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# Chapter 1 Conversation and Conversation Analysis

## Focus

- The origins of Conversation Analysis as a research approach
- Conversation Analysis as a way of understanding social interaction

## Introduction

Conversation is one of the most prevalent uses of human language. All human beings engage in conversational interaction and human society depends on conversation in order to function:

Social interaction is the primordial means through which the business of the social world is transacted, the identities of its participants are affirmed or denied, and its cultures are transmitted, renewed and modified (C. Goodwin & Heritage, 1990, p. 283).

Conversation is the way in which people socialize and develop and sustain their relationships with each other. When people converse, they engage in a form of linguistic communication, but there is much more going on in a conversation than just the use of a linguistic code. Much that is important in conversation is carried out by things other than language, including eye gaze and body posture, silences, and the real-world context in which the talk is produced.

Conversation has received a great deal of attention from writers over a very long period of time, however, much of what has been written about conversation is prescriptive in nature and deals with the idea of what makes a “good conversationalist” (see Burke, 1993). Such approaches to conversation take the form of a set of prescriptive rules which describe what a conversation should be. They present sets of social rules which indicate which topics are appropriate or how language is to be used for maximum effect. These principles of what constitutes good or appropriate conversation vary from culture to culture and change over time (Burke, 1993). Such approaches to conversation show little about conversation as a normal everyday human activity, but frame conversation as an elite activity governed by the conventions of “polite society”. However, conversation is not solely an elite activity, but rather an everyday one, and it is important to understand how it is that people engage in this everyday activity as a structured social event.

The everyday nature of talk has often been denigrated as a subject for study, with linguists such as Chomsky (1965) seeing language used in actual instances of spontaneous communication as being in some way defective and negatively influenced by non-linguistic factors. Such views of language, however, divorce the linguistic system from its primary use in human communication. Given the fundamental role of conversation in human social life, it is important to understand conversation as a linguistic activity, and since the 1960s increasing importance has been given to the analysis of conversation as a field of study (Clayman & Maynard, 1995; C. Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Heritage, 1989).

## The development of Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis is an approach to the study of talk in interaction which grew out of the ethnomethodological tradition in sociology developed by Harold Garfinkel (1964, 1967, 1988).

Ethnomethodology as a field of sociology studies the common-sense resources, practices, and procedures through which members of a society produce and recognize mutually intelligible objects, events, and courses of action. These main ideas for the approach were established in *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Garfinkel, 1967). The core focus of ethnomethodology is small-scale social order seen through the common social knowledge of members of society of the forces that influence how individuals interpret the situations and messages they encounter in their social world. Garfinkel sought to study the social structure of everyday lived experience and to develop an understanding of “how the structures of everyday activities are ordinarily and routinely produced and maintained” (Garfinkel, 1967, pp. 35-36). Ethnomethodology also gave increased prominence to participants’ understandings of social action and viewed the participants themselves as knowledgeable agents who attribute meaning to their social actions in ways which were central to the unfolding of those actions (Meyer & Endreß, 2019; ten Have, 2016).

Ethnomethodology proceeds from an assumption that social order appears to be orderly but is in reality potentially chaotic. For ethnomethodologists, the social order is not a pre-existing framework, but rather it is constructed in the minds of social actors as they engage with society. As members of a society encounter sense impressions and experiences, they must somehow organize into a coherent pattern. Garfinkel (1967) suggests that the way individuals bring order to, or make sense of, their social world is through a psychological process, which he calls “the documentary method”. This method firstly consists of selecting certain facts from a social situation that seem to conform to a pattern and then making sense of these facts in terms of the pattern. Once the pattern has been established, it can be used as a framework for interpreting new facts which arise within the situation. In the documentary method, context plays a vital role as people make sense of occurrences in the social world by reference to the context in which the occurrence appears: participants index an occurrence to its particular circumstances. Garfinkel argued that people constantly make use of the documentary method in their daily lives to create a “taken-for-granted” understanding of the social world which they feel they “know” and in which can be “at home”. They perceive the social world through a series of patterns they have built up for making sense of and coping with the variety of situations that they encounter in their lives.

This taken-for granted nature of understandings of the social world implies that social knowledge is implicit and for this reason understandings of social knowledge cannot be elicited (Duranti, 1997). Instead social organization can only be understood by examining actual instances of social interaction. In each instance of social interaction, members need to make available to others their understanding of the activities in which they are engaged, and participants routinely monitor each other to confirm and test shared understandings of the activity as it unfolds. For this reason, in studying social interaction, ethnomethodology tends to ignore the information actually transmitted during interaction, concentrating more on how the interaction was performed. This is because the stance of ethnomethodology suggests that all meanings are, and can only ever be, subjective and that the only objective social reality, and therefore the only thing worth studying, is the reality of commonly understood methods of communication.

The emphasis on studying actual instances of social interaction is further developed in the work of Erving Goffman (Goffman, 1959, 1963, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1981, 1983), who asserted that the ordinary activities of daily life were an important subject for study. Goffman’s work demonstrated that it was possible to study everyday events and situations and to discover from

these non-trivial information about how human beings engage in sociality. He was able to show how matters of great social significance could be found in everyday activities. Goffman's approach to research was a qualitative one in which description and analysis were the primary tools for developing an understanding of social processes and this contrasted with much of the prevailing work in sociology and social psychology which favoured more quantitative approaches based on hypothesis testing. Goffman (1964) in particular drew attention to the need to study ordinary instances of speaking, which had in his view been neglected. He argued that:

Talk is socially organized, not merely in terms of who speaks to whom in what language, but as a little system of mutually ratified and ritually governed face-to-face action, a social encounter (Goffman, 1964: 65).

He argued that the study of speaking was not simply a matter of narrowly focused linguistic descriptions of language, but rather than interaction had its own system of rules and structures which were not intrinsically linguistic in nature. This means that the study of language in purely linguistic terms could not adequately account for the nature of language-in-use.

The work of Garfinkel and Goffman provided an impetus for the development of Conversation Analysis by establishing a concern for investigating the orderliness of everyday life and these were taken up Harvey Sacks in his lectures on conversation from the early 1960s (Sacks, 1992). In these lectures, Sacks developed an approach to the study of social action which sought to investigate social order as it was produced through the practices of everyday talk. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, through the work of Harvey Sacks, and his colleagues Emmanuel A. Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, Conversation Analysis began to emerge from sociology as an independent area of enquiry oriented towards understanding the organizational structure of talk which has influenced a number of the social science disciplines concerned with human communication (Lerner, 2004). Conversation Analysis drew from ethnomethodology a concern for understanding how order was achieved in social interaction, and empirically based methodology based on micro-analytic studies (Clayman & Maynard, 1995).

Sacks' approach to the study of conversation is characterized by a view of talk an activity through which speakers accomplish things in interaction. Talk can, therefore, be strategically employed to achieve communicative goals. For Sacks, this strategic use of talk is not a set of rules or recipes by which actions are accomplished, but rather the production of interactional effects which are achieved through the use of talk in a particular context (Schegloff, 1992a). For Sacks, conversation was orderly and this order was manifested at all points (Sacks, 1992). The orderly nature of talk results from the recognisable achievement of the same outcome through similar methods in similar contexts. Conversation then is realized through sets of practices which speakers can deploy in order to undertake particular actions in particular contexts and which will be recognized as achieving the appropriate action by other participants.

The core assumptions of Conversation Analysis are (see Psathas, 1995):

1. *Order is produced orderliness.* That is, order does not occur of its own accord not does it pre-exist the interaction but is rather the result of the co-ordinate practices of the participants who achieve orderliness and the interact.
2. *Order is produced, situated, and occasioned.* That is, order is produced by the participants themselves for the conversation in which it occurs. The participants themselves orient to the order being produced and their behaviour reflects and indexes that order. This means

that in analysing conversation as an academic activity, orderliness being documented is not externally imposed by the analyst but internally accomplished by the participants. This observed order is not the result of a pre-formed conceptions of what should happen, nor is it a probabilistic generalization about frequencies.

3. *Order is repeatable and recurrent.* The patterns of orderliness found in conversation are repeated, not only in the talk of an individual speaker, but across groups of speakers. The achieved order is therefore the result of a shared understanding of the methods by which order is achievable.

These three formulations make it clear that Conversation Analysis assumes that there is overwhelming order in conversation. Conversation is neither random nor unstructured; however, the order observable in conversation does not imply an overarching uniformity in conversational structure which is generalisable across conversations (Wooffitt, 2005). Instead, the participants themselves construct conversations in orderly ways.

A key idea in Conversation Analysis is the notion of recipient design, which Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) characterize as the most general principle of conversational interaction. Recipient design refers to the idea that participants in talk design their talk in such a way as to be understood by an interlocutor, in terms of the knowledge that participants assume they share (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979; Schegloff, 1972). This means that conversational contributions are designed with a recipient in mind and are designed as appropriate for that recipient. Recipient design is not simply a resource which speakers use to design talk, it is also a resource listeners can use in interpreting talk, as listeners are motivated to hear a turn that is designed for them, and participants track the trajectory of the talk to hear turn if a turn is designed for them (Boden, 1994). This means that recipient design is a highly salient feature of talk and the organization of talk, and therefore one aspect of the produced orderliness of conversation. The task of the analyst is to discover and describe the produced orderliness which is created by conversationalists during conversation. Such an analysis allows the machinery of conversation to become visible, and it is the purpose of this book to describe this machinery of conversation – the sets of procedures which participants in conversation deploy in order to achieve orderly and ordered social interaction.

Conversation Analysis, as the name of an approach to studying talk in interaction, is in some ways a misnomer for the approach as the focus of Conversation Analysis is actually much larger than conversation as it is usually understood. In fact, while much work in Conversation Analysis has examined informal talk in everyday social settings, there is a growing body of work which has applied the same methodological and theoretical tools to talk in institutional contexts (see for example Antaki, 2011b; Drew & Heritage, 1992b; Heritage, 1997, 2004). Conversation analysts do not see an inherent distinction between the formal and the informal, the everyday and the institutional rather they see talk in interaction as a social process which is deployed to realize and understand the social situations in which talk is used. As Schegloff argues (1992b, p. 1296) “talk-in-interaction is a primordial site of sociality on the one hand and, on the other hand, one of the (largely presupposed) preconditions for, and achievements of, organized life”. Conversation Analysis therefore legitimately investigates all areas of socially motivated talk.

## Conversation Analysis as an approach to studying interaction

Conversation Analysis studies the organization and orderliness of social interaction. In order to do this, it begins with an assumption that the conduct, including talk, of everyday life is, is produced as, sensible and meaningful.

The central goal of conversation analytic research is the description and explication of the competences that ordinary speakers use and rely on in participating in intelligible socially organized interaction. At its most basic, this objective is one of describing the procedures by which conversationalists produce their own behaviour and understand that of others (Heritage, 1984b, p. 1).

A fundamental assumption of such a program of research is that in engaging in talk, participants are engaging in socially organized interaction. Human talk is a form of action, and is understood as action by participants in the interaction. This talk is presented and understood as meaningful because participants share the same procedures for designing and interpreting talk. Conversation Analysis seeks to understand these shared procedures which participants in an interaction use to produce and recognize meaningful action.

Action is meaningful only in context and context is seen as playing two primary roles in interaction. Heritage (1984b) refers to this as the context-shaped and the context-renewing significance of a speaker's contribution. Talk is context-shaped in that talk responds to the context in which it is created. What participants say is shaped by and for the context in which it occurs and each next bit of talk is understood in the light of what has preceded it. This contextualization is an important procedure for understanding conversational contributions. At the same time talk is context renewing because talk shapes the context as each next bit of talk constrains and affects what follows and influences how further talk will be heard and understood. Each turn at talk is the response to some previous talk and, by its utterance, provides a context in which the next turn at talk will be heard. Context is, therefore, dynamic and is renewed at each point in the talk. Conversationalists design their talk to demonstrate the sense they have made of the preceding talk and display, through the construction of their talk, their understanding of the talk-so-far. Turns at talk are, therefore, publicly available displays of understanding which allow for "shared understandings" to be created and ratified (C. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992).

While context is therefore vitally relevant to interaction, it is necessary to be cautious about what can legitimately be invoked as relevant context. Schegloff (1992a) has indicated that context can be considered in two different ways. Context may be external to the interaction itself; this includes context in the form of social categories, social relationships and institutional and cultural settings. The second is internal to the interaction and is created by participants through their talk. The core issue in thinking about context in these terms is the extent to which aspects of context are relevant to the participants in the interaction as they interact with each other. Schegloff (1992a) argues that not all potentially knowable aspects of external context can be taken as being equally potentially relevant at any point in the interaction and, as such, the test of the analyst is to determine, on the basis of the interaction itself, which elements of context are displayed as relevant and consequential to the participants themselves. This means that context needs to be seen more as something which is invoked in interaction, rather than something which impacts on interaction.

The underlying assumptions of Conversation Analysis discussed so far have implications for the ways in which analysts work to develop accounts of language as social action. Firstly, the data for study must be actual talk occurring in actual contexts (Drew & Curl, 2008; Heritage, 1995). Conversation Analysis is analysis of real-world, situated, contextualized talk. As conversational order is achieved order and the achievement is done through the deployment of practices in particular contexts only naturally occurring instances of actual talk can provide the information necessary for developing an account of what occurs in talk. The use of actual instances of talk allows for the possibility of an examination of what speakers actually do when speaking, rather than producing an account of what speakers think they do (for example, as the result of introspection about language use). Conversation Analysis uses a specimen approach in which each data segment used for developing an account of conversational behaviour is not a statement about reality but rather a part of the reality being studied (ten Have, 2007). As an empirical discipline, Conversation Analysis allows order to emerge from the data without an intervening layer of theoretical constructs and allows for the determination of the organising principles that are used and oriented to by the speakers themselves.

### **Conversation Analysis and some other ways of studying language in use**

Conversation Analysis is one of a number of different research approaches that examine how human beings use language to communicate. These approaches are often grouped together under the umbrella terms ‘Pragmatics’ or ‘Discourse Analysis’. Pragmatics is understood as the study of all aspects of language in use (Mey, 1993) and as such is very broad in its focus and goes beyond the study of interaction to consider wider questions of meaning in context. Discourse analysis is similarly understood as language in use but adds a core concern for language beyond the level of the sentence (Schiffrin, Tannen, & Hamilton, 2015); that is it focuses primarily on interactions or texts. Neither of these ways of approaching language are specifically focused on spoken language or on interaction. Within these broad umbrella terms, there are many different approaches to studying language in use. These different approaches share much in common and many people working in the field draw on methods and findings from approaches other than the main one they work with. However, the different approaches also vary in terms of their focus of interest and in their specific methodologies. This section will review four ways of approaching the study of language in use that have similarities to and differences from Conversation Analysis in order to locate Conversation Analysis as a field of study. The comparison does not intend to be exhaustive but has selected five approaches that overlap with Conversation Analysis but also differ in significant ways –Speech Act pragmatics, Discourse Analysis, Interactional Sociolinguistics, Discursive Psychology and Critical Discourse Analysis – that show something of the range of interest in human language use. In reality, the boundaries between these different ways of dealing with language in use are often quite fuzzy and many researchers draw on more than one way of studying language.

#### *Speech Act pragmatics*

Pragmatics is a wide discipline that deals with a number of features of language in use. One element that is shared with Conversation Analysis an interest in human language use as a form of action, but is more focused on the ways that particular contributions are constructed and interpreted than on interaction itself. Pragmatics starts from the idea that in saying something a speaker is in fact also doing something, that is from the idea of speech acts. This idea began with Austin’s (1962) observation that some examples of language use cannot be evaluated as true or false but rather must be understood as having performed some action in the world, as for example when a judge says in a court of law says “I sentence you...”. In saying “I sentence

you...”, the judge performs the act of sentencing; the speaking is the form of the action. Austin identified three levels of speech acts: the locutionary act (what is said), the illocutionary act (what the speaker intended to do in speaking) and the perlocutionary act (the effect of the speaking). The utterances that Austin studied were quite formulaic and self-referential, but Searle (1965, 1969) later argued that all talk could in fact be understood in terms of speech acts. For example, “What is the time?” can be understood as constituting the act of questioning.

The observation that all language use could be understood as speech acts involved a move away from the more fixed and formulaic utterances that were Austin’s focus and meant that pragmatics needed to consider the variation in ways of speaking and how participants in communication constructed and made sense of talk. For example, a request speech act in English can have a number of forms: ‘Open the door!’, ‘Could you open the door?’ or even ‘The door is closed.’. The existence of very different forms to achieve the same thing leads to the question of how locutionary acts relate to illocutionary acts and what the purpose of different ways of encoding speech acts is. The first of these issues relates to the idea that some speech acts are indirect (Searle, 1975); that is, the surface form (locutionary act) and the intended action (illocutionary act) do not seem to match as in the case of “Could you open the door?” which is a question in form, but is a request in meaning. Searle argues that participants derive illocutionary meanings for indirect speech acts by orienting to Grice’s (1975) cooperative principle in conversation in which each participant assumes that what is said is appropriate for the point at which it is said. The issue of the diversity of realisations of speech acts has been a focus of work on politeness and within this work different utterances have been understood as having different politeness values. For example, indirect forms of speech acts are seen as more polite than direct forms as indirect forms perform more work relative to the social relationships between participants (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Thus, a question form request such as “Could you open the door?” allows space for the possibility that the recipient could exercise free will and not perform the act and so can be considered politer than an imperative request, which focuses more on what the speaker wants done (Wierzbicka, 1991).

Speech act pragmatics differs significantly from Conversation Analysis in that it focuses attention specifically on the construction of individual utterances and focuses much less on interaction, although interaction is sometimes used as context for understanding the illocutionary forces of utterances. In fact, Searle (1992) has argued that aspects of interaction, such as how recipients display their understanding of conversational contributions, are not particularly relevant for understanding illocution. Because speech act pragmatics has focused mainly on the level of utterance, it does not deal well with the ways that contributions in talk fit together to create actions over more than one turn, which has been a key focus of Conversation Analysis (Schegloff, 1988c). Some recent work in speech act pragmatics has argued that the lack of focus on interaction is a problem and has sought to develop a more discursive approach to study speech acts, often drawing on Conversation Analysis (e.g. Kasper, 2006). Speech act pragmatics has also differed from Conversation Analysis in terms of the data that it uses for analysis. While many people studying speech act data have sought to use naturally occurring interaction, there has also been a strong tradition of eliciting language samples in non-naturalistic ways, for example in role plays or discourse completion tasks (see for example Kasper & Dahl, 1991), and work such as that of Austin and Searle has often been based on introspective data.

## Discourse Analysis

While discourse analysis is often used as a blanket term for many different ways of dealing with language in use, it is also used as a term in its own right (Waring, 2017). This section will focus on one key form of Discourse Analysis that has grown out of work in linguistics that has sought to understand how language beyond the sentence is structured and to identify rules analogous to the rules of sentence construction that can account for discourse structure, for example, the structural components of stories (e.g. Labov & Waletzky, 1967), newspaper articles (e.g. van Dijk, 1985b) or classroom interaction (e.g. Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). The focus of such linguistically oriented discourse analysis has been to identify units in discourse and rules for using these units to construct larger structures. For example, in their study of classroom interaction, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) identified a recurring three part structure that was used in interactions between teachers and students – an initiation (I) by the teacher, a response by the student (R), and feedback (F) on the response by the teacher. These structural positions could be filled by quite different types of talk, for the example the feedback on a right answer can look very different from feedback on a wrong answer, but the structure can be seen to shape many classroom interactions. Discourse analysts are thus looking at data to identify regularly occurring structures that are found in the data in order to describe how language is constructed and the elements used to construct it and produce a ‘grammar’ of discourse. Once such a grammar has been established it can then be applied to instances of language to code the language used against the structural categories.

Discourse analysis, by using categories is able to show how meanings are created through the arrangement of elements in a stretch of language; that is how the units that make up a stretch of language can be sequenced and how different sequencing possibilities influence how the same information is presented. To give a simple, short example, there is a difference between the sentences:

- (1.1a) John stole the money
- (1.1b) It was the money that John stole
- (1.1c) It was John who stole the money

These three sentences have the information in the sense that they contain the units *John*, *money*, and *stole*. They also have the same relationships between the components – John performed the action; the money was affected by the action. In this sense, the sentence conveys the same information. However, the differences in structure convey the information differently. Sentence (1.1b) constructs the sentence as being about the money and represents the money as new information and John as known information. Sentence (1.1c), however, is constructed as being about John, with John is new information, and the stealing of the money is presented as known. Thus, the ways that the units are sequenced interacts with things outside the sentence itself, such as the knowledge states of participants at the time of talking. Similar things can be seen in other ways of sequencing information. For example, Kirkpatrick (1993) has described two different ways of constructing request letters: (1) presenting reasons and then the request, and (2) presenting the request and then the reasons for it. The former gives the requestee information before imposing, the latter provides the request as a way of showing the relevance of the information. Kirkpatrick argues that these two structures may be evaluated differently by members of different cultures with Australian readers usually considering (2) to be polite because it provides a context for understanding the information and Chinese readers usually considering (1) to be polite because it prepares the recipient for the request.

Discourse Analysis has similar concerns to Conversation Analysis as both pay attention to the structures of language in use, but they also have some key differences. The main difference is that Conversation Analysis places attention on the actions that are accomplished through language; that is structures are mechanisms for social interaction and the key analytic focus is on understanding the social interaction and how it is accomplished. In Discourse Analysis however, the focus is on the structures themselves and how they relate to meaning; the units and rules are the objects in focus rather the social action that is being accomplished.

### *Interactional Sociolinguistics*

Interactional Sociolinguistics is a very broad field of research about interaction that draws on many other forms of discourse analysis including Conversation Analysis. This approach to studying interaction grew out of the work of Gumperz (e.g. 1982), who sought to combine insights from linguistics and anthropology to understand how the use of language is involved in social and cultural interaction. It is less focused on the underlying mechanisms that allow interaction to be structured as orderly and more focused on what speakers do to create and understand meaning in interaction.

As part of its concern with understanding how human beings create meaning through interaction, Interactional Sociolinguistics acknowledges that human beings draw on more resources than language to shape communication and is especially interested in the role of cultural presuppositions and the ways they shape interaction and understanding (Gumperz, 2015). Identifying and understanding background information is therefore a key element for Interactional Sociolinguistics. Interactional Sociolinguistics often focuses on ‘contextualisation cues’ (Gumperz, 1982); the devices that are used by speakers to indicate how they mean what they say. Gumperz (1982, p. 131) defines contextualisation cues as “constellations of surface features of message forms ... by which speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is to be understood and how each sentence relates to what precedes or follows”. For example, if a speaker says ‘Very funny’, she may mean this literally and this may be indicated by non-language elements such as laughter or smiling, or she may indicate a negative or sarcastic response through aspects of intonation, stress, etc. These devices, laughing, intonation, etc. are contextualisation cues that enable speakers to express and interpret what the words mean in the specific interaction in which they are used. They do not in themselves encode meaning, but when they function in association with words they shape how the words are understood (Gumperz, 2015). Such contextualisation cues are tacit knowledge that speakers hold about the nature of interaction and vary from culture to culture.

Much work in Interactional Sociolinguistics has focused on the enculturated nature of communication practices and has sought to understand how contextualisation cues vary across languages and cultures. This means that Interactional Sociolinguistics often invokes macro-level phenomena, such as culture, to explain micro-level features of interaction, and this is a key difference between the approaches of Interactional Sociolinguistics and Conversation Analysis. Conversation Analysis is very reluctant to include macro-level phenomena in an analysis (Schegloff, 1999a, 1999b) and does so only where it is clear that participants in the interaction demonstrably and explicitly orient to these phenomena in their talk. The inclusion of macro-level phenomena in the analysis also entails a different methodology from Conversation Analysis’ focus solely on recordings of actual interaction and instead requires an “ethnographically informed” (Gumperz, 2015, p. 314) analysis of what occurs in the talk; that is, in addition to recordings of naturally occurring talk, Interactional Sociolinguistics brings

into the analysis information from outside the interaction itself. Researchers may thus include more introspective forms of data such as interviews and focus groups, retrospective accounts from participants in the interaction, and observations of the broader context in which the interaction occurs. Conversation Analysis has often been sceptical about the usefulness of information that is external to the data as it may introduce elements into the analysis that were not present for participants at the time of speaking or that may be difficult to locate within the interaction itself.

### *Discursive Psychology*

Discursive Psychology, like Conversation Analysis, focuses on the analysis of naturally occurring interaction and examines the micro-level features of the interaction but differs from Conversation Analysis in that its focus is not on social action and the mechanisms through which it is achieved but rather on understanding human psychology as it is created in interaction. It aims to examine how psychological concepts, such as attitudes, emotions, identities, perceptions, mental states, prejudices, etc., are produced and managed in discourse and the implications of this for understanding social interaction and psychology (Wiggins, 2017). It is a reaction to strong cognitivist psychology that constructs psychological issues as things that are intrapersonal, and seeks to understand psychology as interpersonal and socially managed in interaction. For Discursive Psychologists, psychological states are not pre-formed and then expressed through interaction but rather that they are constructed in interaction in order to achieve particular social actions. This means that, when human beings express psychological states, they do not do it simply to express those states but to achieve some other social goal. Therefore, rather than viewing attitudes as internal states of individuals, Discursive Psychology seeks to understand how attitudes are expressed, described or made consequential in interaction. For example, consider Joseph's talk in extract (1.2).

(1.2) [(Wiggins, 2017)]

Mum: could you eat a bit more Joseph please, instead of staring into space  
Joseph: no I don't like it  
Mum: a little more if you don't mind  
Joseph: no ((shakes head))

Here Joseph is expressing an attitude (dislike) to the food that he has been given to eat. However, in saying this, he is not simply expressing an interior attitudinal state, he is expressing his attitude in order to reject his mother's request that he eat more. He is using the expression of his attitude as a way of countering his mother's authority and her right to require him to eat by expressing an attitude that indicates that this request is unreasonable or inappropriate in this context.

Discursive Psychology aims to understand how social practices are constructed but also how social practices construct versions of the world for participants in interaction. Discourse is seen as bringing different versions of reality or of truth into being. Discursive Psychology recognises that there are potentially different ways of seeing or understanding the world and that ways of talking can invoke some realities and downplay or challenge others, even if they are not mentioned in the interaction. For example, it is possible to argue that when people evaluate something they are not only expressing an attitude towards the thing they are evaluating but are also countering some other way of evaluating the thing (Tileagă & Stokoe, 2015). For

example, Joseph's expression of dislike for his food in extract (1.2) is not simply an expression of his evaluation but also an attempt to counter other possible evaluations of the food.

Discursive Psychology and Conversation Analysis share much in common in the ways they view interaction and their emphasis on talk as a form of action, and Discursive psychologists often draw on Conversation analytic methods and ideas, they differ centrally in their core research aims. Conversation Analysis is interested in identifying the organisational structure that is found in human interaction and explaining the orderliness that underlies interaction as form of human sociality. Discursive Psychology is primarily interested in what interaction shows about human psychology and the ways that psychological phenomena are created and expressed in human interaction, and understanding how human beings manage the relationship between mind and world (Edwards, 2007).

### *Critical Discourse Analysis*

Critical Discourse Analysis aims to reveal the ideologies that underlie ways of using language that work to marginalise or oppress individuals or groups in society and often has the aim of not only revealing those ideologies but also of challenging or undermining them (Fairclough, 2010; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; van Dijk, 1985a). It is especially concerned with how ideologies are produced and reproduced in authoritative and influential texts, such as media and social media texts (e.g. Angouri & Wodak, 2014; van Dijk, 1991) and political discourse (e.g. Bhatia, 2006), but has also examined how ideologies are found in everyday interactions (e.g. Saloojee & Saloojee, 2018; van Dijk, 1987). Critical Discourse Analysis positions itself as an intersection between linguistic theory and social theory, especially theories related to power and ideology and analysis is usually strongly informed by theoretical positions. It can be argued that, while both Critical Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis seek to analyse language data, Critical Discourse Analysis could be considered a theory-driven approach while Conversation Analysis is a data-driven approach.

The main focus of Critical Discourse Analysis is on the content of the discourse: what is said and how it is said. In studying language, Critical Discourse Analysis usually focuses on aspects of the language used to construct discourse and the ways that these relate to other possible ways of constructing the same events in order to understand the ideological positionings that language choices convey (van Dijk, 1985a). For example, analysts may be interested in lexical choices, such as the difference between referring to the same individual as a 'refugee', an 'asylum seeker', or an 'illegal immigrant', and how these choices position the individual referred to and what responses the reference creates or permits. In examining the words used to construct a text, analysts may also consider phenomena such as over-lexicalisation; that is when multiple words are used to describe the same referent especially when the words are not central to understanding the message, such as when one uses 'lady doctor' or 'male nurse' implying a particular gendering of the participants and expected gender roles. They may also be interested in syntactic choices, such as the difference in agency in active sentences such as:

(1.3a) The police officer shot the demonstrator.

(1.3b) The demonstrator was shot by the police officer

(1.3c) The demonstrator was shot.

In these sentences, the agency of the police officer is highlighted (1.3a), down played (1.3b) or elided (1.3c), and this may have consequences for understanding blame or responsibility for the action (Hart, 2016). Analysts often also consider not only what is present in the interaction

but what is absent, for example the perspectives that are missing in a news report that have relevance for understanding the phenomenon being discussed. Interaction usually plays a relatively minor role in analysis. In fact, Critical Discourse Analysis is often used in contexts of monologic discourse (speeches, written texts, policies, etc.) where social interaction is not a significant feature of the text being studied. Where Critical Discourse Analysts discuss interaction as an idea, they usually mean something more akin to the idea of the reception of discourses by recipients and their meaning-making processes in relation to them or the ways that discourses are appropriated, deployed or modified by those who use them rather than a locally created situation of interaction between participants in talk (Hodge, 2012).

Conversation Analysts are often critical of Critical Discourse Analysis because they believe that such analyses are analyst driven and may not account for what is actually happening between participants (Schegloff, 1999b). There is a perception that in Critical Discourse Analysis macro-social categories such as gender, race, sexuality, power, etc. are assumed always to be relevant in interactions and can be used to explain what occurs. For Conversation Analysis, the important aspect of analysis is to show from the data that what is occurring is relevant for the participants at the moment it occurs by showing from the interaction that they are orienting to it. This difference in understanding what constitutes evidence and how it is understood as evidence is the basis of a discussion between Billig and Schegloff in *Discourse Studies* (Billig, 1999a, 1999b; Schegloff, 1999a, 1999b) that has suggested that macro-social issues may be not be questions that Conversation Analysis can be used to address. However, some people using Conversation Analysis have treated such issues using data where it can be clearly demonstrated from the interaction itself that such categories are relevant and consequential for participants and the development of their talk, for example Kitzinger (2000) on gender and Liddicoat (2009) on sexuality.

## **About this book**

Since Conversation Analysis was first developed in the 1960s, a coherent body of knowledge has emerged about the ways in which conversation is structured. This body of knowledge has been developed on the basis of a distinctive methodology which is based on the study of actually occurring examples of human interaction. One important part of this method is the written representation of spoken language in the form of transcripts, and this issue will be taken up in the next chapter. Understanding transcription is an important step to understanding the body of findings in Conversation Analysis because it gives an indication of what is considered by analysts in their study of talk.

The book then turns to an examination of the methods are which participants in interaction regularly use to structure their talk. This examination is an account of the basic machinery of talk through which talk is designed and recognized as orderly. This basic machinery covers three broad areas of conversational organization. The first of these is how turns at talk are structured and managed by participants (Chapters 5 and 6). The second is the ways in which turns at talk are organized into conversation as sequences, and how basic sequences can be expanded to produce larger, coherent units of conversational action (Chapters 7 and 8). The third basic dimension of the machinery for producing orderly talk is the repair system which deals with breakdowns in the application of the machinery (Chapter 9). The discussion of these basic mechanisms will then move to some larger issues which relate to these mechanisms; that is, how actions are created and understood (Chapter 10) and the relationship between talk and embodied action in interaction (Chapter 11).

Once these three sets of processes have been discussed, the book will turn to investigate an emerging line of research that uses Conversation Analysis to understand online written interactions (Chapter 12). This will be followed by a discussion of some particular interactional issues that participants face in interaction: beginning an interaction (Chapter 13), ending an interaction (Chapter 14) and gaining the interactional space in which to tell a story (Chapter 15), and examine the mechanisms by which these difficulties are addressed. Finally, it will look at some of the ways that Conversation Analysis has been used to study talk in specific contexts and the ways that it can be applied to understand aspects of the social and linguistic world.

### **Further Reading**

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- Silverman, David. (1998). *Harvey Sacks: Social Science and Conversation Analysis*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## Chapter 2 Collecting conversational data

### Focus:

- The nature of data for studying conversation
- Ways of recording data and issues involved with different forms of data collection
- Ethical issues in data recording

### Introduction

Conversation Analysis is an empirically based approach to understanding conversation and data collection and analysis play an important role in the conversation analytic approach. The next chapters will examine some of the issues that relate to the process of doing Conversation Analysis. There are three main areas of interest in the process: data collection, transcription and analysis.

### Naturalistic data

It is a basic starting point for Conversation Analysis that the interactions being studied should be naturally occurring. Golato (2017) describes a naturally occurring interaction as any interaction that would occur regardless of whether the researcher had come upon the scene and requested or obtained a recording of it. They should be interactions which would have happened anyway, not interactions which have been contrived by the researcher for the purposes of doing research. Conversation Analysis attempts to understand how people interact normally and naturally and in order to do this, research needs to be based on interactions which are normal and natural. If interactions are set up for the purposes of research, this introduces a new dimension into the interaction which will influence how participants in the interaction will understand what they are doing and accordingly how they do it. In this sense, such interactions are not naturally occurring conversations, but naturally occurring instances of participants contributing to research. The Conversation Analyst therefore needs to be able to collect instances of interaction which were not designed for the purposes of research, but which were conducted by people for their own purposes.

In reality, collecting naturally occurring conversation is more difficult than it may at first seem. People engage in the sorts of interactions which Conversation Analysts are interested in all the time and the research requirement is to document these interactions in some way. However, when a research attempts to document these interactions by making recordings, the act of recording itself adds a new dimension to the situation and this new dimension may have implications for how the interaction unfolds. Labov (1972) refers to this as the “observer’s paradox” that the observation of any event is influenced by the fact that it is being observed. This is a particular problem for Conversation Analysis as the aim is to observe how people interact when they are not being observed. The task of the Conversation Analysis researcher is therefore to attempt to make the act of recording interactions as unintrusive as possible so that the research itself captures interactions which have been minimally influenced by the act of research. Research is most potentially intrusive when the researcher is present recording the data and therefore a possible participant in the interaction. In many cases, the observer in Conversation Analysis studies is an absent observer and it is only the recording device that is present at the time of the interaction. In these cases, the fact of observation may be less apparent, but it is always potentially there. However, there is some evidence that participants’ awareness of recording devices may not be as big a problem for studying conversation as some people

have thought. Speer and Hutchy (2003) have argued that recording devices are not automatically something that affects interaction and that participants' reactions are themselves something that can be analysed and understood as situated practices in interaction. The effects of recording thus seem to be complex and highly variable across participants and contexts.

The Conversation Analysis approach of using naturalistic data contrasts with other ways of collecting data for studying human interaction which can collectively be called "experimental". Experimental research can be understood as a way of finding information through activities established by researchers for the purposes of eliciting data about interaction. That is, such activities are *designed* and take place for the purposes of data collection. In this sense they are not natural interactions (although the distinction between natural and experimental data is not a neat one, as will be discussed below).

In some forms of experimental research participants are asked to participate in interactions established by researchers in order to collect examples of language in use. For example, Labov and Waletzky's (1967) analysis of story-telling is drawn from a series of interviews designed as part of field research in sociolinguistics. These stories were elicited in response to questions from the researcher and the researcher was positioned as an audience for these stories rather than as a regular conversational partner. Such interactions are of a particular kind – they represent what would be said in interactions in which particular roles, in this case researcher-interviewer and research participant-respondent, are important for understanding how the interaction unfolds. That is, such instances of interaction are in fact naturally occurring instances of talk in one particular context. In fact, this is what Labov and Waletzky do when analysing the data to understand how stories are constructed in their interviews rather than using the interviews for their original purpose of collecting sociolinguistic information. Their interviews are thus treated as naturally occurring instances of talk during sociolinguistic interviews. Such interactions can be used to understand the specific context in which they are produced, but they are not instances of how people communicate in other contexts. Labov (1997) recognises that the stories collected for Labov and Waletzky's (1967) study are of a particular type and may not reflect what happens in spontaneous story-telling in everyday conversation. Data collected in such settings is interesting for understanding how such settings operate as forms of interaction in their own right but are less useful for understanding how people interact in other settings.

Another experimental way of collecting interactional data is through eliciting data, for example using role-plays (Félix-Brasdefer & Hasler-Barker, 2017). In role plays, people act out situations and produce interactional language as they do so. Role-plays are a way of eliciting comparable interactional data over a number of different participants with the same focus. The problem with role-plays lies essentially in their play-acting dimension. That is, participants are not really doing what they are acting out and the social relationships being performed are not the real social relationships between the participants – total strangers may role-play intimacy or close friends role-play strangers – or people may play roles in which they have no real experience. If we understand talk as a form of social interaction, then to falsify the social dimension of the interaction is problematic. Moreover, because the role-play is a constructed performance, there is less need for participants to attend to the social consequences of the interaction outside the role-play. It is not a part of an on-going social relationship between participants. It is performed for the researcher and not for the participants and the participants' purposes in interacting are not those of everyday interactants. Thus, role-plays provide data

about how people interact in performances of interaction, but not necessarily how they interact naturally.

Different types of data provide different qualities of information for the analysis of interaction. Experimental data, especially data such as role plays, may be interactional in form, but they are ultimately contrived interactions rather than naturally occurring ones. In treating any interaction as naturalistic, the researcher needs to understand clearly what it is a natural instance of and what the influence of the context in which it occurs is. That is, experimental data can provide information about how people interact in the experimental situation and treated in this way, they are in fact naturally occurring data. Conversation analytic studies of interviewing techniques in social sciences research demonstrate such an orientation to this data. However, when data is collected in an experimental setting with the intention of understanding interaction outside such settings, there is a problem in using and interpreting such data.

### **Documenting conversations**

If the data for Conversation Analysis are naturally occurring interactions, then these interactions need to be documented in some way in order to become available for study. There are a number of ways in which conversation can be documented and each approach has advantages and disadvantages. Decisions about how to document conversations in Conversation Analysis begin with from the perspective that in order to understand conversation as orderly, it is necessary to have access to detail. This means that some approaches to documentation used by other forms of discourse analysis, such as field notes of observed interactions, are not appropriate for Conversation Analysis. Such notes are necessarily simplifications of the data as the researcher is not able to attend to and record everything that happens at each point in an interaction. This means that the documentation of interactions for Conversation Analysis research requires an approach which preserves as much of the detail of interaction as possible. There are two widely used approaches to documentation found in Conversation Analysis studies: audio recording and video recording.

The original research in Conversation Analysis was based on audio recordings of interactions, as this was the best available technology at the time. Such recordings provided useful information for understanding the basic structures of conversation, such turn-taking, sequence organisation and repair. Audio recordings of many forms of naturally occurring interaction are inevitably incomplete as they present only the vocal elements of what is happening in the interaction. This means that significant non-verbal elements of communication, such as gesture, gaze, movement and contextual information, are lost to the analyst. One area in which audio recording works well is for the study of telephone conversations as in these interactions as the information available to each participant is restricted to the sounds which can be transmitted by the technology.

Video technologies have made it possible to capture far more information about interactions and have opened the way to investigating new aspects of social interaction including gaze, body movement, the relationship of talk to the physical environment and the manipulation of objects. Video data has been used for a long time in conversation analytic studies, with pioneering work using film being reported by Sacks and Schegloff (2002) on work originally presented in 1975 and Goodwin (1979, 1980, 1981). Video recording is significant for understanding how talk is used in interaction because it captures for the analyst more of what is available to the participants in understanding and designing the interaction. The video gives access to the shared visual space of participants and allows this to be interpreted as a relevant

component of the interaction. From the Conversation Analysis perspective, it is important not to disregard any level of detail that may be of relevance to participants, thus video recording, by maintaining more detail for later analysis provides better detail for Conversation Analysis studies, regardless of their ultimate focus.

In spite of the limitations of audio recording, it has some advantages over video recording. The first is that an audio recorder is likely to be less intrusive than a video recorder. In part, this is because audio recording equipment is smaller and more easily managed than a video recorder. Moreover, video recording may require a person to operate the camera in order to track the visual information. This means an additional person is introduced into the setting and simply by being present becomes a participant in the interaction. A sound recorder with a multidirectional microphone can be operated by participants themselves. In addition, it is sometimes easier to obtain permission from research participants to make audio recordings than it is to make video recordings. Heath and Luff (1993) note that audio recording maintains a greater anonymity for research participants and this may influence people's willingness to contribute to research. Nonetheless, they also observe that many people are willing for both audio and video recordings to be made if they have some control over how the video material will be treated. In some cases, it is possible to obtain access to video material for the purposes of study but without the possibility of using the material for publication or other forms of dissemination. People may be willing for visual material to be available to a small group of researchers, but not willing for this material to be disseminated more widely. The choice of methodology therefore may be determined by factors other than the amount of information a recording technique provides.

Both video and audio recording have the advantage of providing accurate data in the sense of capturing what is present in the interaction (Peräkylä, 1997). There can however be limitations in such data, especially in terms of the quality of recordings. Some aspects of the interaction may not be captured – the talk may be too quiet; something may happen “off camera”; there may be interference. That is, recordings provide the most accurate version of the data possible, but they do not represent the whole interaction. The recording is not the same as the event recorded. In fact, even the production of a written transcription based on recorded data involves some loss of detail and for Conversation Analysis the recording of the actual instance of interaction always remains the primary data. Pomerantz and Fehr (1997, p. 70) state that “Conversation analysts strongly prefer to work from recordings of conduct” and argue that the advantages of recording is that it allows for the possibility of playing and replaying the interaction both for transcribing and developing an analysis, permits rechecking of the analysis against full detailed material and makes it possible to return to the data with new interests.

There are other possible limitations to what is available in a recording. Peräkylä (1997) refers to the problem of inclusiveness in recordings. By this he means that a recording may involve the loss of information which was available for the interaction, but which is not available for recording. Such information includes:

- medium and long term temporal processes: the recording is one instance of an interaction and cannot capture how that interaction builds on prior interactions or anticipates future interactions, unless these connections are explicitly made by participants in their talk'

- ambulatory events: the recording may not capture things that happen elsewhere in the setting which are not set up for recording, but which are experienced by and known to participants and shape their interactions
- the impact of texts and other non-conversational modalities of action: for example, something read or seen by participants may influence their interaction but what was seen or read may not be recorded or recordable.

If these things are to be available for the analysis, then arrangements need to be made in the data collection process. For example, ten Have (2007) suggests that recordings of a series of interactions can be used to capture medium and long term processes, ambulatory events can be captured with multiple recording devices and the use of other modalities can be documented outside the recording itself.

This raises the question of the role of additional data in Conversation Analysis studies. Much Conversation Analysis work does not use any data other than recordings of conversations themselves. One of the reasons for this is that recorded data is seen as being empirically rich and free from the limitations and problems of more subjective data collection techniques, especially those based on recall or intuition (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984a). There has, however, been some criticism of what has been seen as Conversation Analysis's restricted database (Billig, 1999b; Cicourel, 1981; Wetherell, 1998) In particular, these critics would like to see more reference to larger sociological categories such as gender, socio-economic status, age, power, institutional context, etc. in analyses. The inclusion of such material would indicate that recordings need to be supplemented by other information found in interviews, demographic information and other sources. For Conversation Analysis, the question of whether or not additional information should be used to supplement recordings is more than a methodological issue. The question revolves around a consideration of the ways in which sociological categories are relevant for specific understanding interactions. This is not to deny that participants in interactions may be categorised in terms of gender, age, etc. but whether such categories have a place in the analysis. The core perspective in Conversation Analysis would be that such categories are not relevant to analysis unless participants themselves can be shown to be orienting to them (Schegloff, 1997b). The position being adopted here is one which argues that these categories are not fixed aspects of interaction which are always relevant in interaction and that if any such categories are to be invoked to explain interaction, then it must be possible to demonstrate that they are relevant to the participants themselves in the particular interaction (Schegloff, 1991, 1997b). That is, an analysis in the conversation analytic tradition should not start from the point that sociological characteristics are a given but rather should search for evidence that they are relevant. This means that data in addition to recordings is not a pre-condition for a complete analysis of talk in interaction, may not be relevant for the analysis of any additional piece of interaction and can only be seen as relevant after analysis has begun.

### **Technical issues in recording**

Recording naturally occurring data means that recordings are not usually done in ideal conditions. Naturalistic recordings are made against the background of the noises and activities of the everyday world. In order to achieve its objectives, Conversation Analysis researchers cannot be too prescriptive about the environments in which they record data – they have to deal with what the natural world provides. This has implications for the quality of the data that can be collected for analysis. It is unlikely to have the clarity of a studio-produced recording in which background noise can be filtered out and participants remain in fixed positions with

recording equipment placed to best capture the sounds made. At the same time, it is necessary to make sure that the recording is clear enough to be useful for analysis and in particular that the sound can be adequately heard and that actions in video are captured adequately to be transcribed.

In recording of spoken data for Conversation Analysis, it is important to have good quality microphones. The microphones should be separate from the recorder so that they can be placed as close as possible to the participants. These should preferably be non-directional microphones so that they pick up sounds when participants move around, although they may also pick up ambient noise that can interfere with the quality of the data (Mondada, 2013a). Goodwin (1981) has given close consideration the difficulties of sound recording in naturalistic settings. He notes that one of the most important considerations in sound quality is how near the microphone is to the participants.

The main influence on sound quality, even more important than the quality of the microphone used, was the distance of the microphones. The closer the microphone, the better the sound (C. Goodwin, 1981, p. 39)

Goodwin also notes that the ideal, in terms of sound quality, was to attach the microphones to the speaker, but he found this cumbersome and intrusive. He therefore opted to use a stationary microphone placed near the participants in a central position between them. Although the quality of microphones has increased significantly since Goodwin began experimenting, his advice about placing stationary microphones is still useful. Modern lapel microphones are small and light weight and are much less cumbersome than the microphones available to Goodwin and can be used without being too intrusive, especially radio microphones (Mondada, 2013a). Nonetheless, it is not necessary to have state of the art equipment to produce usable recordings for analysis, although the better the quality of the microphone, the better the recording. Some researchers use multiple microphones to collect data from each participant and this assists in producing high quality recordings by may make the tasks of transcription more complex as multiple recordings have to be compared to produce a single transcript of a conversation.

Video recording has a number of additional considerations as there is a need not only to capture sound but also to capture postures, gestures, eye gaze, etc. Early work using video involved a single fixed camera positioned at a distance to include all of the participants to be able to capture the interaction between them. This means that the camera may have to be placed at a distance from the participants which may make small gestures and eye gaze shifts hard to detect on the recording. Video recording is often done with a single fixed camera set up in such a way to show all of the participants. This can sometimes be quite difficult to achieve and may require participants to sit in less than natural configurations to provide good camera angles. Single cameras are usually better for interactions with smaller numbers of participants than larger groups as positioning the camera to capture the speech and actions of several people can be logistically very difficult. Video recording devices may have rather limited microphones and so the sound recordings made may not be adequate in themselves for understanding the sounds of the interaction. For this reason, many researchers use video in combination with audio recording.

The use of a single camera has continued to be common in the field but a single camera limits how much data can be collected about the interaction. For example, a gesture or other action may not be visible from the perspective of the camera because it is hidden by the bodies of

participants or objects in the environment. As a result, studies may use multiple cameras to capture as many angles and aspects of interaction as possible. For example, Deppermann, Laurier and Mondada (2018) used multiple cameras to study interaction in cars with some of the cameras positioned to capture different aspects of what is happening inside the car and others to capture the environment outside the car as this is consequential for understanding the actions of participants inside the car.

Conversation analysts have usually used stationary cameras, usually positioned at around eye-level for the participants. Stable cameras are preferred to moving cameras as moving the camera, for example by panning across the participants, by following participants as they move around or by focusing on the activities of a single participant can cause problems in the data itself. For example, movement to follow one participant may miss something done by another that is relevant to following the interaction. Also the decision to move the camera is in fact an analytic decision: the camera operator decides that something in the interaction is significant enough to be followed and so shapes the data prior to its full analysis (Mondada, 2013a).

Fixed cameras work well only when the participants are engaged in a relatively static occupation in which there is little movement. Where participants move around, a fixed camera often misses useful information about the interaction. To overcome this problem, researchers adopt a range of different strategies. One is to have a camera operator to enable the camera to track actions. This is not an ideal solution as the camera operator is necessarily selective in determining what to focus on and cannot predict where and when a camera needs to capture some significant aspect of the interaction for later analysis. Also, the operator is an additional participant in the interaction, whose presence may influence that interaction. The presence of an additional person in the interaction, who is an observer of the interaction rather than a participant in it, may change the character of the interaction from a natural interaction between participants to a performed interaction for the observer. Heath and Luff (1993) believe that the presence of an operator is best avoided as being too much of an intrusion in the interaction and recommend using fixed cameras, set up before the interaction begins.

However, some studies have made use of moving cameras to capture moving interactions. For example, Broth and Lundström (2013) used a single moving camera to film an interaction between two participants walking along a pier. They note that the camera operator walking with the participants is also a participant in the interaction and influences the interaction in non-trivial ways by moving or stopping during the interaction and by moving the camera in particular ways. This means that the camera operator needs to be considered in the analysis of the interaction. Mini cameras mounted in glasses could provide a way of collecting moving interaction that does not involve a camera operator. Salembier et al. (2005) used such glasses to examine participants' interactions with multimodal mobile devices. Such cameras allowed the researchers to collect data on the participants' subjective view of the devices with which they interacted but showed limited information about the participants themselves and their actions and so they also used a camera operator to capture the additional data they needed. If the focus of data collection is to understand embodied actions, the many other types of person-mounted cameras (e.g., lapel cameras) have similar problems as they are not positioned to record the whole of participants' bodies.

It is also possible to use 360-degree "virtual reality" video cameras as a way of capturing a broad scope of data and dealing with the problems caused by movement without needing a camera operator, especially when the interaction takes place in a relatively constrained environment. Using 360-degree cameras can enable researchers to track of how participants

move as they interact and to capture as much contextual information as possible. However, 360-degree cameras may have similar limitations to other single camera approaches and additional still cameras might be needed to capture some aspects of the interaction.

Given that eye-gaze has been seen as important for understanding aspects of interaction (e.g. Auer, 2017; C. Goodwin, 1979, 1980; Rossano, Brown, & Levinson, 2009 ), finding ways to record gaze can be an important consideration. Often eye-gaze has been observed from video and in this case, what is really being analysed may be head-movement, which provides a way of understanding gaze direction, but other aspects of gaze, such as the focus of the gaze, may need to be inferred from gaze direction. Even in quite sophisticated data collection approaches, capturing eye gaze accurately may be problematic. Kawahara, et al.'s (2016) study of audiences at poster presentations used a multiple forms of data collection involving a camera, a microphone array and motion sensing to detect audience members' faces and track their eye gaze. While this data collection method supplemented the video, they still needed to approximate eye gaze from head movement. It is possible to track eye gaze in a more precise way using eye-tracking glasses, alongside microphones and videos (e.g. Holler & Kendrick, 2015). However, eye-tracking glasses are cumbersome and may require participants to be recorded under artificial conditions and so the interactions may not fulfil the criterion of naturalness that is central to data collection in Conversation Analysis.

Whenever multiple recording devices are used to collect data, this raises the question of how to integrate these multiple sources of data into a holistic view of the interaction being recorded. Using multiple data sources may capture more information, but it does so in a way that fragments the interaction (Mondada, 2013a). Different data sources need to be synchronised and the information from each source needs to be related to information from other sources. The more inputs, the more complex this synchronisation process is likely to be. Moreover, having more information about the interaction may not necessarily reveal what aspects of the interaction are salient for participants at any moment in the interaction: an analyst may be able to see what participants are looking at, but this is not the same as knowing what they are seeing (Nevile, 2015). It may be the case that the recording reveals most of what was available for a participant to attend to, but it does not reveal what they were in fact attending to, unless there is other evidence the interaction that indicates this.

This discussion shows that there is no ideal way of recording spoken language data but rather the researcher has to find a best fit between the resources available and the purposes of the project. The aim of the Conversation Analysis researcher is to produce the best quality recording of an interaction, with a little intrusion as possible, in the context in which the interaction happens.

### **Using technologically mediated data**

Recording spoken language use through technologically mediated communication can be much more easily managed than recording live face-to-face interaction. Technologically mediated communication in the form of telephone class was an early source for analysis precisely because it was relatively easily available source of recordable data (Mondada, 2013a). Telephone calls provide a good source for studying interaction because an audio recording captures the information that is available in common to both participants as such calls involve only a shared audio signal (Schegloff, 2002a). There are many good systems for recording telephone conversations, although there are now often legal issues involved in using such devices that limited possibilities for recording such calls.

Computer-mediated interactions have fewer problems as the participants themselves require the necessary technology for recording in order to use the system. Computers can use software to record what is happening in the interaction in a way that will record both images and sounds and usually with a reasonable quality of recording. These devices produce good quality recordings, providing the sound quality of the original is good, however technologically mediated forms of communication may be subject to mechanical forms of interference. This is especially the case when recording computer mediated video conversations, where static, echo, silences, etc. are still a common problem both for the participants and for the researcher. Such recordings will capture the data involved in the online interaction but will not capture what the participants are doing during the interaction, but which is not heard through the technology or made visible on the screen. For this reason, researchers sometimes also record participants while they are interacting. Such recordings can involve complexity in the data collection process as participants are normally spatially separated and recording all of the participants may be quite difficult. Develotte, Kern, and Lamy (2011) have published a series of studies based on online dyadic interactions in which both participants were recorded as well as having their online interaction recorded, but this required participants to interact at specific times and in specific places and so the data were not strictly naturally occurring.

Some work on the study of social interaction has used media data taken from broadcasts of particular types of interactions. Media data has the benefit of usually being available as high quality recorded data and this greatly facilitates transcription. Such data is very easy to collect, but its use needs to be carefully considered. Obviously, if a project seeks to investigate the ways in which interaction occurs in a media context, such as interviews, game shows, talk radio, etc. Then media data is the naturally occurring form of such interactions. In using such interactions, however, the researcher needs to be aware of any editing that may have occurred in the material being broadcast as this can obscure important interactional information. In the case of “reality” television shows, editing may produce such a constructed version of the interactions recorded that they will be of little use for understanding the ways in which the participants designed their talk. Aspects of the interaction may also be scripted and where this is the case, the script may create particular interactional patterns which need to be taken into consideration. Thus, a televised soap opera may reveal much about the construction of scripts but is likely to say little about naturalistic ways of human interaction.

Although collection of online material may be relatively easy, this does not mean that they will always occur in a form that can be used without some form of ‘transcription’. Some forms of online communication, such as Tweets can easily be represented in textual form, but for other forms of interaction, issues such as the layout of the contributions and even non-linear elements of the communication such as hyperlinks may be relevant for understanding interaction (Giles, Stommel, Paulus, Lester, & Reed, 2015). In cases, where not all of a message is represented in one place, some curation of the materials will be needed to produce a transcript that is useful for analysing and reporting data.

### **Ethics in data collecting**

Recording people’s interactions for research purposes brings with it a number of ethical issues which need to be addressed in designing Conversation Analysis research. Participants in a conversation analytic study need to give and be able to give informed consent for their interactions to become the subject of research.

The first ethical issue is that participants need to give consent to being recorded, whether that recording will be done in audio or video form. This means that participants should always be aware that they are being recorded. Such an awareness raises the possibility that the observer's paradox discussed above will influence the data being collected, but this is essentially a secondary consideration in constructing ethical research. Being recorded for study is an intrusion in people's lives and one about which they often feel uncomfortable (ten Have, 2007). In giving consent for being recorded, participants need to have adequate information about what is required of their participation. They need to know whether the recording will be in audio or video form; if a person will be present to manage the recording, for example by operating a video camera; if the participants will be responsible for organising the recording themselves; the likely duration of their contribution; the nature of their contribution. In addition, participants should be made aware that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any point – and that this can be at a point after the data has been recorded. Participants in an interaction may feel that the conversation which has been recorded has personal or other information that they do not wish to be disclosed or known to others and may wish a recording to be returned or destroyed.

The second issue that the recording will be used for research and in this context participants have a right to know what this research constitutes. In particular, they have the right to know who will have access to the recording that was made of their interaction and if this recording will be stored for use in further research or is to be used only in a single project.

A third issue is the public dissemination of the research data. Participants in research have a right to expect that their involvement and information will remain confidential, unless they have given consent otherwise. In making transcripts that will be seen by others, it is advisable to change identifying details such as names, addresses or other information which could be used to recognise the participants. If recordings themselves are to be used in any public context, it is much more difficult to preserve the anonymity of participants. In audio recordings, voices can be recognised and lead to participants being identified. In some research contexts, it is common to distort the voices of participants in recording but this is not a possible option in Conversation Analysis because it is the exact detail of the talk which is the basis of the analysis. With video recording, the visual image makes preserving anonymity even more difficult. Again, in some research contexts it is common to distort images in some ways to protect participants' identities such as by pixilation, and again in Conversation Analysis studies this could defeat the purpose of using video. This means that participants need to be asked to consent to making their data public, being aware that they may be identified where this is done.

The sensitivities involved in using identifiable data may mean that participants consent to data being used in more restrictive ways than researchers may wish. For example, participants may be willing for video or audio recordings to be made and used in research, but for these recordings not to be made public beyond the researchers. They may be happy for transcripts to be published or used in presentations but not the recordings. Alternatively, some participants may be happy for the audio track of a video recording to be used publicly but not the visuals. These are all issues which need to be negotiated between researchers and participants as a part of the consent process. As ten Have (2007) recommends, gaining informed consent for undertaking Conversation Analysis research may therefore be a complicated process and researchers may need to separate out recording, research and publication of data may need to be separated to allow for differing consent processes for each.

## Exercises

1. Make an audio recording or a video recording of a naturally occurring interaction. When you have made the recording, consider the issues that arose in making the recording, in particular:

- a) The physical set-up: How did you set up the recording? What were the consequences of this set up for the quality of the recording? Did the set-up influence the interaction in any way? What might you have done differently?
- b) The shape of the interaction: Did the conversation seem “natural”? Was there evidence that participants were aware of being recorded and that this awareness may have influenced their participation? Is there evidence that the impact of the recording on their participation changed over the interaction?
- c) The setting: What impact did the setting have on the quality of the recording? For example, was there background noise, did the participants move around, etc? Did these things cause significant problems for your recording or were they things that you could work around?
- d) The equipment you used: Was the equipment suitable for the interaction and the setting?
- e) What the participants say about the experience: How did the participants themselves feel about the recording? What did they say about the impact of being recorded on their participation?

2. Use what you have learnt from the first recording to make some additional recordings and note how any changes you made to the way you set-up the recording affect the quality and naturalness of the interaction.

3. Experiment with making recordings of interactions with different numbers of participants. What difference does the number of participants make to how you record the data?

## Further Reading

- Goodwin, Charles. (1993). Recording interaction in natural settings. *Pragmatics*, 3, 181-209.
- Sacks, Harvey. (1984b). On methodology. In J. Maxwell Atkinson and John Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of Social Interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (pp. 2-17).
- Mondada, Lorenza (2013). The conversation analytic approach to data collection. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of Conversation Analysis* (pp. 32-56). Abingdon, UK: Blackwell.

## Chapter 3 Transcribing conversation

### Focus

- The reasons for transcribing
- The nature of transcription as a research practice
- Transcription conventions used in Conversation Analysis

### Introduction

The basic data for Conversation Analysis is naturally occurring talk. If such talk is to be used for detailed analysis it must first be recorded and then transcribed. However, transcripts of talk are only ever partial representations of the talk they record but they allow the analyst to see the transient and complex nature of talk captured in an easily usable, static format. This means that transcriptions are not substitutes for the original recordings but additional tools which can be used to help analyse and understand these recordings (Ayaß, 2015; Heritage, 1984b; Psathas & Anderson, 1990).

Transcripts however are not neutral and objective representations of talk. As Green, Franquiz and Dixon (1997, p. 172) note a “transcript is a text that ‘re’-presents an event; it is not the event itself. Following this logic, what is re-presented is data constructed by a researcher for a particular purpose, not just talk written down”. Transcripts are in every case subjective representations of the talk in which the transcriber has made decisions about what features of talk to include or exclude from the transcription. These decisions in turn have an influence on how the researcher perceives the structure of the interaction by making some features of the interaction more visible while obscuring others (Mondada, 2007a; Elinor Ochs, 1979). The subjective and created nature of transcriptions means that researchers may need to produce different transcriptions at different times in order to examine different aspects of the talk being transcribed and to see the talk according to evolving sets of ideas and foci. Mishler (1991), for example, demonstrates how the same interaction can be transcribed differently for different purposes even by the same researcher.

Transcription is not a once-for-all-time representation of talk but rather an open ended process in which the transcript changes as the researchers insights into the talk are refined from ongoing analysis (Ehlich & Switala, 1976; Gumperz & Berenz, 1993; Mondada, 2007a). For these reasons, researchers in Conversation Analysis frequently retranscribe their data in order to see and hear different nuances in the interaction. Transcriptions, then, while indispensable for conversation analytic research, are only ever secondary data representing the primary data of the recorded interaction. They are used alongside recordings and are constantly updated as the result of repeated listening. Transcription then is not simply a representation of talk, but an analytic tool which helps the researcher to notice features of the talk being transcribed and to attend to detailed aspects of talk which may not be apparent outside the act of transcription (Heath & Luff, 1993).

In Conversation Analysis no level of detail is considered *a priori* to be irrelevant for the understanding of talk in interaction and this means that transcription is much more than the recording of the words produced by participants in interaction. In addition to knowing *what* has been said, the conversation analyst also needs to know many aspects of *how* it was said (ten Have, 2007). However, the need for detail in a transcription is also a potential problem (Cook, 1990; C. Davidson, 2009). In transcribing talk, the transcriber needs to balance two

considerations: (1) the high level of detail found in the talk itself and (2) the accessibility of the transcript to a range of potential audiences. The latter consideration means that the system should not have too many symbols which are unfamiliar to speakers of the language and which require a large amount of specialized knowledge in order to be useful (Heritage, 1984b; Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005). A transcript which is accessible to a range of readers provides a way of communicating (partial) information about the talk being studied in a written analysis of the talk.

In Conversation Analysis it is usual to use the transcription system which was first developed by Gail Jefferson (Jefferson, 1985, 2004) for early work in Conversation Analysis and described for example in early works such as Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (Sacks et al., 1974). This transcription system is well suited to detailed analysis of talk and it has proved to be both a robust and useful tool for understanding the ways in which language is used in social interaction.

### Indicating information external to the talk

In addition to a representation of the talk itself, it is important that a transcript also provides information about the circumstances in which the recording was produced. This information includes the time, date and place of the recording and identification of the participants (Psathas & Anderson, 1990; ten Have, 2007). In conversation analytic transcripts, the identification of participants is in some ways problematic. In most cases, participants in interaction are indicated by a name, as in extract (3.1) or a letter, as in extract (3.2).

#### (3.1) [Car Conversation]

1 Nick: on- [which] day's your anniversary  
2 Elvis: [yeah?]  
3 Sasha: sixth. June.  
4 Nick: the sixth.  
5 Elvis: yeah,

#### (3.2) [UTCL J66.3 (Drummond, 1989)]

1 X: Is that who we use to do those dividers  
2 Y: Yeah.  
3 (0.9)  
4 Y: [ and she] said it took- they didn't do- (.)  
5 X: [ Well ]  
6 Y: very good proof reading or anything

In everyday interaction, such names or letters are usually adequate in Conversation Analysis for transcribing everyday interaction, in which the membership categories of the participants are only relevant to the extent to which they appear in the interaction as it unfolds (Psathas & Anderson, 1990). Naming participants is, however, potentially problematic for ethical reasons as participants may be identifiable from the talk in the transcript. For this reason, transcripts often use pseudonyms to identify participants. Choosing a pseudonym can be difficult as the phonetic shape of the word allows for different possibilities in interaction. For example, consonants such as *l*, *m*, *s*, etc. can be lengthened readily whereas other consonants such as *p*,

*t*, *k* are less easily lengthened. So, for example, if an original interaction involves an articulation like:

(3.3) [UMN: 01:9:6]

H: His name's uh Ph:::ill:::.

where the : symbol indicates lengthening of the previous sound this will be hard to capture with a pseudonym like *Pete*, as the transcription:

(3.3') [UMN: 01:9:6]

H: His name's uh P:::et:::e.

would indicate a very odd articulation as the stop *t* cannot be lengthened in the same way an *l* can. Similarly, sometimes conversationalists make word plays on names that may not be apparent when a pseudonym is used to replace the original form.

In institutional talk in which the membership categories to which participants belong are interactionally important, it is common to identify participants by their membership category, as in the following extract from a study of interaction in a small claims court.

(3.4) [Flooded council flat (Pomerantz, 1987)]

1 Adj: how if I can just ask you please one or two  
2 points in clari[fication  
3 Pla: [Sure. Yes that's what  
4 w[e're here for  
5 Adj: [of the issue:[s  
6 Pla: [Yes,

Here *Adj* stands for adjudicator and *Pla* stands for plaintiff and they encode the roles that the two have in the interaction under way. This transcript treats the identities of the participants in terms of who they are in the court, not who they are in more general terms. Moreover, unlike names, these terms do not indicate aspects of identity such as gender and so they privilege one (institutional) identity over other possible and possibly relevant identities. Watson (1997), in his critique of transcription of medical interactions, has argued that labelling participants according to such categories constrains readers to understand talk as being produced by 'doctors' or 'patients' without having established that such a categorization is warranted in the interaction. Ten Have (2007), however, argues that using names rather than categories for representing the participants is artificial given that the institutional identities of each is known to the other during the interaction. At the same time, labelling a doctor and patient using names (*John, Mary, Ms Smith*) also indexes a social identity which may not be relevant or appropriate to the interaction. The choice of an identifying form is not a neutral matter but rather one in which the transcript must be seen as a constructed representation and choices convey connotations. Ten have, therefore, notes that even the coding of elements external to the talk itself has analytic consequences and that these should be considered by the transcriber in the act of transcription.

A further problem for identify speakers when using taped interactions is that it may not always be possible to determine who said something during the interaction. Where this is the case, a question mark is used to indicate the uncertainty, either with a name to indicate that the identity of the speaker is uncertain (3.5), or without to indicate that the speaker is unknown (3.6).

(3.5) [Lunch]

Joy: [an' he was saying that he jus' didn' wanna go.  
Hal?: [°when?°

(3.6) [Lunch]

?: hhh.

### Transcribing words

The first step in developing a transcription is to capture the words that the participants are saying (Mondada, 2018b; Psathas & Anderson, 1990). Writing down these words raises the question of how such words are to be represented in a written form. Languages usually have a standard orthography, that is a set of established conventions for representing the words of a language and this standard orthography represents one way of writing the words spoken in the transcription. The standard orthography has the advantage that it is known to (literate) speakers of the language and, therefore, is easily understandable by non-specialist readers of the transcript. However, a standard orthography is not a neutral representation of the language but rather it contains a partial theory of the sounds and units of the language (Duranti, 1997) and is based on a particular variety of the language – the notional standard language (Liddicoat, 2005). This means that a transcript written in the standard orthography makes some prespecified decisions about the boundaries of words and the pronunciation of the sounds in those words. For example, the sentence:

(3.7) Why don't you take a break?

indicates a sequence of six identifiable words and attaches sound values to those words. Languages, however, do not typically have one simple pronunciation which is invariable for all speakers and in all situations and the question of what constitutes a word and what sounds are found in a word vary with geography and social context. A standard orthography cannot capture the variation in the ways in which things are said. In actual conversation, then, the sentence in (3.7) may be pronounced very differently from the way the standard orthography expects, and may be better rendered as something like:

(3.8) Whyncha take a break?

in which the first element is pronounced more or less as a single unit. Example (3.7) can be considered an idealization of language which is useful for communication across regions and social contexts, but (3.8) is a more accurate representation of what a speaker actually says in a particular context (Jefferson, 1983; Mondada, 2018b). Similar issues occur for dialect differences, whether regional or social, and the same standard orthography may represent widely varying pronunciations of the word, which may be relevant to understanding what happens in a conversation. There is therefore a tension between standard orthography, which promotes the readability of transcript and the actual words which are spoken in a particular

way in a particular conversation. In order to be as faithful as possible to the words as spoken many transcribers try to capture a close representation of what is said by modifying the spelling away from the standard version in order to be a more accurate representation of what is said.

Modifying spelling, however, is not without problems. Standard orthography, like any aspect of a standardized language tends to be viewed as the ‘right’ way to do things in the language and deviations from this may be stigmatized as sloppy, or undedicated or as negatively marked in other ways (Duranti, 1997; Jefferson, 1983; Liddicoat, 2005). The transcriber then has to face the issue when making a transcription of how to find a balance between representing speech accurately, representing it readably and representing it in a way which does not inappropriately stigmatize the speakers. The end result in the transcription is a choice between a range of possibilities:

1. using standard orthography only and ignoring spoken language characteristics found in the speech. This means representing spoken language in very much a written language form and could possibly mean that features of talk which are interactionally salient are not included in the transcript. Such a transcript would usually depart too far from the actual spoken form to be useful for Conversation Analysis.
2. using standard orthography for most of the transcript but using modified spelling where the spoken language is noticeably different from what is presented by the standard orthography. This means making a decision about whether a word or phrase should be represented using standard orthography or using a modified spelling. However, as the difference between standard written forms of language and non-standard or spoken forms is actually a continuum, it may be difficult to decide exactly what to modify when transcribing a particular piece of talk. The result may be that there is a great deal of variation within the transcript and that the variation in writing does not always reflect the variation in the talk itself.
3. using modified orthography throughout the transcript as consistently as possible to reflect actual use. This is a very good approach for the researcher as it helps to promote noticing of the language features in the interaction and requires the transcriber to make careful decisions in representing the spoken language. However, such transcriptions can be very difficult for readers who have not been trained in transcription.

In the end, decisions about how to transcribe are subjective and are influenced by how the transcriber hears the talk and this is in part influenced by the transcriber’s own starting position. For example, it is not uncommon to see words such as *ever* or *part* transcribed as *evuh* or *paht* by North American transcribers who normally pronounce the post-vocalic *r* in these words and perceive it as missing in the pronunciation of English speakers who use varieties without these *r*’s. However, for a speaker of British English or other *r*-less varieties, the omission of the *r* would probably not be noticed, and the words could be transcribed using the standard orthography. In the end, transcribers have to decide on an approach which best suits their needs and audience, to make principled decisions about how far to modify the transcript and to use these decisions consistently in transcribing.

### **Transcribing prosody**

The words of a language are spoken with stress, intonation, and differences in volume and length of sounds which are interactionally important. For example, intonation can distinguish between questions and statements. Consider the difference between the ways in which the following sentences would be said:

- (3.9) You have a pen?  
You have a pen.

Here the intonation contour is the primary aspect of the delivery of these sentences which marks their function in talk. In conventional English orthography, this difference in function is marked by punctuation. In a similar way, stress can be communicatively important as it may be used for contrast or emphasis. Consider the differences in meaning which come when stressing different words in the sentence:

- (3.10) He told me it was you.

In conventional orthography, stress is marked by underlining the stressed part of the word, or by writing it in italics. For example, extract (3.11) shows a stress on the verb *told*.

- (3.11) He told me it was you.

When transcribing stress, there is a need to consider how much detail to use in the transcription. For example, English has both word stress and sentence stress. This means that in most English words, there is a stressed syllable, while, in longer utterances, one or more words may have a greater stress than other words in the utterance. Most transcribers of English mark sentence stress but not word stress, as word stress is a predictable feature of English words. Other transcribers note sentence stress only when it deviates from the ‘expected’ stress in English – that is when a word which would not normally be stressed is stressed or where the stress is stronger than would be expected. As with modifying spelling, decisions about how to transcribe stress will depend on the individual transcriber, but it is important that the decisions taken help the reader to understand what is happening in the transcription.

When transcribing prosody, the usual conventions available to written languages are not adequate or useful for representing what happens in speech. Punctuation, for example, tends to show more about the function of a sentence than its pronunciations. For example, both (3.12) and (3.12’) are written with a question mark, but their intonation is different in each. For most English speakers, in (3.12) the intonation contour falls, while in (3.12’) it rises.

- (3.12) What did he do?  
(3.12’) You have a pen?

It is therefore necessary to develop specialized conventions to represent actual speech in transcripts. In the Jefferson system, many of the features for transcribing prosody are, in fact, punctuation symbols, but used in different ways. For example, length is shown by inserting a colon after the lengthened sound as in:

- (3.13) [Sal 99:3:4:2]

Sal:      Yea:h,  
Sue:      Yeah.

Here Sal’s *yea:h* is said with a longer vowel and this sound is hearably longer than Sue’s following *yeah*. When a sound is exceptionally long, more than one colon can be used. In extract (3.14), Elvis speaks both of the words with additional lengthening, while in (3.15),

Ben's articulation of *to:* is lengthened, while that of *the:::* is very long, the additional colon's showing that it is about twice as long as the sound in *to:*.

(3.14) [Car Conversation]

Elvis: o:[:h no::.

(3.15) [AB:01:17]

Ben: an so we wen' to: the::: La Paella restaurant

Punctuation symbols are also used to show intonation. In extract (9) above the two utterances were distinguished by the intonation used. The first is said with a rising intonation, which marks it as a question, and the second with a falling intonation, which marks it as a statement. In the Jefferson transcription system, punctuation symbols are used to mark the intonation contours of talk:

- a full-stop marks a falling intonation.
- ? a question marks a rising intonation.
- , a comma marks a slightly rising intonation, but is also used when the intonation contour is hearably incomplete, although this may sometimes be used for a level contour or even a slight fall. The basic hearing here is of an incomplete intonation contour.
- ¿ an upside down question mark is used for intonation which rises more than a slight rise (,) but is not as sharp a rise or does not reach as high a pitch as for a question mark.

These symbols are used to represent the way the pitch of the talk varies over the turn and are not used in the same way as punctuation which shows the function that an utterance has. For example:

(3.16) [Car conversation]

Nick: [how's it taste man,  
Elvis: it's tastes alri:ght ma:n.

In this extract, Nick's turn is a question, but uses a comma to show that there is a slightly rising intonation at the end of the turn, while in (3.17) Sasha's turn is a question but has a full stop to indicate a falling intonation.

(3.17) [Car conversation]

Sasha: an all- did he tell yuh about his problems with  
his wife an [that.

When the intonation contour becomes more complex, the Jefferson transcription system uses a combination of intonation symbols, lengthening and underlining to represent the intonation. Example (3.18) shows a rise-fall contour, in which the pitch rises a little before ending as a fall. The underlining of the letter preceding the colon (showing a lengthened sound) indicates the rise, while the fall is indicated by the final full stop.

(3.18) [Keep: 98:6:8]

J:           Hello:o..

If, however, the colon is underlined this shows a fall-rise intonation where the underlined element is at a slightly lower pitch than the rest of the final part of the contour.

(3.19) [JLK: 98:1:11]

K:           It's where,

These features are used to show the general relatively smooth intonation contour over a segment of talk, however sometimes there may be a sudden shift upwards or downwards in pitch which is very marked within the general intonation contour. To transcribe a rise in pitch, an upwards arrow as in (3.20) is placed just before an upward pitch shift.

(3.20) [May and Jo]

Jo:           What have you got- ↑oh-. more tomaatoes, ↑lovely.  
                  that's ↑grea:t.

Here Jo resets her pitch much higher three times in the course of her turn at *oh-* at *lovely* and at *grea:t*. For a fall in pitch downwards arrow is placed just before the shift, as in (3.21).

(3.21) [Lunch]

Harry:      So I's sorta like ↓euh here we go again.

In this case, Harry's groan *euh* is shown to begin at a much lower pitch than the preceding talk.

Sometimes for a very exaggerated intonation a combination of a number of arrows may be used to capture the effect, as in (3.22).

(3.22) [(Liddicoat, 1997)]

M:           and did you learn English in: (.)↑Po↓la↑nd?

In this extract M is speaking with a learner of English and the arrows are an attempt to capture a very marked singsong intonation on the word *Poland* with a sharp rise on the first syllable and a sharp fall-rise on the second.

The volume of talk is very important to conveying aspects of meaning and import. Talk which is markedly louder than the other talk is shown by capital letters, as in extract (3.23), where Sasha's *ten dollars a da:y* is said very loudly.

(3.23) [Car conversation]

1   Nick:      [We've] been budgetting big time we're  
2              [ like li]vin' on ten dollars a day=  
3   ?:         [ ((cough)) ]  
4   Nick:      = sorta shit,

5 Elvis: Yea:[:h  
 6 Sasha: [ten dollars a da:[y.  
 7 Nick: [Yea:h.=

Quiet talk is shown by degree signs (°) before and after the segment of talk which is quieter or whispered. For example, extract (3.24) shows that May's *I think this is it* is said more quietly than the talk which precedes and follows it.

(3.24) [May and Jo]

May: uh (1.2) °I think this is it;° she's going (.5)  
 (wa- ) see where that dark (.) is;  
 Jo: right;

Where the talk is very soft, two (or even more) degree signs may be used. In extract (3.25), the transcript shows the talk becoming quieter over series of turns.

(3.25) [JSK:11:8ii]

Dora: We'll i's a pity.  
 Helen: °Yeah°  
 Dora: °°yyhhh .h°°  
 (0.3)

Talk may also be noticeably faster or slower than the surrounding talk. Talk which is noticeably faster than surrounding talk is transcribed as >words<, as in (3.26).

(3.26) [May and Jo]

May: and then h uh I think h uh >I don't know how they  
 get from Sydney to the other place,  
 [but then it'll be a bus.<  
 Jo: [°right.°

Talk which is noticeably slower is transcribed as <words>, as in (3.27).

(3.27) [Lunch]

Joy: `n then I could'n help myself. I'd told her o:ver  
 and o::ver and <she just didn't [get it.>

In addition to these features of talk aspects of voice quality may also be relevant for the transcript, in particular breathiness and creak. Breathy speech is transcribed by inserting an *h* in the transcription of the word which is spoken with breathy voice, as in the word *say* in extract (3.28).

(3.28) [Lunch]

Joy: An' then wha' did sa<sub>h</sub>:hy.

Creaky voice is marked with # before and after the words pronounced with creak, as in Elvis turn in (3.29).

(3.29) [Car conversation]

Sasha: I was [gu[nna say yuh poor thing hh.=  
Nick: [ye[s::  
Elvis: [#ohh yeah#  
Sasha: =I mean Ron's a ni[ce-

### Transcribing other vocal sounds

Not all of the sounds a speaker uses are necessarily recognized as normal speech sounds in the language being transcribed or may not be considered as 'words' in the language. These sounds include a range of vocalizations and well as the sounds of breathing and laughter, which all play a role in the talk being produced and need to be included in the transcript. These vocalizations include sounds that are made by listeners to indicate they are listening such as *mhm* or *mm*, sounds used for word searches such as *uhm* or *uh* or clicking sounds, which are found as phonemes in some languages, but are not used in words in others. When representing these sounds there is usually no standard orthography and the transcriber needs to represent these sounds in a way which conveys the sound being depicted as accurately as possible for a reader. It is particularly important to show the approximate sound and the syllable-like parts which make up the vocalization. For example, the form *mhm* represents a sound that has two beats/syllables while the form *mm* represents a long *m* sound. These two sounds can have quite different meanings in conversation (Gardner, 2001). Similarly, it is important to be able to distinguish between *uh huh* which has a yes-like meaning and *uh-uh* which has a no-like meaning.

For click sounds, forms such as *t!* or *tch* are used for dental clicks while *pt* or *p!* can be used for bilabial clicks.

(3.30) [Ma:11 (Rendle-Short, 2003)]

Ma: t! and that'll be helpful of course, as a computer  
scientist,

Audible breathing can be interactionally very important and needs to be included in transcription along with speech sounds. Out breathing is indicated by *h*'s with a full stop after, with the number of *h*'s indicated the duration of the breathing.

(3.31) [Car conversation]

Elvis: I know the:: di:lemma hh. (1.0) ged up an scrub  
concrete huh [heh

Inbreathing is show by a dot before the *h* as in

(3.32) [May and Jo]

Jo: .hh see you later then.  
May: °yeah. (tha[nks.)°

Jo: [bye.

Another feature that is interactionally important is incomplete speech. Where a sound is cut off abruptly this is indicated by a dash.

(3.33) [Car conversation]

Sasha: o:h. we saw some briyant ones recently, like um  
(1.0) oh what was that one about- (0.4) like  
Double In- (.) Indemnity= n like lots of movies  
from the thirties that ha- had amazing plot lines?

Here Sasha abruptly cuts off her talk on *about-*, at *Double In-* and again at *ha-*. The dash can also be used to indicate a glottal stop.

Sometimes a sound may be difficult to represent in orthography and may need to be described rather than described in the transcript. The common way to indicate a described sound is to place the description in double brackets, as in the cough in extract (3.34).

(3.34) [Car conversation]

Nick: shoulda done that ages a[go.  
Elvis: [ah that w's cool  
Sasha: ((cough))

The use of the double brackets here shows that the cough is described, not transcribed. Such descriptions have also been used for other aspects of interaction, such as ((laughter)), ((crying)) or ((applause)), however in many cases descriptions can be shown to lack adequate information for understanding the phenomenon they are trying to capture (Detienne, Greco, Mondada, Traverso, & Wiesser, 2009). The transcription of laughter, for example, is quite complex (Jefferson, 1985). When transcribing laughter, transcribers try to approximate sound of the laugh using *h* to indicate the breathiness and also through their choice of an appropriate vowel. For example, a laugh could be transcribed as *hih* or *hah*. Laughter also comes in pulses and a transcription needs to capture the number of pulses in the laughter.

(3.35) [Car conversation]

Nick: I musta given away about a hundred bucks in free  
drinks tonigh(h)t huh huh

(3.36) [Car conversation]

Nick: [an I was goin oh yeah that's really cool  
ma:n, yep, (.) no worr(h)[ie(h)s  
Elvis: [heh huh huh

In extract (3.35), there are two pulses of laughter both of which are produced with the same vowel quality, while in (3.36) there are three laugh pulses in Elvis' turn the first of which has a different sound from the others. Laughter can also occur within talk and this is shown by the symbol (*h*) inserted in the talk at the point the laugh pulse occurs. This can be seen in Nick's no worr(h)[ie(h)s which contains two laugh pulses during the talk.

In addition to laughter, speakers can talk with a hearable “smile voice” that is talk produced while smiling. This is shown in transcription by placing £ before and after the words articulated with smile voice, as in (3.37).

(3.37) [Tel8:1:2]

Sue: u-hi:,  
Sal: Wha's up £don' you recognize me,£

Hepburn (2004) uses aspiration marking similar to laughter to transcribed crying using combinations of *hs*, often with vowels. She also uses preceding full stops to mark inhalation and >hhuh< to mark a sharpness of exhalation of inhalation. In addition, she transcribes sniffs as *.shih* (wet sniff) or *.skuh* (snorty sniff) and, by analogy with ‘smile voice’ uses tildes (~) to enclose ‘wobbly’ voice or a break in the voice heard during crying. These conventions can be seen in extract (3.38).

(3.38) [HC boy in attic (Hepburn, 2004)]

Caller: Hhuyuhh .shih [~it's the] creulles' pl:ace  
CPO: [ °N n::.°]  
Caller: th'ah've ever be-en to, ~↑ .hhuhh

### Transcribing contiguous or simultaneous talk

When one unit of talk follows another with no discernible interval between the two, this is shown by an equals sign.

(3.39) [Car conversation]

Elvis: [.hh an you jus screa:med an I just stopped.=  
Sasha: =slammed on the breaks. in the middle of  
th[e intersection.

This shows that Sasha’s talk begins immediately Elvis’ talk stops. The equals sign can also be used to mark where two parts of the same speakers talk run together without a discernible break as in (3.40).

(3.40) [Car conversation]

Elvis: hey er like I broke one las night=I  
we[nt out see this ba:n',  
Nick: [what the coopers?

Alternatively, the same thing can be shown by using a < mark as in (40’).

(3.40’) [Car conversation]

Elvis: hey er like I broke one las night<I  
we[nt out see this ba:n',  
Nick: [what the coopers?

The main difference between what is transcribed in (3.40) and (3.40') is that the first shows that there is less than the usual beat of silence between the words *night* and *I*, while the second implies that the sounds are pushed together in a way that obscures the boundaries between the two sections of talk.

Talk may also happen simultaneously. Where one person starts to talk while another person is still talking, the start of the overlapping talk is indicated by a left square bracket and the beginning of the overlap is aligned in the transcript. Extract (3.41), shows particularly frequent overlapping talk between a number of participants.

(3.41) [Car conversation]

```

1   Elvis:  I know the:: di:lemma hh. (1.0) ged up an scrub
2           concrete huh [heh
3   Sasha:                [poor Ni[ck
4   Nick:                [no man I've gotta ged up an
                        fold
5                        jumpers
6                        (0.2)
7   Nick;   huh huh huh
8   Elvis:  >an be extreme[ly poli:te,<
9   Sasha:                [an-
10  Sasha:  an look really- [really together,
11  Nick:                [hey man you take these [ma:n.
12  Elvis:                [oh no
                        [thanks
13  Nick:  [an I'll:: see yuh on Tuesda(h):(h)y huh huh huh

```

In older transcripts overlap is sometimes shown with two backslashes (//) which indicate where overlap occurs in each relevant turn, as in (41').

(41') [Car conversation]

```

Elvis:  I know the:: di:lemma hh. (1.0) ged up an scrub
        concrete huh //heh
Sasha:  //poor Ni//ck
Nick:   //no man I've gotta ged up an fold jumpers (0.2)
        huh huh huh

```

The layout of this system is less clear when more than one overlap is present and the use of [ and alignment makes the transcript much easier to read.

The end of a stretch of overlapping talk is shown by a right bracket.

(3.42) [Car conversation]

```

Sasha:  I always think of those days as yihknow
        all fun, an' musicals, but
        [some of] the movies were really heavy.
Nick:   [ yea:h.]

```

Where two speakers begin to speak at the same time this is shown by a square bracket at the beginning of the turns as with Elvis' and Sasha's talk in (3.43).

(3.43) [Car conversation]

1 Nick: okay ma:n̩  
2 Elvis: [alright ma:n.]  
3, Sasha: [alright so- ]  
4 Nick: good tuh s[ee yuh ma:n ]  
5 Elvis: [I'll see yuh soo]:n mate.  
6 Nick: uh huh huh  
7 Elvis: thanks a lot.

In cases where there is overlapping talk, it is often necessary to interrupt the transcription of a turn at talk at a point where the talk of one speaker is incomplete because of the limitations of space on the page. Where a turn at talk has been broken up in order to insert overlapping talk, and equals sign is used at the end of the line of talk which has been interrupted and again at the beginning of the continuations to show that there is no discontinuation of the talk being produced and that the break is purely for purposes of layout.

(3.44) [Car conversation]

1 Nick: .hhh like Montezuma's pays all her bills, all her  
2 amex, Rick's amex.  
3 (0.2)  
4 Nick: all that sorta shit.<all the electricity,  
5.→ .h[h she]'s got a s:even hundred dollar =  
6 Elvis: [\*o::h\*]  
7.→ Nick: = a month electriciy bill. huhuh  
8 Sasha: wha[t. at home?]

Here Nick's talk continues without interruption from *s:even hundred dollar* to *a month electricity bill*, however, in order to transcribe Elvis' overlapping *\*o::h\** the line has had to be broken.

### Transcribing pauses

When there is a break in the stream of talk this is transcribed in a number of ways. Where the pause is very short it is transcribed as (.), while longer pauses, usually those lasting for more than two tenths of a second are timed and the timing is shown between brackets.

(3.45) [May and Jo]

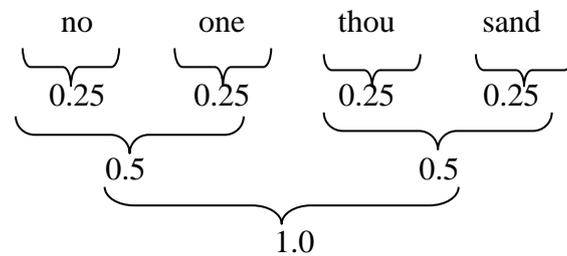
May: uh (1.2) °I think this is it̩° she's going (0.5)  
(wa-) see where that dark (.) is̩  
Jo: right̩

Here, there is a very short break in May's turn between *dark and is*, with half second pause (0.5) after *going* and a pause of just over a second (1.2 seconds) after *uh* at the beginning on the turn.

There are a number of ways in which a pause may be timed, and different ways of timing have different consequences. Jefferson (1989) explains her initial approach to timing pauses as:

... I have been timing pauses in tenths of seconds. While I try to be accurate, I have not given particular attention to the phenomenon of silences *per se*, and have been content with rough timings. For example, I started out using a stop watch, but in 1968 it broke and instead of replacing it I switched over to the method favoured by amateur photographers, simply mumbling 'no one thousand, one one thousand, two one thousand ... (Jefferson, 1989, p. 166)

Jefferson's counting method is based on the assumption that each utterance is approximately one second long and that, by reciting this formula during a pause, a rough timing in fractions of a second can be arrived at as follows:



Jefferson (1989) later describes retranscribing pauses using both the rough counting method and stopwatch timing and states that the result is roughly consistent. Psathas and Anderson (1990) argue that what is most important in timing pauses is not the standardized accuracy of the timing, but rather that the timing is internally consistent within the transcript. The advantage of the counted timing is that it is sensitive to the rhythm of the talk and is timed relative to what is happening in the conversation, such as speaking speed. Psathas and Anderson argue in fact that counting is a 'self-standardized' measurement device. However, the counting method means that timings in transcriptions made by different transcribers will not always be the same. Using a stopwatch allows for the possibility of more consistent timing across transcribers. Ten Have (2007), however, notes that using a stopwatch is problematic in that it can be difficult to catch the exact starting and finishing points of the pause and recommends repeated attempts at timing as a way of gaining accuracy. Computer software can also be used for measuring pauses (Moore, 2015). Computer observation of pauses is likely to be very accurate as a measure of elapsed time, but it is not sensitive to the rhythm of particular speakers and to the context in which a pause occurs and so may be less useful as a way of capturing the timing of talk as opposed to elapsed time.

When representing pauses there is an additional issue which needs to be considered in how to place the pause in the text of the transcript. This means considering whether a pause should be transcribed as belonging to a particular speaker or to no particular speaker, or whether it is a pause within a turn or between turns. These issues are essentially analytic and depend on the context in which the silence occurs. For example, the pauses in Nick's turn in (3.46) is best transcribed within his turn at talk because they come as part of an on-going and incomplete bit of talk – they are turn internal pauses – and so are hearable as Nick's pausing.

(3.46) [Car conversation]

Nick: an it's like (0.2) of this (.) great big (.)  
pheasant or something like that;

The pause in extract (47) is quite different. In this extract Harry asks Joy a question and the pause comes after Harry's turn is completed and is potentially describable as Joy not having begun to talk yet.

(3.47) [Lunch]

Harry: Who gave you that one,  
Joy: (0.4) Y'know I don' remember.

The transcript here shows that the pause belongs to Joy by including it as a part of her turn. In extract (3.48), the long two second pause occurs between turns and so is placed on its own line in the transcript and as it is not attributable to any one of the participants in the conversation, it does not have a name against it on the left hand side. This is a way of showing that no-one was speaking at this time.

(3.48) [Car conversation]

Nick: [hey Saf go straight throu[gh man.  
Sasha: [yeah. okay.  
(2.0)  
Nick: ah fuckin cool huh huh I got away from Ron

While these three examples are quite clear, other examples require a judgement from the transcriber. This is the case in Sasha's turn at (3.49).

(3.49) [Car conversation]

Sasha: reminds me of this guy I used to go out with  
(when I was in school).  
(2.2)  
Sasha: he was real nut case [as well.

Here Sasha completes a bit of talk and there is a silence of just over two seconds before she takes up the talk again on the same subject. The transcription above shows the talk as an interturn silence belonging to no-one in particular, rather than as a break in Sasha's ongoing production. If this talk had been transcribed as (3.49'), the analysis would have been quite different.

(3.49') [Car conversation]

Sasha: reminds me of this guy I used to go out with (when  
I was in school). (2.2) he was real nut case [as  
well.

Here the transcript claims that Sasha held the speakership for the entire duration of the segment transcribed and that she and she alone produced the silence in the middle of a turn at talk. The

length of the pause and the fact that the talk is produced in two complete units (sentences) suggests that (49') is a less accurate way to represent this bit of talk. Other cases may be harder to decide on. For example, in (3.50) the pause is shown as a pause between two turns by Joy in which no-one was speaking, while in (3.50') it is shown as part of Joy's on-going talk.

(3.50) [Lunch]

Joy: So we couldn't rea:lly decide in th' end what tuh do.

(0.3)

Joy: Coz i' was gonna be h:ard either way.

(3.50') [Lunch]

Joy: So we couldn't rea:lly decide in th' end what tuh do. (0.3) coz i' was gonna be h:ard either way.

In this case, the transcriber's sense of what is happening is involved in deciding between the two representations. These examples demonstrate clearly the analytic nature of decisions about transcription and reveal that transcribing is not a neutral objective activity, but rather the theorized construction of a representation of talk (Detienne et al., 2009; Elinor Ochs, 1979).

### Dealing with problems of hearing or comprehension

Sometimes it is difficult or even impossible to hear something on the tape. Problems in hearing often happen because naturally occurring conversations are not recorded under ideal acoustic conditions. This means that background noises, interference or low volume can all affect the audibility of the tape. Where the transcriber has difficulty hearing the talk, this is indicated in the transcript by using single parentheses around the words being transcribed.

(3.51) [Car conversation]

Sasha: reminds me of this guy I used to go out with  
(when I was in school).

In this extract the words *when I was in school* are shown as the transcriber's best hearing of the talk, with the brackets showing that there is some doubt about how accurate the hearing is. Sometimes, a transcriber may be unable to decide on more than one possible hearing of the talk and this is indicated by placing both possibilities in the transcript, as with the case of the quiet talk in (3.52).

(3.52) [TG (Schegloff, 1979a)]

Bee: °(I 'unno)/(so anyway)° .hh hey do you see v-  
(0.3) fat ol' Vivian anymore.

Extract (3.52) shows a transcriber's best guess between two alternative hearings both of which are possible, but neither of which is definitive. Where it is impossible to hear enough to transcribe anything, the space between parentheses is left blank, as in extract (3.53).

(3.53) [Car conversation]

Sasha: [ yeah] apparently she's really she's- not- =  
Nick: [( )]  
Sasha: =(0.6) well from it;

Here Nick's talk is overlapped with Sasha's and the words themselves are inaudible.

### Transcribing nonverbal elements of interaction

Jefferson's original transcription system did not include much information about non-verbal elements of language, especially visual information, largely because the system was developed to transcribe audiotaped data. However, as Conversation Analysis has evolved other researchers have developed the system to include additional features designed to capture other elements of interest in discussing language as it is used in a range of types of interaction. In many cases these transcription systems have been developed in order to deal with the particular phenomenon a researcher has been investigating and this is probably the least 'standardized' aspect of transcription among researchers in Conversation Analysis.

The first systematic treatment of non-verbal information is found in the work of Charles Goodwin (for example see C. Goodwin, 1979, 1980, 1981), who developed a transcription system to deal with eye gaze. In Goodwin's transcripts, eye gaze is marked by a line above or below the relevant stretch of talk. The lack of notation indicates a lack of eye gaze. A series of dots indicates the movement from a state of non-gazing to a state of gazing, with an X used to mark where the gaze reaches the other. Square brackets are used to mark the gaze line onto the talk line to show how gaze and talk are synchronized. The features can be seen in extract (3.54).

(3.54) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

Beth: . . . . [X \_\_\_\_\_  
Terry- [Jerry's fas[cinated with elephants  
Don: . . . . . [X \_\_\_\_\_

In this transcript, Beth is talking to Don and her eye gaze is indicated above the talk. As she begins to talk her gaze's travels to Don and reaches him as she restarts her talk with Jerry and continues to gaze at Don for the rest of the talk. Don is the addressed recipient of the talk and his eye gaze is noted below the talk. At the beginning of the talk Don is not gazing towards the speaker, but he begins to move his gaze to her at the restart and his gaze reaches Beth just after the start of *fascinated*, after which he continues to gaze at Beth.

Gaze direction can be shown more specifically by indicating who is gazing at whom by using codes such as Ab, Ba, etc. (Haddington, 2006). Ab means A is gazing at B, Ba means that B is gazing at A. Thus (3.54) could be retranscribed as:

(3.54')

Beth: . . . . [Bd \_\_\_\_\_  
Terry- [Jerry's fas[cinated with elephants  
Don: . . . . . [Db \_\_\_\_\_

This marking of who is gazing and who is being gazed at is particularly useful in representing gaze in multi-party interactions, where gaze direction may be complex.

In transcribing gaze, Goodwin has developed a different way to transcribe pauses in order to show more clearly what is happening during a pause. Where Goodwin is co-ordinating gazing and pausing he uses dashes in brackets rather than numbers and each dash indicates a tenth of a second, as in extract (3.55).

(3.55) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

Michael: Who kno:ws, .hh (-[---) nu:mbers and letters  
 Don: . . . . . [X\_\_\_\_\_]

Here Don's eye movement reaches Michael after a one tenth of a second of a pause which lasts for four tenths of a second.

Goodwin uses commas to indicate movement of gaze away from the recipient of the talk, as in extract (3.56).

(3.56) [(C. Goodwin, 1984)]

Ann: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Karen has this new hou:se. en it's got all this=  
 Beth: \_\_\_\_\_ , , , (Nod)  
 Ann: \_\_\_\_\_  
 =like- (0.2) ssilvery:: g-go:ld wwa[llpaper.  
 Beth: (Nod) \*\*\*\*\* . . [X\_\_\_\_\_]

Here Beth is gazing at Ann at the beginning of the talk but after *this* she begins to move her eye gaze away and is no longer gazing at Ann by the end of *hou:se*. Goodwin's early transcriptions also involved some noting of actions, as in the nods in extract (3.56). In this transcript the row of asterisks are used to indicate where Beth puts food in her mouth. The nods here are described rather than transcribed and Goodwin also uses descriptions in other ways in his early transcriptions of non-verbal elements for example:

(3.57) [(C. Goodwin, 1984)]

Ann: Do(h) said. (0.3) dih-did they ma:ke you take=  
 This wa(h) llpa(h)p(h)er? er(h) didju=  
 Don: \_\_\_\_\_  
 |  
 smile

In this extract, the duration of Don's smile is described by a graphic device which shows where it begins and ends. He also uses lengthier descriptions in similar ways:



(--) elapsed time in seconds

These conventions show features of gestures rather than coding gestures themselves. These are accompanied by a description of the gesture itself which is combined with the transcript to develop an overall representation of the gesture as it maps onto speech. As in (3.61).

(3.61) [MO Chicken Dinner (Schegloff, 1984a)]

Gesture has both fingers pointing to speaker's temples.  
Lexical affiliate is "thinks".

```

                                o . . . . .
F:      Jus' like a cl(h)a:ssic story, .HHH An'
        a . . . . . r
        now when I go out to a job, yihknow an'
                                o . . . . .
        .HH before we run the cable ev'rybody
        . . . . .
        thinks, .hh "fuck the tru:ck."
```

This transcript shows that the gesture begins towards the end of the word *story* and reaches its point of maximum extension at *now* and then is released during *yihknow*. The gesture is then repeated beginning at *cable* moving quickly to maximum extension at *ev'rybody* and remaining in place for the rest of the talk. The advantage of this transcription system is that it shows the close co-ordination of a gesture with talk, but the transcript itself cannot show much about the act of gesturing itself and the coding for extract (3.61) is very like that for extract (3.62), although the gesture itself is not similar.

(3.62) [Auto Disc: 14:05 (Schegloff, 1984a)]

Gesture is a point to the right with the left forefinger.  
Lexical affiliate is "t'Florida".

```

                                o . . . a r . . . hm
Gary:   But eez takin it] t'Florida so, ...
```

Here Gary's gesture begins at *but*, reaches its maximum extension at takin is quickly released and returns to its starting position at *t'Florida*. The distinctiveness between the gestures is contained in the preliminary description only. This then is a transcript which is very suitable for showing how a gesture co-ordinates with talk, but not for showing the nature of the gesture, for which an initial description is required.

In addition, Schegloff adds descriptions of special actions which are coded against the talk by number references as in extract (3.63).

(3.63) [MOChicken Dinner (Schegloff, 1984a)]

Several gestures are involved. F is holding a business card in his left hand and gesturing with right hand. He first releases a prior gesture, then repositions the business card with his left hand. He then points at (something on) the business card and animates the point for a few moments. He then stops that gesture and points at a part of one of the listeners' garment at "this colour".

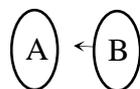
F: ... y'know like three times lo:nger the  
 . . .2 . . . . . o . . . .3. . . . . . . . .  
 bird. .HHH and then: u-thi:s stripe is in a  
 . . .4 o . . .5. . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  
li:ght (.) w'll it's in this colour.

- 1 = release of prior gesture toward business card
- 2 = repositioning of business card
- 3 = point reaches its acme and moves back and forth over business card
- 4 = stop back and forth motion
- 5 = arrival at target of next point

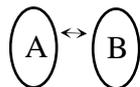
This extract involves a very large amount of descriptive detail in an attempt to represent the gesture involved adequately to support the analysis. The descriptive detail here, however, continues to focus on the co-ordinating points of the gesture and the talk rather than an on the description of the gesture itself. The effect is to reveal the complexity of the action involved rather than the action itself.

Rossano (2013a) has developed a particularly detailed way of transcribing gaze using arrows to show gaze direction and circles to represent participants. The system is complex with many symbols but the basic features of the system show aspects of gaze direction and gaze movement – for the full system see (Rossano, 2013a). Symbols that show focus of eye gaze:

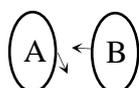
- A level arrow pointed to the other participant shows gaze towards that participant. In the representation below B is gazing at A, but A's gaze is not show:



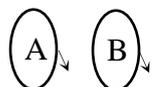
- a double headed arrow pointing between the two participant circles shows mutual gaze:



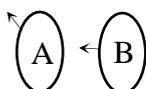
- an arrow pointed downward shows downward gaze. In the representation below B is gazing at A, but A is gazing down.



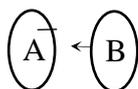
- When both participants are shown with downward arrows this shows gaze direction in relation to each participant: an arrow pointing downwards towards the other participant shows gaze towards the other; an arrow pointing downwards away from the other participant shows gaze away from the other. In the representation below A is gazing at B who is gazing away from A:



- An arrow pointed up shows a mid-distance gaze, with the direction of the arrow showing the direction of the gaze, as below where B is gazing at A, who is gazing into the mid-distance to the right.

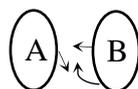


- A straight line with no arrow shows the participant's eye are closed as below where B is gazing at A, but A's eyes are closed.

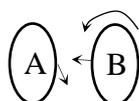


Symbols that show movement for gaze involve curved arrows show the direction of movement in combination with symbols show focus of gaze:

- A curved line from below show the participant is raising their gaze to the other, as in the representation below where B starts raising gaze towards A, who is looking down.



- a curved line from above shows one participant is turning towards another as in the representation below where B is turning to look at A, who is gazing down.



A more elaborate transcription system has been developed by Rendle-Short (2006) in her work on non-verbal elements in computer science seminar presentations. Rendle-Short's system is similar those developed by Goodwin and Schegloff but has action lines for gaze, hand movement and body movement each of which has its own distinctive set of transcription symbols, as shown in Table 1.

Table 3-1: Transcription symbols for non-verbal communication (source Rendle-Short, 2006)

Gaze direction

|   |   |
|---|---|
| —————   | directs gaze towards audience, straight ahead |
| →→→   | directs gaze towards right                    |
| ← ← ←   | directs gaze towards left                     |
| ↓↓↓   | directs gaze downward                         |
|  | directs gaze at computer                      |
| ↘↘↘   | directs gaze towards right middle distance    |
| ↙↙↙   | directs gaze towards left middle distance     |

Hand movements

|  |  |
|--|--|
| LH   | left hand  |
| RH   | right hand   |
| BH   | both hands   |
| cccc   | hands are clasped in front of body                       |
| oooo   | hands are 'open' i.e. not clasped and moving in some way |
| LH→  | moves left hand to right                                 |
| ← RH   | moves right hand to left                                 |
| LH↑  | raises left hand into air                                |
| BH↑  | raises both hands into air                               |
| RH  | interacts with computer with right hand                  |

Body alignment

|  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| — — —  | body is facing audience           |
| // // //   | body is partially facing audience |
|  | body is turned away from audience |
| →→→  | moves to right                    |
| ← ← ←  | moves to left                     |
| bbbb   | backward position                 |
| ffff   | forward position                  |
| at  | presenter stands at computer      |

In a transcription, these action lines are combined with descriptive comments and additional actions lines where relevant, as in extract (3.64),

(3.64) [Mi:17 (Rendle-Short, 2006)]

Gaze: 

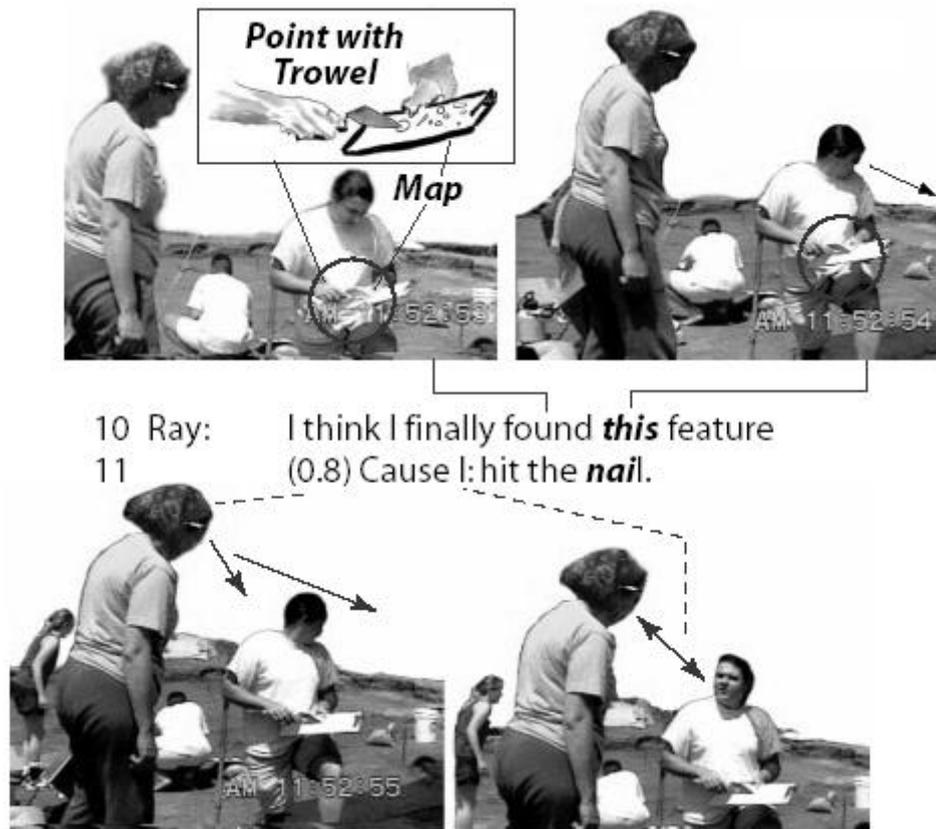
1 Pres: (1.0) °but we [won't worry about that.°

Hands: [LH assessment wave

Body: at 



(3.65) [(C. Goodwin, 2003b)]



(Source: Goodwin 2003b, p. 222, used with permission)

Here Goodwin combines transcription, video capture, line drawing and other markers such as arrows to capture the action of eye gaze and body movement in static form. The various stances of the participants and the direction of eye gaze are shown by the images, which are then mapped onto the points in talk where the image is relevant. The line drawing shows detail not available in the video capture and arrows signal gaze direction. In this combination, Goodwin tries to capture all the salient information a reader needs in order to understand the transcript for his analysis.

Mondada (2018a, 2019a) has developed a system for transcribing embodied actions that is becoming increasingly used, although many other systems remain in place and have been used in this book. Mondada's system aims to show the ways that actions are coordinated with talk and also provides a way to connect screen shots from video data with the transcription.

To show who produces a gesture, the transcription system uses paired symbols for each participant that show the start and end of the gesture, for example

- |   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| * | * | gesture by participant 1 |
| ^ | ^ | gesture by participant 2 |
| Δ | Δ | gesture by participant 3 |
| + | + | gesture by participant 4 |

In the extract below Zack is speaking and while he is speaking he moves his right hand (R) to his face. The gesture is framed by \* and begins at *how* and he holds the gesture until midway through the in breath *.hhh*.

(3.66) [Home:cov]

ZACK: Let me see.h  
 (0.3)  
 uh \*how c'n I descri:be it, (.) .h\*hh  
 \*moves R hand to face \*

To show several lines for different embodied actions done by the same participant different symbols are used but Mondada recommends that the symbols be similar, such as:

|   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| * | * | gesture by participant 1 |
| • | • | gaze by participant 1    |
| + | + | gesture by participant 2 |
| † | † | gaze by participant 2    |

Where there is a need to show an action continues across lines of talk the symbol -->, with the symbol for the participants action (e.g. \*-->), shows the action continues on until the same symbol is reached. If (3.67) is retranscribed so the turn goes across more than one lines, then these symbols would show this as in (3.68). So, if gaze is added to Zack's turn above, it will be represented as:

(3.67) [Home:cov]

Zack: •Let me see.h  
 •eyes down -->  
 (0.3)  
 uh \*how c'n I descri:be it, •(.) .h\*hh  
 \*moves R hand to face \*  
 -->•

All of Zack's information is included with his speaker identification, but if something is added for another participant, this would need a separate speaker identification, and Mondada recommends producing this in lower case for a non-speaking participant as shown for Shane's gaze line in (3.68):

(3.68) [Home:cov]

ZACK: •†Let me see.h  
 • gazes at shane -->  
 shane: †gazes at ZACK -->  
 (0.3)  
 ZACK: uh \*how c'n I descri:be it, †•(.) .h\*hh  
 \*moves R hand to face \*  
 -->•  
 shane: -->†

If an action begins before the extract reported this is shown by the symbol >> and if it continues beyond the transcript, this is shown by -->>. So (3.69) shows that Zack's is gazing down before the beginning of the extract, while (3.70) shows that he adopts a fixed pose in which all his embodied actions continue past the talk.

(3.69) [Home:cov]

ZACK:                   and then we juss' cut\* across th[e park [there  
                          >>gazes down                   \*

(3.70) [Home:cov]

ZACK:    An\*d headed \*f' home.  
                          \*turns body left -->>  
                          \*lowers hand to lap -->>  
  \*places R hand on L hand -->>

For a more detailed representation of actions, additional symbols can be used to show the flow of the action over time, with the following symbols being used show the development, high point and undoing of the action:

(3.71) . . .                The action is being prepared  
       ----                The apex of the action is reached and maintained  
       ,,,,,               The action is being retracted

If (3.66) is retranscribed in more detail, then Zack's action could be represented as being developed, held and removed in the following way:

(3.72) [Home:cov]

ZACK:    Let me see.h  
          (0.3)  
          uh \*how c'n I descri:be it, (.) .h\*hh  
                  \*, , , , moves R----- . . \*  
                                  hand to face

When using a screen shot as part of the transcript, this can be done by using the code #fig to indicate where the screen shot was taken, as in

(3.73). This shows that the screen shot represented was taken at the mid-point of the action when it was being maintained and held.

(3.73) [Home:cov]

ZACK:    Let me see.h  
          (0.3)  
          uh \*how c'n I descri:be it, (.) .h\*hh  
                  \*, , , , moves R----- . . \*

hand to face  
#fig



All of these transcription systems are limited by the difficulties of representing dynamic action in the static form of print. Electronic publication, however, has made it possible to include sound and video in the publication itself, alongside the transcripts (see ten Have, 2007). In this case, the primary data used by the transcriber is made available to the reader in its full richness, alongside a transcript which helps in directing the reader's use of the data set for the purposes of the particular analysis being done on the data.

The transcriptions systems discussed so far are all trying to represent the details of individuals' gestures, gaze, and body movements, but there are also elements of non-verbal behaviour which are relevant to certain types of interaction. One of these is audience applause, which is especially relevant in the context of speeches and other forms of monologue. A transcription system for dealing with applause has been developed by Atkinson (Atkinson, 1983, 1984a, 1984b, 1985). In Atkinson's approach, applause is marked by a series of x's, with upper case X indicating loud applause and lower-case x indicating quieter applause, as in:

(3.74) [GE:79:4B (Atkinson, 1984b)]

Audience:   xxXXXXXXXXXXXXxx

Extract ((3.74) shows applause in which the volume increases and then decreases as the applause starts and finishes. The transcription system used here, therefore, allows the dynamics of applause to be captured in ways which a description, such as ((applause)), would not. Atkinson's transcription system has other features which build the dynamism of applause further. A single isolated clap is indicated by the symbol -x-.

(3.75) [GE:79:4B (Atkinson, 1984b)]

Audience:   -x- (0.2)

This symbol may also be used in transcribing longer stretches of applause in which the applause begins and/or ends hesitantly or raggedly.

(3.76) [GE:79:3B (Atkinson, 1984b)]

Audience:   -x-xx-xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx-x

In transcribing applause, the number of x's is not used to show the duration of applause. Instead Atkinson times clapping in a similar way to the way pauses are timed, placing the duration of the clapping on a line indicating the span of the timed applause, so in extract

(3.77), the applause is shown as lasting for five seconds.

(3.77) [GE:79:3B (Atkinson, 1984b)]

Pardoe: >THAT'S THE ↑First ↓thing to guaran↓tee<  
|----- (5.0) -----|  
Audience: -x-xx-xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx-x

### Adding transcriber's information

In addition to capturing the features of the talk and its non-verbal accompaniment, the transcriber may also wish to add comments to the transcript in order to explain contextual information or to encode events which are difficult to transcribe. This is done by placing the information in double brackets at the appropriate point in the transcript, as in extracts (3.78) and (3.79).

(3.78) [Car conversation]

1 Sasha: I always think of those days as yihknow all  
2 fun, an' musicals, but [some of] the movies=  
3 Nick: [ yea:h.]  
4 Sasha: = were really heavy.  
5 (4.0) ((Car turns a corner))

(3.79) [Car conversation]

Elvis: see yuh soon.  
Nick: yeah.  
(Car door slams))

These additions are in effect descriptions which add to the contextual information in the transcript which may be relevant to the way in which talk is shaped and produced.

In addition to such descriptions, a transcriber may also wish to highlight features of the transcript for attention. For example, when preparing a transcript for publication the researcher may wish to signal which element of the text is the salient element for analysis. This is done by placing an arrow on the left margin of the transcript.

(3.80) [Mary and Jo]

Jo: [↑No. that's ↑lovely. ↑No, ↑no. ↑I can see::,  
gorgeous. So she hiring a car.  
→ Mary: No::, she's gone on a (0.3) tour.  
Jo: Right.

Where there are multiple points to be considered in the analysis the arrows may be marked with a letter for clarity.

(3.81) [Labov:T.A.:4r (Jefferson, 1978)]

a→ Marge: Very- It's terrific I  
bec[ause I'm telling yih-]  
b→ Rita: [En she couldn' ev]en fini-sh[::i(h)t,]=  
Marge: [There's ]  
Marge: =E:vrybody's e[couraging[ her there.]  
c→ Rita: [enna cupp[a ca:wfee. ]

In addition, for clarity of presentation, it may be desirable to omit some parts of a transcription in a published analysis. Where material has been left out of a transcript, this is represented by a series of dots. The dots are put horizontally to show that material is deleted within a turn, as in the last line of extract (3.82) and vertically to show where a series of turns have been deleted, as in extract (3.83).

(3.82) [Car conversation]

1 Sasha: I always think of those days as yihknow all  
2 fun, an' musicals, but [some of] the movies=  
3 Nick: [ yea:h.]  
4 Sasha: = were really heavy.  
5 (4.0) ((Car turns a corner))  
6 Nick: jus' go like follow this roa[d almost  
7 all the way..

(3.83) [Car conversation]

Nick: but I didn' see a fuckin' ca:r? and like the  
pedestri[an didn']  
Elvis: [this w'z] th-  
Nick: ye[ah.  
. . .  
Nick: [this- th]is pedestrian didn' have right of way  
but I thought (.) okay I'll be polite an stop,

## Making a transcription of interactional data

Transcribing conversation is a time-consuming activity and it can take many hours to produce a relatively complete detailed transcription of an interaction, especially if including visual as well and audible information. Wagner (2019) suggests a ratio of 60:1 for transcribing, that is for every one minute of data, it can take around 60 minutes to transcribe. Obviously, the more information that is included in the transcription the longer it will take to complete the work of transcribing. The amount of time that is required to transcribe is also affected by feature of the recording being transcribed. Some things that increase the time required for transcribing include large amounts of overlapping talk, poor quality recordings or recordings with background noise, and features of the talk itself such as fast speech, unclear articulation of

speech or unfamiliar accents. Devoting time to transcription is important as the quality of an analysis is closely related to the attention given to producing a transcript and thus to the time invested in transcribing. It is therefore important to plan for how long it is likely to take to transcribe data and to plan for this as a part of any Conversation Analysis project.

As transcripts include a lot of information, it is best to build up the transcript by working through a series of layers of information. For example, begin by transcribing the basic features the transcription such as words and pauses for a stretch of talk and then begin to refine this by adding other levels of information such as intonation, stress, length of pauses, and location of overlapping talk. For these it is best to focus attention on one phenomenon at a time in transcribing a turn at talk. Once you have built up the spoken text, you can then add non-verbal elements to this again considering the different layers of nonverbal information that is being recorded – eye gaze, gestures, postures, etc. Some transcribers like to work through each level for the whole interaction they are transcribing; others like to work on shorter segments of talk and develop a complete transcription of these segments before moving on. There is no best way of working here other than to find an approach that works for oneself and leads to a detailed and well-constructed transcript.

The basic requirement for making a transcript is a way to play the data and to write the transcript. Thus, having access to a media player and a way of writing the transcript is the basic requirement and many transcripts have been made using an audio player and writing the transcription out by hand and then rewriting it as a typed text. However, using technology can make the process easier. For example, listening to a recording through headphones can enhance its hearability so using good quality headphones is always a good idea. Other devices can also help facilitate the action of transcribing such as having a foot pedal to control pausing and rewinding a transcript allows the transcriber to continue writing the transcript while manipulating the recording.

There are now many software applications available that help with transcribing and many suitable applications are free to download, although commercial applications are likely to have more features that may be useful. It is a good idea to check out what software is available and to try out some applications to see which work best for you. The advantages that transcribing applications may have is that they can allow for adjustment of the playback speed that can sometimes help hearing of the talk, automatic repetition of segments while transcribing them, and automatic timing of pauses. They may also offer ways of enhancing the audio quality to attempt to remove background noise on poor quality files. One important affordance of software has been the linking of the transcript with the data itself so that the researcher has easy access to both the transcript as a representation of the data and the data itself when making an analysis.

One recent development in transcription of spoken language data has been the development of speech recognition software that can produce a written transcript directly from spoken language data (Moore, 2015). These applications can produce a transcription of words mainly in standardised orthography and can be useful for researchers who want a simple record of talk. However, these systems are of limited use for Conversation Analysis as they provide little information at the levels above the word, except for the automatic timing of pauses. These applications have particular difficulties when transcribing overlapping talk and when there is background noise: “[Automatic Speech recognition] systems are not robust to noise, channel distortions, and accents. They only model localized aspects of conversation and sometimes make egregious errors because of this lack of knowledge of context” (Picheny et al., 2011, p.

2). Given that Conversation Analysis uses naturally occurring data, the quality of recordings that are possible is often not good enough for reliable automatic transcription.

Even where the transcription of words is accurate, before such a transcription can be used, there is much additional information that would need to be added by the transcriber and when this is added to the need to check for and correct errors in the transcript, the result may actually not be much of a time saving. Any time saving on transcription, however, may be a false economy as doing Conversation Analysis requires the development of a close and thorough knowledge of the data being used and this intimate engagement comes from working closely on developing the transcript. As Bolden (2015, p. 277) argues “the conversation analytic transcription process mandates a close and careful listening, which makes transcribing a crucial research activity rather than a step preliminary to research”. This means that transcription is not a precursor to analytic work but rather a central step in understanding and analysing data (Elinor Ochs, 1979). This means that ultimately, the best research practice is for the researcher to do the transcription.

## Translation

Translating data is an issue where an analysis is to be published in a language which is different from that in which the data was collected. This means that the reader of the analysis cannot be assumed to have access to the data in its original form. Where the reader of an analysis may not necessarily be able to read the data directly, it becomes important to provide some form of translation to make the data accessible.

Translation of data collected in one language and published in another is a significant issue for representing interactional data (Mondada, 2018b). The key problem for a transcriber is how to deal with the different structures of the languages being transcribed so that the translation does not distort the original interaction. Consider extract (3.84) in French:

(3.84) [(Crozet & Liddicoat, 1998)]

1 Monique:oui ça- oui ici j'trouve que c'est ↑plus  
2 difficile d'êt' végétarien [moi j'étais =  
3 Suzanne: [ouais c'est c'que  
4 Michelle dit  
5 Monique:=dans zun environnement' y avait des  
6 magasins [biologiques  
7 Suzanne: [ah oui

Here the transcript shows two overlaps, one at Monique's *moi* (line 2) and the other at Monique's *biologiques* (line 6). These both represent problems for translation in a transcript. Monique's turn at talk here would be translated as *Yes that- yes here I find that it's more difficult to be vegetarian I was in an environment where there were health food shops*. Expressed as a translated transcript, this would look like:

(3.84')

1 Monique:yes that- yes here I find that it's more  
2 difficult to be vegetarian [I was=  
3 Suzanne: [yes that's what



after *ii ohana* ‘good flowers’ and in the middle of the verb *deshita* ‘were’. In the Japanese version the appreciation of the flowers is already clear and I’s turn cannot be heard as predicting anything but rather responding to an appreciation. Moreover, the honorific particle *o* at the beginning of the word *hana* ‘flowers’ also signals that the flowers to which R is referring are the flowers that I had sent. If this data were presented in English only, they would be a misleading account of the talk. Reporting only the translated data, therefore, is a serious difficulty for accurate understanding of what is going on in the talk and is to be discouraged.

In order to overcome the problems of using only translated version of the text, it is common to include both the original and the translation in a published version of a transcript. Here too there are important decisions to be made about how this is to be done.

Some studies use the translated version of the data in the text and place the original version in a footnote or appendix. This does give the reader access to the original, but has the effect of subordinating the original version to the translation. This solution ignores the fact that the original is the primary data and the translation is a construct which is in many ways different from the data on which the analysis is based. A preferable practice is for both the original and the translation to be included in the body of the text as separate text items.

(3.86) [(So'o & Liddicoat, 2000)]

|   |    |                        |                        |
|---|----|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | A  | halou?                 | hello?                 |
| 2 | L  | <u>T</u> iva           | <u>T</u> iva           |
| 3 | A: | <u>o</u> e <u>y</u> es |                        |
| 4 | L: | o a tou mea o faiga    | what are you doing.    |
| 5 | A: | e leai ni mea o lea    | I'm not doing anything |
| 6 |    | e fai a'u mea:'oga,    | I'm studying,          |
| 7 |    | a o lea e matamata le  | but the boys are       |
| 8 |    | tivi a le 'auli'i ia   | watching television.   |

In this extract, the translation is presented alongside the original and this is possible because the lines in the transcript are quite short and there is no overlapping talk. More often the translation is given after the original version, although in some cases the translation is placed first. It is better that the translations come after the original to emphasize the fact that the original is the primary data and the translation is a secondary artefact to make the data more intelligible to some readers.

Separate translations would appear to be most suitable where the emphasis is on higher level features of the data, like the sequencing of actions, as is the case in the So'o and Liddicoat (2000) study from which extract (3.86) is taken. Where more micro level features are important, as for example in the case of examining turn construction and overlapping talk, the use of separate transcriptions can make for difficulty for readers in mapping the translation onto the original.

Some studies overcome the problem of mapping the translation onto the original by giving a line-by-line translation inside the transcript, as in:

(3.87) [(ten Have, 2007)]

|   |    |                  |
|---|----|------------------|
| 1 | O: | Schr <u>a</u> ma |
|---|----|------------------|

- 2 B: dag met Paul  
 B: hi Paul speaking.
- 3 O: ja Paul  
 O: yes Paul
- 4 B: ik kom even melden dat ik eh geslaagd ben  
 B: I just called to tell you I uh succeeded
- 5 B: in het kopen van een telefoonspoel  
 B: in buying a telephone coil

This translation shows better the relationship between elements within the turn, but here the grammars of the language involved (Dutch and English) are quite similar and in fact ten Have (2007) argues that such interlinear translations are in fact best suited where languages are similar. However, it should be noted that even in this extract, there are some elements which have quite different grammatical structures between the two. For example, while *hi Paul speaking* is an idiomatic translation of *dag met Paul*, the two phrases are in fact quite different as *met* translates literally as *with* not *speaking*. In ten Have's example, this is not an important difference, but in some analyses similar distinctions may be important.

The most accurate way to provide a translation, especially where micro level features are important, is to provide an interlinear gloss of each element in the sentence as well as a translation. This is especially important in cases where the grammars of the languages are different (ten Have, 2007), but also where the analysis gives attention to detail in the production of talk.

(3.88) [Taxes: 5-6 (Sorjonen, 1996)]

- 1 S: ö Nyt kyllä nyt valehtele-t [jotta vipa:t]taa.  
 now surely now lie-2 so that swings  
 uh Now surely now you're lying in your throa:t.  
 [ ]
- 2 E: [↑No ei::. ]  
 [PRT NEG3 ]  
 [↑Well no::. ]

Here the transcript has three lines, the Finnish original, a word by word gloss and an idiomatic translation. The first presents the original data on which the analysis is based. The interlinear gloss provides an explication of the Finnish structure and enables the reader to know what is happening word by word in the Finnish original. There are a number of grammatical conventions however in the gloss which themselves need defining in the key to the transcript (2 = second person, 3 = third person, PRT = particle, NEG = negation). Finally the translation gives a version of the meaning which is no longer dependent on the structures of the original in order to convey the meaning, together with some indication of where elements marked in the transcript map on to the translation.

### Transcribing conversation: Some final comments

It is clear from the discussion so far that transcription is a detailed endeavour and because of the detail transcription is quite time consuming. Moreover, transcription is rarely 'finished' as each new hearing can reveal something new in the data that the transcriber did not hear or notice on earlier hearings. For this reason, transcribers usually make repeated transcripts of

their data building and increasingly detailed representation of the talk they are studying. In fact, it is usually easier when beginning a transcript to concentrate on one aspect of the talk at a time as a way of dealing with the complexity and richness of the data. For example, a first pass through transcription might concentrate on trying to capture the words being spoken, while noting other aspects of the data as they occur. Next, it may be useful to concentrate on features such as intonation, loudness, lengthening, etc. as a way of building towards a more complete version of the data.

In many cases, transcribers note features in the talk that cannot be transcribed using the conventions listed in this chapter and they may need to make up their own ways of representing sounds or behaviours that they observe. This is in fact how the conventions for transcribing have developed over time as people have needed to note new phenomena in their transcripts in order to be able to study them. Symbols that are developed for the transcription system should, therefore, be listed whenever they are included in material that others will read.

By way of summary, it is important always to remember that a transcript is a created artefact not an objective account and that it will always be a selective representation of the data itself. Therefore, it is important to use the transcript alongside the original video or audiotape so that the transcript can be checked, revised and supplemented as needed. There is then no final version of a transcript, but rather transcripts continue to evolve as they are used in response to greater familiarity with the data, developing analysis of the interaction being studied, different analytic aims and different intended audiences. While Conversation Analysis cannot be done without a transcript, it nonetheless remains an analysis of an instance of conversation not of the transcript itself.

### **Exercise**

Select one of the interactions you have recorded and choose a small segment of around 10 minutes in duration for transcription. Begin by making a transcription of the words and gradually fill in other information using the conventions from this chapter as a series of revisions of the transcript. Do not try to complete the transcript in one sitting but come back to it a number of times and refine it. Note how the various versions of the transcript add new information and help you to see different things about the interaction.

### **Further reading**

- Bolden, Galina B. (2015). Transcribing as research: “Manual” transcription and Conversation Analysis. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 48(3), 276-280. doi:10.1080/08351813.2015.1058603
- Jefferson, Gail. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction In Gene H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 13-31). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Mondada, Lorenza (2018b). Transcription in linguistics. In L. Litosseliti (Ed.), *Research methods in linguistics* (2nd ed., pp. 85-114). London: Bloomsbury.

## Chapter 4 Analysing conversational data

### Focus:

- The specimen perspective in data analysis
- Ways of analysing conversational data
- The place of theory in Conversation Analysis

### A specimen perspective

Conversation Analysis adopts what is called by Alasuutari (1995) as specimen perspective. This means that the data for study in Conversation Analysis is not “not treated as a *statement about* or a *reflection of reality*; instead, a specimen is seen as a part of the reality being studied” (Alasuutari, 1995, p. 63, emphasis in original). That is, an interaction is not studied because it necessarily shows something about larger issues of human sociality or societal organisation but because it is an instance of social interaction. As an instance of social interaction, it can be scrutinised in its own right as a way of understanding how it functions as a social interaction. This means that any conversation can be seen as an instance of how human beings have interacted and the orderliness and organisation it presents can be studied as a process of achieved orderliness. It is not an issue for Conversation Analysis whether the practice which is observed and analysed is representative or not. It is important that it occurred as a natural practice of interaction and therefore it warrants analysis as a part of the totality of human interaction. The issue is not if the practice is representative, but rather to determine how the practice works. This means that for researchers working from a specimen perspective, no research data is in itself more authentic, unbiased, or accurate descriptions of reality. “All forms of talk and texts represent situated speech that provides evidence of the various ways in which a particular phenomenon can be approached” (Talja, 1999, p. 472).

Alasuutari contrasts the idea of a specimen perspective with what he calls a “factist perspective”. In a factist perspective, data is understood not in their own terms but as “more or less honest and truthful statements about outside reality” (Alasuutari, 1995, p. 63). From a factist perspective, it is not so much important that an interaction happens and happens in a particular way, but that it represents something about something external to the conversation. As a representation, it may be assessed as an accurate, reliable or typical instance of the external fact it represents and is evaluated in terms of this. The factist perspective can be understood as an approach to data which sees in any observable phenomenon a way of understanding some reality which is not observable. This means that any observable phenomenon is of interest in terms of what it shows something about an underlying generalised reality. In using data within such a perspective, the researcher needs to consider how the research data reflects the underlying issue of interest and how it needs to be treated in order to understand this issue – is the data an accurate reflection of the reality being studied?

Alasuutari identifies some core dimensions according to which the specimen and factist perspectives can be contrasted and these contrasts help to clarify some of the ways of working with data in Conversation Analysis. The first dimension is the way the data is understood as relating to reality. In a factist perspective, the data is separated from the reality being studied and so provides information only indirectly about the reality and each datum needs to be compared with and related to other data in order to assess its value. In a specimen perspective, each datum is an element of reality itself and so has its own value independently of other data. It can be compared and related to other data, but the process of comparison or relation does not

validate the datum itself. This means that in a specimen perspective a single instance can be studied in its own right and produce results which contribute to our understanding of reality. The second dimension is how data relate to issues of truthfulness and honesty as accounts of reality. In the factist perspective, such considerations are fundamental to the research approach and data must be shown to be reliable, representative, truthful sources for understanding the reality. In research conducted from such a perspective, it is important to indicate how the data is honest and truth and so valid for the purposes for which it is being used. In the specimen perspective, such considerations are not relevant. The truthfulness of the data arises from the fact that they exist and have been documented as existing. Researchers using a specimen perspective do not, therefore, seek to demonstrate the validity of the data as it is the very existence of the data that makes them valid.

The logic of data in Conversation Analysis is therefore that any instance of interaction is potentially useful for analysis and worthy of study in order to understand how it has been produced in an orderly way by the participants in the interaction being studied. Sacks argues that “we can come up with findings of considerable generality by looking at very singular, particular things. By asking what it takes for those things to have come off” (Sacks, 1992, Vol. 1, p.298).

Heritage (1988) likens Conversation Analysis research to the work of naturalists. Researchers gather together collections of interaction taken from a range of natural sites. Conversation Analysis research is based on a collection of interactions – of specimens of conversational activity. These collections can be assembled in different ways. It may be that a researcher wants to study a particular interactional phenomenon and the collection would consist of recordings of interactions within which this phenomenon was likely to be present. Thus, a study of greetings would consist of a set of recordings in which greetings were present. The process of forming the collection would consist of a series of targeted recordings that documented samples of the specimens needed for the collection to work. In other cases, researchers may wish to understand interactions in particular settings, in which case the data will consist of a collection of recordings made in this setting. Thus, a study of classroom interaction may consist of a collection of specimens recorded in classrooms. Again, the development of the collection would begin with the act of recording particular interactions and not others. In other cases, especially in more exploratory studies, the collection being worked with may simply be whatever data is available to the researcher and may be, in fact, quite heterogeneous. The process of assembling a collection of data for research in this case will come from examining the data available in order to identify the phenomena it contains.

### **The process of analysis**

Unlike many other research methods, Conversation Analysis does not usually begin with a research question or hypothesis about the data. Such an approach is viewed as one which in some way pre-determines what is relevant or interesting in the data and privileges a pre-theorised understanding of interaction over the data itself. Conversation Analysis is a data-driven approach to research – that is, it aims to work from data to theory not from theory to data. This focus gives a particular shape to the ways of developing an analysis in Conversation Analysis.

### *Identifying phenomena: Unmotivated looking*

Psathas (1995) describes the starting point for analysis in Conversation Analysis as ‘unmotivated looking’, that is repeated listenings to the same data in order to discover what is happening. Sacks (1984, p. 27) describes this as “treating the data in an unmotivated way, i.e. giving some consideration to whatever can be found in a particular conversation you happen to have your hands on, subjecting it to investigation in any direction”. Psathas (1990) notes that unmotivated looking involves the analyst being open to discovering what is going on in the data, rather than searching for a particular pre-identified or pre-theorized phenomenon. Schegloff (1996a) argues that this is a process of noticing features of talk, which may in themselves be quite unremarkable. Unmotivated looking can be understood as a process of listening to the data and/or reading through the transcribed text to obtain a feel for the data. This is a process of immersing oneself in the data in order to see what is happening in it. It is a way of letting the data speak to the researcher rather than having the researcher impose an interpretation on the data. Sacks (1984) argues that this is a particularly powerful way for coming to understand how conversation works as it allows the researcher to see things that may have been obscured by a pre-theorised starting point that determined in advance what was interesting or worthy of note in an interaction. Unmotivated looking provides an entry point into analysis by providing opportunities to notice what is being done in a particular interaction. That is, it is an examination of the data in terms of the actions that are being performed there. Schegloff (1996a) describes this process of noticing actions in the data as having two different possibilities. The first is to notice the action being performed and then to provide an account of how the practices being used accomplish that action. The second is to notice a feature of the talk and to identify what the outcome of that talk is – or if there is any outcome to be observed. That is, one way of working is from action to language, the other is from language to action

Psathas (1995) argues that the idea of unmotivated looking is a contradiction and a paradox because there is a purpose to unmotivated looking. The researcher is looking at the data to see what is there that is of analytic interest in understanding how social interaction works. The emphasis here is not therefore on purposeless reviewing of the data but rather on openness to what the data presents rather than inspecting the data to find instances of a phenomenon. Ten Have (2007) argues that the idea of unmotivated looking is also a problematic idea in that the researcher does not approach the data from a completely neutral position. A Conversation Analysis researcher may look at data with an open mind as to what is of possible interest in the data, however this researcher also looks at the data with a particular understanding of what the nature of talk in interaction. The cumulative insights of several decades of research shape the process of unmotivated looking and serve as a way of structuring this process. Ten Have (2007) recommends a general strategy for analysis which begins by looking at:

1. the ways in which turn-taking operates in the interaction (see Chapters 5 and 6 of this book for more on turn-taking). An initial characterisation of turn-taking would include identifying the number of participants in the interaction, where speaker change occurs, whether there are any pauses, overlapping talk and any disfluencies in turn-taking and where these occur.
2. the sequences in the interaction and the ways they are structured and developed (see Chapters 7-8). This could include identifying where a sequence begins and ends, what base the sequence is constructed around, what action the sequence accomplishes, what builds towards this base and what follows from it, whether there is talk relating

to the beginning of the sequence which occurs before the identifiable beginning or later talk which follows the identifiable end.

3. any instances of repair work (See Chapter 9). This could involve identifying where the repair occurs, what the trouble is that needs repairing, which participants indicates that there is a trouble to be repaired, who actually does the repair and how the repair is dealt with in following talk.

This staged approach to working through the data gives a structure to the process of unmotivated looking that helps in becoming familiar with what the data presents without constraining what will be seen as relevant in the data.

### *Developing an analysis*

An analysis within the tradition of Conversation Analysis is not primarily an attempt at coding data and creating categorisations of activities according to established criteria. It is rather a systematic exegesis of one or more conversational fragments that seeks to reveal the orderliness of a particular conversational action. The aim of an analysis is therefore to develop a general account of orderly features of conversation on the basis of an account of particular examples. Sacks argued this in the following terms:

The idea is to take singular sequences of conversation and tear them apart in such a way as to find rules, techniques, procedures, methods, maxims (a collection of terms that more or less relate to each other and that I use somewhat interchangeably) that can be used to generate the orderly features we find in conversations we examine. The point is, then, to come back to the singular things we observe in a singular sequence, with some rules that handle those singular features, and also, necessarily, handle lots of other events (Sacks, 1984, p. 411).

In this quote Sacks is arguing that the process of analysis for Conversation Analysis is to inspect individual instances of spoken interaction as a way of identifying the underlying rules which create the orderliness of the interaction. When these rules have been identified in individual cases, they can then be brought into relationship with other data so that the observations made in singular instances can be tested and so that the orderliness of other instances can be explicated.

In constructing the rules which underlie orderliness in conversation, Conversation Analysis is undertaking a very particular project. The aim is not to establish categories of orderly behaviour for their own analytic power, but to attempt to discover the rules that participants themselves use to construct the orderliness of the interactions. That is, Conversation Analysis attempts to determine what categories, rules or practices participants themselves use and can be shown to be using in the interaction. An analysis for Conversation Analysis purposes is therefore a representation of participants' perspectives on the action being analysed.

Schegloff (1996a, pp. 172-173) argues that an account of action should be characterized by three methodological elements:

1. a formulation of the action being accomplished in the data, accompanied by exemplifications of the action from data and discussion of deviant cases as exemplifications of the underlying formulation being proposed;

2. a grounding of the formulation in the reality of the participants in order to demonstrate that the observation is not a construct of the analyst alone, but is understood and oriented to by the participants themselves;
3. an explication or analysis of how the practice observed yields the action being accomplished.

Schegloff's (1996a) requirements impose a high level of rigour on unmotivated looking and prevent conversation analytic accounts from becoming unstructured. This means that the starting point for analysis is open, but the procedures required once something has been noticed are highly rigorous. By incorporating participants' perspectives in terms of the ways they themselves achieve the organisation of their activity, Conversation Analysis aims to demonstrate the practices that constitute orderliness for them, and therefore for other social actors. The analyst's role is not to impose external, theoretical categories in the analyses which make sense of the sense of the observed activity but to allow the participants' own sense-making work to be revealed by an explication of the coherent ways that the ongoing action is organised and produced by them. That is, Conversation Analysis sees participants in interaction as analysts and that the outcomes of their analysis are revealed in the ways in which interaction is designed at each moment. It seeks to articulate this analysis rather than to create an independent, theoretically derived analysis.

This idea draws on Garfinkel's (1967) contrast between two approaches to the idea of coding social data. One is an analysts' perspective, from which the researcher codes observed phenomena on the basis of categories with explicit criteria developed in order to account for data for a particular analytic purpose. The other is the participants' perspective, from which the individuals involved in social action interpret what is happening moment by moment in their interaction. The participants' perspective on the interaction is displayed by the participants themselves in the ways in which they design their contribution to the interaction. Participants when they speak display their understanding of what has previously been said and so each turn at talk represents a form of analysis of the talk. This analysis is not systematic or even explicitly formulated in the talk, but is nonetheless present. In developing an analysis of an interaction, Conversation Analysis 'seeks to remain faithful to members' perspectives' (Psathas, 1995, p. 49). This means that the role of the analysts is to demonstrate 'the orientations, meanings, interpretations, understandings, etc. of the participants' (Schegloff, 1997b, p. 166) rather than constructing through the analysis meanings and interpretations which are the analyst's own preoccupations in studying the data. Schegloff (1997b, p. 167) has even called such analyses acts of 'theoretical imperialism'. In Conversation Analysis, then, the purpose is to demonstrate how a particular conversation is an orderly social action achieved by participants and oriented to as orderly. It is not to invoke wider issues beyond the local interaction as an explanation of what is occurring at a particular moment in time.

### *Finding patterns and making comparisons*

Once a phenomenon has been noticed, there are differing possibilities for exploring the phenomenon in order to construct an account. This may be done by exploring a single case example or by establishing a collection of similar actions. Single case analysis involves looking at a conversation, or a segment of a conversation, in order to track in detail the various devices and strategies used by participants to accomplish a particular action (Schegloff, 1987a, 1988b). The analysis of a single case is in effect the starting point for any analysis, as single case examples allow the analyst to examine how conversational practices operate in particular instances and allow for a description of these practices to begin. It allows the analyst to examine

how an instance of conversation is orderly for its participants (Schegloff, 1968). As all conversational interaction is orderly and as each instance of conversation is a produced order which is achieved by particular participants in a particular conversation, each single conversation is the place in which order is produced. A single case of talk is a single case of achieved orderly interaction, which can be examined as such and which can reveal much about the procedures used to create this order. This means that the single case is derived from and manifests the competency that members have to produce orderly talk.

That this particular social action occurred is evidence that the machinery for its production is culturally available, involves members' competencies, and is therefore possibly (and probably) reproducible (Psathas, 1995, p. 50).

Any single case of orderly interaction is therefore an indication of the nature of members' competencies involved in creating order. As such, a single case is not like a sample drawn from a pre-existing collection of such cases and representative of those cases but rather an entire, self-contained instance of produced order.

Conversation Analysis analyses are often based on collections of comparable data in which patterns of interaction can be observed. A collection can only proceed from a single case analysis as such an analysis is required to determine what a particular action is an instance of (Psathas, 1995). A collection is, therefore, a possible next step in analysis rather than an alternative analytic approach. Once the researcher has identified some phenomenon in interaction for further analysis, a next step is to identify similar phenomena elsewhere to help develop a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of interest. As the phenomenon which is the starting point for the analysis may be a particular action or a particular practice, as discussed above, collections may be of either kind.

Once a collection has been assembled it can be used to test the robustness of a particular description of action and to refine the analysis in the light of repeated instances of an action in different instances of interaction. The collections are a bringing together of things that have been noticed to be similar in some sense in order to explicate the ways in which they are similar and the ways in which they differ so as to understand how similarities and differences are orderly and meaningful. The analysis of a collection allows the regularly occurring procedures for accomplishing a particular type of action to become clear and allows for differing trajectories for the accomplishment of the action to be seen.

The usual way to develop such a collection is to work through a corpus of collected data in a systematic way to identify new instances of the phenomenon. This means that the collection is usually established from a loosely based corpus of interactions rather than by seeking to document instances of the observed phenomenon through additional recording, although such an approach is also possible. One reason for this is that the phenomena which Conversation Analysis deals with can be very difficult to collect in a targeted way. For example, if one wanted to study instances of invitations being declined in naturally occurring data, it would be very difficult to target only conversations in which invitations were going to be declined. In searching through the data for new instances of a phenomenon, it is important to attempt to locate every example of the phenomenon which exists within the data available. That is, the selection made aims to be as comprehensive as possible rather than a limited or subjective selection of instances of the phenomenon. The resultant collection will show a range of variation in the ways the phenomenon under investigation is accomplished and this variation itself becomes an important analytic tool.

In working with a collection, one possible strategy is to begin by analysing a small set of the available data in the collection to construct an initial analysis. This analysis is then developed further as more data is brought to bear on the analysis until all of the data has been accounted for. This is a process of inductive reasoning through which regularities in organisation can be identified and explained. In working with data in this way, some instances will confirm the initial analysis others will adjust the analysis in some way, while others will show defects in the analysis or point to the need for different levels of generalisation in the analysis. Schegloff's (1968) study of telephone calls provides a well-known example of this process. In this study, he examined 500 telephone openings and developed a distributional rule – that the answerer speaks first – as an initial formulation of a social organisation of telephone call openings. However, one single instance did not fit the pattern – the caller spoke first. The initial formulation of the rule is therefore not adequate to account for all of the data. The remaining instance is shown in Extract (4.1).

(4.1) Police make call (Schegloff, 1968)

Receiver is lifted and there is a one second pause  
Police: Hello.  
Other: American Red Cross.  
Police: Hello, this is Police Headquarters ... er,  
Officer Stratton [etc.]

Schegloff notes with this example provides for two possible analytic treatments: it could be set aside as a deviant case having no significance for understanding the distributional rule or it could trigger a re-examination of the corpus to determine if the distributional rule itself was the best account of the data. Schegloff chose to do the latter. As a result of considering what the problematic instance showed, he changed his analysis from a distributional rule to an analysis of the telephone's ringing and the first spoken turn constituting a summons-answer sequence (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of this). In such an analysis, the one second pause noted in the transcript becomes significant for understanding the sequence. If the ringing of the telephone constitutes a summons to a conversation and the answerer's talk is a response to that summons, then the silence constitutes a missing summons and the police officer's talk is a re-doing of the summons in the face of a previous failure to securing an interlocutor. Consideration of the problematic example therefore provides information that challenges the first analysis and leads to a different account of orderliness in talk that accounts not only for the 499 unproblematic cases, but also for the single deviant case.

The explanatory power of such exceptions in the data has given rise in Conversation Analysis to a practice of deviant case analysis and one of the mechanisms for testing analytic constructs (Heritage, 1988). Departures from established patterns of interaction are not treated as exceptions but as evidence for understanding the nature of the pattern. They can be analysed to show how participants display their understanding of the departure from a norm and the significance this has in interaction. If a participant demonstrates that a departure from a norm has been noticed, then this noticing shows that they are orienting to an expectation that the norm should apply. Deviant cases therefore serve to show that the orderliness that has been detected has a normative character. Schegloff's (1968) deviant case shows that speakers on the telephone orient to the idea of a summons to speak followed by an answering response is the expected norm – a rule of social interaction. The deviant case is deviant only in the sense that it does not look like other cases. It still shows that there is an expectation of a summons and an

answer and when this does not occur, participants work to re-establish the norm – here’ through the police officer’s *hello*, which does secure a response.

The development of an analysis in Conversation Analysis is therefore a process of moving from the analysis of a specific case towards a more generalised analysis of the phenomenon under consideration. It is a stage and structured way of expanding the analysis through bringing new data into the account and testing the account against the data. As the database for the account expands, conclusions and explanations can be refined to reveal insights about more general processes that underlie the organisation of conversation.

### Linking with theory

The discussion so far has avoided the issue of theory, except to indicate where a pre-theorised position is understood as being contradictory to the ways Conversation Analysis analyses are developed. This does not however mean that there is no place in Conversation Analysis analyses for theory to be incorporated into analysis. Conversation Analysis is cautious in its application of theory to data – the evidence of any broader issue must be seen in the data as relevant to participants’ orientations in talk. Kitzinger (2000) argues that it is because of Conversation Analysis’ localised, constructed view of the social world that it can be used in more rigorously grounded attempts to address theory. Conversation Analysis can show how larger social categories are produced and reproduced through ordinary, everyday interactions, but only where they can be empirically shown to be present as something to be produced and reproduced. In a discussion of Conversation Analysis as a way of exploring power, Schegloff (1997b) formulates this possible role of theory as one in which, by constructing a particular understanding of the ways in which social actions can be produced, it allows for other possibilities to be detected and analysed where they are manifestly present in participants’ interactions.

To see how theory can be incorporated into a Conversation Analysis account, it is useful to look at an example in which a broader social category becomes a part of the analysis of a particular piece of conversational data, drawn from Liddicoat (2009).

#### (4.2) [Extract 1 (Liddicoat, 2009)]

- 1 T: Y Sam. (.) ¿Como es tu novia?  
And Sam. What’s your girlfriend like?
- 2 Sam: Mi uhm (0.2) novio es alto y:: delgado.  
My uhm (0.2) boyfriend is tall (masc) and slim  
(masc).  
(0.4)
- 3 T: ¿alta y delgada?  
Tall (fem) and slim (fem)?
- 4 Sam: ¿alta y delgada?  
tall (fem) and slim (fem)?  
(0.3)
- 5 Mi novio (.) uhm es alta y delgada.  
My boyfriend (.) uhm is tall (fem) and slim (fem).
- 6 T: Tu novia es alta y delgada.  
Your girlfriend is tall (fem) and slim (fem)

- 7 Sam: .hh uhm:: (n-) ¿novia?  
 .hh uhm:: (n-) girlfriend?
- 8 T: Sí tu novia e::s::  
 Yes your girlfriend i::s::
- 9 Sam: O::h no es novio. Mi novio es alto y delgado.  
 (0.2) Y tiene una barba.  
 O::h no it's boyfriend. My boyfriend is tall and  
 slim. (0.2) And he has a beard.

There are many things that could be said about the interaction in this stretch of talk. At its basic interactional level, this sequence consists of a number of turns at talk exchanged between a teacher of Spanish and her male pupil, Sam. The sequence begins with a summons to Sam, which calls him into the interaction unfolding in the class and positions him as the recipient of the main action of the sequence – a question-answer exchange. The teacher begins the exchange by posing the question and Sam produces his version of the answer. The talk then moves into a very teacher-like activity, correcting the students' response. Sam responds to the correction by repeating the teacher's proposed correction. Such exchange patterns have often been identified in classroom interactions (e.g. Stubbs, 1986). The sequence then continues as the student and teacher work through the correction, until in the last line, the student rejects the correction. The extract here could therefore be considered to be an example of corrective work in a classroom context and analysed in those terms. However, such an analysis would not attend to broader social and identity issues which are demonstrably relevant to the participants in this interaction. In particular, the student orients to the issue of sexual identity as being fundamental to what he and the teacher are doing in this sequence. A more elaborated account of this extract needs to take into consideration broader theoretical issues.

In the extract, the question *como es tu novio/novia* is taken from the textbook, which provides an answer format: *mi novio/novia es Adjective y Adjective*. In the first line, the teacher constructs a heteronormative frame in which Sam is invited to contribute this description – that is descriptions will be of people of the opposite sex when a description is of a partner. In using this question, which in its Spanish form has overt gender marking, the teacher assigns to Sam a particular sexual identity and this assignment of an identity will play a significant role in how the answer here is treated. The student produces a grammatically correct response following the textbook format, with all elements agreeing in masculine gender. The teacher produces a partial repetition of the prior talk with questioning intonation and the repetition of the adjectives in the feminine locates the gender agreement in Sam's talk as the trouble source. What is being corrected is at one level Sam's rejection of the assigned heterosexual identity and of the heteronormative framing of the activity. Sam's response is to repeat the target utterances and then to place these within his original utterance, keeping the masculine form *novio* and describing this person with feminine adjectival forms. It appears at this point that Sam is treating the teacher's corrective feedback as the correction of a grammatical problem in his prior talk. Sam's resulting talk is this time ungrammatical: it has a masculine subject and feminine adjectives. The teacher then produces a repair initiator with the whole of Sam's original utterance in the feminine. The sentence is again grammatical, but with all of Sam's original form removed and replaced with the expected heteronormative forms. Sam, after a few hesitations produces the new corrected form *novia* with questioning intonation. The teacher accepts this as a correct form and prompts the production of a full version of the corrected sentence. Sam at this point rejects the correction being made rejecting the identity assignment which had occurred at the beginning of the exchange. He rejects *novia* as a possible

characterisation of the person he is describing and reasserts his original formulation as *novio* and produces the original version of the sentence removing the feminine forms introduced by the teacher. After a short pause he further reinforces the original interpretation of the text as being about a boyfriend by adding a less ambiguous gendered descriptor – “he has a beard” – a description that would otherwise have been precluded by the answer format. Here Sam is asserting a gay identity and rejecting the prior work as corrective by disambiguating his own framing of his identity as it applies in the context of the question.

In this extract, it is possible to see the working through of an interactional problem relating to understandings of sexual identity and the normativeness of heterosexuality in constructing interactions. The extract can therefore be understood legitimately not just as a conversational structure but as a contesting of larger sociological categories and so is amenable to theorising in terms of the categories (Kitzinger, 2000). In such an analysis, the focus on sexual identity is data driven – it comes from the data itself, not from the preoccupations of the analyst with such questions. In fact, the data is one of a small collection of instances reported in Liddicoat (2009) in which similar interactional trajectories appear in which broader theoretical categories of identity need to be addressed in order to understand a generalisable feature of the data and the work that participants do in the extracts.

### **Exercise**

From your transcript, select an excerpt of about a page of transcribed conversation that you find interesting as a starting point to begin your analysis. The excerpt should be a complete unit – that it should have an identifiable beginning and an identifiable end. Alternatively, it could be a series of shorter complete units.

- a) In your excerpt, identify the beginning and end of the unit of units. What is it that shows that the beginning is the start of some action? What is it that shows that the ending is the ending of the action? In considering these questions, you need to consider what comes before the beginning of your excerpt and what comes after its ending.
- b) What action(s) is being performed in your excerpt? What evidence is there that participants orient to the action as you understand it?
- c) Where in the extract do the main elements of the action occur?

### **Further Reading**

- Heritage, John. (2008). Conversation Analysis as social theory. In B. S. Turner (Ed.), *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory* (pp. 300-320). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sidnell, Jack (2013). Basic conversation analytic methods. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of Conversation Analysis* (pp. 32-56). Abingdon, UK: Blackwell.
- ten Have, Paul. (2007). *Doing Conversation Analysis: A practical guide* London: Sage.

## Chapter 5 Turn-taking in conversation

### Focus

- The forms of language used in the construction of turns at talk
- The role of possible completion in turn taking
- The allocation of talk to next speakers
- The local management of the turn taking-system
- The relationship between turns at talk and the language used to construct them

### Introduction

One of the most noticeable features of conversation is that speakers change. In fact, in most cases, only one person speaks at a time and transition from speaker to speaker occurs fluidly with few gaps and little overlap. This is of course not to say that gaps and overlaps do not occur. However where gaps or overlaps occur, they can be seen as doing something of interactional significance, as will be seen below. Moments in which one speaker speaks at a time can be considered as a default setting. It does not indicate that something other than simply changing speakers is going on at this point in the conversation. Gaps and overlaps, however, are likely to be interpreted by participants as indicating that something additional is happening.

Speaker change is a normative process which must be achieved by participants in the conversation. That is to say, turn-taking behaviour is socially constructed behaviour, not the result of an inevitable process. For example, the fact that overwhelmingly one person talks at a time is not the result of any physical or psycholinguistic constraint on human beings and there are also some activities, such as laughter or responses to greetings addressed to a group, which can overlap regularly and unproblematically, and where one person speaking at a time would be very unusual. Moreover, it is not even the case that more than one speaker speaking at a time inevitably causes problems for understanding, as extract (5.1) shows.

#### (5.1) [Car Conversation]

1 Elvis: Like there was a bus right the:re man, in  
2 that fuckin' bli:nd spot, [an' I] looked =  
3 Nick: [Yeah,]  
4→ Elvis: =th[rough an I didn't see ]=  
5→ Sasha: [An he's drivin' through]=  
6→ Elvis: =[anything so I wen' through]  
7→ Sasha: =[an' I'm jus screamin' ] my lung[s out  
8→ Elvis: [.hh An'  
9 you jus screa:med an I just stopped.=  
10 Sasha: =slammed on the breaks. in the middle of  
11 th[e intersection.  
12 Nick: [Didjou have the right of way?

At the turns in lines 4 to 8, Elvis and Sasha produce talk as part of the same story at the same time. However, this does not prevent Elvis from being able to paraphrase Sasha's *an' I'm jus screamin'* in the turn marked b. Clearly, Elvis must have been able to process the overlapping

talk in order to be able to do this, even though he was speaking at the same time. He shows very clearly that he can understand someone else's talk while talking himself.

### Some possible models of turn-taking

In seeking to establish some rules for turn-taking it is important to understand that these rules are enacted interactionally by participants in a conversation. They are not a set of pre-allocated rules for speaker change, although such a set of pre-allocated rules is often posited for speaker change. For example, if people are asked how they know when it is their turn to speak, their intuitive responses often suggest that there is such a set of rules. They will often say that they know they can start speaking because the previous speaker has paused to show the turn has stopped. However, in looking at actual conversation, it becomes clear that pausing is not very useful in determining speaker change. Most speaker changes occur without an appreciable pause after the prior speaker's turn and, in fact, an appreciable pause after a turn may be interpreted as an interactional difficulty or problem of some sort as in extract (5.2).

#### (5.2) [Lunch]

1 Harry: Didjih speak tuh Mary today?  
2→ (0.2)  
3 Harry Did yih speak tuh Mary?  
4 Joy Oh, yea:h I saw her at lunch.

In this interaction, an appreciable pause occurs after Harry's turn. This pause is treated as Joy's not responding and Harry repeats the question. This example shows that an appreciable pause after a speaker finishes is treated not as space for the next speaker to come in, but as a failure of the next speaker to speak. The silence in line 2 can be interpreted by participants as a problem because of the context in which it occurs. The previous speaker has asked a question and a question obliges the next speaker to produce an answer as an immediately next action. In this context, the pause is not seen as a space to show that the prior speaker has finished but that the next speaker has not yet begun, and Harry's repetition of the question shows that this is how he sees the silence. The appreciable space in this extract requires an explanation: in other words, it is *accountable*. The explanation here is treated by Harry as a problem of hearing, although in other contexts different interpretations of silences can also be possible. Silences between turns are, then, not simply spaces where a next speaker hears that a prior speaker has finished.

Silences in talk are also not simply opportunities for a next speaker to begin, and it is possible to find cases in talk where silences occur but where speaker change would be inappropriate, as in extract (5.3).

#### (5.3) [Mary and Jo]

1 Jo: [↑No. that's ↑lovely. ↑No, ↑no. ↑I can see::,  
2 gorgeous. So she hiring a car.  
3→ Mary: No::, she's gone on a (0.3) tour.  
4 Jo: Right.  
5→ Mary: and .h uh (0.3) they go by plane from here to  
Sydney;  
6 Jo: Right;

7 Mary: and then h uh I think h uh >I don't know how  
 8 they get from Sydney to the other place,  
 9 [but then it'll be a bus.<  
 10 Jo: [°Right.°

In (5.3), appreciable pauses of about a third of a second (0.3) appear at each of the arrows, however, these pauses could not be considered as even potential sites for legitimate speaker change as they occur within Mary's on-going and demonstrably incomplete talk. In these cases, the current speaker is treated by the recipient as currently continuing to be the speaker who holds the floor and the pause does not lead to speaker change (Clayman, 2013). Any attempt by Jo to become a speaker at this point would be accountable. From these examples, it is clear that pauses themselves do not function as signals for speaker change but may have other interactional significances.

It is also clear that no other possible set of pre-allocated rules for organising speaker change are in operation. Turn length is not fixed but varies. Sometimes a turn can be a single word, at other times it may be quite a long sentence. A recipient cannot tell simply on the basis of length of utterance when a turn will end. It is also not true that the content of turns is fixed in advanced. What speakers say varies. The sorts of turn-taking systems discussed above are used in some forms of human behaviour - such as fixed turn length in debates or pre-specified content in rituals - but they are not the case for everyday conversation greatly (Sacks, 2004; Sacks et al., 1974).

A model of turn-taking can only account for the facts of turn-taking if it deals with the "randomness" of turn-taking in terms of what is said, for how long and by whom. In order to achieve this, a model of turn-taking needs to be sensitive to each 'next bit' of talk, rather than trying to describe or prescribe behaviour over a whole conversation. Turn-taking works at the level of each next bit, not at the level of the whole conversation because speakers in a conversation only have access to the conversation as it unfolds. Moreover, the action of turn-taking is not imposed externally on a conversation but is run internally by the participants themselves; it is locally organized (that is, it is organized at the moment it happens by the participants themselves) and interactionally managed (that is, it is accomplished within the process of interaction between the participants).

There is a model of turn-taking which is sensitive to the unfolding nature of talk in the work of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), who have proposed such a model of the turn-taking system based on study of a corpus of spontaneously occurring interactions. In order to account for the ways in which speaker change occurs, Sacks, et al. propose that two separate, but interrelated components are involved: a turn constructional component and a turn allocation component. These two components are related by a set of rules. This proposal maintains, therefore, that turn-taking in conversation is an orderly, rule-governed process. Each of these aspects of this turn-taking model will be discussed in detail in the next sections.

### **The turn constructional component**

A first step towards understanding how turn-taking works in conversation involves understanding what turns at talk actually look like. Turns at talk are made up of stretches of language, but, as has already been seen, these stretches of language can vary a lot in terms of

their structure. Sacks et al. (1974) state that turns are made up of units which they call turn constructional units (TCU) and that the composition of TCUs is highly context dependent.

### *Turn constructional units*

A variety of grammatical units may function as TCUs: words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. In fact, any linguistic constituent can potentially function as a TCU. Although TCUs are made up of structural elements, TCUs themselves are not structurally defined units, such as those typically used in grammatical accounts of language, such as word, clause, and sentence. While, these more traditional units of linguistic analysis are defined in structural terms in ways which are context-free, TCUs are context-sensitive and a decision about what constitutes as TCU can only be made in context. Importantly, it must be acknowledged that people do not just talk in sentences, but can use a range of different structures to construct their talk. This can be seen in the following extract.

#### (5.4) [Lunch]

- 1 Joy: hh. so we decided tuh go to that place th's  
jus' opened up.  
2 Harry: where's that  
3→ Joy over near dee jays.  
4 Harry: oh I haven' seen 't.

Extract (5.4) contains TCUs which are also sentences: for example *so we decided tuh go to that place th's jus' opened up.* and *where's that*, and also a TCU, indicated by the arrow, which is a prepositional phrase. This phrasal TCU is nonetheless adequately complete at the point at which it occurs and counts as a whole and an appropriate contribution to the conversation at this point. In context, even linguistic forms which are not usually considered to be able to stand alone can be found as TCUs, as in (5.5).

#### (5.5) [FAM:A2, simplified (C. M. Jones & Beach, 1995)]

- 1 Ther: What kind of work do you do?  
2 Mother: Food service  
3→ Ther: At?  
4 Mother: (A)/(uh) post office cafeteria downtown  
5 main post office on Redwood  
6 Ther: °Okay°

In (5.5) the arrowed turn contains the word *At?*, and in this case it functions as a complete TCU. That is, this single word in and of itself functions as a full unit in this conversation at this point in the conversation. Moreover it is recognized as a sufficient unit by Mother, who produces a response. This response in turn is recognized as appropriate and sufficient by the Therapist, who accepts it with °*Okay*°. Schegloff (1996b) argues that *At?* in this turn is grammatically continuous with the previous talk and that it provides an opportunity for the recipient to produce a unit of talk. This further unit of talk is grammatically continuous with the *At?* and the *At?* implements the action of “prompting” at this point in this conversation. It is clear that *At?* here must be considered to be a complete unit in its own right.

Schegloff (1996b) posits the possibility that phrasal and lexical TCUs may be sequence-specific and occur in positions which are symbiotic with the preceding constituent. This is certainly the case with the TCUs in (5.4) and (5.5) both of which gain their interactional status by being second elements after the turns which precede them. This is particularly the case in (5.5), where the word level TCU *At?* and the Noun Phrase TCU *(A)/(uh) post office cafeteria downtown main post office on Redwood* are both interpretable as complete and meaningful contributions because of the prior talk.

The contextual nature of TCUs becomes clear from examples like those above and it can be argued, as does Schegloff (1996b), that the grammar of TCUs is a positionally sensitive one. It is clearly the case that the word *at* is not always a TCU, nor is it likely that it will often be a TCU and in most contexts it will clearly not be a TCU. *Within its context*, a TCU is a TCU because it is recognisably possibly complete. If a piece of talk is not recognized as possibly complete at a particular point in the ongoing talk, then it is not a TCU.

Together with this notion of possible completion, TCUs are also projectable: that is, a recipient can know roughly what it will take to complete the unit of talk currently underway. This means that speakers are able to project where a TCU underway will be possibly complete and this projection is important for the organization of turn-taking (Liddicoat, 2004a). It is possible to see the ways in which recipients make projections about the trajectory of talk in their spoken language behaviour. In example (5.6), the recipient projects forward to a possible conclusion and produces the same piece of talk at the same time as the speaker.

(5.6) [Jefferson (1983)]

1 Joe: B't he wannid the] dawg dih bite iz wife.  
 2 (0.5)  
 3 (?): [ ] °ehhh°  
 4 Joe: [ ] So †he come[s ho:me one] night ] the sonofa]=  
 5 Carol: [heh heh heh] heh he]h heh heh ]  
 6→ Joe: =bitch [bit hi:m.]  
 7→ Carol: [bit hi:m,]

In order to be able to do this, the recipient is clearly able to tell what it will take to complete the unit underway. The context in which the talk is produced, in particular the line of the transcript, *he wannid the] dawg dih bite iz wife.*, and the sentence structure of the turn so far provide information which aides in projecting the trajectory and assist in the precision timing of Carol's talk. In example (5.7), there is a different realization of TCU projection.

(5.7) [Lerner (1991) C124A/C244A]

1 D: They haftuh run programs for them to rehabilitate  
 2 them tuh- to deal with the new materials. and if  
 3→ they ca:n't,  
 4→ A: They're out.  
 5 (.)  
 6 D: Mm hm,

In this case, A completes D's utterance by providing the *then* component of an *if...then* construction. In this case a single TCU is spread over two turns at talk and, in order to be able to do this, A needs to be able to tell roughly what it would take to complete the TCU under way using the *if...then* syntactic frame to aid the projectability of the talk (Lerner, 1991). TCUs are, then, characterized by the projectability of a possible completion point at some time in the future. The argument is then that TCUs end at places of possible completion. These points of possible completion are called Transition Relevance Places (TRP).

### *Possible completion and turn construction*

So far the term 'possible completion' has been used a number of times in the discussion without considering exactly what the term means and it is now needful to consider this idea in a more focussed way. Possible completion itself requires more development, and there has been a large amount of discussion in CA about what it actually means to say that some stretch of talk is possibly complete.

Sacks, et al. (1974) discuss a number of levels of possible completion which are relevant to TCUs. They argue that a turn at talk can be seen as possibly complete in three main ways. First, it may be grammatically complete: that is, it may be a syntactically complete unit. Secondly, it may be intonationally complete: it may occur with an intonation contour which indicates that the unit is now ended. For example, *what* with rising intonation can be hearable in context as a complete question TCU, while *what* with level intonation may not be hearable as a complete question in the same context. Thirdly, although most importantly, the TCU needs to be complete as an action: it must count as having done what needs to have been done at this point in the conversation, for example having asked a question, provided an answer, issues an invitation, etc. Early discussions of TCUs (see for example Jefferson, 1973; Sacks, 2004; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 1982) have a strong tendency to privilege the role of syntax in determining completion, although in all such discussion the nature of the TCU as action has been important. The idea of a TCU as action has become increasingly important in later discussions. Schegloff (1996b) sees turns as 'interactional habitats' in which language (TCUs) are deposited, and as such places the notion of action at the centre of the nature of TCUs.

Grammatically complete TCUs constitute a complete grammatical unit and language can be grammatically complete in a number of ways. A sentence is a syntactically complete unit of talk but also smaller units can be complete; a word can be a grammatically complete unit, as can be a phrase, such as a Noun Phrase, a Verb Phrase, or any other phrasal construction, as can be seen in (5.8), which has already been discussed above:

(5.8) [(C. M. Jones & Beach, 1995) FAM:A2, simplified ]

- 1 Ther: What kind of work do you do?
- 2 Mother: Food service
- 3→ Ther: At?
- 4 Mother: (A)/(uh) post office cafeteria downtown
- 5 main post office on Redwood
- 6 Ther: °Okay°

In this extract, turns are made up of a sentence in line 1 – a syntactically complete question, or individual words in lines 3 and 6, and a compound word *Food service* in line 2), or a Noun

Phrase A)/(uh) *post office cafeteria downtown*. All of these constitute complete units of interaction. In reality though, turns at talk may have multiple possible completion points within what is nonetheless as single complete syntactic units, as in (5.9)

(5.9) [Car Conversation]

Sasha: o:h god| Elvis| I thought we were dead|  
that day.|

In this example, there is a single sentence *o:h god Elvis I thought we were dead that day*, but within the sentence there are other points at which the talk could form syntactically complete units, marked by //. Thus, a single unit can be built up of other potentially complete units and this raises an issue for understanding syntactic completion; how do participants in conversation choose among the possible components of a turn in organising speaker change?

Given the problem of knowing at which point a complex TCU such as that in (5.9) is complete, researchers such as Ford and Thompson (1996) and Selting (1998) have argued that argue that intonational completion is more important than it may have appeared in earlier work. In producing talk, speakers package their syntactic units within intonation contours and the intonation contour gives information about the way that the syntax of the TCU is being designed. The ending of an intonation contour, either falling or rising, can thus give information about whether or not a turn is possibly complete at a particular point. In (5.9), the punctuation (.) marks a falling intonation on *day*. Thus, at this point both grammatical and intonation completion coincide and can be considered a stronger indication of possible completion than just intonation or syntax alone. However, Walker (2017) notes that intonation is not in itself a predictor of whether or not a speaker will stop talking or continue and it appears that other aspects of the talk and its placement may be relevant for understanding speaker change.

Intonation involves not only the intonation contour, but also other elements of the vocal production of the talk that may also be relevant for understanding turn construction, such as pitch, loudness, tempo or stress (Bergmann, 2018). For example, intonation contours involve not only a final pitch but also a pitch peak that occurs before the end of the contour and may signal an up-coming end of the contour and work to project a possible completion (Schegloff, 1998b). In (5.9), the stress at the beginning of *dead* in *I thought we were dead that day*, is such a pitch peak and foreshadows a possible end of the TCU. Both prosody and grammar work together to construct talk and neither can be considered in isolation from the other (Selting, 2010).

Pragmatic completion refers to the idea that a TCU constitutes a recognisably complete action, for example, questioning, answering, requesting, inviting etc., (see Chapter 10 for more on actions and action formation). Returning to the unusual turn component *at?* in extract (5.10), it is possible to see how pragmatic completion may be significant for understanding where a TCU is possibly complete.

(5.10) [(C. M. Jones & Beach, 1995) FAM:A2, simplified ]

1 Ther: What kind of work do you do?  
2 Mother: Food service  
3→ Ther: At?  
4 Mother: (A)/(uh) *post office cafeteria downtown*

5                    main post office on Redwood  
6 Ther:            °Okay°

Here, the word *at*, considered syntactically as a preposition, would normally project more talk as prepositions usually project an up-coming Noun Phrase. However, in this case, the use of *at* embedded in a context of questioning and as a follow-up of a previous question constitutes a recognisably complete action of questioning, and is responded to as such by the mother, who produces a turn that is recognisably a possibly complete action of answering.

In many cases, a single action may be completed within a single syntactic unit, but some complex actions require more than one such unit to be recognisably complete (Selting, 2000).

(5.11) [L:M: 1:23'10]

1 Laura Whadd'd y' do on the wee:kend.  
2 Mandy: W'll I' was sorta a: quiet one, a' we  
3            only di' one thing rea:lly. That w'z to visit  
4            my mum, who's in the hospital.  
5 Laura: O:h why? ↑Wha's wro:ng.

In this example, Mandy's turn has a number of syntactical and intonational completions, but it is not until *That w'z to visit my mum*, that her turn is hearable as having answered the question that she was asked by Laura. Thus, in order to complete the action that is required in context, Mandy requires more than one TCU to perform the action and it is at this point that speaker change occurs. For a further discussion of multiunit turns and some of the interactional issues involved see later in this chapter)

Ford and Thompson (1996) argue that intonational completion may be more important than syntactic completion as almost all instances of intonational completion in their data coincide with syntactic completion, while instances of syntactic completion only correspond with intonational completion about half the time. However, they develop their argument about the significance of intonation more fully noting that speaker change occurs usually where all three types of completion (grammatical, intonational and pragmatic) co-occur. The concept of pragmatic completion in this study is, however, problematic. While they argue the aim of pragmatic completion is to capture the 'notion of conversational action' (Ford & Thompson, 1996, p. 148), a definition which corresponds to the importance of action accorded to TCUs by authors such as Sacks, et al., they found pragmatic completion as action difficult to operationalize and defined it as follows:

an utterance was required to have a final intonation contour and has to be interpretable as a complete conversational action within its specific sequential context. (Ford & Thompson, 1996, p. 150)

The inclusion of intonation in the definition of pragmatic completion seems to be problematic as it makes it difficult to interpret the significance of their claim that speaker change occurred usually where all three types of completion co-occurred as pragmatic completion must by definition co-occur with intonational completion. The inclusion of intonation in pragmatic completion would seem to blur the distinction between action and intonation, and also to a lesser extent between syntax and action, and it appears that this analysis privileges the linguistic features of TCU over the action being performed. Nonetheless, it remains true that completion

based on the notion of action is difficult to operationalize because such completions are highly sensitive to their context.

Selting (1998) further extends the argument about the relative importance of syntax and intonation in delimiting TCUs and for effecting speaker change. She argues that points of possible syntactic completion are potential completion points for TCUs, but that it is the prosodic features of the talk which signal whether or not the syntactic unit is designed for possible speaker change. This means that a continuing intonation contour effectively over-rides a syntactic possible completion leaving the talk to be heard as incomplete. Selting's proposal is, however, a purely linguistic one which considers only the role of syntax and intonation and the role of linguistic action is not considered in her study. While she does acknowledge the possibility of utterances being 'syntactically, semantically and discourse pragmatically' complete (Selting, 1998, p. 37), she argues that the role of prosody is more important in determining whether a turn is completed or not.

In addition to the elements of syntactic, intonational and pragmatic completion, some non-verbal behaviours may also be implicated in turn-taking (see more on this in Chapter 11). Goodwin (1981) has demonstrated that turn completion may be linked to a combination of gaze and syntax in face-to-face interaction. In particular, the co-ordination of gaze is important for helping to determine whether the end of the talk so far has reached a possible completion point and whether speaker change would be relevant at this point. Goodwin argues that at towards the end of talk speakers direct their gaze towards an interlocutor and withholding gaze from an interlocutor displays that the turn-so-far is incomplete and that securing a recipient's gaze is implicated in passing a turn to a next speaker. Streeck and Hartge (1992) and Mondada (2007b) have shown that gestures can also be relevant for understanding how turns at talk are constructed as gestures provide a resource that can be deployed before a TCU reaches possible completion that can indicate that there is more to come in the turn currently underway. It is also possible for gestures or eye gaze to construct complete turns at talk with no language being used because some gestures can stand in place of linguistic forms (Levinson, 2013). Thus, nodding or shaking one's head can produce an agreement or disagreement turn, waving can constitute a greeting or farewelling turn, or redirecting eye gaze to a previous speaker can be the complete response to a summons turn. More complex, context specific actions can also constitute complete actions in their own right, such as in responses to requests, where, for example, a response to request to pass the salt may be done simply by passing the salt.

Turn construction and the recognition that a turn might be possibly complete at a particular moment in interaction involves a constellation of different linguistic and non-linguistic activities that can be deployed in creating contributions to interaction. Turns at talk are thus not simply linguistic acts that involve the creation of particular linguistic forms. They are rather multimodal constellations of components that work together to construct a turn-so-far as possibly complete or not. There is no single element that works alone to indicate possible completion, although pragmatically complete actions may appear to be more important than other elements in signally possible completion. Gaze and gesture, however, appear to play a more minor role than other features of completion because participants are still able to project completion and organize turn-taking when visual clues are absent, such as in telephone conversations.

The various studies of aspects of completion reveal that the definition of TCUs is problematic in CA and in part the definition problem stems from an attempt to find a decontextualized set of linguistic forms which account for occurrences of speaker change. The discussion turns on

the relative importance of types of completion: syntactic, intonational and pragmatic. This is problematic because a TCU is fundamentally a context-sensitive phenomenon which is not so readily identified in formal terms. The central issue for defining TCUs would, therefore, appear to be the notion of conversational action. If a unit is not potentially complete as a relevant conversational action in its context, it cannot usefully be considered as a constituent unit of a turn, which is itself a site for pursuing some action within conversation and through language.

The discussion above has turned around the notion of *possible* completion and the word 'possible' here is central to the turn constructional component of the turn-taking model. Participants in conversation project *possible* completion not *actual* completion. Actual completion can never be predicted as speakers can and do prolong their talk beyond what is needed to complete a particular action underway. Participants cannot know in advance where a turn will end only when it *could* end (Liddicoat, 2004a). Actual completion is in a sense an irrelevant issue for conversation, as participants need to orient to moments when talk may be complete rather than moments when talk is known to be complete. This can be seen in the behaviour of participants in actual conversation, as in examples (5.12), (5.13), and (5.14).

(5.12) [Trio:II Sacks, et al. (1974)]

1 Penny: An' the fact is I- is- I jus' thought it was so  
2→ kind of stupid [I didn' even say anything [when=  
3→ Janet: [Y- [Eh-  
4 Penny: =I came ho:me.  
5 (0.3)  
6 Janet: Well Estelle jus' called 'n ...

(5.13) [Sacks, et al. (1974)]

1→ A: Uh you been down here before [havenche.  
2→ B: [Yeh.

(5.14) [Jefferson [1973]]

1 Penny: O:kay. I'll see yuh.  
2→ Agnes: A::l?right [Dear,  
3→ Penny: [Bye bye,  
4 Agnes: Bye bye,

In these examples, next speakers begin to talk during the on-going turn of the current speaker. What is of interest here is the placement of these attempts to effect speaker change. In each case, the next speaker begins at a place where the action under way is possibly complete and where the syntactic units being produced are possibly complete, although not at points of intonational completion. In each case, the possible completion is not an actual completion, but rather a projected point at which the talk could relevantly be ended. The issue here is, then, that speakers are waiting to get to a point where the prior speaker's turn is possibly complete so that they can become next speakers. They do not wait to hear actual completeness. This orientation to possible completion allows for a smooth transition with no gap between turns, which could be hearable in some contexts as a delayed or absent response.

### *Transition relevance places*

The notion of possible completion is linked fundamentally to the idea of transition relevance places (TRPs). It has been argued above that there are points where a speaker's talk is possibly complete and that at points of possible completion, speaker change is a possible next action. Such points are transition relevance places, places at which speaker change could be appropriate. This means that TRPs are not places where speaker change has to occur, but rather places where speaker change could occur. In fact, TRPs are the sites in conversation in which speaker change can be a "legitimate next action". That is, speaker change which occurs at a TRP will not normally be heard as interruptive and therefore will not be an accountable action. That is, speaker change is not an appropriate action except at the possible completion of a TCU and attempts at speaker change other than at a TRP are accountable. Once a speaker has begun to speak, that speaker has the right to produce one potentially complete bit of talk and only one such bit of talk. At completion of this TCU, the right to produce the next TCU must be gained interactionally. Because possible completion is transition relevant, current speakers have rights to produce a single TCU and to complete a whole TCU. There are, however, some cases in conversation where speakers do work to gain a right to produce an extended turn at talk which is made up of more than one TCU, for example telling a story. In these cases, the current speaker can be seen as having some rights to produce each next TCU until the extended turn is 'complete'. While such extended turns look quite different from other instances of conversation, the right to an extended turn is still gained interactionally and participants do this by orienting to a turn-taking system which guarantees rights to only a single TCU.

### *Extending turn constructional units*

In conversation, speakers can and do continue to talk beyond the completion of a single TCU and how this occurs will be discussed below. Where talk proceeds beyond a first TRP, this additional talk may involve a new TCU or it may be designed as an increment to a preceding TCU. An increment is a further bit of talk which builds onto the TCU so far, without creating a distinctly new unit (Ford, Fox, & Thompson, 2001). This is what happens in Penny's talk in (5.15).

(5.15) [Sacks, et al. (1974)]

- 1 Penny: An' the fact is I- is- I jus' thought it was so  
2 kind of stupid [I didn' even say anything [when=  
3 Janet: [Y- [Eh-  
4 Penny: =I came ho:me.  
5 (0.3)  
6 Janet: Well Estelle jus' called 'n ...

Penny produces a complex sentence, which is itself a single TCU: and *the fact is I just thought it was so kind of stupid I didn' even say anything when I came home*. This TCU is possibly complete syntactically, intonationally and as an action at the point of its actual completion. However, it is also possibly complete at other points in its trajectory as can be seen from Janet's attempts at speaker change. Penny's talk is possibly complete in both its syntax and as an action at *stupid*, and her next talk is not designed to be a new TCU, but rather as an extension of the previous one. The same is true at *anything*, which is again a possible completion, and which is followed by a further increment to the TCU under way. This means that this turn at talk has

been designed in such a way that continuations beyond possible completions are constructed so that at the end only a single TCU has been produced. While Penny's talk at the possible completions at *stupid* and *anything* are not internationally complete (the transcript shows a continuation in the intonation contour), TCU extensions can also occur where the turn so far is not intonationally complete, as can be seen in (5.16).

(5.16) [Joyce and Stan 2:01-09]

1→ Joyce: Yeah t[hey give it back to you. Later. [(See an')  
2 Stan: [(Yeah the ) [THE WAY I  
3 BEAT MINE it was a pa:rkng ticket. Yihknow,  
4 so I was able ta go ta night court (wu) then beat  
5 the ten dollar ticket.  
6 Joyce: Oh: ,

In Joyce's turn the TCU *they give it back to you* is possibly complete with completed (that is, falling) intonation. Joyce then adds an increment *later* again with again with a completed intonation contour. What she has effectively done here is cancel the prior possible completion and deferred the possible completion to the end of the increment. In fact, she appears to beginning a further increment with *see and* although this TCU remains uncompleted. TCUs are to some extent quite fluid units in the sense that they can be made up of any linguistic constituent and they can be interactionally reshaped during their production (C. Goodwin, 1979; Streeck & Hartge, 1992). Nonetheless, they are always characterized by their status as possibly complete in their context and that speaker change is a possible next action after the completion of a TCU and in some cases a required next action.

The discussion so far has established where speaker change can occur but not how it occurs. The latter is handled by the turn allocation component and the rules which link turn construction to turn allocation.

### Turn allocation

At any TRP, there are two basic ways in which a next speaker can come to have a turn at talk: either the current speaker can select the next speaker, or a next speaker may self-select. These two possibilities, however, are not equally present at the end of every TCU and at any TRP only one of these may be the appropriate way for speaker change to occur.

#### *Current speaker can select the next speaker*

If a current speaker is to select the next speaker, the talk must be designed to achieve this. Only some forms of talk can select next speaker: for example, questions can, but answers do not. If a current speaker produces a question, this talk makes a particular type of action a relevant next action (i.e. an answer) and at the same time may make some recipient the relevant participant to perform that action. Questions, however, do not inherently select a next speaker. A question for example may be addressed to a group, any one of whom could be an appropriate next speaker. Nonetheless questions do make speaker change a highly relevant next action and at the same time constrain what can be considered appropriate talk from the new speaker. A current speaker who selects a next speaker must design the talk in a way which selects this speaker and can do this in a number of ways (Lerner, 2003).

An address term, such as a name or the pronoun *you*, can be used to select a next speaker. However, addressing by itself does not select a next speaker, rather it is the combination of the type of talk in which the address is embedded and the address term which does this, as can be seen in extracts (5.17) and (5.18).

(5.17) [Lunch]

Joy: Have yuh got the papers for the meeting ye' Carol;  
Carol: Yeah=they came in th's morning.

(5.18) [Lunch]

Joy: how's things  
Harry: not ba:d Joy.

In (5.17), Joy selects Carol as the next speaker by a combination of both the question form and the name. Essentially, the question makes speaker change a relevant next action and the naming works to select Carol as the new speaker. If someone other than Carol speaks in this position it would be accountable because the next turn has been allocated to Carol and it is Carol, as the recipient of the question, who is required to provide the answer. A silence after this question would be hearable to participants as Carol's silence and this could be formulated by participants as 'Carol didn't answer'. In (5.18), however, the naming does not work to select a next speaker. Here, Harry's turn is an answer and does not require or constrain future talk. If someone other than Joy talks next it would not be accountable and a silence would not be heard specifically as Joy not doing something.

The use of *you* as an address term creates further complexities in multi-party talk because of the potential vagueness of the reference (Lerner, 1996b), and indicates some other techniques that can be used by current speakers to select next speakers, including context, turn design and non-verbal cues such as gaze direction.

Lerner (1996b) has shown that the use of *you* to identify an addressee functions through features of context and recipient design to uniquely identify referees. Identifying *you* in a multiparty conversation depends on features such as the sequential positioning of the turn which contains the address, visible actions, associations with material objects, and speaker gaze.

(5.19) [Chicken Dinner (Lerner, 1996b)]

Shane: I can't get this thing mashed  
Nancy: You do that too to your potatoes?  
Shane: Yeah

In (5.19), Nancy's turn is explicitly tied to Shane's prior turn and the use of *you* and *your* tie the two turns grammatically. At the same time, Nancy initiates an action, in this case a question, which makes further talk relevant as a next action, that is, an answer. In this context, the *you* can be seen as selecting Shane as the relevant next speaker as the result of the sequential position of the turn containing the reference.

(5.20) [Chicken Dinner (Lerner, 1996b)]

(2.8)

Vivian: C'n you pass the butter,  
(3.1)

In (5.20), Vivian's talk cannot rely on sequential positioning to identify the addressee, but rather relies on environmental cues such as the positioning of the butter in relation to other participants. In Lerner's analysis, the participants use their location in relation to the butter as a resource for determining who the addressed recipient is, and who should perform the required next action.

In addition, gaze may also be deployed in indicating to whom turn at talk is addressed and so select a next speaker (Auer, 2018; C. Goodwin, 1979, 1981; Rossano, 2013b). A recipient who has established eye contact with a speaker can as such be designated as a next speaker where a turn requires some next speaker. However, gaze direction, like naming, is not enough to select next speaker. Speaker selection depends on where in the turn this happens. At the beginning of a turn, gaze can select the primary recipient of talk and over the course of a turn the primary recipient of the talk can change (C. Goodwin, 1979, 1981; Rossano, 2013b).

(5.21) [Car conversation]

Sasha: an all- did he tell yuh about his problems with  
his wife an [that  
Nick: [yuh. oh I knew all about that anyway.  
(0.2)

In this extract, Sasha's *you* addresses Nick primarily as her interlocutor. For a number of lines prior to this extract, Nick has been talking about his experiences with a mutual acquaintance. Sasha's talk in this context is designed to find out if Nick, the previous teller, knows what she does about this acquaintance, and in this context *you* is construable as Nick and not the other potential recipient in this conversation, Elvis, who so far has participated little in this stretch of conversation.

### *Next speaker self-selects*

Self-selection occurs when a participant becomes next speaker, but nothing in the previous talk has selected this person to be next speaker, as in extract (5.22).

(5.22) [SF:ST:4]

1 (0.2)  
2 Sue: Ggo:d whadda Day.  
3 Trish: hh whadda wee[:k.  
4 Mary: [yeh than'g(h)od i's Fr(h) [iday  
5 Sue: [hh. Huh

Here, Sue self-selects as next speaker following a brief silence, but her talk does not select any next speaker. Trish then self-selects immediately as next speaker providing an upgraded version of Sue's prior turn and likewise does not select a next speaker. Mary then self-selects aligning with the prior talk. In contexts, where there is possible competition for who will become the next speaker, possible next speakers may deploy actions as recipients of a turn under way that make claims to become a next speaker. For example, Mondada (2016) has

shown that, in meetings, participants may make claims to become a next speaker by engaging with objects relevant to interaction such as pointing at a part of a document under discussion. Such actions indicate that a current recipient is moving from being a 'non-current speaker' to being an 'incipient speaker' and thus a possible next speaker'.

Self-selection can also occur where the prior talk is designed to require that someone speak next, but does not constrain who that person should be.

(5.23) [SF:ST:4]

Sue:        Hi.  
Trish:      Hi[: Sue  
Mary:        [Hello:,

In this extract, Sue's greeting requires a greeting response, however, it is addressed to both Trish and Mary. As such, it cannot select either of them as next speaker even though it does make it relevant for them to produce greetings. The turn type is constrained by Sue's talk, but not the identity of the next speaker. Trish, therefore, self-selects as next speaker, as does Mary.

However, not all possible verbalization functions as the producer of the verbalization self-selecting as next speaker. For example, laughter does not claim the floor and is commonly done as a choral action in which no one participant could be considered the current speaker. Other forms of talk are designed specifically to show that a participant is not taking the floor. Continuers, such as *yes, mm hm, uh huh*, etc., produced during an extended turn, indicate to the current speaker that the recipient of the extended turn is orienting to the talk as continuing past the current moment and passes up the opportunity to take up speakership at this point (Schegloff, 1982).

In some cases where a next speaker self-selects, this speaker may be the person who produced the immediately prior turn, as in (5.24):

(5.24) [Car conversation]

1     Sasha:  reminds me of this guy I used to go out with  
2                    when I was in school.  
3                    (2.2)  
4     Sasha:  he was real nut case [as well.

Here, Sasha's first turn is possibly complete and does not select a next speaker. No other participant speaks after her turn and there is quite a long silence, which ends when Sasha again becomes the speaker. In so doing, she self-selects as next speaker.

Sacks, et al. (1974) have indicated that there is a bias in talk so that the last speaker but one often becomes the next speaker. This is, however, simply a bias in the system, not an inherent feature of the system itself. Turn allocation cannot be ensured beyond the immediately next turn and at the end of each turn speaker allocation strategies apply equally to all participants: that is any recipient may be selected as a next speaker by the current speaker or any participant may self-select. The observable fact that the last speaker but one becomes next speaker in a particular conversation is not therefore evidence for the application of a rule to that effect, but

rather the locally managed outcome of a set of rules which allocates speakership at the end of each emerging turn.

These options for speaker change can now be mapped onto the turn constructional component by a set of rules in order to provide an account of how and when speaker change happens in conversation.

### **Rules linking turn construction and turn allocation**

Sacks, et al. (1974) have outlined a small set of rules for relating turn allocation to turn construction which co-ordinate speaker change. These rules link turn allocation explicitly to the idea that the possible completion of a TCU is transition relevant, and also provide for an ordering of the two possible options for speaker selection discussed above.

(1) At any transition relevance place of an initial turn constructional unit:

- (a) if the turn so far uses a current speaker selects next technique, then the selected person has the right and obligation to take the next turn to speak, no other speaker has such rights or obligations;
- (b) if the turn so far is not constructed to select a next speaker, then self-selection may, but need not occur. The first participant to begin speaking acquires the right to a turn;
- (c) if the turn so far is not constructed to select a next speaker, the current speaker may but need not continue if no other speaker self-selects.

(2) If the current speaker continues after the initial TCU, these rules apply again at the next transition relevance place, and at each subsequent transition relevance place until speaker change occurs.

Rules 1(a)-(c) are ordered: that is rule 1(b) applies if rule 1(a) has not been applied, and rule 1(c) applies if rules 1(a) and 1(b) have not been applied. Self-selection can only legitimately apply if a 'current speaker selects next' strategy has not been employed, and the current speaker can continue as next speaker only if another speaker does not self-select. These rules, therefore, constrain each other and this constraining effect applies to each of the rules, not just to the lower ordered rules. Thus, if a speaker is going to apply rule 1(a), then the turn has to be constructed in such a way that rule 1(a) has been invoked before the first TRP of the initial unit. If this was not the case, rule 1(b) would apply at that TRP. In the same way, the presence of rule 1(c) necessitates that an application of rule 1(b) can only be assured if it occurs at the first TRP of the initial unit. These rules constrain each other therefore in that each lower order rule can only apply in the absence of a higher order rule, and also in that each higher level rule must be enacted before the first TRP of the initial unit of talk in order to assure its operation.

The ordering of the rules also works to prevent instances of more than one speaker at a time. If the rules were not ordered, a current speaker selects next strategy and a current speaker self-selects strategy could both be legitimately employed at the same time, however the ordering of these rules means that if a current speaker selects next strategy is deployed, then this pre-empts self-selection. This not only blocks an application of self-selection, but also provides for such self-selection to be seen as an accountable action, that is as misplaced in this context.

These rules provide, as an inherent feature of the system, for a limit of turn size to a single TCU – a single possibly complete unit of talk. Speakers gain the right to a single TCU and at the completion of that TCU, the right to speak lapses. The end of each TCU, therefore, becomes an important strategic point in conversation, as it is at this point that the current speaker's speakership is vulnerable and a current recipient's speakership becomes possible. This means that current non-speakers need to monitor the talk in progress for possible completion, because possible completion can allow or require talk. At the same time, speakers need to design their turns in order to get things said by the end of the first TCU.

The existence of rules which constrain the talk in such ways does not inevitably lead to situations in which a speaker produces only a single possibly complete unit or where speaker change occurs at the end of such a unit. Speaker change is a social phenomenon which is worked out by participants throughout the interaction TCU by TCU. The system is locally managed by the participants and is interactionally sensitive. At each point in the talk participants respond to what has just happened and this reaction is used to demonstrate how what has just happened has been understood. Speakers' behaviour differs according to understanding and the next action has the capacity to display the understanding achieved so far. Participants also have to analyse what is going on as it is produced, monitoring for possible completion. This provides a powerful motivation for listening as the end of each TCU may make a display of understanding possible or even necessary because if such a display of understanding is not made when required it is seen as lacking. Participants have to respond directly on completion because the first to respond has rights to the turn. This provides a need, especially in multi-party conversations, for self-selecting next speakers to begin as soon as possible.

### **Features of turn-taking in conversation**

Sacks, et al. (Sacks et al., 1974, pp. 700-701) outline a set of 'grossly apparent facts' observed in their data which need to be accounted for by the turn-taking model, and they indicate how facts these are addressed by the model they propose.

#### **Speaker change recurs, or at least occurs**

The power of the Sacks, et al. (1974) model lies in the fact that it accounts for turn-taking, but does not make it an inevitable consequence of the system. The model does not prevent one participant from dominating the conversation nor does it require all those present to participate at all points in the conversation. The model provides a set of rules which are equally relevant for all participants, but which does not imply or impose equality of participation because the conversation is interactionally created by the participants themselves (Schegloff, 1999b). At the same time, speaker change is built in as a recurrent part of interaction, which operates as a possibility at each possible completion of each turn, because any talk produced must reach a TRP.

#### **One person talks at a time and occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common but brief**

The system allocates to any one speaker the exclusive right to speak until reaching the first possible completion. The exclusivity of this right allows for a standard case where a participant who has become current speaker will get to produce one TCU and attempts at speaker change prior to possible completion will be accountable.

The focus of speaker change at moments of possible completion regularly localizes competition for talk at TCU boundaries. At these boundaries, the inclusion in rule 1(b) of the provision that the first to start has the right to become the current speaker provides a mechanism to deal with simultaneous starts. The model makes simultaneous starts a possibility, but also provides a way to deal with them. The turn-taking system also provides for the possibility of overlap between current speaker and next speaker at a TRP. Because speakers rely on projections of possible completion rather than actual completion, variation in the form or delivery of final components can lead to overlapping talk between the end of one turn and the beginning of the next. As these are places where speaker change could or should occur, the model provides for resolution of such overlaps in the shortest possible time. Thus, the features of the model which lead to the possibility of overlap also provide for the possibility of resolving overlapping talk quickly.

### **Transitions with no gap and no overlap are common**

This is again related to the locus of speaker change being places of possible completion. The projectability of such completions allows for speaker change to occur without a noticeable gap between the prior talk and the current talk in ways which could not be assured by orientations to actual completion. Additionally, projectability allows for the possibility of talk beginning after another speaker has completed an utterance.

### **Turn order varies and the relative distribution of turns is not specified in advance**

The system provides that only the immediately next turn is allocated at any time and that speaker change apply at every possible TRP, with the same series of ordered options for speaker change occurring at each point. The order of speakers is therefore locally controlled by participants. The rule set allows for the possibility of the bias towards the last speaker but one becoming the next speaker mentioned above, but also allows for other possibilities. The bias towards last speaker but one becoming next speaker is therefore locally managed by participants rather than being invoked by the system.

The system does not provide for an equal distribution of turns, nor for a particular concentration of turns. The distribution of turns is locally managed for each conversation. Rule 1(b) in particular allows for any participant to self-select as next speaker and this maximizes the set of potential next speakers at this point, but does not pre-determine which member of this set will be next speaker, except that the first starter gains rights to a turn.

### **Turn size is not fixed, but varies**

Two elements of the system allow for turn size to vary. First, the constituent elements of turns are variable in size, ranging from words to complex sentences. The system requires that a turn contains a possibly complete unit but does not specify in a context-free way, what such a unit will look like. Speakers have a free selection among possible unit types. Secondly, the possibility of current speaker continuing as next speaker allows for the possibility that a turn can contain more than one TCU, or an extension of an existing TCU beyond the first possible completion. The recurrent nature of this rule means that the system does not provide for a maximum turn size, although it does provide for a normal minimum turn size of one TCU.

## **Number of parties can vary**

The turn-taking system is not dependent on a specified number of participants and applies equally to conversations between two people or between much larger groups. In two person conversations, the application of rule 1(b) is less problematic because of the reduced size of the pool of potential next speakers, but the rule set applies equally to these sorts of conversations as well as to larger groups.

At the same time, the nature of the turn-taking system favours interactions within small groups. The rule set refers to only two participants, current speaker and next speaker, and this, coupled with the bias towards last speaker but one becoming next speaker, allows for the possibility of some participants being left out where there are three or more potential participants. In many cases in conversations between four or more people, where turns at talk are concentrated among only a small number of participants, the conversation may schism into two or more parallel conversations (Egbert, 1997). Within each of these conversations the turn-taking system will apply only to that particular conversation as long as the schism lasts.

## **Talk can be continuous or discontinuous**

The turn-taking model explicates how talk can continue to occur in a conversation, but also provides for the possibility that talk may cease for a time during a conversation. Rules 1(b) and 1(c) provide for the possibility of some participant becoming next speaker, but they do not oblige any participant to become next speaker. This means that when a current speaker stops and has not selected a next speaker, it is possible that no speaker will self-select to start or continue to speak and a lapse in the talk results. At the same time, if a current speaker selects a next speaker, a silence would be problematic, because rule 1(a) both confers a right to speak and an obligation to speak. The system, therefore, provides for situations in which silences will be heard differently. In some sequential positions a silence will be hearable as a particular participant's silence and will be accountable as a lack of talk from that participant. In other sequential positions, a silence will not be hearable as anyone's particular silence, but as a lapse in the conversation – as a discontinuity in the talk. Once a conversation has become discontinuous, it can be revived by any participant self-selecting as next speaker.

## **Repairing turn-taking errors and violations**

The model proposed by Sacks, et al. (1974) is, as has been seen, susceptible to troubles in its organization, such as overlapping talk or silences, and because the system is interactionally accomplished by participants in conversation, violations of the system must inevitably occur. If the turn-taking system is to function, there must be some mechanisms by which the normal functioning of the system can be restored (for a fuller discussion of repair see Chapter 9).

In English, there are a number of explicit devices designed specifically for repairing problems of turn-taking. These include devices like *Who me?* for repairing problems relating to 'current speaker selects next' or *Excuse me* for repairing speaker change at points in the talk where such change is accountable. In addition, there are a range of less explicit interactional practices relating to dealing with problematic instances of overlapping talk (see Chapter 6). For example, practices such as false starts, repeating or recycling speech which has occurred in overlap, and various hitches and perturbations in the delivery of talk in overlap can be deployed by speakers to repair turn-taking problems, as can stopping talk before possible completion. Some of these devices (*who me?*, *excuse me*, etc.) are external to the turn-taking system itself, while others

(stopping, continuing, recycling, etc.) are internal to it. Stopping before possible completion as a device for repairing 'more than on speaker at a time' is based on the turn constructional module which provides for speaking to possible completion of a TCU. Sacks, et al. (1974) also argue that the application of the 'current speaker continues' strategy can also be seen as a repair device in its own right in that it serves to repair an absence of speaker change after a TRP. At the same time, Sacks, et al. (1974) argue that the turn-taking system itself provides constraints on other types of repair behaviour. As such, problems of hearing and understanding are not done until a turn has been completed: that is, at the TRP after the repairable has occurred. Repair is initiated by recipients at the moment it occurs but is integrated into the turn-taking system relevant to conversation.

## Turns and TCUs

The argument so far has been that speakers gain rights to produce a single TCU when they gain the floor and that this right expires at the first possible completion point unless the right is re-established. This gives the impression that a turn at talk consists of only a single TCU, and to some extent this is normally the case. However, in conversation other possibilities are also found. A turn at talk may sometimes consist of more than one TCU, and sometimes a single TCU may be constructed over a series of turns and by more than one participant.

### *Multi-TCU turns*

The possibility of a turn including more than one TCU has already been raised above as an operation of rule 1(c), current speaker continues, which allows for current speakers continuing speaking and producing a new TCU, leading to a multi-TCU turn at talk. There are, however, other ways in which speakers may be able to produce more than one TCU in a turn. In all cases, however, being able to produce more than one TCU in a turn is the result of interactional work, not the result of a right to produce more than one TCU. In other words, there is no guarantee that a speaker will be able to produce more than one TCU before speaker change occurs and longer turns are created jointly as the work of the speaker and of the recipient. Speakers can carry out a project of gaining a multi-unit turn at one of three points in a turn: at its beginning, at its middle and at its end (Schegloff, 1982).

At the beginning of a TCU, the speaker may produce a device which indicates that there is a longer than usual piece of talk to come. One such device is producing a list beginner such as 'first of all'. List beginners make a claim for a certain type of structure as the proposed action underway. Lists are themselves multi-part activities, typically but not universally, being made up of two or three parts (Jefferson, 1990). A list beginner can, therefore, indicate that what is to come will be completed when it is hearable as a list and in so doing foreshadow a more complex turn at talk. A second common, but less overt, device found at TCU beginnings is audible breathing. Like a list beginner, a large audible in-breath can indicate that there is a longer than usual bit of talk to come and more breath will be needed to get through it.

In the middle of a TCU, devices can be employed which project more talk to come. These devices include markedly first verbs which indicate more to come. For example, the verb *tried* in English presupposes the idea of failure, as is shown in (5.25).

(5.25) [Lunch]

1 Harry: so did- did you ask him if he w'd do the session



maximal incompleteness of the unit she has just launched. By producing the rush through she has become the next speaker and having ensured her speakership through the early start can pause without the possibility of transition relevance occurring.

Speakers may use rush throughs to add something new to the turn is not connected to the talk in the turn so far (Local & Walker, 2004).

(5.28) [Holt.5.88.1.5.20.finger (Local & Walker, 2004)]

- 1 Rob: I just fee::l:-(0.4) if they're going to  
2 go the wa::y: of the modern schoo:ls  
3 there's an awf:ul- they're caught between the  
4 two that's their pro[blem  
5 Les: [that's ri:ght  
5 (0.3)  
6 Rob: and they've got to go:: (. ) you know really  
7→ get their finger out<what do you think of Ann  
Percy  
8 (. )  
9 Les: .hhhhh we::ll do you kno:w e-I wuh-I: have a  
10 certain sneaking respect for her  
11 Rob: mm:[:

In this extract, Rob makes an abrupt change of topic from talking about schools to talking about a specific individual. She does this by rushing through from one unit to the next in a way that joins the two prosodically although they have separate interactional purposes. In this turn, the new element introduced into the turn involves a change of topic and the opening of a new action within the turn.

Another mechanism that can be used to construct multiunit turns by manipulating the transition from one TCU to another is a pivot (Walker, 2007). A pivot is a short item of talk that is grammatically a part of the TCU currently under way and also of a new TCU that is produced in the same turn, as in (5.29).

(5.29) [B.IV.4-718s; PIV014 (Walker, 2007)]

- Lot: so I went down there and got a- (. )  
Rancho a fresh one  
(0.6)  
→ Emm: oh that's what I'd like to have is a fresh one

In turn 3, Emma's turn is made up of two components *oh that's what I'd like to have* and *what I'd like to have is a fresh one* that are joined by a shared item *what I'd like to have*, that is a pivot. Her turn reaches a possible completion at the end of *what I'd like to have* but the talk continues on with further words that continue the talk that has been produced, although with problematic grammar. The turn is also produced as part of a single intonational contour and with other prosodic features, such as the tempo of the talk, its amplitude, etc. that indicate that it is designed as a continuation of the talk so far. Walker (2007) argues that such turns have an internal structure that can be characterised as consisting of a pre-pivot (the talk prior to the

shared item), the pivot itself (the shared item) and a post-pivot (the talk that follows the shared item), but which are themselves produced as a single unit of talk, as diagrammed in (5.29’).

(5.29’)

|           |                       |                |
|-----------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Pre-pivot | Pivot                 | Post-pivot     |
| oh that’s | what I’d like to have | is a fresh one |

Turn designs such as those in (5.29) are highly context specific and are designed for a specific point in a specific interaction. However, Clayman and Raymond (2015) have identified a set of pivots that are less context dependent and which can be deployed in similar ways, including address terms, quotatives (e.g. *X said*), interrogative formulations (e.g. *don’t you know*) and discourse fillers (e.g. *you know, now*).

(5.30) [Rahman:A:2:JSA(9): Jenny’s weight (Clayman & Raymond, 2015)]

1 Jen: Oh: e-ye- ey list'n I:'m d<I went on the scale  
 2 yestee I'm ten stone now,  
 3 (0.5)  
 4 Ann: Well now y[ou don't look it]  
 5 Jen: [ T e n s t o :]ne:.  
 6→ Ann: 'don't look it Jen ah must be honest.

In (5.30), the structure is slightly different from (5.29) because the talk is possibly complete before the address term is used and again at the end of the address term (5.30’) see rather than being seamlessly fused as was the case for (5.29). However, the turn that is produced is grammatically coherent and works as a complete syntactic unit.

(5.30’)

Ann: 'don't look it | Jen | ah must be honest. |

Nonetheless, it works in the same way in the interaction to extend the talk and is delivered prosodically in a similar way to (5.29) in a single intonation contour, with the same tempo, etc. as is shown in (5.30’’).

(5.30’')

|                |       |                    |
|----------------|-------|--------------------|
| Pre-pivot      | Pivot | Post-pivot         |
| 'don't look it | Jen   | ah must be honest. |

Other modular pivots work in the same way in that they contain possible completions but still produce a turn in which the pivot joins two items to create a multi-unit turn.

In the discussion above, the multi-unit turns were launched by work done by the current speaker, but multi-unit turns do not only result from the behaviour of the current speaker within a current turn, but can be launched by a prior speaker. Devices which do this include:

1. current speaker producing a single TCU which counts as a story preface, and which solicits an extended turn for the speaker in the next turn but one (see chapter 15)
2. prior speaker soliciting something which by its nature is a multi-unit turn, such as a story in response to a question
3. current speaker producing a preliminary to a preliminary, such as *Can I ask you a question? Can I ask you a favour?* (Schegloff, 1980), which solicits an extended turn in the next turn but one (see chapter 8).

The common element in all of these devices is that they are interactionally accomplished between the participants to the talk. None of the devices ensures a multi-unit turn, but rather provides an indication that a multi-unit turn is a possible action for a particular participant. Whether or not the participant produces a multi-unit turn depends as much on a recipient allowing the turn as it does on the speaker producing it.

### *Multi-turn TCUs*

It is possible in some cases that a TCU can be distributed over more than one turn at talk. Lerner (1991, 1996a) has identified compound TCUs with two part formats where this may be possible. Lerner identifies units such as *if ... then* and *when ... then* construction as typical examples of these compound TCUs, as in (5.31).

(5.31) [Smith: Thanksgiving (Lerner, 1996a)]

1 Lynn: When you don't get any appreciation back from  
2 teachers, well its like ferget it.

These TCUs are made up of two components, a preliminary component which has its own projectable possible completion, and which also projects a possible form for the final component of the TCU and the TCU as a whole. It is, however, only in the final component that the possible completion of the TCU as a whole becomes roughly predictable. These units, Lerner argues, provide both recognisable possible completion and also projectable possible completion, which provide resources for recipients to provide an anticipatory completion, as in (5.32).

(5.32) [GTS (Lerner, 1996a)]

1 Dan: When the group reconvenes in two weeks=  
2 Roger: =they're gunna issue strait jackets

In this extract, the *when ... then* structure provides both a place for anticipatory completion – the end of the preliminary component – and also a form – the projected final component. The next speaker is able to predict roughly where the turn at talk will be complete and provide a candidate version of that completion (Liddicoat, 2004a). The result is that a single TCU is spread over two turns at talk by two speakers. Lerner (1996a) characterizes what is happening here as conditional access to the turn space, because the speaker change here is highly constrained. The next speaker must provide talk which completes the prior TCU and talk which is not hearable as completing the TCU would be accountable. As such, the result is a collaboratively completed TCU.

Sacks (1992: Fall 1965, Lecture 3) has identified another device which leads to the development of a single TCU across multiple turns at talk. In this case, however, rather than being based on a two part format, it is achieved by adding increments to the talk of a prior speaker so that the talk produced becomes effectively part of a single grammatical unit.

(5.33) [(Sacks, 1992) Fall, Lecture 7]

- 1 Joe We were in an automobile discussion.
- 2 Henry: Discussing the psychological motives for
- 3 ( ): hhhhhhh
- 4 Mel: Drag racing in the streets.

In each of the turns at talk by Henry and Mel, the current speaker adds an increment to the prior talk, and the talk over the turns has the form of a single sentential unit. Mel provides a collaborative completion for Henry's talk, but in this case it is based on the predicability of Henry's TCU so far. Henry does something different from the cases we have considered so far: he produces a further increment to Joe's already possibly complete utterance. In this case, the access to the turn space is not conditional and the talk in this position is not constrained. The talk at this point is possibly complete without projecting more talk. The next speaker, however, produces talk which is designed as second to the prior turn and which is implicated in the action undertaken by the prior turn. Schegloff (1996b) analyses turns such as those in (5.33) as TCUs which are designed not to have TCU beginnings: that is they are designed not to start at a new point but to continue or augment prior talk.

These examples show that, while it is a feature of turn-taking that a speaker has the right to produce a single TCU and only a single TCU, this feature is not a deterministic rule. Instead, it provides a resource to which participants orient in creating their talk and which can be deployed in talk to achieve social effects. Phenomena such as multi-TCU turns and multi-turn TCUs do not, therefore, provide evidence against a basic organizational pattern of 'one TCU and only one TCU', instead they provide evidence for participants' orientation to this pattern and demonstrate that this orientation is a resource for constructing participation in talk.

## Conclusion

The turn-taking system proposed by Sacks, et al. (1974) is a system which is both context free and context sensitive. It is context free in the sense that it is not dependent on characteristics of the talk, of the topic or of the participants. As such, it applies in any conversation. At the same time, it is context sensitive in that what counts as possible completion determining speaker change varies according to what has gone before in the interaction and that mechanisms for turn allocation can be sensitive to the talk preceding the TRP. The turn-taking system provides a basis for the nature and organization of conversation. It very strongly links the construction of talk and the allocation of talk so that these two facets of talk can be integrated into a single set of procedures. The turn constructional and the turn allocational components of the Sacks, et al. model are themselves resources which speakers can draw upon in order to construct talk. The components, and the rules which relate them, are not static invariable constructs for organising talk, but rather are deployable resources which can be used to claim or demonstrate understanding and to organize participation.

## Exercise

Using a transcription of about 50 turns of talk, work through the transcript turn by turn and consider how the turn-taking is being organised.

1. Begin by considering the turn construction:

A. Identify the syntactic completion points within each turn at talk. For each turn consider:

- a) Is the turn made up of a single grammatical unit or more than one grammatical unit?
- b) Is the turn syntactically possibly complete at more than one point?
- c) How does the turn begin grammatically? Is the turn designed to begin a new syntactic unit or is it designed in some way to continue previous talk?
- d) How does the turn end grammatically?

B. Identify the intonational completion points. For each turn consider:

- a) whether the turn is made up of one intonational contour or more
- b) whether the intonation contour is falling, rising, level or some other shape
- c) the point at which the intonation is complete and how this relates to the grammar of the turn

C. Identify the action (or actions) being performed in the turn and the point at which this action becomes recognisable.

2. Next, identify the points at which speaker change occurs. Note how this relates to the features of turn construction you have already identified.

3. Finally, examine the turn allocation in the extract. For each turn:

- a) Does the current speaker select a next speaker? If so how is this done? What happens after the speaker is selected?
- b) If the current speaker does not select a next speaker, who begins to speak? How is this done?
- c) Is there any evidence that speakers need to repair problems of speaker change? What is this evidence?

## Further reading

Sacks, Harvey, Emanuel A. Schegloff, & Gail Jefferson. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organisation of turn-taking for conversation. *Language*, 50, 696-735.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. (1996). Turn organization: One intersection of grammar and interaction. In E. Ochs, E. A. Schegloff & S. A. Thompson (Eds.), *Interaction and grammar* (pp. 52-133). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Chapter 6 Gaps and overlaps in turn-taking

### Focus

- The notion of the transition space and the ways it can be modified by participants for interactional purposes.
- The interactional significance of gaps in talk.
- The interactional significance of overlaps in talk and how overlaps are managed by participants.

### Introduction

The preceding chapter examined speaker change as it relates to transition relevance places: points at which speaker change becomes a possible next action. It was argued that speaker change is a relevant next action at such a place and that speaker change typically occurs at such a place with neither a gap nor an overlap. However, both gaps and overlaps do occur in talk and they have an effect on the interaction. That is, gaps and overlaps are interpretable as doing something interactionally. Sometimes gaps and overlaps are problematic for turn-taking in conversation; however this is not always the case. In order to develop a fuller understanding of how turn-taking works and when gaps or overlaps become interactionally problematic, the idea of a transition relevance place needs to be considered in relation to the idea of a *transition space* (Jefferson, 1986; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 1996b). The transition space can be thought of as that part of a stretch of talk in which transition may occur and it can be characterized as commencing just prior to a TRP and finishing just after the end of a TRP. The idea of a transition space gives a sense of duration to the locus of speaker change and it is possible to identify a normal transition space, in which there is no gap and no overlap and deviations from this norm. The normal value for the transition space, a beat of silence, indicates that nothing special is being done in the transition between speakers. However, it is possible that the transition space may be longer than normal, for example as a gap, or shorter than normal, as in the case of overlap. Both of these possibilities have a interactional importance above and beyond speaker change itself.

### Increased transition space

A lengthened transition space results in a silence in the talk. Silences work in different ways in different contexts and have different interpretations in these contexts. When a silence occurs at the end of a completed action in the talk, such as after the answer to a question, the silence is not attributable to any particular speaker, as is the case in extract (6.1).

(6.1) [HG:II:15 (Button & Casey, 1984)]

1 N: =You'll come about (.) eight. Right?=  
2 H: =Yea::h,=  
3 N: =Okay.  
4 (0.2)  
5 N: Anything else to report,

In this extract the action being undertaken is completed and it is possible either of the speakers could legitimately speak in the place occupied by the 0.2 second silence and the possible

contribution that could be made to the talk here is relatively unconstrained. Moreover, the silence here is not attributable to a particular participant not speaking, that is N's silence is no more and no less relevant to the interaction than H's. In this extract, neither party is talking and neither is required to talk. This is not the case, however, in extract (6.2).

(6.2) [Lunch]

→ Harry: Didjih speak tuh Mary today?  
(0.2)  
Harry: Did yih speak tuh Mary?  
Joy: Oh, yea:h I saw her at lunch.

In this extract, the silence is hearable as belonging to one of the participants (that is, Joy). Harry has produced a turn at talk which requires further talk from Joy – an answer to the question. Harry has selected next speaker in his turn and this next speaker has an obligation to speak on completion of this turn, as was seen in Chapter 5. The silence here is therefore attributable to Joy and is interpretable as Joy not speaking. Here, joy's silence is interactionally relevant: she is not speaking in a place where she is required to speak. Thus, while it is true that neither party is speaking during the silence, this is not a complete description of the pause, as talk is accountably absent for only one of the participants.

When they occur, silences are treated in different ways in each of the two contexts. Where a silence does not belong to any particular speaker, it may become quite prolonged, and may result in a lapse in the talk. These lapses may be quite long and in some cases, such as where participants are travelling together, may be measurable in minutes or even hours. However, where a silence is attributable to an individual participant, it is likely to be repaired if it becomes too long as in extract (6.2). Joy's silence is accountably absent and is therefore interpretable – it does something or indicates something about the interaction at this point. The presence of such a silence is usually interpretable as an indicator of some problem; in this case as a problem of hearing, and Harry repeats his original turn at talk as an attempt to repair the problem. Silences after a possible completion can also be repaired by the current speaker continuing with further talk as in (6.3):

(6.3) [OH: Anne & Beth 15]

Anne: so are yih gonna be free on the weekend,  
(0.4)  
Anne: say on Saturday  
Beth: yeah

In Anne's first turn she produces a question and in so doing she produces talk which requires a response from Beth. As such, the 0.4 second silence is attributable to Beth, who is not providing an answer to the question. As with extract (6.2), the silence in extract (6.3) is interpretable as an indicator of some problem, however in this case, Anne does not treat the turn as not having been heard, but rather a problem with the form of the turn itself. Anne's second turn adds an increment to her previous turn, giving additional precision about her prior *on the weekend*. This increment has the impact of repositioning the silence from being an inter-turn silence during which Beth is not speaking, to being an intra-turn silence during which Anne is not speaking. The increment here is a sense undoes the fact that Beth is not speaking

and recharacterizes the silence as an instance of Anne not speaking. The effect of this is to undo the interactional problem occasioned by the prior talk.

In the above extracts it is clear that where a speaker expands the transition space by not providing talk which has been projected by prior talk, this expansion is interpretable as indicating some problem for the talk. The nature of the problem, however, is not specified by the expanded transition space itself, but rather by the context in which the silence is heard.

### Reduced transition space

One way to reduce the transition space is for next speakers to *latch* their talk to the talk of the prior speaker. When a speaker latches talk to the prior turn, there is no beat of silence between the turns, but there is also no overlap.

(6.4) [NB:II:3:R:1 (Jefferson, 1986)]

Emma: G'morning Letitia=  
Lottie: =u-hHow' r YOU:.=  
Emma: =FI:NE

In extract (6.4), the transition between turns at talk is done with what Jefferson (1986) calls “absolute adjacency”; immediately after Emma finishes, Lottie starts and immediately after Lottie finishes Emma starts. The beat of silence which is the normal value of the transition space is not present.

The transition space may be further reduced to create a small amount of overlapping talk between the current speaker and the next speaker. Overlapping talk is often thought of as interruption, but the term *interruption* really conflates a number of different interactional features of overlapping talk. Overlapping talk can be either problematic or unproblematic. Small amounts of overlap do not usually seem to be problematic, as they are not treated as such by participants. Longer overlaps, however, may be problematic and speakers may do things through their talk to deal with the problem. The term *interruption* is best reserved for these problematic overlaps.

It is also important not to consider overlap simply as something that the speaker entering the talk does to the speaker who currently has the floor. Overlapping talk is an interactional phenomenon which is produced by speakers together. In some cases, overlap may be occasioned by a speaker continuing past a possible completion, as in extracts (6.5) and (6.6), which we discussed in the previous chapter.

(6.5) [(Sacks et al., 1974)]

A: Uh you been down here before [havenche.  
B: [Yeh.

(6.6) [(Jefferson, 1973)]

Penny: O:kay. I'll see yuh.  
→ Agnes: A::l?right [Dear,  
→ Penny: [Bye bye,  
Agnes: Bye bye,

In these examples, the overlap can be seen as the result of the current speaker continuing beyond a TRP, rather than the next speaker unambiguously reducing the transition space by beginning to speak just before possible completion. The resulting overlap is short and is not treated by the participants as a problematic instance of two people speaking at the same time: there is no attempt to repair the overlap, or to undertake any other actions relating to the overlap.

Not all unproblematic overlap is produced by a speaker speaking beyond a TRP. Jefferson (Jefferson, 1986) has identified cases in which a next speaker does not wait for possible completion but starts speaking just before a possible completion, as in extracts (6.7) and (6.8).

(6.7) [Crandall:2-15-68:93 (Sacks et al., 1974)]

A: Well if you knew my argument why did you bother  
to a:[sk.  
B: [Because I'd like to defend my argument.

(6.8) [Her:01:2:2 (Jefferson, 1986)]

Jean: So well they won't be here Boxing [Day;  
Doreen: [Oh ↓well  
that doesn't mattuh

In these extracts, the next speaker begins to talk slightly before possible completion. In extract (6.7), the overlap begins mid-word, only two phones before possible completion, while in extract (6.8), Doreen's talk begins one word (or alternatively one syllable) before possible completion. The overlaps do not appear problematic – the possible completion is projectable, speaker change is effected and “one speaker speaks at a time” is restored quickly at the possible completion itself. In these cases, the speakers have reduced the transition space through the timing of their own talk.

The construction of a reduced transition space may also be the result of the current modifying talk in such a way that a reduced transition space results, especially by modifying the rhythm of their talk.

(6.9) [263 (Schegloff, 1986a)]

1 Hyla: Hwaryuhh=  
2 Nancy: =Fine how' r you.  
3 Hyla: Okay:[y  
4 Nancy: [Goo:d.  
5 (0.4)

In extract (6.9), Hyla's *okay:y* with its very lengthened final glide produces a turn at talk which is longer than what would have been projected from the beginning of the turn at talk. As such, Nancy's *goo:d* which begins just before completion has the effect of an early entry into her turn, but the early entry is in part due to the change in the rhythm of Hyla's talk.

In some cases, overlap is brought about by the first speaker producing more talk, where such talk is not usually expected, as in extract (6.10).

(6.10) [Her:OII:2:7:5:R (Jefferson, 1986)]

Doreen: Yes well pop in on th'way back'n pick it up  
Katie: °Thank you ve'y much° eh ha-how are you ↓ all.  
[Yer a l[ittle ti:red] °nah°  
Doreen: [Oh wir [all fi:ne, ] Yes I'm jus: sohrta  
clearing up

In this extract, Katie produces a complete question selecting a next speaker and requiring her to talk. At this point she should normally stop to allow the answer to be produced. Doreen's talk orients to the production of the question and she begins as next speaker. However, Katie also produces a candidate answer at the same time.

These examples reveal that overlapping talk is an interactional achievement rather than being simply the case of mistiming of the next speaker's entry into the talk or an interruption of the current talk. In fact, in extract (6.9) in particular, the overlap appears to have been engineered by the current speaker. As an interactional achievement, interruption is an interpretable action in talk, and the reduction of the transition space is meaningful in context. A reduced transition space may be deployed by next speakers to achieve certain interactional ends. It can, for example, be used where there is possible competition for the floor between possible next speakers. In Chapter 5 it was argued that where more than one speaker starts at about the same time, the first speaker to start usually gets the turn. This means that there is a motivation for starting early and a reduced turn space allows the possibility of pushing the onset of talk to an earlier point than a normal transition space, and in so doing increasing the possibility of becoming the first speaker to start. In extract (6.11), Carol uses a reduced transition space to gain early entry to her turn at talk, and proceeds to tell a second story in response to Joy's earlier telling.

(6.11) [Lunch]

1 Joy: that w'z r:eally a:weful b'd in thuh end we sorta  
2 had a good t[i:me  
3→ Carol: [yeh=th[a' w'z like what=  
4→ Harry: [i-  
5 Carol: = happen' tuh us when we wen' up the coas' we had  
...

Carol's strategy seems to have been quite successful as it pre-empts Harry's becoming next speaker when he begins to talk after possible completion. Had Carol waited until the TRP, both she and Harry would have started to talk simultaneously, and Harry may even have emerged as next speaker. However, by the time Harry begins speaking, Carol has already begun her talk and Harry drops out immediately.

If gaining speakership through an early start were the only outcome which can be achieved by a reduced transition space, many cases of reduced transition spaces in conversations with only two participants where competition for the floor is less of an issue would be unexpected, as the rules relating to speaker change at TRPs would seem to preclude such a motivation. Early entry into a turn is not only deployable as a way to gain speakership; it also creates interactional effects. These effects vary a lot with context. In extract (6.12), the overlapping talk serves to show understanding.

(6.12) [(Jefferson, 1983)]

1 Joe: B't he wannid the] dawg dih bite iz wife.  
2 (0.5)  
3 (): [ ]°ehhh°  
4 Joe: [ ]So †he come[s ho:me one] night ] the sonofa]=  
5 Carol: [heh heh heh] heh he]h heh heh ]  
6→ Joe: =bitch [bit hi:m.]  
7→ Carol: [bit hi:m,]

In this example, Carol's overlap is a demonstration that she understands the trajectory that Joe's talk has projected – that she is 'tuned in' to the story. It is a much stronger display of understanding than a repetition after a normal transition space would have been and is also a stronger indication of Carol's involvement as a recipient for the story. Carol uses the context and the unfolding talk as a resource for collaboratively completing Joe's turn at talk and in so doing asserts her understanding and displays understanding of the humour involved in the telling (Liddicoat, 2004a).

A reduced transition space is also common in cases of disagreement or rejection of prior talk, as in extract (6.13).

(6.13) [Debbie and Shelly 3:12]

1 Debbie: I mean at a:ll.  
2 Shelley: alright, [well don get ma:d at me.  
3→ Debbie: [.hh [.HH I'M NOT MA:D but it  
4 jus seems like its like you can't do anything  
5 unl;ess there's a gu:y involved an it jus pisses  
6 me o-<I'm jus bein rea:l ho:nest ya cuz it's like;  
7 .hh[h [why=  
8 Shelley: [whe[n  
9 Debbie: wouldn:t- why wouldn't you g,b'cuz >I mean< thats  
10 what Jay Tee told me you told hi:m;

In the arrowed turn, Shelley begins her turn in overlap with Debbie's talk, beginning her in-breath before Debbie's first possible completion (ma:d) and continues to overlap with the emerging talk. The effect this overlap gives is of strong disagreement, beginning at the first place at which disagreement is possible.

Similarly, overlapping talk can also be used to display enthusiasm, as in extract (6.14).

(6.14) [SJ: 11]

Sally: wull y-I met this really cu::te [guy,  
Jean: [OH WO::W REally?

In this extract, Jean's early entry in the turn produces an effect of strong interest through quick up-take of the topic. In her talk the loudness and the *wow* both indicate a strong interest and this is further reinforced by the early entry Jean makes into her response to Sally's talk. Extracts

(6.12), (6.13) and (6.14) all exploit early entry into the turn to show quick uptake of the trajectory of the prior speaker's talk and uses this quick uptake to emphatically display understanding of the talk, thereby strengthening the effect of the talk produced. The effect or enthusiasm, disagreement, etc., however, is contextual: it is achieved by particular talk produced in relation to the talk it follows rather than being signalled by the early entry itself.

### **Problematic overlap**

In the cases discussed above, overlapping talk occurs in places which are just prior to possible completion, that is, within the transition space, and produces very short overlaps. The overlapping talk registers some interactional goal is being undertaken in the talk and is not treated by participants as problematic. Cases of reduced transition space are not, however, the only instances of overlapping talk found in conversation. Some overlap occurs at a point in the talk which is prior to the beginning of the transition space – that is, it does not orient to the upcoming completion of talk. Where this happens, the overlap is not quickly resolved by one speaker reaching possible completion and so longer overlap is a possibility in these contexts.

In some cases of overlap, the entry of the next speaker during another's talk can be seen as a miscue in the turn-taking system, as was seen in the discussion in the last chapter of the talk repeated in extract (6.15).

(6.15) [Trio:II (Sacks et al., 1974)]

1 Penny: An' the fact is I- is- I jus' thought it was  
2→ so kind of stupid [I didn' even say anything=  
3→ Janet: [Y-  
4 Penny: =[when I came ho:me.  
5→ Janet: [Eh-  
6 (0.3)  
7 Janet: Well Estelle jus' called 'n ...

Here, Janet produces overlapping talk at possible completion places in Penny's talk; that is, at places where speaker change is possible. However, Penny's turn is not actually complete at these possible completions and Janet and Penny are speaking in overlap. In these cases, extended overlap is a possibility where two speakers are beginning TCUs at the same time. In this extract, the problem does not persist as it is resolved by Janet discontinuing her talk.

Another possible source of overlapping talk is a simultaneous start by two self-selecting speakers. This can happen when the prior speaker does not select a next speaker and two (or more) next speakers begin at the same time (6.16). It can also happen where, in the absence of some other speaker starting a turn at talk, the prior speaker self-selects as next speaker at the same time as some other speaker self-selects (6.17).

(6.16) [Frankel: 67 (Sacks et al., 1974)]

1 Mike: I know who d' guy is.=  
2 Vic: =[He's ba::d.  
3 James: [You know the gu:y?

(6.17) [UTCL J66.3 (Drummond, 1989)]

1 X: Is that who we use to do those dividers  
2 Y: Yeah.  
3 (0.9)  
4 Y: [and she] said it took- they didn't do- (.)  
5 X: [ Well ]  
6 Y: very good proof reading or anything

In both these extracts, two speakers begin a TCU at the same time. Sacks, et al. (1974) have noted that where two speakers self-select as next speaker, the first to begin gets the turn. However, this is of no help in the present cases as there is no speaker who begins first. In such cases, the overlapping is a problematic instance of more than one speaker at a time.

In some cases, overlapping talk begins just after a prior speaker has begun to speak, as in extracts (6.18) and (6.19).

(6.18) [NB:IV:3:R:5 (Jefferson, 1986)]

Lottie: becuz they would really be the Spri:ng.  
Let' [s see tha]t's twunny fi:' dollars ...  
Emma: [ Ye a h.]

(6.19) [JG:I:24:8-9 (Jefferson, 1986)]

1 Laura: But I know that Joe did say he had a letter from  
im.  
2 (1.2)  
3 Marge: Eh di[d he tell you- .hh  
4 Laura: [That's all he said.  
5 Marge: Well did he tell you that when you phoned im ...

Jefferson (1986) argues that cases of overlapping talk such as those found in these extracts can be explained the result of an application of the turn taking system rather than simple cases of a speaker starting in interruption. In these extracts, it appears that the second speaker's talk has been designed to be produced after an expanded transition space; that is after a pause, but the prior speaker self-selects as next speaker during this transition space. Jefferson sees in these examples cases of simultaneous starts in which one speaker begins the turn with a brief pause. She presents these overlaps as:

(6.18') [NB:IV:3:R:5 (Jefferson, 1986)]

Lottie: becuz they would really be the Spri:ng.  
(Let') [s see tha]t's twunny fi:' dollars ...  
Emma: (\_\_\_\_) [ Ye a h.]

(6.19') [JG:I:24:8-9 (Jefferson, 1986)]

1 Laura: But I know that Joe did say he had a letter from  
im.

2 (1.2)  
 3 Marge: (Eh di) [d he tell you- .hh  
 4 Laura: (\_\_\_\_\_) [That's all he said.  
 5 Marge: Well did he tell you that when you phoned im ...

In the transcriptions here the underlined space represents the preceding pause in overlap with simultaneous talk. In these cases, both speakers are in speakership and not listening for or hearing a bit of talk by the other. Such overlap is an instance of problematic overlap, in which one speaker at a time needs to be restored. Jefferson (1986) further argues that these cases demonstrate the interactional achievement of not having heard the other speaker rather than simply reflecting a situation in which one speaker cannot hear what the other is doing. They do this by showing that the speaker is not attending to bits of talk to which it would be possible to react.

The cases of overlapping talk discussed so far, overlapping talk, even where it is a problematic instance of more than one speaker speaking at a time, is oriented to features of the turn taking system. In some cases, however, overlap occurs without such clear reference to features of the turn-taking system, as in extract (6.20).

(6.20) [UTCL J66 (Drummond, 1989)]

Gloria: .hhhh that's what I s(h)aid I said well  
 [you can send em to me now huh]  
 Pam: [ you probably wouldn't say ] bring em in  
 person or something

In this extract, the overlap does not begin either just before or just after a possible completion. Instead it begins at a point of incompleteness. Gloria's *I said* projects further talk in the form of a quotation what had been said in the recalled conversation. In cases such as these, the overlapping talk again represents a problem for turn-taking which is not easily resolved by a speaker soon reaching possible completion. This extract shows clearly interrupting talk: that is, talk which is specifically designed to enter into another's talk at a point where speaker change is not a relevant activity.

### *The nature of overlapping talk*

In conversation, it appears that when more than one person is speaking at a time, it is most commonly the case that there are two people talking at a time, regardless of the number of participants in the conversation (Schegloff, 2000a). In fact, Schegloff argues that instances of talk by more than two people at a time are usually instances of two speakers beginning simultaneously in overlap with a third (current) speaker and quickly resolved to instances of two people speaking at a time when the third speaker reaches a completion. Instances of more than two speakers beginning at a time are also possible but are less easily resolved than in the case of two simultaneous speakers beginning in overlap. Schegloff cites the following extract as a case in point:

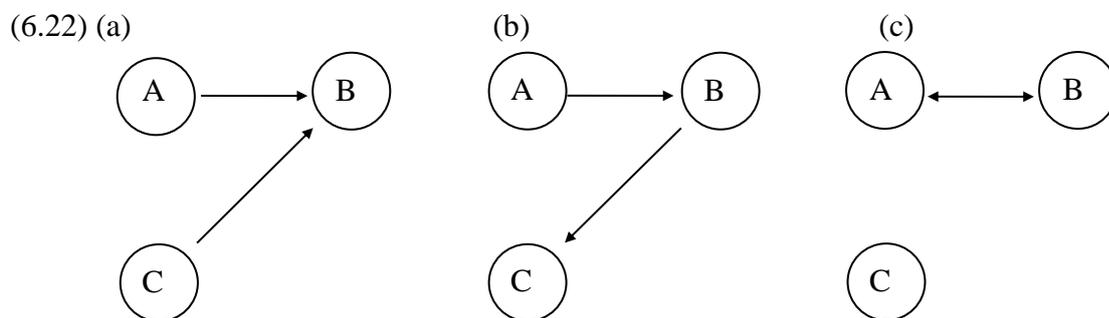
(6.21) [Post-party, 7 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 Marty: Ih w'z a liddle well done.  
 2 Fred: Uhm,

- 3→ Anne: Oh[: I s]aw ] a] l:l'ot'v ra:re pieces.  
 4→ Fred: [I[t w'z ] fi ]:ne].  
 5→ Marty: [Ih w'za-] Ih-] Ih] w'z a fanta:stic  
 6 piece a' meat.

In extract (6.21) three speakers (Marty, Fred and Anne) begin to talk at about the same time. Marty is producing an assessment with which the others disagree. This incipient disagreement is indicated by Fred's *uhm*, and Anne's *oh* and these intimations of disagreement prompt a back down by Marty as a pre-emptive response to the projected disagreements from his interlocutors. At this point three turns come to be launched almost simultaneously, with the prospect of sustained overlap by more than two speakers.

Situations in which two people speak at a time fall into three possible configurations (Schegloff, 2000a), which can be represented as:



The configuration presented in (6.22a) shows that one possible source of problematic overlap occurs when two speakers address the same recipient. This means that two participants are competing for the attention of another participant and where this occurs the address participant has an important role in resolving the overlap: the eye gaze of the recipient is very important in determining what will happen. In this case, two speakers are competing for a single recipient and securing eye gaze is important in securing a recipient (C. Goodwin, 1979, 1981). The speaker who does not secure the recipient's eye gaze commonly drops out, although this speaker may also compete more vigorously the recipient's attention. The configuration in (6.22b) involves each speaker addresses a different recipient and here the roles of both speaker and recipient are problematic. The overlapping talk here can be resolved either by B ceasing to speak and becoming the recipient for A's talk, or by A ceasing to speak and becoming a non-participant in the exchange. The configuration in (6.22c) involves two speakers addressing each other and so the roles of both speaker and recipient are problematic, with each speaker having each of the roles. This configuration is also possible in conversations with only two participants and in which all overlap will necessarily be of this type.

### *Resolving overlapping talk*

The discussion so far has raised the idea of a potential for competition between speakers in relation to overlap. More than one person speaking at a time can be an interactional problem, and this problem can only be resolved by a return to one person speaking at a time. The solution involves one speaker emerging as the only speaker and the other speaker losing speakership. As there is no 'rule' which determines who should emerge as the sole speaker, speakership

becomes something for which participants competed interactionally, at moments of overlap, with a view to becoming *the* speaker at this point in the conversation.

Schegloff (2000a) has outlined an overlap resolution device which is employed by conversationalists to deal with problematic instances of overlap. This device is composed of three elements:

1. a set of resources which can be used in the production of a turn
2. a set of places in a turn at talk in which these devices can be deployed
3. an interactional logic which relates the resources and places.

### *Resources for resolving overlap*

Overlapping talk is characterized by the deployment of two types of resources within turns: resources which interrupt the continuity of the talk and resources which depart from the prosody of the turn so far. Schegloff (2000a) calls the former ‘hitches’ and the latter ‘perturbations’. Commonly occurring hitches include cutting off the talk so far, usually in conjunction with an oral stop, such as a glottal or velar stop, prolonging a segment of talk and repeating a just prior element. Hitches are thus items which could be considered disfluencies in the talk that either stop the turn in progress or delay its production in some way. Common perturbations found in overlap are increased volume, higher pitch and faster or slower pace of talk. Perturbations are thus features of talk that alter the form of its delivery, often marking it as being in competition with other talk (Kurtić, Brown, & Wells, 2013). These resources are found in other places in talk, but they are very frequent in overlap and are deployed strategically in overlap to achieve relevant interactional goals. Examples of their deployment in overlap can be seen in extract (6.23).

#### (6.23) [Car conversation]

1 Sasha: [oh yea:h, an there's a tree: as well] so it is  
2 a [bad ] spot  
3 Nick: [yeah.]  
4 Elvis: yea[h, it is].  
5→ Nick: [this- th]is pedestrian didn' have right of way  
6 but I thought (.) okay I'll be polite an stop,

In extract (6.23), Nick recycles the beginning of his turn [*this- th*]is, a device which is found in other contexts, such as repair, but which here serves to allow his talk to emerge from the overlap with Elvis' prior talk. The timing of Nick's talk is such that he enters into the talk just prior to a possible completion of Elvis' turn, which is, however, not an actual completion. The recycling helps to overcome the resulting ‘mistiming’ of his start.

#### (6.24) [TG14:36-43 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 Bee: t! We:ll, uhd-yihknow I-I don' wanna  
2 make any-thing definite because I- yihknow  
3 I jis::t thinkin:g tihday all day riding  
4 around on th'trai:ns hhuh-uh



produced. Of course, Joy's talk doesn't inevitably head off overlap and overlapping talk can still eventuate even if overlap resolution is attempted in pre-onset position, as extract (6.26) shows.

(6.26) [Upholstery shop, 43 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 James: Alright. Becau:se, it's insured anyway, when I  
2 call de office, dey'll send a man up eh tuh put  
3→ that glass I:N.  
4 Vic: Well,  
5 James: But dis [person thet DID IT, ]  
6 Vic: [If I see the person,]  
7 James: -IS GOT TUH BE:: .hh taken care of. You know what  
[I mean,

In this extract, James, who is reaching a possible completion, appears to register that Vic is preparing to start a turn, which actually begins just after James' possible completion. James produces much louder talk at the end of his turn, seeking to head off a possible overlap with his next bit of talk, however, Vic goes on to produce talk in overlap.

While it is possible to pre-empt overlap by deploying overlap resolution devices in pre-onset position, most overlap is actually resolved after the overlap has actually begun. Schegloff (2000a) identifies attempts at overlap resolution which begin just after the overlap itself begins as being in the *post-onset phase* of the overlap.

Post-onset overlap resolution typically has the form of slowing down the pace of the talk through such devices as sound stretches and repetitions: marking time until the overlapping speaker reaches completion and talk can emerge in the clear. This shows that overlap resolution is qualitatively different in different places (Schegloff, 2000a): resolution in pre-onset position involves speeding up talk to pre-empt starting while in post-onset position it involves slowing down talk to delay finishing. As such, the idea of places for overlap resolution is not a convenient way for analysts to categorize the location of a particular type of talk in relation to other talk happening at the same time, rather it is a reflection of the ways in which participants themselves resolve overlap.

Hitches and perturbations can be deployed just before possible completion to hold talk until a projected completion has dealt with the overlap. Schegloff (2000a) refers to this as the *pre-resolution position*. Bee produces overlap resolution devices in pre-resolution position in extract (6.27).

(6.27) [TG14:36-43 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 Bee: t! We:ll, uhd-yihknow I-I don' wanna make  
2 any-thing definite because I- yihknow I  
3 jis::t thinkin:g tihday all day riding  
4 around on th'trai:ns hhuh-uh



(6.29) [TG 05:02-05 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 Bee: nYeeha. .hh This feller I have- (nn)/(iv-)  
2 "fella"; this ma:n. (0.2) t! .hhh He  
3 ha::(s)-uff-eh-who-who I have fer Linguistics  
4 [is] real]ly too much, .hh[h=]  
5 Ava: [Mm] hm?]

(6.30) [TG 11:19-23 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

Bee: [Still not gettin married  
Ava: .hhh Oh no. Definitely not.[mar]ried.]  
Bee: [No ] he's]  
dicided defin[itely?]

In these examples, the overlapping talk coincides rhythmically. In extract (6.29), Ava's *mm hm?* is overlaid on Bee's *is really* in such a way that each beat of Ava's talk occurs simultaneously with each beat of Bee's emerging talk. In the same way in extract (6.30) Bee's *No he's* coincides with the beats of Ava's *married*. These examples show clearly that participants are using a rhythmic structure to organize their talk and give evidence that a unit such as 'beat' is a relevant one for participants.

In examining overlap using the beat as a unit, we can view each bit of overlapping talk as consisting of a series of emerging beats which provide places for sequential and interactional organization. During overlap, what each speaker does at each beat of overlap can be examined as an instance of what speakers do in relation to the immediately preceding beat. Schegloff (2000a) represents this as in (6.31).

(6.31)

|      | 1st beat | 2nd beat | 3rd beat | 4th beat |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Les: | [L1      |          |          |          |
| Pat: | [P1      |          |          |          |

Here, Les and Pat begin to talk simultaneously, producing the first beat of their overlapping talk. As Les begins his talk (L1), he can hear Pat speaking (P1), and Pat, as he is producing talk, can hear Les. The next beat will, therefore, be the place at which they register and react to the overlap which has just occurred. At this point, the speakers have a set of possible alternatives: each speaker could stop at this point and not produce a second beat or he could continue to speak and produce a second beat. These alternatives apply equally to each speaker. If one speaker ceases to speak, the overlap is resolved. The same is true if both speakers cease speaking, although the ensuing result is silence, which, as noted above, is also a turn-taking problem that requires resolution. If both speakers continue, the overlap moves into a second beat as in (6.31a).

(6.31a)

|      | 1st beat | 2nd beat | 3rd beat | 4th beat |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Les: | [L1      | L2       |          |          |
| Pat: | [P1      |          |          |          |

At the second beat (L2, P2), each participant is able to hear the stance that his interlocutor has taken to the overlap: to stop or persist. Here both speakers persist and the interaction problem remains. Again both speakers have available the same alternatives as before: to stop or to produce another (third) beat of talk.

In addition, from the second beat of overlapping talk the speakers also have other resources which can be deployed. They can continue to talk using the usual mode of production employed by a solo speaker or they can shift to competitive production by using the hitches and perturbations discussed above (in this case in post-onset position). This competitive talk projects that the speaker will continue with the turn currently under way, as in (6.31b), in which Les upgrades his talk to competitive mode.

(6.31b)

|      | 1st beat | 2nd beat | 3rd beat | 4th beat |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Les: | [L1      | L2       |          |          |
| Pat: | [P1      | P2       |          |          |

At the second beat, Pat can now hear that Les has not only continued talking, but that he has begun to talk in competitive mode. He has made a claim to the turn space and has projected continued talk in the turn. In response to Les' upgraded talk, Pat can now withdraw from the talk, thereby resolving the overlap, he can continue to talk in solo production or he too can upgrade his talk to competitive mode. If Pat continues to talk into the third beat, regardless of the mode of talk he adopts, there will be serious competition for the turn space as neither speaker has displayed a willingness to relinquish the turn to the other.

(6.31c)

|      | 1st beat | 2nd beat | 3rd beat | 4th beat |
|------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Les: | [L1      | L2       | L3       |          |
| Pat: | [P1      | P2       | P3       |          |

In (6.31c), Pat has upgraded his talk to competitive mode in the third beat, while Les has continued to talk in this mode. Both have now projected continuing to speak in this turn. In the fourth beat, the speakers can now register their reactions to the talk as it has emerged at the third beat. Both Les and Pat may, for example, further upgrade their talk by deploying further hitches and perturbations and create an extended fight for the floor. Such fights are, however, not common in English (Schegloff, 2000a). Typically at this point, one of the speakers will withdraw from interaction and the overlap will be resolved.

What emerges from this discussion is a model of the interactional nature of overlap resolution. At each next moment in emerging overlapping talk, the participants' stances on the overlap are registered and enacted and at each next moment participants have the possibility of either ceasing to talk, continuing to talk in the same mode or upgrading their talk. The model itself does not require overlap to be short; rather it shows how devices for overlap resolution can be deployed at particular places in emerging talk to deal with the interactional problem posed by overlapping talk. The model does, however, provide for the possibility of overlapping talk being resolved quickly, as a single beat of overlapping talk provides enough opportunity for overlap to be resolved. Much overlap is resolved after a single beat by the withdrawal of one or both parties to the interaction at the first moment at which overlap has been perceived (Schegloff, 2000a), as in extracts (6.32) and (6.33).

(6.32) [Lunch]

1 Joy: that w'z r:really a:weful b'd in thuh end we  
 2 sorta had a good t[i:me  
 3→ Carol: [yeh th[a'] w'z like what=  
 4→ Harry: [i-]  
 5 Carol: = happen' tuh us when we wen' up the coas'  
 6 we had ...

(6.33) [HG, 1 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

Hyla: [Bu:t]  
 Nancy: [ My ] face hurts

In each of these extracts, the speaker drops out after a single beat in the talk. However, in some cases where the rhythmic structures in the talk are not so well aligned, a single beat in one speaker's talk may not coincide with a single beat in the other's talk as in extracts (6.34) and (6.35).

(6.34) [Car Conversation]

Nick: [yeah.]  
 → Sasha: i's [jus so-]  
 → Nick: [we've ] been budgeting big time we're  
 [like li]vin' on ten dollars a day sorta shit,

(6.35) [HG, 1(Schegloff, 2000a)]

Mike: =y' coudn't git[ta hol-]  
 Vic: [ m a n ] tell 'im.

In these extracts, a single beat in one speaker's talk coincides with more than one beat in the other's talk. In each of these cases, the speaker who produces the 'extra' beat stops speaking (although this is not inevitably the case in overlap resolution).

As we have seen, overlapping talk may survive beyond the first beat. Where this happens, the majority of overlaps are resolved one beat after a speaker upgrades to competitive talk



speaker is not the only criterion for judging success in overlap resolution. In addition to winning the floor, Schegloff (2000a) proposes three other criteria for success:

1. persistence to completion;
2. persistence to projecting the thrust of the turn; and
3. achievement of sequential implicativeness.

Each of these will be dealt with in more detail below.

### **Persistence to completion**

Some speakers appear to design their talk in overlap in order to bring their own talk to its projected completion, rather than surviving the overlap to emerge as a sole speaker. These speakers continue their own talk in solo production mode, producing no hitches and perturbations. This means that their talk is produced as if no one else were speaking at the same time. This orientation can be seen in extract (6.38).

(6.38) [Car conversation]

Sasha: =n' he starts takin' off an the bus is like this  
           n [I'm jus' [screa:min']  
 → Elvis: [I jus' [didn' see ]it. I looked there an' i'  
           mustuh been exACTly thee:re [yihknow like

In extract (6.38), Elvis' talk is produced in solo mode with no hitches and perturbations throughout the first TCU and remains in solo mode even after Sasha's talk is upgraded. This example shows a speaker doing something other than competing for the floor during overlap and continuing to talk as if there was no overlap at all. Schegloff (2000a) argues that solo talk in overlap may be the strongest possible response to overlapping talk because interactionally it takes a stance of non-recognition of the competing talk.

### **Persistence to projecting the thrust of the turn**

Other speakers seem to orient to bringing their talk to a point at which the thrust of the turn has been projected or is recognisable. Schegloff (2000a) argues that Deb's turn in extract (6.39) is such a case.

(6.39) [Pre-party, 2-3 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 Dick: Y' [know what- y' know [ ( ) ]  
 2 Deb: [ W h a t a w a s [ter you] w e r e ]  
 3 Anne: [DON'T S]AY that I'm ex]a-  
 4 just say I'm a liar.  
 5 Dick: Y' know what, yer [ grandmother- ]  
 6→ Deb: [ >It's not a question< ] of=  
 7→ = [<ly:ing 't's a question of being- >]  
 8 Dick: [ yer GRANDMOTHER IS A CENTIPEDE,

Here, Deb has to deal with an interactionally sensitive issue: Anne's claim that she is being called a liar. Deb's interactional project in her turn is dealing with replacing this

characterization of her mother with some other issue. Completing the project of displacing the talk about lying seems to be Deb's goal at this point and getting this said is interactionally important: more so that completing for the turn or changing the topic, neither of which gets done in Deb's turn.

### Achievement of sequential implicativeness

For some speakers during overlap, it appears to be most important that their talk, rather than the talk of the other speaker, is responded to by subsequent speakers. In other words, the speaker works to ensure that the talk is sequentially implicative, or at least sequentially consequential (Schegloff, 2000a; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). In order to secure sequential implicativeness, speakers respond to overlap in quite different ways and rather than pursuing talk to gain the floor, may cease to speak in order to achieve their interactional project.

(6.40) [KC-4, 16:36-17:18 (Schegloff, 2000a)]

1 Kathy: So once I'd set up the warp, I' was very simple to  
2 jus' keep- jus' to weave it.  
3 (0.8)  
4 Kathy: You know[ ( )  
5 Dave: [(But listen to how long ( ) ]  
6 Rubin: [In other words, you gotta string up thee]  
7 you gotta string up thee colours, is that it,=  
8 Kathy: =[Right.]  
9 Rubin: =[in thee] in thee [warp.]  
10 Kathy: [right] right  
11 Dave: (but listen) tuh  
12 [how long it took to put in the]=  
13→ Kathy: [A n d t h e n e a c h weft-]  
14 Dave: =the the warps [(though)]  
15→ Kathy: [ and then each weft y'know  
16 then I did I s- my warp was strung up, so that  
17 [I had (each colours.)  
18 Rubin: [(Where's that come from,) "warp and weft."  
19 (0.8)  
20 Kathy: ↓I haven't the faintest notion.

In this extract, Dave's talk about how long the process took is in overlap with Rubin's talk in response to Kathy's *So once I'd set up the warp, I' was very simple to jus' keep- jus' to weave it*. Once Kathy has confirmed Rubin's understanding of the process involved. Dave relaunches his talk about the length of time. This time Kathy's talk is in overlap with Dave's talk, but Kathy discontinues and Dave emerges as solo speaker. However, at Dave's possible completion, Kathy relaunches her talk repeating the words she began in overlap. The repetition shows that what she is saying here is what she way trying to say earlier (Schegloff, 1996b). In this example, Kathy's discontinuing the talk at her first attempt sacrificed her talk in that particular turn space, but when she relaunches her talk in a different turn space, she makes her talk the relevant talk to which following talk will be addressed. In so doing she has cancelled the sequential implicativeness of Dave's turn at talk, and this talk is never addressed. Dave is

also doing something similar in relaunching the turn that he surrendered to Rubin in his first attempt to talk about how long it took to set up the weaving. What Kathy and David doing here is sacrificing speakership in the short term in order to carry out a longer term project: lack of success in holding the turn is translated into success in controlling the sequence. David, however, because of Kathy's redoing of her talk, is not successful in securing sequentially implicativeness in this case. This shows that holding a turn is not the only way in which a speaker can exert control over how talk proceeds.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed deviations from speaker transition with no gap and no overlap. These cases of gaps and overlaps are potentially counter evidence to the existence of the turn-taking mechanism described by Sacks et al. (1974) in that they do affect speaker change at places of possible completion. The discussion here, however, has demonstrated that speakers orient to the relevance of possible completions for speaker change in understanding and responding to cases of gaps and overlaps. Silences after a possible completion are therefore interpretable as a speaker not speaking yet precisely because a contribution is expected at a first possible completion. Similarly overlaps are treated as problematic where entry into talk is not related to a possible completion. In these senses, problems of speaker change are not exceptions to the turn-taking mechanism, but rather instances of it. In turn, the resolution of these problems uses aspects of the turn-taking system in order to repair the talk. For example, an inter-turn pause may be converted to an intra-turn pause by modifying the turn constructional unit by adding an increment, therefore delaying and reproducing a possible completion and the progression of talk in overlap may be delayed by hitches and perturbations which carry talk over until the other speaker reaches a possible completion. In each case, the speaker draws on the turn-taking system itself to repair problems in turn-taking and demonstrate an overall orientation to the system in constructing their talk.

## Exercises

1. In your transcript locate instances of gaps in the talk. For each gap note what proceeds and what follows the gap.
  - Is the gap attributable to a particular speaker – that is, is there evidence that a particular participant should be talking at this point? If the gap is attributable, what is the missing action that should be performed at this point? How do the speakers deal with the gap and what is the interactional consequence of this?
  - Is the gap a gap in which no speaker is required to talk? If so, how do the speakers recommence talk after the gap?
2. In the transcript now identify instances of overlapping talk.
  - For each overlap, note when the overlap starts. Is it near a possible completion or at a point where the talk is obviously not completed?
  - Then note how the overlap is resolved. Which speaker continues as the speaker and what does this speaker do to achieve this? Which speaker stops speaking? How and when is this done? Are there any consequences of the overlap to be

observed later in the talk? (For example, is any material from the overlapping talk reintroduced?)

### **Further reading**

#### *On overlapping talk*

Jefferson, Gail. (2004). A sketch of some orderly aspects of overlap in natural conversation. In Gene H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 43-59). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. (2000). Overlapping talk and the organisation of turn-taking in conversation. *Language in Society*, 29(1), 1-63.

#### *On pauses*

Jefferson, Gail. (1989). Preliminary notes on a possible metric which provides for a 'standard maximum' silence of approximately one second in conversation. In Derek Roger & Peter Bull (Eds.), *Conversation: An interdisciplinary perspective* (pp. 166-196). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Wilson, Thomas P., & Don H. Zimmerman. (1986). The structure of silence between turns in two-party conversation. *Discourse Processes*, 9(4), 375-390.

## Chapter 7 Adjacency pairs and preference organization

### Focus

- Adjacency pairs as a form of conversational structure.
- The notion of preference in Conversation Analysis.
- The influence of preference on turn shape.

### Sequence organization

Chapter 3 included a discussion of the ways in which some turns at talk constrain who can speak next and what a next contribution can be. This indicates that turns at talk are not things which appear independently of each other, but rather are cluster together: they are organized to be coherent and orderly and the relationship between turns is a meaningful one. This clustering of turns at talk is referred to as sequence organization.

The notion of sequence organization is based on the premise that the central consideration for the organization of talk is that talk is a form of social action: that is, turns at talk are places in which the participants in a conversation perform actions through talk. Turns at talk cluster together in order for speakers to develop a course of action. This view maintains that the action being performed is a more important resource for understanding how conversation is organized than is topic. While, it does not deny that topic may be an organizational feature of talk (Button & Casey, 1984, 1985; Jefferson, 1984), it does argue that action is more important as an organizational feature than topic (Schegloff, 1991, 1995). Much talk is problematic if considered solely in terms of topic. For example, in the sentence *Could you open the window?*, it is problematic to consider this as primarily an utterance about windows and much more useful to consider it as enacting a request to do something. The legitimacy of seeing such talk in terms of action rather than topic can be seen in the ways in which participants treat such talk in a conversation: further talk on the topic would be considered less appropriate after such a sentence than would the action of opening a window. Opening the window would, in other words, be an expected next action after *Could you open the window?* while further talk would not be expected. Furthermore, if a participant were to report on what had transpired when the sentence was produced, the participant would characterize this as ‘X asked me to do something’ rather than as ‘X said something about windows’. This example also leads to another issue which is important for sequence organization. This is the idea that some actions make other actions relevant as next actions, which are in turn seen as being occasioned by the prior action. This relationship between actions is the basis of *adjacency pairs* (Schegloff, 1991, 2007; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Stivers, 2013).

### Adjacency pairs

In conversation we notice that many turns at talk occur as pairs. A greeting is conventionally followed by another greeting, a farewell by a farewell, a question by an answer. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) called these sorts of paired utterances *adjacency pairs* and these adjacency pairs are the basic unit on which sequences in conversation are built. Adjacency pairs have a number of core features which can be used by way of a preliminary definition. They (1) consist of two turns (2) by different speakers, (3) which are placed next to each in their basic minimal form, (4) which are ordered and, (5) which are differentiated into pair types. The first two features are rather straightforward, but the latter three require more explanation. Firstly, it is normally the case that where an adjacency pair occurs, the two turns occur immediately together with no

intervening talk. However, this does not mean that all adjacency pairs are in fact immediately adjacent to each other. In some cases other talk can come between the two turns, although what can legitimately occur in this position is actually quite constrained (these inserted turns will be discussed in Chapter 6). Secondly, the two turns which make up the adjacency pair are ordered so that one of the pair always occurs first and the other always occurs second: for example, a question always precedes its answer. Therefore we can say that some types of talk are designed to initiate next actions, while other types of talk are designed to complete the action initiated. Those forms of talk which initiate actions are called *first pair parts* (FPP), while those that flow from such initiations are called *second pair parts* (SPP). Thirdly, the relationship between FPPs and SPPs is constrained by the type of FPP produced. That is, when an FPP initiates a sequence, not just any SPP can occur in the second position: the SPP must be of the appropriate type for the action initiated by the FPP. Therefore, a question must be followed by an answer to be heard as a completed sequence: it cannot be followed by a greeting or a farewell even though these are also possibly SPPs in other contexts. This latter relationship points to the nature of sequences as coherent actions conducted over a number of turns and which are understood as coherent because they adhere to a program of action initiated by a FPP. Some examples, by no means exhaustive, of adjacency pairs are:

(7.1) question - answer

John: What time's it?  
Betty: Three uh clock.

(7.2) greeting - greeting

Amy: Hello.  
Jean: Hi.

(7.3) summons - answer

Terry: hey Paul,  
Paul: uh yeah.

(7.4) telling - accept

John: I've jus' finished my las' exam.  
Betty: that's great.

In each of the examples above, the first turn of the pair initiates some action and makes some next action relevant. The second turn responds to the prior turn and completes the action which was initiated in the first turn. These two turns together accomplish an action. The basic sequence, then, is composed of two ordered turns at talk:

A: first pair part  
B: second pair part

Participants in conversation orient to this basic sequence structure in developing their talk and adjacency pairs have a normative force in organising conversation in that adjacency pairs set up expectations about how talk will proceed and if these are not met then the talk is seen as being problematic (Heritage, 1984b; Stivers, 2013).

This basic sequence is closely linked to the turn taking system itself because it makes speaker change a relevant next action. The practice of producing an adjacency pair requires that once a recognisable FPP has been produced, on the first possible completion, the current speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce an SPP of the relevant type. The FPP can be constructed to select a next speaker, but does not have to.

As has been argued then, FPPs, as a primary aspect of their production, make a subsequent action relevant; it projects some second action as a relevant next action. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) discuss this in terms of *relevance rules*: FPPs create a context in which some next action is expected to occur and the talk that is produced after it will be seen as in some way responding in a relevant way to the preceding FPP. This means that if there is no next talk, this talk will be seen as absent, as in (7.5).

(7.5) [Lunch]

- 1 Harry: Didjih speak tuh Mary today?  
2→ (0.2)  
3 Harry Did yih speak tuh Mary?  
4 Joy Oh, yea:h I saw her at lunch.

In this case, Harry's question FPP makes it relevant for Joy to produce an answer SPP. The silence indicated by the arrow is hearable here as Joy not producing an answer (as discussed in Chapter 4). That is, in this context, the silence is not heard as no-one speaking: it is heard as Joy specifically not producing an answer. The absence of the talk in this position is accountable (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) and is interpretable; something which was publicly and expectedly relevant to do at that point in the talk has not been done. Harry's recycling of his prior turn is a response to this silence as a lack of an answer and renews the relevance of the answer SPP as a next action.

The force of relevance rules also applies to talk produced after a FPP has been produced, as in (7.6).

(7.6) [Lunch]

- 1 Joy: 'N whaddya think 'v Brett,  
2 Harry: Brett?  
3 Joy: The new guy in accounts.  
4 Harry: Oh. He seems oka:y.

In this extract, the talk which follows the FPP is not constructed as a SPP. Given that the FPP makes some SPP relevant, the talk in the second turn is interpretable as being constrained by the relevance of the SPP. The SPP is a relevant next action, which has not yet been produced, and the talk can be seen as deferring the SPP while some other relevant work is done. The intervening talk here is constructed with the SPP still 'on record' and the SPP is hearable as 'not having been done yet'. The intervening talk does not cancel the relevance of SPP, which is produced immediately after the inserted talk is completed. Unlike Example (2) in chapter 3, the FPP is not redone and this provides evidence that for these participants the relevance of an answer as second action following the FPP is not in doubt or in need of redoing. Also, the SPP is heard as relevant to a course of action projected by the original FPP and the on-going

relevance of the projected SPP provides a context in which Harry's delayed answer can be interpreted.

## Counters

As has been seen above, when an FPP is produced, there are some other elements of talk which can be done immediately after it, but where this happens, the SPP remains a relevant future action. Talk which is not a SPP does not remove the relevancy of a SPP being done in following talk. *Counters* (Schegloff, 2007) however work differently and shape the trajectory of a sequence in a quite different way, as in (7.7).

(7.7) [Lunch]

- 1 Harry: so whad'dyuh think of yesterday's wor' shop.
- 2 Joy: uh:m (.) wha' dyou think.
- 3 Harry: well: 'm not tha' sure really,
- 4 Joy: yeah that's what I thought, it was like stuff
- 5 we all know anyway.

In this extract, Harry produces a question FPP, but without responding Joy provides a reworking of the same FPP and redirects the question back to Harry. Joy's turn here does not defer the SPP, but rather she cancels the relevance of the FPP initially directed to her by replacing it with a new FPP, reversing the flow of the unfolding sequence. In producing a counter, Joy not only reverses the direction of this sequence, but she also reverses the requirement to provide a SPP. The interactional effect of this is that Harry commits himself to a point of view about the workshop before Joy needs to do so. Later in this conversation, Joy does give her opinion about the workshop, but not as a response to Harry's SPP above, instead she is able to express her opinion as an agreement with Harry.

## Types of second pair parts

A small number of adjacency pair types have only a single type of SPP. The most common are greeting adjacency pairs (*hello, hi, etc.*) and terminal adjacency pairs (farewells such as *bye, goodbye, seeya, etc.*). While greeting and terminal SPPs have a range of possible realizations, all of these possibilities are the same type of SPP, they all perform the same action. Thus, a greeting FPP can only have greeting SPP and a terminal FPP can only have a terminal SPP (Schegloff, 1968, 1979a, 1986b, 2002b; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). In most cases, these sorts of adjacency pairs have very similar forms for both the FPP and the SPP.

Most adjacency pair types, however, have alternative possibilities for realising the SPP. Some examples of such possibilities are given below:

(7.8) invitation - accept

- Amy: w'd yuh like tuh come over t'morrow night  
Jane: yea:h.= that'd be nice.

(7.8') invitation - decline

1 Harry: I don' have much tuh do on We:nsday.  
2 (.)  
3 w'd yuh like tuh get together then.  
4 (0.3)  
5 Joy: huh we::llhh I don' really know if yuh see  
6 i's a bit hectic fuh me We:nsday yih know  
7 Harry: oh wokay

In (7.8) and (7.8'), the FPP which launches the sequence is the same – an invitation – but the SPP which responds to the FPP is different – (7.8) accepts the invitation, while (7.8') declines it. In both cases the adjacency pair is completed, but the possibilities for doing this vary and so we can talk about invitation adjacency pairs having two types of SPP. Most types of adjacency pairs have such alternative realizations of the SPP, however, this does not mean that each of these possible SPP types is interactionally equal. In fact, in the examples above the SPP in (7.8) is socially and interactionally 'easier' to perform than the SPP in (7.8'). The differences in these two SPP types are dealt with through preference organization.

### Preference organization

In a conversation, a participant may be able to choose among alternatives to design a particular contribution to the talk and, as we have seen above, these choices may have different interactional import. The term *preference* has been developed to characterize these non-equivalent alternatives (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984b; Pomerantz & Heritage, 2013). The concept of preference deals with the possible ways in which some conversational action may be accomplished. It does not refer to the personal desires of the speakers, but rather to the recurrent patterns of talk in which actions are carried out. The basic distinction made in preference organization is that in a particular context, certain actions may be avoided, delayed in their production, or produced in mitigated form, while other actions are normally performed directly and with little delay.

Returning to extracts (7.8) and (7.8'), it can be seen that the acceptance was done without delay, while the declining is delayed in its turn, and, in fact, the invitation is not even explicitly declined. The immediate and direct acceptance of an invitation is usually treated as unremarkable, as nothing unusual being done, however, an equally immediate and direct refusal of an invitation would not normally be treated as unremarkable, but would more likely be interpreted as rude or hostile (C. Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Pomerantz, 1984). Actions which are routinely performed immediately, and whose immediate production is unremarkable are termed *preferred* actions, while those which would not normally be performed in this way are called *dispreferred* actions. For example, for invitations we have the following possibilities:

Invitation:     Accept – preferred  
                  Decline – dispreferred

These two concepts - preferred and dispreferred - are essentially social in nature. They express the fact that some responses are problematic for social relationships, while others are not. If speakers need to produce a next turn which is dispreferred, then they need to design the turn in

different ways in order to do extra conversational work. This extra conversational work orients to the need for the contribution not to be disruptive of the relationship the speaker has with the recipient. As a general statement it may be said that actions such as agreement, acceptances, etc. are preferred, while disagreements, rejections, declinings are dispreferred. This distinction, however, depends on what precedes the turn. For example, next speaker's agreement with a negative self-assessment (*I'm just no good at anything*) would be dispreferred rather than preferred (Pomerantz, 1984).

As a starting point, for considering how preference organization shapes talk, it is necessary to consider two aspects of preference in more detail. These are the *preference for agreement* and the *preference for contiguity* (Sacks, 1987).

### *Preference for agreement*

When some types of talk are considered, it is easy to see that they are designed in such a way as to indicate what the expected next action is likely to be. These types of talk have built into their design an approximate trajectory for the sequence of which they are a part. This can be seen very clearly with questions. The question *That was a great film, wasn't it?* is designed in such a way as to project a *yes* response, while a slightly different design *The film wasn't very good, was it?* projects a *no* response. Sacks (1987) describes these different projected trajectories in terms of preference organization: the former question has a preference for a 'yes-like' response, while the latter has a preference for a 'no-like' response. Answers to either of these questions would be designed with reference to the preferences established by the design of the question turn. Sacks (1987) argues that there is an overwhelming preference for answers to agree with the trajectories of the questions to which they respond. This idea goes beyond a simple understanding of participants in a conversation agreeing with each other, and it is much more useful to think in terms of agreeing with a trajectory. For example, it is not normal to think of people 'agreeing' with an invitation, an offer or other FPPs, however, it can be seen that the construction of invitations, offers, etc., as projecting a trajectory for the sequence they launch and a preference can be observed for SPPs which follow the same trajectory.

### *Preference for contiguity*

A second important organizational pattern identified by Sacks (1987) involves the location of actions within sequences. Sacks notes that, while question or answer turns can contain other pieces of talk, there is a preference for FPPs and SPPs to be contiguous: that is, to occur immediately next to each other. What this means is that people do not usually insert extra material between the end of the question and the start of the answer. For example, questions normally occur at the end of their turns, while answers normally occur at the beginning of the turn. This placement is, of course, not an inevitable feature of talk, but is rather the result of co-ordination of the actions of the participants: speakers design their talk by orienting to a preference for contiguity. An interesting result of the preference for contiguity is that if there are two questions in a turn, the last question usually gets answered first (Sacks, 1987).

#### (7.9) [Make-up]

Zoe: When did yuh get in.=Did yuh have a good trip?  
Joy: Not bad. I got in last night.

In Extract (7.9), Zoe produces two questions in her turn, both of which are answered by Joy. However, Joy answers these questions in the reverse order from the order in which they are asked. She starts with the most contiguous question and then moves to the less contiguous question. This maintains the contiguity as far as is possible in this case.

### *Preference organization and turn shape*

The preferences for agreement and contiguity can be considered to be two basic organising principles for sequences and there is a relationship between them which plays an important role in how turns at talk are designed. This can be seen in Extracts (7.10) and (7.11).

#### (7.10) [Lunch]

Joy: Have yuh got the papers for the meeting ye' Carol;  
Carol: Yeah=they came in th's morning.

#### (7.11) [Lunch]

1 Joy: 'N will the report be finished fuh the next  
2 meeting, dyuh know?  
3 Carol: (0.2) well I dunno: 't seems to be taking lon:ger  
4 th'n we thought so no, I'd guess not until the  
5 one after

In the extracts above, one SPP is preferred and the other is dispreferred. In extract (7.10), the SPP is in agreement with the trajectory established by the FPP and the SPP is also immediately contiguous with its FPP. In extract (7.11), however, the SPP does not agree with the trajectory established by the FPP and the SPP is separated from the FPP by other talk: (.) *well I dunno: 't seems to be taking lon:ger th'n we thought*. These two extracts exemplify a basic principle for the design of turns at talk: preferred SPPs come early in their turns and are contiguous with the FPP and dispreferred SPPs are delayed in their turns and are thus not contiguous with their FPPs (Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987).

The fact that disagreements are typically found late in turns indicates that there must be a class of objects which come before the disagreement. These objects can be seen in a way as preparing for the forthcoming disagreement. One member of this class is silence. Where an FPP is produced which demonstrates a preference, it may be followed by a silence (Pomerantz, 1984). Such silences are breaks in the contiguity of the FPP and the SPP and are, therefore, deployable as devices to delay production of a dispreferred SPP. This is an example of such a silence in extract (7.11).

The silence may be a short silence before the next speaker's turn begins or it may be filled by the last speaker continuing. Where the previous speaker continues, the next turn may be redesigned with the opposite preference, as in extract (7.12).

#### (7.12) [Alice and Betty]

1 Alice: Did yuh have a good time.  
2 (0.3)  
3 Alice: nothing special?

4 Betty: nuh, not so good.

In extract (7.12), Alice asks Betty about her weekend away. Her initial enquiry *Did yuh have a good time*. is designed to project a ‘yes-like’ response and is followed by a silence. Alice ends the silence with a reformulation of her original question as a candidate answer to her own FPP, this time with a different trajectory projecting a ‘no-like’ response. Betty then provides her answer with no gap and with the answer *nuh* as the immediately next element after the prior speaker’s turn. Here Alice is orienting to the silence as indicating possible disagreement on the basis that a break in contiguity is hearable as problematic for agreement. Her next action repairs this problem by rephrasing her question so that the answer can be produced as an agreement. In this way, Alice’s reformulation removes the need for a dispreferred action and makes a preferred action as\ possible next action for Betty.

A dispreferred may also be delayed by talk which is produced before the dispreferred SPP. Some common devices for doing this include tokens such as *uhm*, *uh*, *well*, etc. as well as audible breathing. Like silences, the devices are deployable to break the contiguity of the FPP and the SPP. They may also occur in conjunction with silences, and also with other talk which further delays production of the SPP.

(7.13) [Will and Andy]

1 Will: so is Kaye gonna be able to make it?  
2 Andy: (.) uh well, she’s gotta lotta things tuh do  
3 just now. I dunno. sh-she prob’ly won’t be  
4 able tuh do it

In extract (7.13), Andy produces a dispreferred SPP preceded by a brief silence, and two ‘hesitation’ tokens *uh* and *well*. The SPP is also preceded by a warrant, *she’s gotta lotta things tuh do just now*. which gives an account of the reason for the dispreferred component having to be articulated. The warrant indicates that the speaker is aware of the dispreferred status of his contribution and is orienting to the accountability of dispreferred responses. Preferred responses do not need to be explained, dispreferred responses do. The placement of the warrant before the dispreferred SPP serves a dual function: it defers the SPP until later in the turn and also provides a context in which the SPP can be heard. The answer is also preceded by a hedge, *I dunno*, which mitigates the ‘no-like’ answer by claiming a reduced epistemic authority for the SPP (Coates, 1987). This mitigation is also built into the SPP itself through the word *prob’ly*.

Mitigation seems to be an important part of the construction of dispreferreds (Pomerantz, 1984), and dispreferreds are regularly produced as weak disagreements or may be withheld altogether. In cases where a dispreferred is withheld, the SPP is still hearable because of the design of the turn shape. For example, if extract (13) had ended with *I dunno* rather than continuing to the end of the turn as it was produced, it would still be hearable as a “no-like” response. The silence, the hesitation tokens, the warrant and the hedge all provide information about the likely shape of the answer, but most of all the breaking of contiguity between the FPP and the SPP already strongly indicates a dispreferred SPP is probably being foreshadowed.

Often, turns which are in fact disagreements may be phrased as if they are really agreements (Pomerantz, 1984). These agreements are normally weakened or qualified in some way as in extract (7.14).

(7.14) [Alice and Betty]

Alice: did yuh have good weather?  
Betty: yeah.=until it started to rain. n' then it rained  
for the WHO:le weekend.

Here Alice produces a question which projects a “yes-like” SPP and Betty produces the projected SPP type. However, she immediately latches onto this answer a dispreferred “no-like” answer. The overall meaning of her turn is that she did not have good weather: *it rained for the WHO:le weekend*. The agreement token here orients to the preference established by the prior FPP and at the same time provides a device to delay the dispreferred SPP in its turn.

The devices discussed above are all devices that the current speaker can employ in the same turn as the SPP: that is, they are devices for delaying the SPP in its turn. Speakers can also deploy devices (for example, repairs) which delay the SPP in its sequence. While these devices are not specialized for preference, they do serve to break the continuity between an FPP and its SPP and so are useable in the context of a dispreferred SPP.

(7.15) [TG1 (Schegloff, 1996b)]

1 Bee: Yih sound HA:PPY, hh  
2 Ava: I sound ha:p[py?  
3 Bee: [Ye:uh  
4 (0.3)  
5 Ava: No:.,  
6 Bee: N:o?  
7 Ava: No.  
8 (0.7)  
9 Bee: .hh You sound sorta cheerful?

In extract (7.15) makes an assessment *Yih sound HA:PPY*, which like the questions we have seen above, has built into a trajectory which predicts a “yes-like” response. Ava initiates a repair through a repeat of Bee’s turn (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977). The repair itself is potentially ambiguous: it can be seen as a problem of hearing and understanding or it may be disagreement premonitory. Ava provides in her turn a redoing on the original assessment, after which there is a pause and a dispreferred SPP. The repair sequence has provided a device for delaying the SPP, and also a possible space for redoing the FPP in ways similar the Alice’s redoing in extract (7.12). The pause is also here a device which is deployed to delay the dispreferred, which is finally produced as a strong disagreement *No:.*

We have seen that speakers have at their disposal devices for delaying a dispreferred in its turn and also for delaying it in its sequence and that these devices are regularly deployed by speakers in constructing dispreferred SPPs. It is also clear that only certain classes of talk can be deployed in this context and not any talk can be used to delay a SPP; the talk must in some way orient to the upcoming action required to complete the sequence. The prior FPP has established the SPP as the relevant next action and this relevance constrains what can legitimately be used between the conclusion of the FPP and the production of the SPP.

In summary, we can make the following observations about the effect of preference organization on turn shape:

- A preferred action is routinely performed without delay;
- A dispreferred action is routinely delayed in its turn;
- A dispreferred action is routinely prefaced or qualified in its turn;
- A dispreferred action is routinely accomplished in a mitigated or indirect form;
- A dispreferred action is routinely accounted for.

So far we have talked about the preference for agreement mainly in questions, but similar strategies are found in other types of speech events where there are possible preferred and dispreferred responses. Some of these (invitations and assessments) will be discussed below.

### Invitations

Invitations, like questions, establish a trajectory. In fact, in English, invitation FPPs are usually realized by questions designed for “yes-like” answers, as in extracts (7.16) and (7.17), which are both constructed around a question with *would you like ...*

(7.16) [Amy and Jane]

Amy: w'd yuh like tuh come over t'morrow night  
Jane: yea:h.= that'd be nice.

In extract (7.16) Jane's acceptance comes immediately after the completion of the FPP and is done with strong agreement. She adds a second, latched, TCU in her turn, but the achievement of acceptance requires only the *yes* token, not the following assessment.

(7.17) [Lunch]

1 Harry: I don' have much tuh do on We:nsday.  
2 (.)  
3 w'd yuh like tuh get together then.  
4 (0.3)  
5 Joy: huh we::llhh I don' really know if yuh see i's  
6 a bit hectic fuh me We:nsday yih know  
7 Harry: oh wokay

In extract (7.17), Joy's declining of the invitation is actually withheld and there is no overt “no-like” answer, instead her turn is made up of devices routinely used to delay production of a dispreferred: silence, audible out-breathing, *well*, a hedge and a warrant (J. Davidson, 1984; Pomerantz & Heritage, 2013). The SPP is, therefore, made up of elements other than an overt “no”, but these elements all project a possible dispreferred response as the SPP-type under way in this turn.

Responses to invitations may also include elements in the SPP which orient to the nature of invitations, as in (7.18).

(7.18) [Tools]

1 James: How about going out for a drink tonight  
2 Graham: (0.2) tuh- uh sorry b'd I can' make it=c'z Jill  
3 has invited some've her friends over. Perhaps  
4 some other time

In Graham's response in addition, in addition to a pause, a false start and uh, he adds an accounting *sorry* to his warrant *I can' make it=c'z Jill has invited some've her friends over*. This *sorry* seems to respond to the nature of invitations as something the issuer does for the recipient of the invitation and the problematic nature that declining the invitation creates – the recipient has done something problematic in declining (Kwon, 2004). In addition, Graham's *perhaps some other time* orients to the invitation as something he would be willing to accept under other circumstances, but that under present circumstances this would be impossible. These projected alternative arrangements are often found with refused invitations. These indicate that while the invitation cannot be accepted at the moment, the speaker is still available for further invitations and is orienting to an on-going relationship with the speaker who issued the invitation. Again, the actual “no” response is withheld in this sequence.

### Assessments

Assessments are turns which provide an evaluation. This evaluation may be either positive or negative (Heritage, 1985). Pomerantz (1984) has shown that assessments related to participation in an event are routinely followed by second assessments as a way of co-participating in conversation. Because assessments are evaluations, they have build into them a trajectory which establishes possibilities for preference organization. Assessments are interesting, however, in that in some cases, there is more than just a preference for agreement in operation.

When a recipient produces agreement with a prior assessment, this can be done using one of a range of possible agreements: an upgrade, a same evaluation or a weak agreement. These three possibilities are, however not all equal (Pomerantz, 1984). An upgraded agreement occurs where the speaker producing the second assessment produces a stronger evaluation than in the first assessment, either by producing a stronger evaluative term, as in (7.19), or by adding an intensifier to the prior assessment, as in (7.20).

(7.19) [Pomerantz (1984) MC:1]

A: Isn't he cute  
→ B: O::h he::s a::DORable

(7.20) [Pomerantz (1984) CH 4.-14]

M: You must admit it was fun the night we  
we[nt down  
→ J: [It was great fun ...

Upgrades are forms of strong agreement, which never occur in combination with disagreements.



2                   (0.6)  
 3    A:           [Y'know I don't think-  
 4    B:           [.hh It's warm though,

Here, B's disagreeing turn, although in overlap is substantially delayed following a 0.6 second pause and audible in-breathing. Weaker agreements can preface disagreements, as in (7.26).

(7.26) [Lunch]

Joy:       the new paint job is an improvement isn't it.  
 Harry:    yeh tiz b'd I don' really like the colour

So far, assessments have been shown to work a lot like other forms of agreement/disagreement. Agreements are done more immediately than disagreements, which tend to be delayed. However, there are some cases in which assessments do not work the same way. This is most noticeably the case with negative self-assessments (Speer, 2019), as in (7.27).

(7.27) [fn (Pomerantz, 1984)]

C:        I'm talking nonsense now  
 A:        No:::

In this extract, A's disagreeing response to C's self-deprecating assessment is an immediate on record *no::*. In this case, and elsewhere where negative self-assessments are made, disagreements are not regularly delayed in their turn or mitigated. Pomerantz (1984, p. 89) argues that critically assessing one's co-participant is regularly a dispreferred action. Because agreement with a negative self-assessment is tantamount to providing a criticism, agreements are in this context *dispreferred* actions, while disagreements are *preferred* actions. A common turn shape for an agreement with such an assessment can be seen in (7.28).

(7.28) [ MC:1.-23 (Pomerantz, 1984)]

1    W:        ... Do you know what I was all that time?  
 2    L:        (no) .  
 3    W:        Pavlov's dog.  
 4             (2.0)  
 5    L:        (I suppose)

In the extract, L responds to W's negative self-assessment, with a weak agreement after a two second pause: that is by delaying her agreement and breaking contiguity between the two assessments. Pomerantz (1984, p. 92) argues that there is a regular pattern for this type of agreement as follows:

A:           Negative self-assessment  
               Gap  
 B:           Agreement

The gap in this structure is very much the absence of some relevant next activity: a second assessment; and at the same time foreshadows a potential agreement with the assessment.

In sequences involving negative self-assessments, then, we can see a different preference organization from that we have seen in other contexts (Speer, 2019). It is not the case that agreement is preferred, and disagreement is dispreferred and instead, it seems that preferences relating to criticism of a co-participant over-ride the preference for agreement. In this case, we can see that the details of preference organization are not a fixed feature of conversations, but rather it is context sensitive. We can also see that in some contexts more than one possible set of preferences may be relevant for the construction of an utterance and these preferences may not be compatible with each other. A speaker may have to disregard one set of preference (such as agreement) in order to realize another (avoiding criticism).

### *Dispreferred first pair parts*

The discussion so far has focussed around the ways in which preference affects SPPs, however, preference is also relevant to FPPs and some FPP types are dispreferred (Schegloff, 2007; Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006). One such dispreferred FPP has already been foreshadowed in the previous discussion: criticisms of co-participants. These criticisms are, in fact, one type of assessment and we can consider these to be cases of negative other-assessments (Pomerantz, 1984). The first thing to notice about these sorts of assessments is that they tend not to be frequent in conversation and frequent production of such assessments may itself be accountable. When a negative other-assessment is produced it is frequently delayed in its turn and may be prefaced with the sorts of delaying devices we saw above used for SPPs.

#### (7.29) [Lunch]

1 Joy: ... now yuh see she won' talk about it.  
 2 Harry: °Yeah°  
 3 (1.0)  
 4 Harry: Uh well I don remember much about it b't yuh  
 5 know p'rhaps you w're a bit hard on her.  
 6 Joy: puhha::ps

In (7.29) Joy is telling Harry about a problem she is having with a co-worker. After Joy finishes her telling, Harry responds to the telling with a soft °Yeah° and then there is a delay of a second before Harry with *uh well* followed by a disclaimer about his ability to comment on the situation and only then does he produce a mitigated criticism of Joy's behaviour in the situation she has been recounting. Joy in response produces a mitigated same evaluation: a weak agreement form. It can be argued on the basis of examples such as (7.29), that positive other-assessments direct at one's interlocutor are preferred FPPs, while negative other-assessments are dispreferred.

Request FPPs are also routinely designed as dispreferred turns. They are often delayed in their conversation: that is, they may be held back as later topics, even when they are the prime reason for a conversation taking place. Also requests are regularly accompanied by accounts, mitigations, which occur before the request itself and which delay the request in its turn, as in (7.30) (see Kasper & Faerch, 1989; Schegloff, 2007; Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006).

#### (7.30) [Car]

Jim: well my car has broken down an they don' know if  
 it will be fixed by then an' I w'z wondering if  
 I c'd borrow your car.

This extract actually occurs after a much longer piece of preparatory talk in which Jim relates how he needs to go to a meeting and the meeting is a long way out of town. After this he produces his request FPP in the turn given above. This turn is prefaced by *well* and a warrant before the request itself is produced.

The preference organization involved with requests is interesting because the preferred version – an offer FPP – is interactionally quite different from its dispreferred as it is performed by the other participant (Schegloff, 2007). In fact, many potential requests are actually “headed off” by their recipients, who convert them into offers, as in (7.31).

(7.31) [Lunch]

Harry: z'there any coffee,  
Joy: w'd you like one.  
Harry: yeah thanks that'd be great.

In this extract, Harry's first turn is potentially a preliminary to a request for Joy to make him a coffee. This appears to be the interpretation that Joy constructs for the turn and pre-empts the request with an offer, which is in turn accepted by Harry.

In this case, we have two FPP types which both lead to a similar outcome. In both cases one participant has something or can do something that the other wants. The dispreferred request FPP involves one participant making an imposition on the other while the preferred FPP involves a participant undertaking to do something voluntarily. The imposition relating to the request is a variable thing. Some requests, such as asking for the time, are for things which are considered “free goods” (Goffman, 1963) which even strangers can ask for without account and without participants considering much imposition is involved. Other requests, such as asking to borrow a car, are not free goods and where a large imposition is seen to be involved. Requests for free goods are then much less dispreferred than requests for other goods and we can consider the preference organization here to be scaled from a highly dispreferred request to an only slightly dispreferred request.

## Conclusion

Adjacency pairs, together with their preference organizations, provide the basis for sequence organization in conversation. The minimal sequence is composed of an FPP and an SPP. However, sequences can be expanded beyond this basic two turn structure and sequences can potentially become quite lengthy and involve a large number of turns. The ways in which this happens will be discussed in the next chapters. Regardless of how long a sequence may become, it remains based on a FPP and an SPP and the talk in a sequence is relevant to the performance of this base adjacency pair. Adjacency pairs can, therefore, be considered to be the basic building blocks from which sequences in conversation are built up. The ways in which sequences can be expanded will be considered in the next chapter.

## Exercise

Using a transcription of about 50 turns of talk, work through the talk to identify the first pair parts and second pair parts which make up the talk. Also note if there are other elements in the talk which do not seem to be paired.

- a) Are these turns sequence closing thirds or is there something else happening in the talk at these points?
- b) Do the second pair parts always follow the first pair parts? If not, what sorts of things separate the two? How do you interpret these separations?
- c) Are there first pair parts which do not have second pair parts? If so, what happens in these cases?

### **Further reading**

- Pomerantz, Anita, & John Heritage. (2013). Preference. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of Conversation Analysis* (pp. 210-228). Abingdon, UK: Blackwell.
- Sacks, Harvey. (1987). On the preferences for agreement and contiguity in sequences in conversation. In Graham Button & John R.E. Lee (Eds.), *Talk and Social Organisation*. Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. (2007). *Sequence organization in interaction: A primer in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stivers, Tanya. (2013). Sequence organisation. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of Conversation Analysis* (pp. 191-209). Abingdon, UK: Blackwell.

## Chapter 8 Expanding sequences

### Focus

- Ways of extending talk beyond base adjacency pairs.
- Forms of talk that precede first pair parts and their interactional purposes
- Forms of talk that come between first pair parts and second parts and their interactional purposes
- Forms of talk that follow second pair parts and their interactional purposes.

### Sequence expansion

The preceding chapter discussed the basic features of sequences and proposed the idea that sequences are constructed of two turns at talk: an FPP and an SPP. While the adjacency pair structure is the basis of sequences of talk, it is possible for these sequences to be expanded in various places in their production. Sequence expansion allows talk which is made up of more than a single adjacency pair to be constructed and understood as performing the same basic action and the various additional elements are seen as doing interactional work related to the basic action underway. Sequence expansion is constructed in relation to a base sequence of an FPP and an SPP in which the core action underway is achieved. Expansions may occur prior to the articulation of the base FPP (*pre-expansion*), between the base FPP and the base SPP (*insert expansion*), and following the base SPP (*post-expansion*). Most examples of expansion are also sequences in their own right made up of FPPs and SPPs, and so may also be called *pre-sequences*, *insert sequences* and *post-sequences* in order to focus more on the ways in which the expansions are constructed.

### Pre-expansion

Pre-expansions (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 1979a, 1988c, 1990) are designed to be preliminary to some projected base sequence and are hearable by participants as preludes to some other action. Pre-sequences come in two basic kinds: generic pre-sequences, which are used with any form of following talk and type-specific pre-sequences, which are designed to lead to some particular kind of base sequence.

#### *A generic pre-sequence: summons-answer*

There is one pre-sequence which is not designed with reference to the nature of the action to which it is prior, but is rather a generic pre-sequence which can be used to launch any sort of next talk. This is the summons-answer sequence. This pre-sequence is designed to gain the attention of a recipient (Pillet-Shore, 2018; Schegloff, 1968, 2002b). This is a basic interactional necessity because interaction can only occur if the participants in the interaction are attending to each other and are available as speakers and recipients. The summons-answer sequence is a two part sequence composed of an adjacency pair. The FPP has a number of possible realizations: it can be an address term, a politeness term such as *excuse me*, an attention getting token such as *hey*, or it can be done by touching the intended recipient (Nofsinger, 1975; Pillet-Shore, 2018; Schegloff, 1968, 1986b, 2002b). All of these devices serve a common function of providing an indication that a speaker is seeking a recipient, and where address terms are used, providing an indication of who the desired recipient is.

The SPP also has a variety of forms. The most common SPP following a summons in face-to-face interaction is to redirect eye gaze to the summoner (C. Goodwin, 1980, 1981; M. H. Goodwin, 2006; Pillet-Shore, 2018). The redirection of eye gaze to a prior speaker is enough in itself to show that the gazer is available as a recipient for further talk. Other possible SPPs include verbal tokens such as *what* or *yes/yeah*, which likewise signal availability for further talk. In face-to-face interaction, these verbal tokens are frequently connected with redirecting eye-gaze and other non-verbal manifestations of attention, such as changing body position to orient to the summoner (C. Goodwin, 1980, 1981).

The production on an SPP regardless of its form makes further talk by the summoner conditionally relevant (Nofsinger, 1975; Schegloff, 1968, 1979a, 1986b, 2002b). It is in the relevance of some sort of talk on completion of the summons-answer sequence which demonstrates how such sequences can be viewed as pre-sequences. The summons-answer does not achieve completion in and of itself, but rather makes a next action relevant as the result of its completion. In other words, it projects some future action as the reason for the summons-answer sequence and it is heard as prior to this action. The summons-answer sequence therefore both pre-shadows and requires some other talk, but does not project what will be done in that talk.

If the intended recipient of a summons does not produce a response to the FPP, further talk is not possible. This lack of an SPP may be the result of the FPP having failed to achieve an effect: if a summons is designed to attract attention, its failure to do so would be manifested as a lack of response. At the same time, it is also possible that intended recipient of a summons may withhold a response. While it may not be possible to know whether the lack of response is a result of not hearing the summons or is a deliberate withholding of a response by the recipient, in either case, the lack of response blocks progression to the next action. Where a response has not been produced, participants may treat this as a problem of hearing and it may be repaired by redoing the FPP, as in (8.1).

(8.1) [(Nofsinger, 1991)]

C: Anne  
→ A: ((Silence))  
→ C: Anne  
A: What

Not all responses to a summons, however, lead immediately to further talk. There are also responses which register that a summons has been produced, but which seek to block or delay the projected next talk. These responses range from indicating availability for further talk after a delay (*just a minute, I'll be right there*, etc.), to providing a warrant for not becoming a recipient for the talk at that time (*I'm busy, I'm on the phone*, etc.), to outright rejection of reciprocity of the projected talk (*leave me alone, go away*, etc.). These responses complete the summons-answer sequence, but they also attend to the projection of some next talk and work to block that talk as a next activity, either temporarily or completely. Obviously the degree to which such SPPs are successful as blocks depends on what happens interactionally. The answerer in providing talk has displayed attention to the summoner and is potentially available as a recipient of further talk, even if an unwilling one.

One of the most common locations for summons-answer sequences is in conversational openings, these sequences are frequently the first talk to occur, preceding even greetings (M.

H. Goodwin, 2006; Schegloff, 1968, 1986a). Given the function of summons-answer sequences as securing a recipient for talk, it is not surprising to find this sequence at the point where people move from not being engaged in interaction with each other to being engaged in interaction. The first necessity for interaction to occur is to have participants who are available to each other for talk.

Summons-answer sequences are, however, not just specialized for openings (Nofsinger, 1975). They can also be found within on-going talk, where the availability of an intended recipient may be problematic or may be claimed by a speaker to be problematic. This may be the case, for example, where an intended recipient is currently engaged in some other activity, such as talking to a third participant, where the recipient has temporarily left the room, or where the intended recipient is not currently one's recipient in a multiparty conversation. In extract (8.2), the three participants are in the middle of a car journey and one of passengers (Nick) needs to give directions to the driver (Sasha).

#### (8.2) [Car Conversation]

1 Elvis: [three weeks ol=it tastes quite good  
2 Nick: better'n the other ↑stuff, o::r like (.2)  
3 diff'rent,  
4 Elvis: yeah like it's still young but it tastes good  
5 alread[y so::  
6→ Nick: [hey Sash  
7 (.)  
8 Nick: go straight throu[gh man  
9 Sasha: [yeah. okay.

Here Nick is in conversation with Elvis, who is answering a question Nick has asked him. Sasha has not been involved in the talk for several lines. In overlap with Elvis' talk, Nick produce a summons *hey Sash* involving an attention getting token and an address term, selecting Sasha as next speaker who will provide the answer to the summons and, in so doing, the recipient of the projected talk. While Sasha does not give a verbal response to the summons, the transcript shows that she does become a recipient for the next talk and responds to Nick's talk as the recipient of the talk.

#### *Type specific pre-expansions*

Most types of pre-expansions project some specific next activity and are designed to be, and are regularly produced as, prior to a particular base sequence. The FPP of type-specific pre-sequences projects a particular next activity as relevant for talk and makes relevant a particular types of SPP response. These pre-sequences are used to project actions such as invitations, requests, offers, etc. and can be considered as pre-invitation sequences, pre-request sequences, pre-offer sequences, etc. Type specific pre-expansions do not, however, simply project some future activity, but what happens in the pre-expansion influences the way in which the subsequent talk will unfold, and even if the projected base sequence will be done: the production of the projected base FPP is contingent upon the outcome of the pre-sequence and some responses regularly lead to the base sequence being produced while others do not.

## Pre-invitations

Invitations are very commonly preceded by pre-expansions, typically of the type *Are you doing anything?* (Atkinson & Drew, 1984; Drew, 2018; Schegloff, 2007). These questions are routinely treated by participants in a conversation not as questions seeking information about what the recipient is doing, but as precursors to invitations (Sacks, 1992, Vol. 2, p. 529). The question is designed to check availability for an invitation.

(8.3) [(Schegloff, 1995)]

1 Clara: hello  
2 Nelson: hi.  
3 Clara: hi.  
4→ Nelson: whatcha doin'.  
5→ Clara: not much.  
6 Nelson: y'wanna drink?  
7 Clara: yeah.  
8 Nelson: okay.

In extract (8.3), we can see how such questions function in pre-invitation sequences. Clara gives the answer *not much* to the initial question and this answer can be interpreted, not as a description of activities, but as meaning something like “nothing which is in competition with an invitation at that time” (Schegloff, 2007). In other words, an answer which indicates that one is not doing anything indicates that the invitation is likely to be welcomed. Such responses can be considered to be a “go-ahead” response to the invitation: a response which indicates that the projected invitation can now be done. In extract (8.3), this is how Nelson interprets the answer and he immediately proceeds to the invitation FPP, which in turn receives a preferred SPP: an acceptance of the invitation.

Conversely, if the recipient of the pre-invitation produces a turn which describes some activity, this indicates the likelihood that an invitation would be declined because of a competing commitment, as in (8.4).

(8.4) [Fiona & Jill]

Fiona: have yuh got any plans for Saddurday?  
Jill: my sister's coming up tuh visit.  
Fiona: o:h that will be nice for yuh.

In this extract, Jill's answer turn provides an indication that an invitation would not be likely to be accepted if it were produced following on from this pre-sequence. This answer can be considered to be a blocking response to the invitation: a response which discourages the invitation. In this extract, Fiona does not proceed to the invitation but rather treats Jill's turn in line 2 as a telling and responds to it on this level. Withholding the projected base FPP is not uncommon in such circumstances. The pre-invitation has done the ground work to be seen as an invitation would be likely to be accepted and has shown that if it were produced, it would be declined: a dispreferred SPP. The pre-expansion here allows the speaker to accomplish a different action following on from the pre-sequence and recasts the subsequent talk as undertaking some other action (Fox, 1987).

This recasting however raises an analytic problem: how can questions such as that in (4) be seen as *pre*-sequences if the base sequence they are claimed to precede is not actually done? The solution to this problem lies in the behaviour of conversationalists in these sorts of contexts, which demonstrates very clearly that participants are orienting to invitations as relevant activities. One activity which shows clearly that participants do not orient to questions such as “Are you doing anything?” as questions about activities can be seen in a third possible response to these questions, see (8.5).

(8.5) [S/J 03]

- 1 Sally: yih doin' anythin' this Friday?  
 2→ Jean: why?  
 3 Sally: well we were thinkin' a goin' to a movie.  
 4 Jean: which one,  
 5 Sally: I dunno, perhaps the new Tom Cruise one.  
 6 Jean: yeah I'd like tuh see that.

In this extract, the question does not receive either a go-ahead answer nor blocking answer, in fact it receives an additional question: *why?* This question is revealing. Jean is not responding to the question itself as the main activity under way here, but rather as an activity which is contingent upon something else. Jean's response here indicates that what she is doing depends on what the projected invitation is. That is, she treats the response slot not as an opportunity to answer a question, but as a locational position in which she is called on to display her willingness to be invited. Her *why?* response indicates that her willingness to be invited is contingent upon the nature of the invitation. This is therefore a hedging response to the pre-invitation because it neither gives a go-ahead nor does it block the invitation. It is also a clear indication that questions of the type “What are you doing?” are heard as preliminary to other activities. Sally's response to the *why?* is not, however, produced as an invitation, but rather as a reporting of what the invitation was going to be (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014; Drew, 1984; Schegloff, 2007). She does not do an invitation, which may be refused at this point, but recasts her talk to do the invitation in a way which is less on the record. Nonetheless, Sally's turn at this point is treated as an invitation by Jean, who eventually accepts the invitation.

The orientation to invitations as relevant next activities after pre-invitation sequences can also be seen in speakers' turns after blocking responses, as in (8.6), which continues (8.4) above.

(8.6) [Fiona & Jill]

- 1 Fiona: have yuh got any plans for Saddurday?  
 2 Jill: my sister's coming up tuh visit.  
 3 Fiona: o:h that will be nice for yuh.  
 4 Jill: why::=what're yih doin'  
 5 Fiona: oh:: well we jus' thought we might get some  
 friends  
 6 together and go for a picnic, yihkno:w nothin'  
special.  
 7 Jill: that's sounds like fu-<I think my sister w'd like  
 8 tuh do somethin' like that.  
 9 Fiona: yeah? w'll we thought we might go out tuh the

10→ river. so whyncha both come.  
11 Jill: yeah thadded by nice.

Here, Jill's turn has blocked an invitation from Fiona and the pre-invitation sequence has been done as a telling in response to a question. Jill's next turn why::=*what're yih doin'*, however, continues to orient to Fiona's original question as a pre-invitation and asks what the projected invitation was likely to be. Jill's turn, because it orients to inviting as a relevant activity even after the talk has been recast, contains an implication that the recipient might modify her reception of the projected invitation. That is, Jill has revived the possibility of an invitation by remaining in the invitation sequence. Fiona responds to Jill by telling what the invitation would have been. Although Jill is orienting to an invitation sequence, Fiona continues to construct the talk as a telling about an invitation, rather than an invitation as such (Drew, 1984; Schegloff, 2007). Jill then indicates that both she and her sister would be willing to participate in the event. After telling some more about the invitation, Fiona then (re)does the invitation as an invitation FPP (at line 10) and the invitation is now accepted. Throughout the sequence, the participants show that they are orienting to an invitation as a relevant outcome of the initial question turn, even though the invitation is not done until much later. It is only by viewing the initial turn as preliminary to some activity which was withheld that this sequence can be understood and the relevance of Jill's why::=*what're yih doin'* can be interpreted.

In summary, pre-invitations are typically realized as question-answer sequences in which the question serves to check availability. As such, there are only a limited number of question forms which are hearable as pre-invitations. Availability is a necessary pre-condition for an invitation being accepted and thus availability will determine whether or not a preferred or dispreferred SPP is likely (Schegloff, 2007). The pre-invitation, therefore, is work done by a potential inviter to determine before producing the invitation itself, whether or not it is likely to be accepted, and provides a possibility for not doing the invitation in the face of a likely dispreferred response. The sequence also allows for the possibility of the recipient declining an invitation before it is produced, thereby to some extent avoiding having to do a dispreferred action.

### Pre-requests

Requests, like invitations, have both preferred and dispreferred SPP types and also often occur with pre-expansion (Fox, 2015). Here again, the pre-expansion gauges the likelihood of the request being granted before it is performed.

(8.7) [Bookstore 7-20-2013 001509 (Fox, 2015)]

1 C: ↑do you guys sell ↓stamps?  
2 (.)  
3 S: yes we do. (we) sell them in (packs) of ten  
4 and \*twenty\*  
5 (0.5)  
6 C: u::m (0.3) .pt ↓alright, (0.2) give me ten  
7 (of them)=  
8 S: =alright

Here, C's initial turn launches a sequence to ascertain whether the conditions necessary for the request to work actually exist by asking if the shops sells what he wishes to buy (line 1). This receives a go-ahead response from the seller and once the pre-request has been completed, A produces a request FPP (in line 5). As the pre-request in extract (8.7) has a go-ahead response that leads to the production of the request FPP, it receives a preferred SPP. Pre-requests can also receive blocking responses, as in extract (8.8) and hedging responses, as in extract (8.9).

(8.8) [170 (Levinson, 1983)]

1 A: Hullo I was wondering if you were intending to  
2 go to Popper's talk this afternoon  
3 B: Not today I'm afraid I can't really make it  
4 to this one  
5 A: Ah okay  
6 B: You wanted me to record it didn't you heh!  
7 A: Yeah heheh  
8 B: Heheh no I'm sorry about that, ...

In (8.8), B's turn is a blocking response which indicates that the pre-conditions for the request cannot be met. A orients to B's response as an answer to a question and responds with an acceptance of the telling. The request is not done, however B's second turn indicates that he is fully orienting to A's first turn as a pre-request and reformulates the thrust of the request.

(8.9) [Redecorating]

Andy: djah have a minute?  
→ Chris: why?  
Andy: I need a hand with the ladder.  
Chris: okay'll be there in a moment.

In (8.9), Chris' *why?* is a hedged response indicating that his availability is conditional upon the projected request.

Pre-requests typically treat two types of pre-conditions for the granting of the request: availability of the requested object or ability of the person to carry out the request. Pre-requests dealing with the availability of an object typically have forms such as "Do you have an X?", "Is there any X?", etc. (Fox, 2015) while pre-requests dealing with ability of the person have forms such as "Have you got a minute?", "Can you X?", etc. These pre-requests can project a request so strongly that in many cases, the pre-sequence itself can achieve the request without the request itself being produced, as in (8.10).

(8.10) [(Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) from (Levinson, 1983)]

S: Have you got Embassy Gold please?  
H: Yes dear ((provides))

Here the customer (S) produces a pre-request, asking about the availability of a brand of cigarettes and is then given the cigarettes without any overt request being produced. The pre-request here is functioning in what Searle (1975) calls an indirect request. Levinson (1983) however provides a competing analysis of these forms as pre-requests with an omitted base

sequence. He makes this argument because, an utterance such as *Have you got Embassy Gold please?* can actually launch more than one possible trajectory. It can launch the sequence in (8.10) which is made up of the FPP of the pre-sequence and the SPP of the base sequence. It can also launch a sequence involving the full base request sequence as in (8.7).

Similar arguments about the relationship between pre-sequences and indirect speech acts are made by Herringer (1977) and Schegloff (1988c) and within a conversation analytic perspective indirect speech acts can be best treated as truncated versions of expanded sequences. Levinson's (1983), Herringer (1977), and Schegloff (1988c) argue that, if one codes the pre-request FPP as an indirect request, this is a category imposed by the analyst, because it is only possible to know that the talk has constitutes an indirect speech act after the sequence has been played out. The same form may launch very different sequences and it is only by understanding utterances such as "Do you have X?" as pre-sequences that the commonality of all these possible outcomes can be recognized by participants as well as by analysts. This argument also applies to a third trajectory which may follow a pre-request which allows the pre-request to be followed by an offer as in (8.11).

(8.11) [(Merritt, 1976) from (Levinson, 1983)]

C: Do you have a pecan Danish today?  
S: Yes we do. Would you like one of those?  
C: Yes please  
S: Okay ((Turns to get))

In this extract, the request pre-sequence provides an opportunity for the recipient of the pre-sequence to convert the sequence from a request to an offer (Sacks, 1992, p. Vol 1: 65). In these cases, a dispreferred request FPP is replaced by a preferred offer FPP and the pre-sequence provides a resource to allow this to happen.

Levinson (1983) argues for a hierarchy of preferences for request sequences, which deal in different ways with the doing of a request FPP, which is a dispreferred FPP type.

- (8.12) (i) most preferred pre-request  
response to request
- (ii) next preferred pre-request  
offer  
acceptance of offer
- (iii) least preferred pre-request  
go-ahead  
request  
compliance

Some forms of pre-requests are designed to achieve the most preferred sequence (Levinson, 1983). This is possible when the pre-request FPP contains all of the information necessary to complete the request. That is, fully specified pre-requests FPPs are designed to enable request-oriented SPPs in immediate next position. Other pre-request FPPs usually occasion some other talk before the request can be granted. Some pre-requests, such as "Have you got a minute?"

are designed in such a way that immediate compliance with the request cannot be done and further talk must occur.

Kendrick and Drew (2014) argue that this hierarchy of preference may in fact oversimplify the relationship between requests and offers. Pre-requests may generate offers because their main action is to indicate some problem that the speaker has that the recipient may be able to resolve. After the problem has become apparent there are then two ways that it can be resolved. The first is that the speaker can request the help of the recipient to resolve it, and this would mean that after a pre-request has shown that the recipient has the ability to resolve it, the speaker produces a request. The alternative trajectory is for the recipient to produce an offer. Requests involve a speaker placing the recipient under an obligation to act in way to resolve a problem or need and as such they present a potential social difficulty. Offers however involve the recipient taking agency to resolve the problem or need and so do not involve an imposed obligation (see also Curl, 2006). They argue that when there may be a normative relationship between the presentation of recognizable problems in social interaction and offers of solutions, although there is no obligation for recipients to move to produce offers. Thus, the common element between request and offers may be the evidence of a problem that can be resolved and that such evidence provides for two ways in which the interaction may develop. It may be the case that the nature of the interaction may play a role in how pre-request turns are treated in interaction as Fox (2015) has found that, in service encounters, while sellers may provide requests without the request having been produced, as in (8.12i) above, offers were not often produced by sellers.

### **Pre-offers**

Participants in conversation may try to assess in advance whether their offer is likely to be accepted before producing the offer. This is done through pre-offer sequences (Raymond, 2003, 2010).

(8.13) [S/J 04]

- 1 Sam: The farm's a long way outta town yih  
2 know bud i's gunna be a great party though  
3 [ i's (gunna) ]  
4 Simon: [I'm driv- I']m takin' my car  
5 Sam: Y'are?  
6 Simon: Yih c'd come with me if yih wan.  
7 Sam: Okay thanks

In this extract, Sam and Simon are discussing a party to which they have both been invited. In the context, Sam's observation about the farm where the party is being held being a long way from town is potentially an indication of a problem in getting there. Simon's observation that he is taking his car is not directly relevant to the preceding discussion of the party rather the mentioning of the car in this particular position invites understanding of his potential to resolve the problem foreshadowed in Sam's talk. When Sam registers this as news he is registering interest in the action which is projected by the mentioning of taking the car. This expression of interest counts then as a go-ahead response for the offer, which is produced in the next turn by Simon and immediately accepted by Sam. In this extract, the mentioning of taking the car does work to see whether Sam is likely to be interested in the offer of a lift to the party and works

as a pre-offer rather than as just a telling, at this point in the conversation. The pre-offer here is highly context specific and pre-offers in general do not have the formulaic features found in the other pre-expansions discussed so far.

Like other pre-sequences, pre-offers can also receiving blocking responses as in (8.14).

(8.14) [NJ]

Nick: so:: have yuh got a lift?  
 Joan: yeah. I'm goin' with Jodie.  
 Nick: okay.

In extract (8.14), Nick's question turn deals with the pre-conditions of an offer being accepted by examining if his recipient has a need which his offer could fulfil. Joan's answer indicates that she is not in need of a lift and that the offer is likely to be rejected because of the already arranged lift with Jodie. In this case, Nick does not proceed to an offer and the pre-offer is recast as a simple question-answer sequence. It does not seem that pre-offers are as open to hedging responses as the other pre-sequences discussed above and this seems to be the result of aspects of the ways in which pre-offers are designed. In the case of extract (14), the construction of the pre-offer is so highly contextualized that a hedging response would not appear to be a possible response at any point in the unfolding talk, while in extract (8.14) the request about a need may not allow the same possibilities for a contingent response.

### Pre-tellings

When a speaker wishes to convey news to another, there is a constraint on what is tellable to a particular recipient. Ordinarily one should not tell a recipient something that is already known (C. Goodwin, 1979; Sacks, 1973) (also called pre-announcements) are aimed at gauging whether or not a recipient is an appropriate recipient of some telling (Terasaki, 2004).

Many, but by no means all, pre-tellings are quite formulaic, consisting of the basic components in (8.15):

|        |                                    |                              |               |
|--------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (8.15) | guess<br>(do) you know<br>remember | what<br>who<br>when<br>where | ± information |
|--------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

The minimal form of a pre-telling is "Guess what". This device indicates that the speaker has something to tell, but gives no additional information about the telling, other pre-tellings may give the recipient more information about what the telling will involve, as in "Guess who I saw on the weekend", which gives some indication about the topic of the news. Regardless of the amount of information or the degree of formulaicity, the common function of pre-tellings is to alert the recipient that what is to follow is a telling of some news. This enables the recipient to recognize the telling as news when it is delivered, especially if the news is topically discontinuous with previous talk. In addition, pre-tellings may also include an assessment about the news as good or bad, giving the recipient a framework in which to interpret the telling (C. Goodwin, 1984; M. H. Goodwin, 1990; Terasaki, 2004).

As with other pre-sequences, pre-tellings have more than one possible response type. Often, the response to a pre-telling is a go-ahead response. One common design for go-ahead responses is a repetition of the question word in a formulaic pre-telling as in “guess what/what” in extract (8.16), or a “no” answer to a “do you know ...?” or “have you heard ...?” pre-telling in extract (8.17).

(8.16) [(Terasaki, 2004)]

D: .hh Oh guess what.  
R: What.  
D: Professor Deelies came in, 'n he- put another  
book on 'is order.

(8.17) [Car Conversation]

Nick: [djyou] know how much money she takes home a week?  
Sasha: nah?  
Nick: three thousand fuckin' dollars.

These responses indicate that the news is unknown to the recipient and that a telling would be appropriate. Pre-tellings may also receive blocking responses as in (8.18).

(8.18) [Car Conversation]

1 Sasha: an all- did he tell yuh about his problems with  
2 his wife an [that  
3→ Nick: [yeah. oh I knew all about that  
4 anyway.  
5 (0.2)  
6 Nick an he's got this tattoo on his ↑che:st  
7 Elvis: yeah?  
8 Nick: an it's like (0.2) of this (.) great big (.)  
9 pheasant or something like that,

In this extract, Nick shows that the constraint on newsworthiness has not been met and he is not a candidate recipient for a telling on this topic because he already knows the news. Sasha does not tell her story of “his problems with his wife”, but rather Nick, after a pause, begins another telling of his own.

Pre-tellings can also function to provide a space for making a guess about the news, especially in the case of telling bad news, which can be considered a dispreferred action (Levinson, 1983; Schegloff, 1988b). By prompting a guess through a pre-telling, the need to perform the dispreferred turn maybe removed.

(8.19) [DA:2:10 (Schegloff, 1988c)]

1 Belle: I I-I had something (.) terrible t'tell you.=  
2 =So [uh: ]  
3→ Fanny: [How t]errible [is it.]  
4 Belle: [.hhhhh]

5                   (.)  
6→ Belle: Uh: ez worse as it could be:.  
7                   (0.7)  
8    Fanny: W' y' mean Ida?  
9                   (.)  
10 Belle: Uh yah.hh=  
11→ Fanny: =Wud she do die:?  
12 Belle: =Mm:hm,  
13                   (.)  
14 Fanny: When did she die,

In this extract, Belle produces a pre-telling which characterizes her news as *terrible*, but it is actually Fanny who guesses the news (at line 3) rather than Belle who tells it. In fact, Belle passes up opportunities to deliver her news at line 6. Fanny's talk has shown that she is a potential recipient of the news at line 3, but rather than proceeding to a telling, Belle provides a reformulation of part of her pre-telling and allows a 0.7 second gap. This can be heard as Belle withholding the news providing a space and a prompt for Fanny to guess the news, which she eventually does, first identifying a person about whom the news could be *as worse as it could be* and then identifying what could be told about this person which could be characterized in this way.

### *Preliminaries to preliminaries*

Schegloff (1980, 2007) has described a pre-sequence which is distinctive in a number of respects: the preliminary to preliminaries sequence or the "pre-pre". These sequences are type specific, but there are a range of base sequences which can be projected by them. The form of these pre-sequences is typically *Can I ...?* or *Let me ...* with an indication what the nature of the projected base sequence is: 'Can I ask you a question?', 'Can I make a suggestion?', 'Can I ask a favour?', etc. As such, these pre-sequences look similar to the sorts of type specific pre-sequences discussed above.

In spite of the similarity, pre-pres work and are understood in very different ways. Pre-pres do not seem to be designed in the first instance to anticipate or avoid rejection of a base sequence and do not typically receive blocking responses. Although pre-pres do not receive blocking responses, the 'go-ahead' SPP of the pre-expansion is not immediately followed by the projected base FPP: for example, *Can I ask you a favour?* does not regularly lead to the production of a request in the speaker's next turn. This means that pre-pres do not appear to be designed as immediately prior to a projected base sequence, but as prior to something else. The ways in which pre-pres function can be seen more clearly if we consider extract (8.20).

### (8.20) [J/S 02]

1    Jim:        C'n I ask yuh a big favour?  
2    Sarah:      Sure  
3    Jim:        Yih know how I have tuh go tuh this meetin' out  
4                at Cra:nbourne on Wensday?  
5    Sarah:      Mm hm.  
6    Jim:        Well my car has broken down an they don' know if  
7                it will be fixed by then an'

8→ I w'z wondering if I c'd borrow your car.  
 9 Sarah: U:h so when do yih need it? all day?  
 10 Jim: No jus' from twelve until abou' three;  
 11 Sarah: We:ll I don' need it then so I guess it'll be  
 okay.

In this extract, Jim produces the pre-pre *C'n I ask yuh a big favour?* which gets a go-ahead response from Sarah. He then asks a question which indicates that he has a meeting at a place quite distant from his place of work. Jim then produces a brief telling about his car, before producing the projected base FPP at line 8. Jim's pre-pre leads in his next turn to talk which serves as a preliminary work which needs to be accomplished before the base FPP is done. The pre-expansion is not immediately a preliminary to the projected base sequence, but rather a preliminary to talk which is itself preliminary to the projected base sequence. These pre-pres seem to establish a trajectory in which what comes after them is not heard as a base FPP, but rather as preparatory talk for a base sequence, while also providing for a recognition of the base sequence when it is produced. Thus in extract (8.20), Jim's pre-pre foreshadows that his request to borrow the car will be understood as the FPP of the projected base sequence and that the previous talk should be heard as preparatory to this request. The relationship between the pre-pre and what follows it can be seen even more clearly in extract (8.21).

(8.21) [J/S 05]

1→ Carol: Can I ask y' a question.  
 2 Joe: Yeah.  
 3 Carol: Yihknow Sally Smith?  
 4 Joe: Yeah.  
 5 Carol: An yih know that she's changed jobs.  
 6 Joe: yeah.  
 7 Carol: Well I want tuh get in touch with her but I don't  
 8 know where she is working now.  
 9→ do you have her phone number;  
 10 Joe: I think so. just a moment while I check.

Here, Carol produces the pre-pre *Can I ask y' a question*, thereby projecting a question as relevant base sequence. She then produces two questions, which Joe does not appear to treat as the particular question which Carol has asked permission to produce. Even though Carol's next talk has the form of the projected base sequence, these questions are heard as preliminaries to some other question. A trajectory has been established in which the talk immediately after the pre-pre SPP, will not be heard as the projected action, but rather as a preliminary to this action and this trajectory is more important for interpreting what is said than the form of the talk which appears. When Carol produces her projected question, *do you have her phone number;* (which is a request for a phone number rather than a question), she also precedes it with a warrant for the asking.

Schegloff (1980, 2007) argues that there are two main sorts of preliminaries which are produced in the space made available by the pre-pre: pre-mentions, where speakers provide information to their recipients, and pre-conditions, where speakers ensure that the necessary conditions for complying with the base FPP exist. In the extracts above, Jim and Carol produce base FPPs possible problems of knowledge. In extract (21) Jim's request to borrow a car

involves relevant information which his recipient cannot be presumed to know (his car has broken down and will take time to repair) or cannot be presumed to recognize as relevant (he has a distant meeting). He therefore needs to do work to establish this information so that it will be recognized as relevant to the base FPP when it is produced. In extract (8.21), Carol faces a similar problem. Her recipient can only provide the information she needs if he knows the person involved and knows that she has changed jobs. Her preliminaries follow a sequence from the more general condition (does Joe know Sally Smith) to the less general one (does he know she has changed jobs). Obviously if the first condition for providing the necessary information does not exist (Joe doesn't know Sally Smith), he cannot possibly meet the second condition. If the first condition is fulfilled, he may, however, not be aware of the second condition, in which case he is unlikely to be able to provide the information. Carol, therefore, refines her knowledge about whether or not the conditions exist for her to be able to secure Sally Smith's new phone number. Once the conditions have been established, she also provides a pre-mention of her situation before proceeding to the projected base FPP. In both of these extracts, Jim and Carol do work in the conversational space which the pre-pre creates to provide a context in which their talk can be heard and understood.

### *Multiple pre-expansions*

It is possible in conversation to have several pre-expansions before the relevant base FPP is produced. The multiple pre-expansions may be made up of a generic and type-specific sequences, or of a number of type specific sequences. Where summons-answer sequences occur in multiple pre-expansions, they tend to occur as the initial pre-expansion. Extract (8.22), a fuller version of extract (8.20), shows in a very short conversation, how such multiple pre-expansion can work.

(8.22) [J/S 05]

- 1→ Jim: Sarah?  
 2 Sarah: Uh-yeah,  
 3→ Jim: Yih god a moment,  
 4 Sarah: Yeah.  
 5→ Jim: C'n I ask yuh a big favour?  
 6 Sarah: Sure  
 7 Jim: Yih know how I have tuh go tuh this meetin' out at  
 8 Cra:nbourne on Wensday?  
 9 Sarah: Mm hm.  
 10 Jim: Well my car has broken down an they don' know if  
 11 it will be fixed by then an' I w'z wondering if I  
 12 c'd borrow your car.  
 13 Sarah: U:h so when do yih need it? all day?  
 14 Jim: No jus' from twelve until abou' three?  
 15 Sarah: We:ll I don' need it then so I guess it'll be  
 okay.

In extract (8.22), the pre-pre discussed above is preceded by two other pre-sequences. At line 1, Jim begins with a summons-answer sequence which is preliminary to the next talk he produces and also serves to initiate the conversation by securing Sarah's reciprocity for the talk. Sarah gives a 'go-ahead' response to this, both positioning herself as a recipient of further talk

and making further talk relevant. Jim's next talk in line 3 is a pre-request which seeks establish the possibility that Sarah will grant the projected request. Sarah's SPP is again a 'go-ahead' response. The request which Jim produces in line 5 is simultaneously a request and a pre-pre *C'n I ask yuh a big favour?* which again receives a 'go-ahead' response. The result is an elaborately constructed stretch of talk in which the three pre-expansions each serve a further purpose in establishing the trajectory of the talk.

This extract shows something else about the nature of pre-expansion: in expanding sequences *any* sequence can be the basis for expansion. As expansion sequences are sequences, they too include points at which further expansion can be made, just like any other sequence type. In the above extract, it is not just the base sequence (the request) which is expanded as the pre-sequences themselves are also expanded. The summons-answer is a pre-expansion of the pre-request, the pre-request is a pre-expansion of the pre-pre, and the whole is a pre-expansion of the base request. From this we can see that a single base adjacency pair can provide the basis for a substantial amount of talk, even before it is produced. The coherence of the talk in turn derives from the fact that such talk is hearable as prior to some projected next action and this provides a context in which the talk is interpretable for participants.

### *Conclusion*

Pre-expansions, particularly type specific pre-expansions, have as a primary role to avoidance of problems in talk, particularly in dealing with problematic responses to FPPs. Pre-expansion is therefore closely related to preference organization as it deals with the potential for different types of SPPs in response to a particular FPP. The role of pre-expansions is to gauge the likelihood of a particular FPP receiving a preferred or dispreferred SPP even before it is produced. They provide for the possibility that FPPs which are likely to receive dispreferreds will not be produced and so avoid the problem of rejection before it arises. This means that pre-expansions are not just possible locations for talk relevant to a particular project but are resources for the organization of that project, and even for determining whether a particular project even gets done.

### **Insert expansion**

In the discussion of adjacency pairs, it was claimed that some types of talk can occur between an FPP and an SPP and these types of talk are quite limited. These types of talk are cases of insert expansion: expansion which occurs within the adjacency pair itself and separates the FPP from the SPP. The talk which occurs between an FPP and an SPP, however, does not cancel the relevance of the yet to be produced SPP. Insert expansions interrupt the activity under way, but are still relevant to that action (Jefferson, 1972). Insert expansion allows a possibility for a second speaker, the speaker who must produce the SPP, to do interactional work relevant to the projected SPP.

As with pre-expansion, insert expansion is realized through a sequence of its own, which we can call an insert sequence (Schegloff, 1972, 1990). Typically, insert expansion is launched by an FPP produced by the second speaker which requires an SPP for completion. Once the sequence is completed, the base SPP once again becomes relevant as the next action (Sacks, 1992, Vol. 2, p. 529). This allows the insert expansion to a base SPP until some preliminary work can be done and completes this work. The type of work being done by the insert is determined by the sequential relationship of the insert itself as insert expansions can relate to either the FPP which has launched the adjacency pair in which they are inserted or they may

be addressed to the SPP which needs to be produced because of that FPP. These are called *post-first insert expansions* and *pre-second insert expansions* respectively (Schegloff, 1990).

### *Post-first insert expansion*

Post-first insert expansions are designed to address issues arising from the FPP which precedes them. They are therefore second to that FPP. In any conversation, problems may arise and when they do arise, they need to be repaired. Overwhelmingly this repair occurs in the immediate next turn after the problem occurs (Schegloff et al., 1977). This can be seen in extract (8.23).

(8.23) [CD:SP (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

D: Wul did'e ever get married `r anything?  
C: Huh?  
D: Did jee ever get married?  
C: I have // no idea

In this extract, C produces a turn after the production of D's FPP which does not count as an answer to the question. This turn indicates a problem of hearing or understanding relevant to the FPP and in doing so it initiates a repair sequence. This means that C's turn is also an FPP and requires its own SPP for completion. In this case, the SPP produced must count as a repair of the problem indicated by C's turn. In extract (8.23) the repair is provided by D in his next turn and the inserted repair sequence is completed. This structuring of repair is a case of *other-initiated self-repair* because it is the recipient of the problematic talk who initiates the repair sequence and the producer of the problematic talk who provides the repair (Schegloff et al., 1977), see also chapter 7.

This extract also, demonstrates that in this sequence the repair must be completed before the base SPP can be produced. It is impossible for C to provide the relevant SPP until the problem of hearing or understanding can be resolved and this requires that the base SPP be displaced until the repair can be achieved. At the same time, the repair remains relevant to the action currently under way: it is seen as connected to this action and in as a component of the action. The participants in producing the insert are still orienting to the course of action which was initiated by the base FPP and are still orienting to the SPP which this required. The structure involved here is then:

A: FPP<sub>base</sub>  
B: FPP<sub>insert</sub>  
A: SPP<sub>insert</sub>  
B: SPP<sub>base</sub>

In extract (8.23) the insert sequence involved is addressed to the FPP. It is derived from it and responds to it as a problematic instance of talk, without reference to the SPP which has been invoked. It is thus quite clearly post-first in its design. However, while these repair insert sequences are designed as post-firsts, this does not mean that they may not also orient to aspects of the SPP. Other initiated repair sequences, because they are inserted with an adjacency pair, break contiguity between an FPP and an SPP. Like other elements which break contiguity, insert sequences can be implicated in the possible production of a dispreferred SPP, as in extract (8.24).

(8.24) [TG1 (Schegloff, 1996b)]

1 Bee: Yih sound HA:PPY, hh FPP<sub>base</sub>  
2 Ava: I sound ha:p[py? FPP<sub>insert</sub>  
3 Bee: [Ye:uh SPP<sub>insert</sub>  
4 (0.3)  
5 Bee: No:, SPP<sub>base</sub>

Here, Bee's dispreferred *No:*, is separated from the assessment which launches it by an inserted other initiated repair and a silence. The repair here is premonitory of an up-coming dispreferred. Inserted repairs, however, are not inherently markers of a pending dispreferred, but rather because of their placement in the sequence they can be deployed as a device to achieve the break in contiguity that is usually associated with dispreferreds. Moreover, regardless of their function as a pre-indication of a dispreferred second, the inserted repair sequence remains, in its design, tied to the FPP not to the SPP. The problem being repaired here appears to be one of preference: the FPP is designed in such a way as to project a particular answer response (that as yes) and Bee's answer requires a breach of the preference for agreement and the insert expansion allows not only for a break in contiguity but also for the possibility of redoing the problematic FPP (Sacks, 1987). The inserted repair sequence allows an opportunity to modify the preference organization of the FPP which occasioned the repair, as happens in extract (8.25).

(8.25) [Lunch]

1 Harry: Aren't you supposed to go up there FPP<sub>base</sub>  
2 with John though?  
3 Joy: Wha'¿ FPP<sub>insert</sub>  
4 Harry: Y'aren't goin' up there with John SPP<sub>insert</sub>  
5 Joy: Na:h that fell through weeks ago SPP<sub>base</sub>

Here, Harry produces a question FPP which Joy follows with the repair initiator *Huh¿*. Harry's question is designed to predict a 'yes' answer, but he modifies the form of the base FPP in the SPP turn of the repair sequence to change the expected answer to a 'no'. Joy then produces the base SPP, which now aligns with the new preference organization in the reformulated FPP: that is the same base SPP would have been dispreferred given the first formulation of the FPP.

Post-first insert sequences can be repeated through more than one sequence if the first attempt to repair the trouble is not successful.

(8.26) [TG 1:7-14]

1 Ava: [<I wan]' dih know if yih got  
2 a-uh:m wutchimicawllit. A:: FPP<sub>base</sub>  
3 pah(hh)hking place<sup>o</sup>th's mornin'.  
4 .hh  
5 Bee: A pa:rking place 1FPP<sub>insert</sub>  
6 Ava: Mm hm, 1SPP<sub>insert</sub>  
7 (0.4)  
8 Bee: Whe:re 2FPP<sub>insert</sub>  
9 Ava: t! Oh: just anypla(h)ce? I wz jus' 2SPP<sub>insert</sub>



In each of these two extracts, the first speaker launches a direction giving sequence by asking a question. This question makes an answer (the directions) relevant, however, the answerer in each case does not provide directions, but rather asks a question. The question does some preparatory work before answering. This question turn is clearly not orienting to some trouble in the base FPP, but rather it is searching for some necessary information the speaker requires in order to be able to produce the SPP. It is orienting to the form which the direction giving SPP will take and attempts to establish the necessary pre-conditions which will shape the form of the SPP. In each case the answer turn in the insert sequence is relevant for the formulation of the route which is presented to the enquirer (Psathas, 1991). When the insert SPP has been produced, the sequence can then move to providing the base SPP: the directions themselves. This type of pre-second insert expansion can be considered to be a *direction giving pre-second*, designed specifically to do work related to direction giving SPPs. The sequential structure of the insert sequence is identical to that for post-first insert expansions:

|    |                     |                       |
|----|---------------------|-----------------------|
| A: | FPP <sub>base</sub> |                       |
| B: |                     | FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| A: |                     | SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| B: | SPP <sub>base</sub> |                       |

However, the function of the sequence is quite different. What these extracts show is that the same locational position within a sequence can be used for different purposes: repair or information getting.

Pre-second insert sequences are very common in service encounters, as in the interaction shown in extract (8.29).

(8.29) [Sandwich Shop]

|    |                                     |                       |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| C: | C'd I have a turkey sam'wich please | FPP <sub>base</sub>   |
| S: | White or wholegrain,                | FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| C: | Wholegrain                          | SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| S: | Okay                                | SPP <sub>base</sub>   |

In this extract, the customer produces a request for a sandwich and the server then asks a question about the type of bread required for the sandwich. As in the direction giving examples, the server needs this information to be able to produce the SPP (the giving of the sandwich: the *okay* here is not strictly speaking the SPP for the request, but rather a verbal indication of preparedness to grant the request). This insert sequence is a *request pre-second*, designed to facilitate the granting of a request.

It is quite possible for there to be more than one insert sequence in such encounters as in (8.30).

(8.30) [Sandwich Shop]

|   |    |                            |                        |
|---|----|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | C: | Uh-I'd like a ham sandwich | FPP <sub>base</sub>    |
| 2 | S: | Whide or wholemeal,        | 1FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 3 | C: | Wholemeal                  | 1SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 4 |    | (1.5)                      |                        |
| 5 | S: | Yih want mustard           | 2FPP <sub>insert</sub> |

|    |    |                        |                        |
|----|----|------------------------|------------------------|
| 6  | C: | Yuh- jist a liddle bit | 2SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 7  |    | (0.4)                  |                        |
| 8  | S: | Salt `n pepper?        | 3FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 9  | C: | Yes please             | 3SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 10 |    | (0.7)                  |                        |
| 11 | S: | Here yih are           | SPP <sub>base</sub>    |

In this example, the server asks a number of questions relevant to the making of the sandwich in the course of its making. The server asks about bread types, mustard, salt and pepper and then complies with each answer before moving to the next insert sequence. In each case, the insert sequence is orienting to the SPP, the giving of the sandwich, as the relevant next action. Zimmerman (1984) refers to these repeated insert sequences as interrogative series: a sequence of sequences with the same basic interactional aim.

In the cases above, the insert sequences all function as occasions for gathering information prior to finalising the request and all assume a preferred SPP: that the sandwich will in fact be given to the customer. However, insert sequences can also be used to determine whether the SPP will be preferred or dispreferred, as in (8.31).

(8.31) [GHT]

|   |      |                                 |                       |
|---|------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Joe: | woud'juh like to come over on   |                       |
| 2 |      | Friday night,                   | FPP <sub>base</sub>   |
| 3 | Sam: | what's happenin'                | FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 4 | Joe: | nuthin' special. Jus' to have a |                       |
| 5 |      | few drinks                      | SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 6 | Sam: | okay                            | SPP <sub>base</sub>   |

In this extract, Joe issues an invitation to Sam, making acceptance or declining of the invitation a relevant next action. Sam, however, asks a question about what the invitation is for, orienting to the fact that this is an invitation sequence, but at the same time gaining information about the invitation before accepting or declining. Once this insert sequence is completed, Sam produces an acceptance SPP. This can be considered an *invitation pre-second* as it appears to be designed to determine which of the possible SPP types which occur in invitations will be produced. Here, the pre-second insert sequence is functioning in a similar way to a pre-invitation sequence. In both cases, the sequence is being used to determining the likely outcome of the sequence. The pre-invitation provides a location for the inviter to gauge whether or not the invitation FPP will receive a preferred or dispreferred SPP. The invitation pre-second allows a structural position for the person being invited to do work to determine whether the SPP will be preferred or dispreferred.

*Multiple insert expansions*

In the discussion above it was seen that post-first insert expansions could be repeated if repair was not achieved by the first try and that pre-second insert expansions could occur where multiple pieces of information were relevant to the accomplishment of the SPP. It is also possible for both types of insert expansion to occur within the same sequence. This can be seen in extract (8.32).

(8.32) [(Schegloff, 2007)]

|    |  |                        |
|----|--|------------------------|
| 1  | Caller: send 'n emergency to fourteen      |                        |
| 2  | forty eight Lillian Lane,                  | FPP <sub>base</sub>    |
| 3  | Dispatch: fourteen forty eight- [what sir? | 1FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 4  | Caller [yeah.                              |                        |
| 5  | Dispatch: Li[lillian Lane?                 |                        |
| 6  | Caller: [fourteen forty eight Lillian      | 1SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 7  | Dispatch: Lillian,                         | 2FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 8  | Caller; <u>yeah</u>                        | 2SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 9  | Dispatch: what's th' trouble sir           | 3FPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 10 | Caller: well, I had the police out here    |                        |
| 11 | once, now my wife's got cut                | 3SPP <sub>insert</sub> |
| 12 | Dispatch: alright sir, we'll have 'em out  |                        |
| 13 | there                                      | SPP <sub>base</sub>    |
| 14 | Caller: right away?                        |                        |
| 15 | Dispatch: alright sir,                     |                        |

This extract, from a call to an emergency service, involves a request for assistance *send 'n emergency to fourteen forty eight Lillian Lane*, which is only responded to by the dispatcher after three insert sequences have been accomplished. The first two insert sequences involve problems in hearing and understanding of the street name in the FPP initiated by the dispatcher: that is they are post-first insert expansions. Once this has been resolved the dispatcher then initiates a question-answer adjacency pair dealing with the reason for the call. This sequence is directed at establishing whether or not the request for assistance warrants to granting of the request. If the conditions prompting the request for assistance are appropriate, then a preferred SPP is likely, if not a dispreferred SPP is likely. This then is a case of pre-second insert expansion.

The ordering of post-first insert expansions and pre-second insert expansions is not random. The sequencing found in extract (8.32), post-first insert then pre-second insert is normative. That this is so is unsurprising. Post-first insert expansions deal with problems of hearing and understanding in FPPs and these must be dealt with as soon as possible after they have occurred (Schegloff et al., 1977). Moreover, the FPP needs to have been heard and understood before the form of the SPP can be considered. This means that work relating to the FPP needs to be done before work relating to the SPP is done.

### Conclusion

The discussion of insert expansion has shown that there are sequences which can occur between the two turns of an adjacency pair, breaking the contiguity of these turns. However, these sequences do not challenge the place of the adjacency pair as the basic organizational unit of the sequences to which they belong. Where these insert sequences occur, the relevance of a SPP in response to the FPP is maintained and the SPP is delayed by the insert not cancelled by it. Participants in conversation understand these inserts as being a part of the sequence which has been launched and interpret them as relevant to that sequence. Insert expansion, whether it is a post-first insert sequence or a pre-second insert sequence, accomplishes necessary work which needs to be done for a base sequence to be accomplished successfully. When a particular speaker produces a FPP, the recipient may not be in a position to provide an appropriate SPP



questioners are, by asking a question, placing themselves in the place of not knowing information and on receiving answers they move from a state in which they did not know to one in which they do know. Moreover, *oh* is not found where the question was one seeking confirmation of something already known or guessed rather than information as here there is no change of state to be displayed (Heritage, 1984a). Heritage argues that *oh* itself does not reflect the degree to which the answer was unexpected but rather that the information is new. Additional features of the production of the *oh*, such as its volume, length or pitch, are important for marking surprise or registering the unexpectedness of the news in addition to registering the talk as newsworthy. In this way *oh* responds to the information as new and unknown, while prosody is linked with the affect of the news.

By registering a change of state from unknowing to knowing, *oh* can propose the possible closing of the sequence. This is most obviously the case where the sequence is made up of a question-answer adjacency pair. In such sequences, getting information is the central project of the sequence and registering that information has been received is a clear signal that the purposes of the sequence have been achieved. Given its change of state value, *oh* is also well designed for closing other-initiated repair sequences, as in (8.34).

(8.34) [EJ:Park]

- 1 Emma: then we're goin' tuh tuh park tuhmorruh
- 2 Jane: wher:e?
- 3 Emma: Hyde Park.
- 4→ Jane: o:h,
- 5 (.)
- 6 Emma: an then we'll go tuh see some of the other things
- 7 an' make a day of it.

In repair sequences, the project launched by the repair initiator is linked to information: resolving a problem of hearing or understanding. In the extract above, Jane's o:h, proposes that she is now in a state of knowing – of having resolved the problem of reference created by the term *the park* – and that the repair sequence can now be completed and other talk can now be done. In both repair sequences and question-answer sequences, then, *oh* functions as a signal that the purposes of the sequence have been achieved. *Oh* is, however, not limited to sequences in which securing information is the central concern, as in the invitation sequence in extract (8.35).

(8.35) [JSK:11:8ii]

- 1 Dora: An' d'yuh think you'll still be able tuh come up
- 2 on the weekend;
- 3 Helen: Uh .hh well no I don' think we'll be able tuh do
- 4 it this weeken'.
- 5 Dora: O↓uh.

In invitation sequences, as in questions, an *oh* token can register that information has been received, but registering receipt of information does something very different in this sequence. Because the sequence in (8.35) is not about information, the *oh* here does not really respond to the SPP as part of the overall project of inviting: by displaying that she now knows something

she did not know earlier, Dora responds to Helen's turn primarily as a telling rather than as a cancelling of a prior arrangement. This means that Dora's *oh* can be seen as a withholding of some other form of talk in this position. We will turn to what this issue below when we consider composite SCTs.

## Okay

*Okay*, like *oh*, can occur in a range of different positions (Rendle-Short, 1999; Schiffrin, 1987) however, this discussion considers only its function as an SCT. While *oh* as a SCT claims receipt of information, *okay* usually claims acceptance of an SPP and what the SPP has done in the sequence (Beach, 1993). *Okay* is therefore relevant for sequences such as invitations, requests, offers etc., where information is not the central concern and where it is possible for the SPP to indicate more than one possible outcome of the sequence (that is a preferred or dispreferred SPP). *Okay* commonly works to propose closure for a sequence which has received a preferred SPP.

(8.36) [CG,1 (Schegloff, 1995)]

- 1 Clara: hello
- 2 Nelson: hi.
- 3 Clara: hi.
- 4 Nelson: whatcha doin'.
- 5 Clara: not much.
- 6 Nelson: y'wanna drink?
- 7 Clara: yeah.
- 8→ Nelson: okay.

In this extract, Nelson's *okay* accepts the preferred SPP and proposes that the sequence is, for him, potentially closable at this point. The action of inviting has been completed and Nelson displays his understanding of what has been done in the sequence, ratifying the invitation and its acceptance. Similarly, *okay* can also serve to close a sequence which has received a dispreferred SPP.

(8.37) [AS:Off 2]

- 1 Andrew: so do yih need any help,
- 2 Sam: (.) uh I don' think so. it should be quite easy
- 3 an' it won' take long.
- 4→ Andrew: o:kay.

In extract (8.37), Andrew's offer FPP receives a dispreferred SPP. Here the *okay* both accepts Sam's response and accepts that Sam's response is a rejection of the offer. This acceptance of the stance which Sam has adopted to the FPP in his turn provides for the potential closure of the sequence indicating that no further talk is necessary at this point. However, it needs to be born in mind that *okay* only proposes closure; it does not ensure it, as extract (8.38) demonstrates.

(8.38) [Mike and Ben]

1 Mike: an I wannid tuh know if yih c'd give me a hand?  
2 Ben: on Saturday? u:h I'm not sure I c'n make it. we  
3 were supposed tuh be goin' out with Fran's mum.  
4→ Mike: okay.  
5 Ben: 'n it's a while since she's seen thuh kids  
6 yih see.  
7 Mike: yeah.  
8 Ben: 'n so I don't see how I c'n get there.  
9→ Mike: okay.  
10 Ben: b't I'll see wh't I can do.  
11→ Mike: okay. I think I c'n get Dave in any case,  
12 so 'ts not a big problem.

In this extract, Mike proposes closure at line 4, indicating that he has accepted the dispreferred SPP that Ben has produced. However, Ben continues with an expansion of his SPP turn, giving additional warrants for his inability to grant the request. Mike again accepts this with *okay* at line 8, proposing closure but this is again followed by further expansion of the dispreferred SPP, with a further *okay* from Mike at line 10, in this case followed by further talk proposing an alternative arrangement and mitigating the impact of the rejected invitation.

### Assessments

The SCTs *oh*, which claims that information has led to a change of state in knowing for the recipient, and *okay*, which registers acceptance of the stance taken by a responsive action, are minimal in form and lexical content, however, SCTs are not restricted to such tokens. Assessments may also be used as SCTs and in this case they display a stance which is taken toward what an SPP speaker has said or done in the prior turn. Assessments are, in this position, evaluations by the next speaker of some aspect of the prior speaker's turn. Such assessments are particularly common in what Sacks (1975) calls "personal state enquiries", as in (8.40). Similarly, overlapping talk can also be used to display enthusiasm, as in extract (8.39).

(8.39) [SJ: 11]

Sally: wull y-I met this really cu::te [guy,  
→ Jean: [OH WO::W REally?

In this extract, Jean's early entry in the turn produces an effect of strong interest through quick up-take of the topic. In her talk the loudness and the *wow* both indicate a strong interest and this is further reinforced by the early entry Jean makes into her response to Sally's talk. Extracts (8.39) and (8.40) all exploit early entry into the turn to show quick uptake of the trajectory of the prior speaker's talk and uses this quick uptake to emphatically display understanding of the talk, thereby strengthening the effect of the talk produced. The effect of enthusiasm, disagreement, etc., however, is contextual: it is achieved by particular talk produced in relation to the talk it follows rather than being signalled by the early entry itself.

(8.40) [263 (Schegloff, 1986a)]

1 Hyla: Hwaryuhh=  
2 Nancy: =Fine how'r you.  
3 Hyla: Okay:[y  
4→ Nancy: [Goo:d.  
5 (0.4)  
6 Hyla: mkhhh[hhh  
7 Nancy: [What's doin.

In this extract, the *how are you* sequence launched by Nancy is closed with the receipt of the SPP by an assessment *Goo:d*. The assessment here is an assessment of Nancy's answer turn and displays an affective evaluation of it. By providing an evaluation of the action launched by the question, Nancy proposes that the action is complete – only a completed project can be evaluated in such a way. After the assessment, and a pause, Nancy launches a new sequence. Assessments are not, however, limited to personal state enquiries, but may be used as receipts for other types of sequences. Extract (8.41), for example, uses an assessment rather than an invitation to close an invitation adjacency pair.

(8.41) [AS:2]

Annie: we were wondering if you 'n Fra:nk w'd like to  
come over Sat'day night for a few drinks.  
Sue: Yeah we c'd do that.  
→ Annie: Goo:::d.

Here Annie's *Goo:::d* also evaluates the action which has been completed and conveys her affective response to the form that the SPP has taken. Assessments can also be found as SCTs after dispreferred SPPs, as in extract (8.42).

(8.42) [Lunch]

1 Joy: we thought we might have a few drinks after work  
2 to y'know sortta s-celebra:te, so if y'd like to  
3 join us thad'd be great.  
4 Harry: sounds like fun b't I dunno:, (.) Friday (.) I  
5 think we're- I think it's the theatre, n um,  
6→ Joy: Tha's a bummer=we'll just have to celebrate  
7 with(h)out yo[(h)u.  
8 Harry: [heh h.

Here, Joy's *Tha's a bummer* displays an affective evaluation of Harry's dispreferred response to her invitation. In evaluating the response, Joy accepts the dispreferred action and proposes a possible closure to the sequence.

## Composite SCTs

So far the discussion has examined SCTs as single token types occurring after an SPP, however, it is possible also for composites made up of combinations of these types to be found in a third position turn. One very common composite is *oh* plus *okay*, as in (8.43).

(8.43) [Lunch]

- 1 Harry: I don' have much tuh do on We:nsday.  
2 (.)  
3 w'd yuh like tuh get together then.  
4 (0.3)  
5 Joy: huh we::llhh yuh see things a bit hectic fuh me  
6 We:nsday yih know I don' really know  
7→ Harry: oh wokay

Joy's SPP turn here is performing a number of actions which are working simultaneously to achieve an effect. At one level, her turn is a telling *things a bit hectic fuh me We:nsday yih know*: it conveys information to Harry, while at another level it is declining an invitation. Tellings such as this are particularly common ways of refusing an invitation (Drew, 1984). Harry's third turn response is composed of two elements which respond to the dual project being done in Joy's turn. The *oh* registers what is said as new information, while the *okay* accepts what Joy has done through the telling (and through other elements of her turn). So in Harry's turn one element of his talk (*oh*) responds to the form of the preceding talk as a telling and the other element (*okay*) responds to action which has been performed. The discussion of extract ) now provides a resource for understanding understand the assertion made above (in extract (8.35), which is reproduced below as (8.44) that there was something missing in Dora's SCT.

(8.44) [JSK:11:8ii]

- 1 Dora: An' d' yuh think you'll still be able tuh come up  
2 on the weekend;  
3 Helen: Uh .hh well no I don' think we'll be able tuh do  
4 it this weeken'.  
5→ Dora: O↓uh.

Dora's *O↓uh* here is responding to Helen's talk as a telling: the information is new to her and she now knows something she did not know previously. However, Helen's turn is not being done in this context primarily as an informing, but rather as a cancelling of a prior arrangement. Dora's *O↓uh* does not contain in it an acceptance of what has been done through the telling. She is responding to the form of the turn, but not to the action under way. It is, therefore, possible to see instances such as this as *withholding* acceptance (Heritage, 1984a). Extract (8.44) shows that, given that composite SCTs are not simply longer versions of SCTs but rather turns in which each element of an SCT responds to something different in the prior talk, it is important to consider single SCTs as potentially 'missing' something. Whether a single SCT is all that is required in a particular sequence depends on the nature of the prior talk: is it talk in which multiple actions are being performed? Where there are multiple actions under way, a single SCT may be doing something which is interactionally quite important and which goes

beyond simply proposing closure of a sequence. The sequence we have been discussing goes on as follows:

(8.45) [JSK:11:8ii]

5 Dora: O↓uh.  
6 (0.6)  
7 Helen: It's uh:m [s-  
8 Dora: [Y're dad will be so:: disappointed.  
9 Helen: .hhh huhhhh yeah w'll- uh- w'll I don' know i's  
10 goin' to be hard tuh ged away with everything  
11 that's happenin' here,  
12 Dora: Mhm.  
13 Helen: An' Will really wants to be at that game yih know  
14 Dora: Mm.  
15 Helen: and tha' makes things a bit hard  
16 Dora: Mm.  
17 Helen: and u::hm::,  
18 (0.2)  
19 Dora: Well i's a pity.  
20 Helen: °Yeah°  
21 Dora: °°yyhhh .h°°  
22 (0.3)  
23 Helen: .hhh °°b'd i's hard°°  
24 (0.3)  
25 Dora: So w- so whad're you doin'.

What is clear in the continuation of this sequence is that neither participant is treating this sequence as closed and Helen is orienting very strongly to the missing acceptance of her change of plans and continues to talk about her reasons for not being able to “come up on the weekend”. Dora eventually provides an assessment – *Well i's a pity* – and the sequence finally moves to closing. This assessment is responds to the extended reworking of the SPP being done by Helen and provides an additional element which was missing in Dora's earlier *oh* SCT. She has now taken a stance towards the telling, rather than treating it as just information.

### *Non-minimal post-expansion*

Non-minimal post-expansions are designed to project further talk beyond their turn and are made up of sequences with FPPs and SPPs of their own. A non-minimal post-expansion or post-sequence, therefore, is designed to project at least one further turn beyond itself. These non-minimal expansions take a number of different forms, each of which undertakes a different interactional project following the SPP.

### **Post-second repair**

Problems of hearing or understanding can occur as easily in SPPs as in FPPs and so there is a need for a location for repair of these problems immediately after completion of the turn in which the trouble occurs. For troubles occurring in an FPP, such repair occurs in post-first

insert expansions. For troubles occur in an SPP, the repair occurs as a post-second post-expansion. Apart from differences in their sequential placement, these two phenomena are essentially the same: they are both other-initiated repair sequences (Schegloff, 1992b; Schegloff et al., 1977).

(8.46) [Car Conversation]

Nick: on- [which] day's your anniversary?  
Sasha: sixth. June.  
Nick: the sixth,  
Elvis: yeah,

Here, where Sasha answers Nick's question, the answer provides a trouble, which is resolved by Nick launching a repair sequence (a repetition) after the SPP, providing a candidate answer for the repair. Sasha confirms the candidate hearing, completing the repair sequence. As was the case with post-first insert expansion, post-second repairs can also be implicated in disagreements. In this case, the repair does not break contiguity in the way insert repairs do, because there is no projected next activity which they serve to delay. However, these repairs still have features which make them appropriate as pre-disagreements.

(8.47) [KM:1:20-28]

1 Kay: .. n so I w'z wondering if you c'd fill in for her  
2 for a while in the morning  
3 Marion: .hh Well, y- (0.3) well y'know things are a bit  
4 busy Sad'day >morning n so I don' know if I c'd  
5 do it,< We have to take the kids to soccer at  
6 eleven, [n then  
7→ Kay: [At eleven?  
8 Marion: (.) Yeah, b't p-perhaps I could do it for a while  
9 before that

In extract (8.47), Kay's *At eleven?* is performed as a repair following talk which rejects a request. The repair here may deal with a problem of hearing, but it also withholds talk which would complete the sequence, such as an *okay* or assessment. The result of the talk is however a redoing of the SPP in a more preferred way. Repair markers indicate a trouble, but they do not indicate what the trouble is: the trouble could be a problem related to agreement as much as to any other possible trouble source. Post-second repairs, therefore, allow a position for prior speakers to redo the problematic utterance to make it more acceptable (Schegloff, 1992b) or for delaying the production of some challenge to the SPP itself by its recipient.

### Rejecting SPPs

Post-expansion provides a location for challenging an SPP, for disagreeing with it or for rejecting it, without initiating a repair sequence. Disagreement in this case is done immediately, without allowing a possible location for a prior speaker to redo a contested turn, and involves overt rather than projected disagreement. This occurs in extract (8.48).

(8.48) [Lunch]

- 1 Joy: So yuh had any ideas abou' where we'll go,  
2 Harry: W'll there's: always la Piazza tha's close.  
3→ Joy: B'd i's expensive.  
4 Harry: U-w'll no' reall-<they have lo's- lots of things  
5 thad're not too expensive,  
6 (.)  
7 Joy: Bu::p'haps we should thing abou' something tha's a  
8 bi' cheaper (.) [c'z (there's )  
9 Harry: [w'lll w- w- whad about that  
10 Chine:se place.  
11 Joy: Yeah thadde be a lo::t bedder.  
12 Harry: Okay: we'll do that'  
13 Joy: tha's good  
14 Harry: °yeah°  
15 Joy: °° (mm) °°

Here, Joy challenges Harry's choice of a restaurant and Harry follows this with a disagreement with Joy's challenge about how expensive the restaurant is. The post-expansion then continues with further disagreement from Joy. In the final turn of the extract, Harry moves from the series of disagreements to providing an alternative possibility: an apparent acceptance of Joy's rejection of the restaurant. Joy now agrees with Harry's choice and the sequence moves towards closing. Here the sequence proceeds in an orderly way in which the SPP speaker provides a defence of his original SPP and rejecting the grounds on which it was rejected. This provides one possible trajectory on which rejections after a SPP can be dealt with. Alternatively, the SPP speaker can accept the rejection of the original SPP and provide an alternative SPP for the initiating FPP. This is, in fact, what Harry eventually does in the face of Joy's continued rejection of this original SPP. A similar acceptance occurs in (8.49), but in this case immediately after the rejection.

(8.49) [STIII:2:1]

- 1 Kate: Whad is there tuh drink?  
2 Fiona: W'll there's:some lemona:de in the fridge.  
3 Kate: Nah I meant a dri::nk.  
4 Fiona: Awrigh' then whad about a glass uh wi:ne.  
5 Kate: Yeah tha's more like it.

Here Fiona accepts Kate's rejection of her initial SPP (*awrigh' then*) and produces the alternative SPP taking into account the basis for the original rejection. In the above examples, there are then two possible trajectories for such a sequence – acceptance or rejection of the disagreement – each of which is implemented in the SPP speaker's next turn after a disagreement or rejection. What the SPP speaker does in this turn leads to a different overall shape for the post-sequence. In particular, if the SPP speaker rejects the prior rejection the post-sequence is typically expanded beyond the initial rejection turn as in (48), while the post-expansion is briefer if the rejection is accepted.

## FPP reworkings

The cases of expansion discussed so far have been examples where the talk expands in some way on the basis of the SPP, however sequences can also be expanded by reworking the FPP as a consequence of a dispreferred SPP (J. Davidson, 1984).

(8.50) [NB:52 (J. Davidson, 1984)]

1 P: Wul lissid- (.) uh:: d'you wah me uh come  
2 down'n getche t' [morrow er anything;  
3 A: [ N o: d e a: r. ]  
4 (.)  
5 A: No:, [ I'm fine. ]  
6→ P: [To the store] er any[thing,  
7 A: [.hh I've got evrything  
8 bought dear,

In extract (8.50), A rejects P's offer to come down and get her, and after this rejection P, at line 4, reworks the offer in a different way. Davidson (1984) argues that in such reworkings of FPPs, the speaker does work to attempt to deal with the shortcomings of the original FPP – that is they constitute a form of repair after the SPP (Jackson & Jacobs, 1980). These FPP reworkings are, of course, also FPPs and they make an SPP a relevant next: that is, the rejector is provided with a place in which either rejection again or 'repairing' the rejection can be done. In (50), this is done by making the purpose of the offer more explicit, however, the reworking also receives a dispreferred second, although this time with a warrant for the rejection which orients to the reformulated version of the FPP *.hh I've got evrything bought dear.*

In extract (8.51), the rejection is replaced in the subsequent version of the SPP with an acceptance.

(8.51) [Computer (J. Davidson, 1984)]

1 A: Oh I was gonna sa:y if you a:y if you wannid  
2 to:,.hh you could meet me at U.C.Be: an' I could  
3 show yih some a' the other things on the  
4 compu:ter, (.) maybe even teach yuh how tuh  
5 program Ba:sic er something..Hhh  
6 (0.6)  
7 B: Wul I don' know if I'd wanna get all that  
8 invo:lved,  
9 hh. Hhh! [(Hh)  
10→ A: [It's rilly interesti:ng:.  
11 (0.2)  
12 A: I showed Tom how tuh pro- (.) how doo uh program  
13 a:.hhh the computer doo: make a ra:ndom number:rt,  
14 cha eh heh! .Hh An' that rilly turned 'im o:n,  
15 (.)  
16 B: Hih! heh! huh! huh! huh! (.) .hhh ((sniff))

17                    We:ll,=how 'bout if I do meet you in the computer  
 18                    centre tomorrow then.

Here, A offers to show B some things on the computer and teach him about programming, however B rejects the invitation with *Wul I don' know if I'd wanna get all that invo:lved*. A then reworks the FPP by doing an additional inducement after the original FPP has been rejected. This inducement at the same time reinstates the offer FPP as still relevant: that is, by providing an inducement for B to accept the invitation, A is not orienting to the rejection SPP as ending a sequence. A's talk is therefore a subsequent version of the invitation, which requires a subsequent version of the response. B's second response accepts the offer. As in extract (8.50), the FPP reworking in extract (8.51) does work to overcome the shortcomings in the original FPP and provides a place for the SPP to be redone in the light of this additional work. In both these examples, the talk produced is a single sequence: a single project is being pursued through the stretch of talk under consideration, rather than the talk consisting of two independent sequences with the same adjacency pair type, and, therefore, the reworking of the FPP is a post-expansion of the base sequence, not a new sequence.

### Post completion musings

Post-completion musings are a class of utterances which have the status of being demonstrably related in some way to the preceding talk, but, which at the same time do not appear to be treated as an expansion of the sequence. The utterances have an ambiguous status therefore in terms of being of the sequence. They achieve this status, according to Schegloff (Schegloff, 1988a), because they are designed to be “out aloud” mutterings which have an ambiguous status between being publicly available talk and private thinking out aloud.

(8.52) [JSK:11:8ii]

1                    (0.2)  
 2    Dora:        We'll i's a pity.  
 3    Helen:       °Yeah°  
 4    Dora:       °°yyhhh .h°°  
 5                    (0.3)  
 6→ Helen:       .hhh °°b'd i's hhard°° hhh  
 7                    (0.3)  
 9    Dora:       So w- so whad're you doin'.

Helen's very quiet °°b'd i's hard°° which repeats some of the prior talk (see extract (8.45) for the previous talk) offers a diagnosis or evaluation of the larger stretch of talk it follows and is designed as a comment on the sequence which has just played out. Moreover, it is not designed to receive a response and does not in fact get a response. It has a semi-private character. It is at the same time designed to come after the sequence, not to be a part of the sequence it follows. The sequence has been closed down prior to this talk, and the ensuing silence does not challenge this as an ending. In addition, while the talk is appended to the sequence it does not relaunch the sequence, nor does it progress the sequence. It follows silence and audible breathing and is inserted into the breathing as a very low volume, breathy element. Helen's contribution, therefore, its done as an element of talk after a sequence is completed, but which still orients to the action which was underway in that sequence, expanding the talk still further. It is possible for the post-completion musing to engender further talk, for example it may be

rejected or contested as a comment on the prior talk, but it does not appear to be designed to generate such talk, rather it is an opportunity to “have the last word”.

### Post-expansion and preference

Most of the types of non-minimal post-expansion we have discussed above have occurred in the context of dispreferred SPP or are themselves dispreferreds, such as disagreements. It appears that preferred SPPs are sequence closure relevant and typically no further talk needs to be done in the sequence. Alternatively, post-expansion after preferred SPPs is likely to be minimal and therefore not designed to extend the sequence. However, dispreferred SPPs frequently occasion further talk in the sequence in which the implications of the dispreferred are played out and problems of misalignment are dealt with. Dispreferred SPPs are therefore expansion relevant turns. This expansion relevance in turn creates an interactional problem for speakers. While preferred responses provide a readily available way to close their sequence, dispreferreds do not. This means that participants must solve the problem of closing long sequences which have extended well beyond a dispreferred SPP.

### Topicalization

While, the expansions discussed so far have dealt with issues arising from SPPs in which there has been some problem which needs to be resolved, not all post-expansions do this. Speakers may also prolong a sequence of talk after a base SPP by marking the SPP itself as something of interest about which they would be prepared to continue to talk. These forms of talk, often called *newsmarks* (Heritage, 1984a; Jefferson, 2018a), include devices such as repeats (full repeats, partial repeats or pro-form repeats) of the previous talk and tokens such as *really*, or questions such as *Did you?*, etc., often preceded by *oh*. In producing one of these devices, a speaker registers the talk not just as information, but also as news, and projects the possibility of further talk about this news.

#### (8.53) [Lunch]

- 1 Harry: S-whadded yih end up doin' on Friday night,  
2 Joy: Y-.hh huh we decided tuh go tuh a rest'rant  
3 in th' end.  
4 Harry: Did yuh?  
5 Joy: Yeah,

There appear to be some differences in the way *oh*-prefaced topicalizations and unprefaced topicalizations run off and the form of the topicalization also has an effect on the way a sequence unfolds (Heritage, 1984a; Jefferson, 2018a). *Oh really?* topicalizations typically have a structure in which a telling (such as the answer to a question) is followed by the topicalization. The topicalization typically leads to a reconfirmation of the telling by the original speaker and an assessment by the recipient which may end the sequence, as in extract (8.54).

#### (8.54) [NB:IV:7:5-6 (Jefferson, 2018a)]

- 1 M: How many cigarettes yih had.  
2 (0.8)  
3 E: NO:NE.  
4↪ M: Oh really?

5→ E:            No:.  
6 M:            Very good.

In this extract, the telling is done as the answer to a question and the topicalization is an expansion after this SPP. M's *no*:. reconfirms the prior *NO:NE*. and this in turn receives the assessment *very good*. *Oh really* topicalizations, therefore, may not typically engender a large amount of talk following the news. While expansions after *oh really?* are often limited, Schegloff (1995) has indicated that quite lengthy expansions may occur in post-expansions launched by *oh really?*.

Where the topicalization is an *oh*-prefaced partial repeat, the outcome is typically different: in this case, further talk about the news normally follows after the topicalization. This talk may be volunteered by the teller of the original news either immediately after the topicalization or it may be solicited by the recipient of the announcement in the place of a sequence terminal assessment (Jefferson, 2018a).

(8.55) [ST:S:21A]

1 Sarah: So:: what d'yih have planned for the weekend.  
2            (.)  
3 Sally: Well not much c'z John's mum's prob'ly coming over  
4→ Sarah: Oh is she?  
5→ Sally: Yeh she's goin' up north soon 'n she wanded tuh  
6            see: the kids before she went n: that,

In (8.55), Sally volunteers further talk on the news immediately following the topicalization. This talk follows immediately on from the reconfirmation (*yeh*) and as such, Sally's turn expands the talk beyond the pattern described for *oh really?*-type topicalizations. In (8.56), however, the news teller does not volunteer further talk beyond the reconfirmation of the telling in the turn following the topicalization, and further talk is instead solicited by the news recipient.

(8.56) [ALX:45]

1 Annie: Yih ever been tuh Queenscliff,  
2 Sue: Yeah we hadda coupla days there las' summer  
3 Annie: O:h did you?  
4 Sue: Yea:h.  
5 Annie: An' didjuh li:ke it?

Jefferson (2018a) also notes that topicalizations which do not have *oh* prefaces typically lead to still different sequences, as in extract (8.57).

(8.57) [Lunch]

1 Harry: S-whadded yih end up doin' on Friday night,  
2 Joy: Y-.hh huh we decided tuh go tuh a rest'rant in  
3            th' end.  
4→ Harry: Did yuh?  
5→ Joy: Yeah,

6→ Harry: Uh huh.  
7→ Joy: Yeah we thought id would be best yih know with  
8       everyon[e n]' how they all have tuh eat=  
9     Harry:               [mm.]  
10    Joy:        = diff'ren things:: a ni:ghmare tryin' to have  
11       dinner ad `ome.

Here Harry's topicalization takes the form of a partial repeat using pro-forms: the pronoun *you* and the pro-verb *did*, without an *oh* preface. Joy provides a confirmation of her prior telling (*yeah*,) after which Harry, the news-recipient, produces an acknowledgment token rather than an assessment as was the case in (8.54) or a solicitation of further talk as in (8.56). His contribution to furthering the talk is therefore minimal. In this case, Joy follows the acknowledgment token by volunteering further talk on the subject. Based on cases such as those above, Heritage (1984a) argues that *oh*-prefaced partial repeats show a greater commitment of the recipient of the news to do more talk about the news than do other forms of topicalization. In cases where talk is not *oh* prefaced, further talk about the news is usually either curtailed or volunteered by the original teller.

### *Sequence closing sequences*

In sequences which have a lot of post-expansion, the organization of the sequence becomes less clear or less orderly as the post-expansion proceeds. This poses a problem in post-expansion of how a sequence is to be closed. While pre-expansion and insert-expansion orient to an up-coming SPP as a potential closing of a sequence, post-expansions do not have a projected completion point which can serve to constrain the trajectory of the sequence. This means that participants in talk need to achieve closure for these sequences in the absence of a projectable future point which provides for closure of the sequence. Such a problem occurs in the sequence below, which has already been discussed in another context.

(8.58) [JSK:11:8ii]

1     Dora:     An' d'yuh think you'll still be able tuh come up  
2         on the weekend;  
3     Helen:    Uh .hh well no I don' think we'll be able tuh do  
4         it this weeken'.  
5     Dora:     O↓uh.  
6         (0.6)  
7     Helen:    It's uh:m [s-  
8     Dora:               [Y're dad will be so:: disappointed.  
9     Helen:    .hhh huhhhh yeah w'll- uh- w'll I don' know i's  
10         goin' to be hard tuh ged away with everything  
11         that's happenin' here,  
12    Dora:     Mhm.  
13    Helen:    An' Will really wants to be at that game yih know  
14    Dora:     Mm.  
15    Helen:    and tha' makes things a bit hard  
16    Dora:     Mm.  
17    Helen:    and u::hm::,

18 (0.2)  
 19 Dora: Well i's a pity.  
 20 Helen: °Yeah°  
 21 Dora: °°yyhhh .h°°  
 22 (0.3)  
 23 Helen: .hhh °°b'd i's hard°°  
 24 (0.3)  
 25 Dora: So w- so whad're you doin'.

In this sequence, Helen's declining of Dora's invitation, an arrangement to which it appears she was earlier committed, is expanded at length after the SPP. The sequence is closed by the deployment of a sequence specifically designed to close such long sequences. Schegloff (2007) identifies this sequence as having three basic elements. (1) An initial turn, typically an assessment, summary or an aphoristic formulation of the upshot or outcome of the sequence (see also Button, 1991b), which proposes closing for the sequence. Such proposals for closing typically take up a cognitive, evaluative or affective stance on the sequence which has been unfolding. In extract (8.58) this is done by Dora's assessment *we:ll i's a pity*. (2) In the second turn, the recipient of the proposed closing may either collaborate to close down the sequence or alternatively withhold compliance or even resist closing. A speaker who is collaborating with closing produces a response which aligns with or agrees with the prior turn. Agreement or alignment provides a go-ahead response for closing. This means that a preferred response is closing relevant in such sequences. This is what Helen does in extract (58) with her °*yeah*°. A speaker who resists the proposed closing continues to speak in the sequence for which closure has been proposed. Withholding collaboration is done by silence. Any non-collaborative response at this point will terminate the sequence closing sequence. (3) If the speaker in the second position produces a 'go-ahead' response, the speaker who proposed closing may produce a third turn in which there is some closing token or assessment and thereby ratifies the prior speaker's alignment with the proposed closing: Dora's °°*yyhhh .h*°. The usual form of this sequence is then a minimally expanded adjacency pair. In this same turn the speaker may also produce the initiation of a new sequence. This does not happen in extract (8.58), and Dora launches the new sequence some time after her ratifying the closing of the previous sequence. It is usual for the volume of each successive turn in this sequence to decrease, with a return to louder pitch at the launching of the new sequence, as it does in extract (8.58).

In extract (8.59), we can see the trajectory of talk which resists the proposed closing.

(8.59) [TG 10:19-11:02 (Schegloff, 2007)]

1 Ava: [I play-] I ] go down the gym en fool  
 arou:n, yihknow.  
 2 Bee: [Mmm  
 3 Ava: [.hhh  
 4 (0.2)  
 5 Ava: Bud uh.  
 6 (0.7)  
 7→ Ava: Y'know it jus' doesn' seem wo(h)rth i(h)t hh!  
 8→ Bee: ((sniff))  
 9→ Bee: .hh Whad about (0.5) uh:: (0.8) Oh yih go f::-

10                   you- How many days? You go five days a week.  
11                   Ri[ght?]  
12   Ava:            [Y e ]ah.  
13   Bee:            .hh Oh gray- .hhh  
14   Ava:            .hh

In this extract, Ava moves to close down the talk at line 7 with an assessment, Bee however resists, firstly by withholding alignment with the proposal for closing (line 8) and then by taking up further talk on the topic (line 9).

## Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with ways in which sequences composed of an adjacency pair can be expanded to create larger stretches of coherent talk in which a single project is being undertaken and its possible trajectories and consequences are being worked through (Schegloff, 1990). The coherence of such sequences is established on a base adjacency pair which constitutes the core action with reference to which other talk is understood as being related. Much of the talk involved in expansion deals with questions of preference and functions as a way of avoiding or dealing with dispreferred second pair parts. This is the case with type-specific pre-expansions, pre-second insert expansions and several types of post-expansion. Expansion also provides places in which the interactional work of repair can be done. The three positions for expansion – pre, insert and post – effectively allow for the possibility of a single base SPP being expanded into quite lengthy sequences of talk. Moreover, as each expansion type typically involves a sequence of its own, expansion can be prolonged each expansion sequence may itself be expanded in some way.

## Exercise

In your transcript, identify the ways that adjacency pairs relate to each other to construct longer sequences of talk.

- What is the base sequence which contains the main action accomplished in the sequence?
- Are there pre-sequences in the talk? How do they prepare for the base sequence?
- Are there insert sequences in the talk? What sorts of insert sequences are they? Do they deal with issues relating to the first pair part or to the second pair part? What sorts of actions are performed in these sequences?
- Are there post-sequences in the talk? What sorts of post sequences are they? What sorts of actions do they perform? How do they get concluded?
- How does the sequence close?

## Further reading

Jefferson, Gail. (1972). Side sequences. In David Sudnow (Ed.), *Studies in Social Interaction* (pp. 294-338). New York: Free Press.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. (2007). *Sequence Organisation in Interaction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

Terasaki, Aileen Kiku. (2004). Pre-announcement sequences in conversation. In Gene H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation* (pp. 171-233). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

## Chapter 9 Repair

### Focus

- Repair as an interactional activity.
- Sequential positions for repair and the realisations of different repair types.
- The issue of preference in repair.

### Repair in conversation

Repair refers to the processes available to speakers through which they can deal with the problems which arise in talk. The idea of repair has already been raised several times in the preceding discussion as repair is relevant to all levels of talk from the turn-taking system to sequence organization and preference. All levels of conversation are potentially subject to difficulties and conversation as a self-regulating system needs to have available practices for dealing these. Repair is itself a mechanism of conversation: a set of practices designed for dealing with the sorts of difficulties which emerge in talk. Like other aspects of the conversational system, the practices of repair are independent of the nature of the thing which needs to be repaired.

Repair is a broader concept than simply the correction of errors in talk by replacing an incorrect form with a correct one, although such corrections are a part of repair (Jefferson, 1987, 2018c; Kitzinger, 2013; Schegloff et al., 1977). In order to emphasize the broad nature of repair as a conversational phenomenon, Conversation Analysis uses the term *repair* rather than *correction* to indicate the overall phenomenon of dealing with problems in talk and the terms *repairable* or *trouble source* to indicate the thing in talk which needs to be repaired (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 363). Repairs may relate to problems of production of talk or to problems of reception: that is speakers may have trouble in producing talk and recipients may have trouble in receiving talk (House, Kasper, & Ross, 2003; Schegloff, 1987c). Problems of reception may include problems of hearing or understanding but may also relate to other issues such as preference organisation or affiliation, although in such cases they may be constructed as problems of hearing and understanding, at least initially. When speakers repair their production, it may involve situations in which it appears there is no error made by the speaker at all but rather some other problem is being addressed, such as problems of recall. This is the case for example when a speaker begins a word search because the appropriate lexical item is not available at the time when it is needed, as in extract (9.1).

(9.1) [May and Jo]

```
→ May: [she's gone to:: .h o:h. wait  
      until I show you on the map where she's going.=  
Jo:    =right.
```

In this extract there is clearly a conversational problem. The current speaker should be producing talk, but needs more time to do so. This problem is repaired by deploying talk indicating that the speaker is searching for the relevant word: a lengthening of the vowel of *to::* and audible breathing. This talk allows the speaker to continue as the current speaker and for her speech to be heard as relevant to the turn underway. It can also allow her the time to retrieve the missing word and so to continue her turn to completion, although this is not what

happens in this example, rather May adopts another strategy for communicating the information for which she is searching, using a map.

Conversational repair aims at success and in the vast majority of cases, successful repair is achieved very quickly (Schegloff, 1979b). It is also important to bear in mind that repair may fail. That is not every repair initiation inevitably leads to a repair.

(9.2) [Autodiscussion 26, (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

1→ K:            didju know that guy up there et- oh What the hell  
2                    is'z name usetuh work up't (Steeldinner) garage  
3                    did their body work.for'em.  
4                    (1.5)  
5→ K:            Uh:::ah, (0.5) Oh:: he meh- uh, His wife  
6                    ran off with Jim McCa:nn.  
7                    (3.2)  
8→ K:            Y'know 'oo I'm talking about,  
9→ M:            No: ,  
10                  (0.5)  
11 K:            °Oh:: shit.  
12                  (0.5)  
13 K:            He had. This guy had, a beautiful thirty-two  
14                  O:lds.

In this extract, K initiates a repair sequence (*self-initiated repair*) around the name of a participant in his telling *that guy up there* (line 1). This initiation is not repaired by either participant and is followed by a silence of one and a half seconds. After the gap, K provides additional information for identifying the 'guy' (line 5) and this is followed by an even longer silence. K then explicitly makes a try for M to identify the 'guy' but this fails (lines 8 and 9) and after a further pause, M abandons the repair with °*Oh:: shit*.

While repair is found in all languages, the particular ways that repair operates varies from language to language as different grammars allow for different possibilities in constructing repair (Fox, Maschler, & Umann, 2010; Fox et al., 2017). All interactions are subject to problems, but the particular linguistic strategies to use these problems will vary. Nonetheless, problems need to be resolved as quickly as possible so that interaction may continue and the ways that repairs relate to troubles and the possibilities for sequencing repairs are very similar. The discussion here focuses on repair in English and the general patterns found are applicable to other languages, but the ways repair gets organised locally may differ (Kitzinger, 2013).

### Types and positions of repair

Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) have proposed a model of the mechanism for repair in conversation which makes a central distinction between who initiates repair and who makes the repair. Repair can be initiated by the speaker of the repairable (*self-initiated repair*) or it may be initiated by its recipient (*other-initiated repair*). In addition, a repair can be made by the speaker of the repairable (*self repair*) or it may be made by the recipient of the item (*other repair*). In combination, these possibilities allow for four types of repair:

1. *Self-initiated self repair*: in which the speaker of the repairable item both indicates a problem in the talk and resolves the problem;
2. *Self-initiated other repair*: in which in which the speaker of the repairable item indicates a problem in the talk, but the recipient resolves the problem;
3. *Other-initiated self repair*: in which the recipient of the repairable item indicates a problem in the talk and the speaker resolves the problem; and
4. *Other-initiated other repair*: in which the recipient of the repairable item both indicates a problem in the talk and resolves the problem.

The distinction between self and other initiation is important interactionally. Obviously, it is important that either party to talk be able to initiate repair, as certain problems in talk are problems for the speaker, while others are problems for the recipient. However, they do not seem to be two independent repair initiation processes, but rather they are related to each other in an organized way (Kitzinger, 2013; Schegloff et al., 1977). The two types of repair initiation deal with the same sorts of trouble sources in talk and this remains true even though some types of repairable are usually associated with self-initiation (for example grammatical problems, word searches, redoing of the action underway) while others are typically associated with other-initiated repair (for example problems of hearing). These associations are a result of the distribution of the types of repairs not of a rule in the conversational system. It is possible for repairs of grammatical errors to be initiated by the recipient and problems of hearing, understandings, etc. to be initiated by the speaker. An example of self-initiation and other initiation working on the same trouble source can be seen in the following extracts.

(9.3) [SBL:3:1:2 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

B:            -then more people will show up. Cuz they  
 →            won't feel obligated to sell. tuh buy.

(9.4) [GTS:3:42 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

1→ A:           Hey the first time they stopped me from  
 2            selling cigarettes was this morning.  
 3            (1.0)  
 4→ B:           From selling cigarettes?  
 5    A:           From buying cigarettes. They [said uh

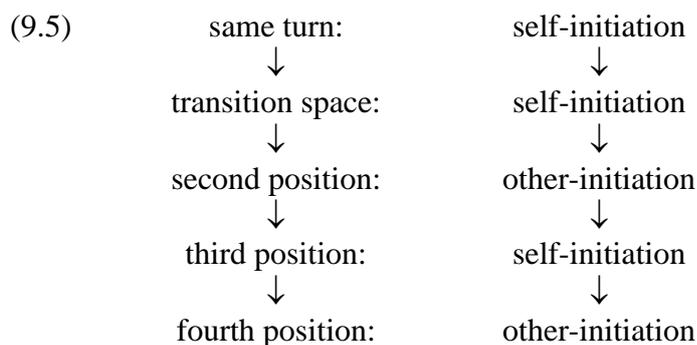
In extracts (9.3) and (9.4), the trouble source is a problem of word selection; in both cases the use of *sell* instead of *buy*. In extract (9.3), the repair is initiated by self and in extract (9.4) it is initiated by the other. Self-initiation and other-initiation are specialized for which participant in the conversation identifies a trouble in prior talk. They are not specialized for the type of trouble to be repaired.

These types of repair interact with sequential locations for repair, so that some types of repair are typically found in the same position or the same sequence type in conversation. Locations for repair are locations relative to the trouble source and repair is designed to resolve the trouble as quickly as possible. It is possible to identify the following positions for repair:

1. within the same turn as the trouble source (*same turn repair*)
2. in the transition space following the turn containing the trouble source (*transition space repair*)

3. in the turn immediately following the trouble source (*second position repair*)
4. in a third positioned turn (*third position repair*)
5. in a fourth positioned turn. (*fourth position repair*)

These positions for repair interact with repair initiation in such a way that each position is specialized to provide for a particular participant to initiate the repair. This means that self-initiation and other-initiation are also organized in terms of their sequential position. The two types of initiation are ordered so that possibilities for self-initiation precede possibilities for other initiation (Kitzinger, 2013; Schegloff et al., 1977), as in (9.5).



What this ordering provides is a set of alternating possibilities. As each of these possible positions is available for repairing the same types of trouble source, they can be seen as a set of ordered possibilities for initiating repair with the speaker producing the trouble having the first opportunity to initiate a repair, either within the current turn, as in extract (9.6), or just after the current turn in the transition space, as in extract (9.7).

(9.6) [AN:04:03]

→ Anna: oh so then he is coming back on Thur- on Tuesday

(9.7) [SBL:3:1:2 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

→ B: -then more people will show up. Cuz they won't feel obligated to sell. tuh buy.

In these extracts, the trouble source is identified by and repaired by the current speaker and no further repair work would seem to be necessary on this repairable. where repairables are not dealt with in the speaker's turn, however, the recipient may initiate a repair in the second position, as in extract (9.8).

(9.8) [GTS:3:42 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

1 A: Hey the first time they stopped me from  
 2 selling cigarettes was this morning.  
 3 (1.0)  
 4→ B: From selling cigarettes?  
 5 A: From buying cigarettes. They [said uh

Talk in the second position may indicate that there was a problem with the original turn. Responses to turns at talk are opportunities to display understanding or misunderstandings of

prior talk (Schegloff, 1992b). This means that talk in a turn in the second position may indicate a trouble source in the earlier turn. Where this is the case, the speaker of the original trouble source may initiate repair in the next turn, in third position in relation to the original turn, as in extract (9.9).

(9.9) [SBL:1:1:12:11 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

Hannah: and he's going to make his own paintings.  
Bea: Mm hm,  
→ Hannah: and- or I mean his own frames.  
Bea: yeah,

In this extract, Hannah's repairable *paintings* is not taken up by Bea and in so doing she shows that she has understood paintings as unproblematic for her. Hannah now repairs the trouble source from her own turn in third position. While talk in the second position may indicate a misunderstanding, it is also possible that such a misunderstanding may not become apparent until the third position. In this case, the recipient of the original turn may initiate repair in the next turn, or in fourth position relative to the original trouble.

(9.10) [EAS:FN (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 M: Loes, do you have a calendar  
2 L: Yeah  
3 M: Do you have one that hangs on the wall?  
4→ L: Oh you want one.  
5 M: Yeah

In extract (9.10), L's turn is in fourth position relative to the original repairable and indicates a trouble source in the original turn: L has not understood this as a pre-request, but rather as a question. Her answer *yeah* does not reveal that her understanding has been problematic and M produces another turn relevant to his project of requesting. From M's turn in third position, L identifies a problem in her version of the action underway and repairs this, showing she now has a new understanding of M's original turn.

Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks (1977) point out that the fact that other-initiation typically occurs in the next turn after the trouble source is not an accidental artefact of turn-taking. It is possible for repair to occur *during* the turn in which the trouble source occurs: that is, it is possible for a recipient to interrupt the current speaker during the current turn, however, other-initiated repair does not typically occur during the turn in which the repairable occurs. Where a current turn is interrupted to deal with a trouble source, this is overwhelmingly done through self-repair. What this means is that the normal first possible position for other-initiation is not simply the next turn, but it is also *no sooner* than the next.

(9.11) [GJ:FN (Jefferson, 1972)]

1 Steven: One, two, three, ((pause)) four five  
2 six, (pause) eleven eight nine ten.  
3→ Susan: Eleven? eight, nine, ten?  
4 Steven: Eleven, eight, nine, ten?

- 5 Susan: Eleven?  
6 Steven: Seven, eight, nine, ten?  
7 Susan: That's better.

In this extract, Susan's other initiated repair would clearly be possible before Steven reaches the number ten, but does not initiate the repair until the prior turn has occurred. Furthermore, Schegloff, et al. (1977) also argue that other-initiation may often be delayed in its own turn allowing an expanded transition space in which self-initiation could potentially occur. This means that it is not simply true that other-initiation is found after self-initiation, rather the repair system is organized to achieve such an ordering.

### *Same turn repair*

Repair initiated by the current speaker in the same turn as the trouble source initiation is accomplished by non-lexical perturbations in speech (Schegloff, 1979b; Schegloff et al., 1977). These perturbations are sensitive to the environment in which they are deployed and consist of cut-off, sound stretches, items such as *uh and uhm*, and pauses.

Cut-offs are interruptions of the word (or sound) underway and typically take the form of a glottal or some other stop. The cut-off therefore works to stop the next sound due from being articulated. Usually a cut-off is used to initiate repair on some trouble source which has already been produced in the turn so far. That is, it is placed after the repairable or post-positioned (Schegloff, 1979b).

(9.12) [AN:04:03]

Anna: oh so then he is coming back on Thur- on Tuesday

In this extract, Anna interrupts her production of the word *Thursday* and substitutes the word *Tuesday*. The cut-off indicates a general problem with the talk being produced and serves to suspend the ongoing production of the trouble source itself and Anna backs up her turn to recommence the problematic element (Laakso & Sorjonen, 2010). Cut-offs often interrupt the projected syntax of the turn, as in extract (9.13).

(9.13) [Car conversation]

Sasha: poor Ron, =he's always like- even (.) when  
he was married and happy he still (.) was  
always h[avin problems or something

In this extract, Sasha's turn so far projects one particular trajectory for her talk *he's always like-*. This trajectory is cut off and a new trajectory begins *even (.) when he was married and happy* projecting a different turn shape and a different possible completion. As such talk after a cut-off may be consistent with the turn so far or it may produce a complete syntactic disjunction with the earlier components of the turn (Schegloff, 1979b). In the ways she repairs her talk as it is being produced, Sasha is reconstructing her talk to produce a new version of the action she has already begun replacing a telling of something about Ron as a generic statement about him (*he's always like*) and replacing it with a more contextualised version that clarifies in some ways the notion of *always* (Drew, Walker, & Ogden, 2013).

*Uh, uhm* and pauses are repair initiations which occur outside word boundaries and stop the articulation of the next word due in the turn (Jefferson, 2018b). They are typically used to repair a next element in the talk. These repair initiations are syntactically congruent with the projected TCU (Schegloff, 1979b).

(9.14) [Moon 6:132]

→ Tommy: ... You haven't u:h added up any of these  
answers, (0.3) or anything like that yet.  
Pete: A::h (.) no (.) not ye:t,

In this extract, Tommy projects a structure *haven't* plus participle, but delays his talk with *uh* after *haven't*. Tommy's trouble seems to be that the next element in his projects sentence is not readily available to him and he needs a bit more time to search for it. He then produces the next item *added* continuing the projected format of the turn.

Sound stretches have as one of their functions initiating repair, especially a search for some unavailable item. A sound stretch is therefore employed within a word, but serves to initiate repair of some next element (Schegloff, 1979b).

(9.15) [AB:01:17]

Ben: an so we wen' to: the::: La Paella restaurant

In this extract, Ben produces a sound stretch on *to: and* a much longer one on *the:::*. The object of the search here is the name of a restaurant, which is the relevant next item to be produced in the turn. Again this repair is syntactically congruent with the projected turn and like *uh*, etc. it serves to delay the production of a problematic item and gain time for a search.

The association of cut-offs with repair of a previous trouble source and other repair initiators with an upcoming trouble source is not always true. Speakers are able to convert their repair from one type to another (Schegloff, 1979b). For example, a repair may be initiated to repair a particular trouble, such as a missing word, but may end by recasting an earlier part of the talk in order to avoid a missing element, as in (9.16).

(9.16) [PB 3-4:6 (Schegloff, 1979b)]

1 Merle: So how's Michelle.  
2 (1.0)  
3 Robin: They brought her ho:me.  
4 (0.7)  
5 Robin: She hadda wait up the:re fo:r- u-she:'s  
6 been there since eight uh' clock this morning  
7 and at six thirty she called me ... (0.5)  
8 Said "Please com'n get me ...

In this extract, the sound stretches on *the:re and fo:r* indicate that a search is a likely next activity. The object for the search is for a duration of time, signalled by the *fo:r*. However, this search for a duration is not carried through and the projected format of the turn is aborted. Instead the turn is recast, moving to an earlier point and now projects the starting and finishing

times for Michelle's wait. The repair initiation starts by projecting repair to a next element, but ends by repairing a previous element and in so doing avoids the need to produce the missing element.

The various types of repair initiations are often found in combination as a *repair segment* (Schegloff, 1979b). There are several examples of such segments in extract (9.17).

(9.17) [Car Conversation]

1→ Sasha: o:h. we saw some briyant ones recently, like  
2 uhm (1.0) oh what was that one about- (0.4)  
3→ like Double In- (.) Indemnity= n like lots  
4 of movies from the thirties that ha- had  
5 amazing plot lines?  
6 (0.9)  
7 some of them were really full on: like um:  
8 (0.3) A Place in the Sun?

At line 1, Sasha initiates a search for a missing name of a film with *uhm* and combines this with a lengthy pause. At line 3, she begins the name of the film *Double Indemnity*, but cuts off her talk and follows this with a brief pause before backing up and producing *Indemnity*. Here then she is using a collection of repair strategies to deal with the production of a problematic item.

Self-initiated repair in the same turn as the trouble source is usually resolved by the same speaker in the turn. In fact all of the extracts discussed so far are cases of *self-initiated self repair*. However, a repair initiated by the current speaker in the same turn as the trouble source may be repaired by the recipient in a next turn (*self-initiated other-repair*). This repair may be solicited as in (9.18) or not as in (9.19).

(9.18) [Car Conversation]

1 Sasha: like this man: (0.8) was um (0.6) out in a  
2 boat and his wife drowned or something,  
3 and (0.6) he did d-=was it he didn't  
4 do it (.) Ellyz  
5 Elvis: yeah.

In this extract, Sasha is recalling the plot of a film she has seen with her boyfriend Elvis. She cuts off her talk at *he did d-* and immediately asks for verification of her recall of the plot, which is given by Elvis. Sasha's talk here seems designed to include Elvis as someone who knows about the event because he has shared the experience. Goodwin (1987) has shown that such displays of uncertainty and requests to a knowing recipient to provide assistance in dealing with uncertainty are useful devices for dealing with instances of shared experiences in interaction. Repairs, then, like that in extract (9.18), can be used in interaction to deal with more than just problems of recall. They can also be deployed to resolve other interactional needs which emerge in talk.

(9.19) [BC:Green: 88 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

- B: He had dis uh Mistuh W- whatever k- I can't  
think of his name, Watts on, the one thet wrote  
[that piece,  
A: [Dan Watts

Here, B is having difficulty finding a name. He cuts off production of the talk at *W-* and at *k-* and indicates his difficulty *I can't think of his name*, and makes another try at the name, *Watts on*, following this by a clue to the person's identity. At this point, A provides the repair.

There are cases of same-turn repair in talk where an initial attempt at repair does not lead to a successful repair and the speaker initiates a further repair on the same trouble source. Most of the instances in which more than one repair is initiated for the same trouble source are cases of two repair initiations and cases of more than two repair initiations are increasingly rare as the number of initiations increases (Schegloff, 1979b). It appears that the organization of repair in conversation does not allow speakers unlimited time in which to affect a repair. These instances of multiple repairs of the same trouble source are orderly in their production and each successive repair appears to be ordered in relation the previous attempts at repair. Schegloff (1979b) has identified a number of features of this orderliness, all of which orient to progressing the turn underway and to displaying that each repair attempt has made progress towards solving the trouble. This orderliness reveals that the organization of repair is not done with relation to what precedes the attempt at repair, but is also sensitive to the whole series of repairs on a single trouble source.

One way in which a speaker may organize a series of repairs on the same trouble source is for each next attempt to repair the trouble to add something to a prior attempt.

(9.20) [TG:492-493 (Schegloff, 1979b)]

- Bee: That's why they have us in this building-we  
finally got a' .hhh a roo:m tihday  
→ in-in the leh- a lectchuh hall,

In this extract, Bee's first try cuts off after *in-*, her second try adds further elements, *the leh-*, and her third try adds *ctchuh hall*, to her second. At each try her turn continues to progress slightly towards its projected completion.

(9.21) [NYI:228-229 (Schegloff, 1979b)]

- Bonnie: why? because they hg- because they have- because  
they asked you first.

In extract (9.21), Bonnie progresses her turn by replacing an element in one try with new element in the next, *have* becoming *asked*. As such her turn continues to progress although she is continuing to initiate repair on the same item. In so doing, while she doesn't add anything further to what the turn is projecting, she does show that her talk is moving towards a resolution of the trouble. In both extracts (9.20) and (9.21), there is actually a combination of both adding further material and changing elements. In (9.20), Bee not only continues to add talk, but changes *the* into *a*. In (9.21), Bonnie, starts with a cut off *hg-* which appears to be the beginning

of *have* followed by a stop and first adds the rest of *have* and then replaces it with *asked*. Schegloff (1979b) argues that this progression from a try which operates on the previous try by adding material or by changing an element is an orderly progression which is readily found in conversation.

Many of the examples discussed so far show that when a speaker's repair talk in the same turn, they may repeat a bit of the talk preceding the repairable item. Schegloff (1979b) argues that in successive tries to repair the same trouble source, each try commonly backs up less far than previous tries.

(9.22) [TG:492-493 (Schegloff, 1979b)]

Bee:        That's why they have us in this building-we  
              finally got a' .hhh a roo:m tihday  
→            in-in the leh- a lectchuh hall,

In this extract, for example, Bee's first repair attempt backs up to *in* while her second repair attempt backs up only to the article *a*. In so doing, it shows progression at both ends of the try.

If the repair does not progress after subsequent tries, the speaker is in a sense "marking time" in the production of the talk underway. Marking time refers to a repair in which each attempt at the trouble is the same as previous attempts: the first repair is like the original, and the second like the first. While this happens in conversation, the second try usually adds a more explicit marker of a search, such as *uh* and in so doing converts the repair into forward repair of some missing element rather than a redoing of an earlier trouble.

(9.23) [TH:20-21 (Schegloff, 1979b)]

W:            An: 'e took the inside out 'n found it uz  
              full of- full of- uh:- calcium: deposits ...

Here W's two tries *full of- full of-* show no progress in moving towards a resolution of the trouble with nothing changed and nothing added to the prior tries. After *uh:* he no longer backs up, but rather searches for a new element *calcium: deposits* and moves forward in this projected turn.

A try which is not identical with the immediately prior try but with an earlier try still is a regressive trajectory in talk rather than a progression in the talk under way. Where this occurs it regularly turns out that this regressive try is the last try produced by the speaker, as in (9.24).

(9.24) [Upholstery shop]

Vic:        En I grab a pail, en I put- .hh I see- ah-  
              put all the glass in the pail,

In this extract, Vic abandons the projected turn with *I see* in his first repair and returns to the earlier *put* format. Something similar happens in extract (9.25).

(9.25) [Car Conversation]

l→ Sasha: o:h. we saw some briyant ones recently, like



In this extract, Lee does not get his recipient's gaze until almost the end of the turn. However, while Lee does not secure Ray's gaze until late in the turn, his restart still seems to be associated with securing a gazing recipient. This can be seen more clearly in extract (9.27') which shows when the Ray begins to move his gaze to the speaker.

(9.27') [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

Lee: Can you bring- (0.2) Can you  
 Ray: . . . . .  
 Lee: bring me here that nylo[n?  
 Ray: . . . . . [X\_

Here, the recipient's gaze begins to move just after Lee's restart and gaze direction and restarting talk continue to be closely related. Goodwin argues that turn restarts and gaze are related in two alternative ways. A restart may allow a speaker to produce new talk with a gazing recipient where such gaze has not been available earlier in the turn. A restart may also be used to request the gaze of a recipient. Goodwin argues that these restarts function as a special type of *summons-answer* sequence in these contexts. Goodwin also provides further support for such an analysis through cases in which the restart does not secure a recipient's gaze, as in extract (9.28).

(9.28) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

Restart (1)  
 ↓  
 Eileen: I ask him, (0.1) I ask him if he- (0.4)  
 Restart (2)  
 ↓  
 Debbie:  
 Eileen: could-If you c[ould call 'im when you got in  
 Debbie: . . . . . [X\_\_\_\_\_

In this case, the first restart does not secure the recipient's gaze and Eileen continues her turn for a little way before restarting again. At the second restart, Debbie begins to move her gaze to Eileen and the turn moves to completion with no further restarts. When Debbie's gaze has been secured, Eileen stops producing restarts and produces a coherent TCU.

Goodwin argues that restarts are not the only devices which can be deployed in this way. He also provides examples in which pauses seem to function in the same way.

(9.29) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

Michael: Who kno:ws, .hh (-[---) nu:mbers and letters  
 Don: . . . . . [X\_\_\_\_\_

In this extract, rather than a restart, Michael pauses in the middle of his ongoing turn. This pause is shown by a series of dashes in Goodwin's transcription, where each dash represents 0.1 seconds. Michael secures Don's gaze during the pause and resumes speaking when he has secured Don's gaze, waiting during the pause for a recipient who is moving his gaze towards him to complete this. The structure here is a [Beginning] + [Pause] + [Continuation] rather than

a new start. Such pauses can also be found in conjunction with other self-initiated repair devices such as *uh/uhm* or lengthened sounds, as in extracts (9.30) and (9.31).

(9.30) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

1 Anne: When you had that big  
 2 Jere:  
 3 Anne: uhm:, (-----+[-]tropical fish tank.  
 4 Jere: . . . . .[X\_\_\_\_\_

(9.31) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

Ethyl: I had a who::le:: (----[----+--) pail full of  
 Jim: . . .[X\_\_\_\_\_

In these two extracts, the devices which precede the pause, *uhm:*, in extract (9.30) and the sound stretch on *who::le::* in extract (9.31), function to request the gaze of a recipient in a similar way to the ways in which restarts can work. After each of these devices and during the pause, recipients begin orienting their gaze to the speaker and after the recipients' gaze has been secured the talk continues. The pause therefore provides a space in which the recipient's gaze can be obtained before the talk continues.

Goodwin (1981) points out that the central difference between restarts and pauses is the way they run off: that is they both interrupt a turn in progress and differ only according to whether the turn is restarted or not after the interruption. The restarting or continuing after the interruption is again relevant to gaze, but in this case the speaker's gaze. There appears to be an interactional order for organising gaze between a speaker and a recipient which places the interaction importance of a recipient gazing at a speaker higher than a speaker gazing at a recipient. Where a recipient is gazing at a non-gazing speaker there appears to be no interactional problem and repair is no needed. However, where a speaker is gazing at a non-gazing recipient, repair is required. Goodwin has demonstrated that this feature of gaze organization is implicated in the ways in which restarting and continuing are deployed after an interrupted turn. This can be seen in extracts (9.32) and (9.33).

(9.32) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

1 Lee: .....[X\_\_\_\_\_

Can you brin[g- (0.2) Can you

2 Ray: . . . . .

3 Lee: \_\_\_\_\_

bring me here that nylo[n?

4 Ray: . . . . .[X\_

(9.33) [(C. Goodwin, 1981)]

1 Barbara:Uh, my kids (---[----) had all these blankets,  
 2 Ethyl: . .[X\_\_\_\_\_

3 Barbara: . . . . .[X\_\_\_\_\_

and quilts and slee[ping bags.

In extract (9.32), Lee is gazing at a non-gazing recipient. He interrupts his talk and, after the interruption and a brief pause, his recipient begins to move his gaze towards the speaker. At this point, Lee restarts his turn and continues it through to the end. In extract (9.33), Barbara is talking to a non-gazing recipient, but has not yet begun to gaze at her recipient. She interrupts her talk and secures her recipient's gaze before continuing, her gaze reaching her recipient much later in the turn. Instances of the co-ordination of talk and eye gaze such of these provide evidence that restarting is specialized for speakers who are gazing at non-gazing recipients and that continuing is specialized for non-gazing speakers with non-gazing recipients. Goodwin (1981) further shows that no perturbation in talk is found where a speaker's gaze reaches a gazing recipient, that is, where there is no trouble to repair.

### *Transition space repair*

The next structurally provided place at which self-repair can be done is within the transition space after a TCU containing the trouble source (Schegloff et al., 1977). In other words it is possible for a speaker to begin a repair after the first possible completion of the TCU and effectively extend their turn as a multi-unit turn in order to carry out repair. While the end result is for the current speaker to initiate the repair within the turn in which the trouble occurs, transition space repair works differently from repair initiated before the first possible completion of a TCU. Transition space repair can be done with no explicit repair initiation marker, other than further talk in the transition space, as in extracts (9.34) and (9.35).

(9.34) [SBL:3:1:2 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

B:            -then more people will show up. Cuz they won't  
→            feel obligated to sell. tuh buy.

(9.35) [GTS 4:1 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

→ Ken:       Hey why didn't you show up last week. Either  
              of you two.

In neither of these extracts is there any evidence of the speech perturbations or of repair marker such as *uh* or sound stretches which accompany within turn repair. The repair is both initiated and completed by the addition of talk in the transition space. Sometimes transition space repair is accompanied by a very reduced transition space (for example latching as in (9.36)). This reduced transition space shows an orientation to the need to get an additional TCU to provide for repair before speaker change can be effected.

(9.36) [Lunch]

Joy:        Well yuh see I w'z talking with Carol and she  
              said she wannid to come along=wu-Emma did.

Here Joy initiates a repair on a problem of person reference: *she* is interpretable here as *Carol* and she latches the repair immediately after possible completion of her TCU.

In other cases, speakers may deploy devices such as *uh* and *uhm* indicating that a repair is being initiated in the transition space. These devices serve to gain speakership in the transition space

and provide for time to carry out the repair by indicating a repair on some next item. This can be seen in extract (9.37).

(9.37) [KC-4:14 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

A: ... well I was the only one other than the uhm  
→ tch Snows [uh Mrs. Randolph Snow?  
B: [( )  
A: (uh huh)

In this extract, the *uh* is placed in the transition space and leads to two next speakers self-selecting. The *uh* also serves to initiate a word search which is produced in the new TCU.

Transition space repair may also be initiated by a device such as *I mean*, as in extract (9.38)

(9.38) [NJ:4 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

N: She was givin me a:ll the people that were  
→ go:ne this yea:r I mean this quarter y' [know

Speakers may also use a *not X, Y* format for initiating transition space repair, as in extract (9.39).

(9.39) [GTS 1:28 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

Louise: Isn't it next week we're outta school?  
Roger: Yeah next week.  
→ No [not next week, [the week after

Both the *I mean* and the *not X, Y* formats locate the repairable in the prior talk, with the *not X, Y* format doing so more explicitly than the *I mean* format.

Transition space repair may be a delayed repair of the trouble in the immediately prior TCU. Repair is usually initiated as soon as possible after the repairable has been produced, and for repairables within a turn, this position is most likely to be inside the TCU itself (Schegloff, 1997a). In extract (9.35) above, therefore, the repair of the problem in reference of *you* is delayed until after the full TCU has been completed. However, many cases of transition space repairs are repairs of the terminal element of the prior TCU (extracts (9.34) and (9.37)-(9.39)), and such repair has to be initiated in the transition space. Most transition space repairs seem not to be delayed repairs, but rather repairs on terminal elements of the turn (Schegloff, 1997a).

### *Second position repair*

Repair in second position, that is, in the turn following the trouble source, is initiated by the recipient of the trouble source. Second position is the first structurally specified place for other-initiated repair (Schegloff, 2000b). Many of these other-initiated repairs are spread over two turns, being initiated in second position and completed in third position relative to the trouble source: they form sequences of an FPP initiation and an SPP repair. Such second position repairs, therefore, equate with the post-first insert sequences and post-second repair post-sequences discussed in Chapter 6.

Speakers use a range of turn-constructive devices to initiate repair in second position and these devices are fundamentally different from those employed in self-initiated repair (Schegloff et al., 1977; Wilkinson & Weatherall, 2011).

One common way for next speakers to initiate repair in second position is to use *huh?* or *what?* as in extracts (9.40) and (9.41).

(9.40) [CD:SP (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

D: Wul did'e ever get married 'r anything?  
→ C: Huh?  
D: Did jee ever get married?  
C: I have [no idea

(9.41) [Lunch]

1 Harry: Aren't you suppose to go up there with  
2 John though?  
3→ Joy: Wha'¿  
4 Harry: Aren't you goin' up there with John.  
5 Joy: Na:h that fell through weeks ago.

These forms interrupt the progression of the talk as a point where the talk is incomplete in order to do work related to the progression on the talk by requesting a more specific formulation of what is being said (Wilkinson & Weatherall, 2011). The tokens used in (9.40) and (9.41) indicate that there is a problem in the prior talk, but give no indication of the nature of the trouble source itself. This means that they are a very generic way of initiating repair in second position. A more specific type of repair initiation consists of question words such as *who*, *where* and *when*.

(9.42) [BM:FN (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

B: By the way, I haveta go ta Lila's.  
→ A: Where?  
B: Lila's ta get ( )

(9.43) [Lunch]

Harry: So I guess I'll see yuh this afternoon.  
→ Joy: When?  
Harry: Oh I'm comin' tuh the planning meeting.=Roger  
can't make it.

These forms are more specific than the earlier one's because they not only indicate that the preceding talk contained something problematic but give some indication of what the trouble source was. They indicate more strongly what information needs to be made more specific in reformulating the talk (Wilkinson & Weatherall, 2011). Partial repeats serve a similar function in locating the trouble source in the prior talk.

(9.44) [TG 1:7-14]

1 Ava: [<I wan]'dih know if yih got  
2 a-uh:m wutchamacawllit. a:: pah(hh)khing  
3 place °th's morning' .hh  
4→ Bee: a pa:king place,  
5 Ava: mm hm,

Partial repeats may also be done with a question word (Robinson, 2013; Schegloff et al., 1977), as in extract (9.45).

(9.45) [Election]

Gary: so what'd'ya think of the news.  
→ John: what news?  
Gary: yihknow about the election?  
John: o-\*uh\* 's te::rrible isn' it,

These partial repeats, by including an element of the prior turn, indicate even more strongly the nature of the trouble source. They also provide with a way for the speaker of the trouble to understand something about what the aim of the repair might be. Robinson (2013) argues that when a partial repeat question is produced, the recipient of the repeat is able to make a judgment of how much the speaker knows about the information involved and the nature of the repair that is required. In this case, the partial repeat shows a lack of knowledge and the repair orients to this understanding.

Another frequent type of repair initiation found in second position consists of *you mean* with a possible understanding of the trouble in the prior turn.

(9.46) [Lunch]

Joy: Kerry's no good. She's haven a fight with Sally.  
→ Harry: Yih mean Sarah dontchuh. Those two are always  
fightin'  
Joy: Yeh. 's a bitch isn' it,

Here Harry not only initiates the repair but also provides a try-marked (*dontchuh*) candidate correction for the repairable, together with a warrant for his repair item. This correction is accepted by Joy in the next turn. The try-marking serves to mitigate the force of the correction but the corrective value of this repair initiation still exists. The *you mean* format for second positioned repair, therefore, represents a strong form of repair initiation. The types of other-initiation discussed here are ordered in terms of their relative strength in terms of their ability to locate the repairable in the prior talk. *What?* and *huh?* are quite weak indicating only that there was some trouble while *you mean* plus a possible understanding is a very strong locator of the trouble source. Schegloff, et al (1977) have identified a preference for stronger over weaker forms of repair initiation. One piece of evidence for this is that weaker repair initiations may be interrupted and replaced with stronger ones, as in extract (9.47).

(9.47) [DA:2 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

- B: How long y'gonna be here?  
A: Uh- not too long. Uh just till Monday.  
→ B: Til- oh yih mean like a week f'm tomorrow.  
A: Yah.

In this extract, B begins what appears to be a partial repeat of *till Monday* but interrupts this turn and repairs it to a stronger *you mean* plus possible understanding format. Such moves from weaker to stronger repair initiators are also found where multiple other-initiations are performed on the same repairable, as in (9.48).

(9.48) [HS:FN (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

- 1 A: I have a: - cousin teaches there.  
2 D: Where.  
3 A: Uh:, Columbia.  
4→ D: Columbia?  
5 A: Uh huh.  
6→ D: You mean Manhattan?  
7 A: No. Uh big university. Isn't that in Columbia?  
8 D: Oh in Columbia.  
9 A: Yeah.

In this extract, D initiates a repair on *Columbia* with a repeat (line 4) indicating this as a trouble source in the prior turn. When A continues with an unrepaired version of this, D up-grades the repair initiation in line 6 to a *you mean* plus possible understanding format. In this case, the possible understanding is rejected by A, who backs up the original *Columbia* and this is now accepted by D.

The extracts examined so far are all cases of other-initiated self-repair, in which the speaker who produced the original trouble provides the repair of the trouble. In some cases, the repair work done by this speaker is quite minimal, as in extracts (9.46) and (9.47), where the speakers simply assent to the possible understanding provided by the recipient of the trouble. While the substance of the repair is provided by the recipient, the actual repair is not achieved until the speaker who produced the trouble has accepted the proposed repair. Such possible understandings are not themselves repairs: they are only candidate repairs which do not have the force of repair until they are accepted by the speaker of the trouble (Kendrick, 2015). The fact that repair in such sequences is achieved by the speaker of the trouble is seen clearly in extract (9.48) where the possible understanding produced by D is rejected.

Not all second position repair involves other-initiated self repair as in the cases discussed so far. Other-initiation may also be resolved by other repair produced in the same second position turn. Jefferson (1987, 2018c) calls these sorts of repairs *corrections*. Corrections have their own sequential properties, which vary according to whether the correction is *exposed* or *embedded*. In *exposed correction*, the other-initiated other repair is produced in second position by the recipient of a trouble, as in extract (9.49).

(9.49) [SF:II:7 (Jefferson, 1987)]

1 Larry: They're gonna drive ba:ck Wednesday.  
2→ Norm: Tomorrow.  
3 Larry: Tomorrow. Righ[t].  
4 Norm: [M-hm,  
5 Larry: They are working half day.

In this extract, the activity underway in the prior turn, in this case a telling, is discontinued and the correction itself becomes the activity which is being pursued by the following talk. In his response in line 3, Norm makes a claim to have better access to the knowledge that Larry is attempting to convey (see Bolden, 2018) and asserts his superior knowledge to produce the correction (see also chapter xxx on epistemics). The talk devoted to the activity of correction may be quite short as in extract (9.49), in which the correction provided by Norm with no other talk, other than Larry's acceptance. However, the correction talk may be lengthier as in extracts (9.50) and (9.51).

(9.50) [GTS:II:2:ST (Jefferson, 1987)]

1 Ken: and they told me how I could stick th-uh:  
2 Thunderbird motor? (0.5) in my Jeep? and I  
3 bought a fifty five [Thunderbird motor.  
4→ Roger: [Not motor, engine.  
5 Roger: You speak of [electric motor and gasoline engine.  
6→ Ken: [Okay  
7→ Ken: Engine. [Okay-  
8 Al: [Internal combus:tion.  
9 Ken: Alright, So [lookit,  
10 ( ): [mhhh  
11 Ken: I moved this thing in the Jeep, yesterday ...

In this extract, Ken's telling is disrupted by a correction sequence in which the correction itself *Not motor, engine*. is followed by an explanation of the difference between the two terms. Jefferson (1987, 2018c) calls such talk *accountings*, which take the trouble and treat it in some way. According to Jefferson, accountings typically include activities such as complaining, instructing, admitting, apologising, accusing and ridiculing, all of which are activities related to the activity of correcting itself. The correction talk here also includes the intervention of an additional speaker, Al, who also engages in the activity of correction. In this way, both of Ken's recipient are explicitly claiming greater knowledge of Ken's topic than Ken has (Bolden, 2018). These actions occur even though Ken accepts the correction twice (lines 6 and 7). To close the correction and re-establish the telling, Ken produces talk which explicitly marks a shift in focus in the talk through *Alright* and *so*. *Alright* here is a change-of-activity token, which Gardner (2005) argues indicates a marked shift of activity and *so* marks a shift in topic (Rendle-Short, 2003, 2006; Schiffrin, 1987), away from the correction talk to the prior telling.

(9.51) [DP:32-33:ST (Jefferson, 1987)]

1 Jan: I guess they paid two-twenty for the house and  
2 two thousand for the ki:l.

3 Beth: Mm::,  
 4 Jan: Technically,  
 5→ Ron: (It's a) kil:n.  
 6 Jan: Kil:n, I don't know how to say it,  
 7 Ron: You always say kil.  
 8 Jan: I don't know I thought that's right.  
 9 Beth: [Ye[ah.  
 10 Ron: [It's like-  
 11 Ron: Is that right? You say kil?  
 12 Beth: Kil:n. I don't know I've heard both...

In extract (9.51), the talk is expanded by an accounting (Jefferson, 1987, 2018c) involving complaining about the speaker's competence, *You always say kil*. In all cases of exposed correction, regardless of what other talk may be done, Jefferson argues that there is a basic structure sequential structure. This structure consists of:

- a A speaker produces some object (X)
- b A subsequent speaker produces an alternative (Y)
- c The prior speaker produces the alternative (Y) (accepts correction)

In the extracts above, the acceptance is usually done by a repetition of the corrected item, in some cases with some other talk showing acceptance of the corrected version. It is also possible, however, for the correction is rejected, as in extract (9.52).

(9.52) [Office II:4]

Anna: An' we have a meeting this afternoon  
 → Barry: It's tomorrow afternoon  
 Anna: No it's this afternoon. They had to bring it forward.

In this extract, Anna rejects Barry's correction restating her original version and providing an account for the rejection. To account for this, the sequential structure above requires an additional component:

- c' The prior speaker produces the original (X) (rejects correction)

Exposed correction, therefore, has two possible trajectories X-Y-Y and X-Y-X, to account for the possibilities that in the third turn, the speaker of the original trouble source can either accept the correction and produce the alternative (Y-Y) or can reject the correction and restate the original item (Y-X).

In *embedded correction*, there is a similar sequential structure, but the talk runs differently, as in extracts (9.53) and (9.54).

(9.53) [GTS:II:60 ST (Jefferson, 1987)]

1 Ken: Well-if you're gonna race, the police have  
 2 said this to us.

3 Roger: That makes it even better. The challenge of  
 4→ running from the cops!  
 5 Ken: The cops say if you wanna race, uh go out at  
 6 four or five in the morning on the freeway..

In extract (9.53), the Ken says something that Roger treats as a trouble *police*. Roger provides an alternative form, *cops*, and Ken, in his next turn adopts Rogre’s alternative. In terms of the discussion in extract (9.53), in which teenagers are talking about their pastime of hot-rodding in city streets, the problem with the form *police* seems to be the fact that it is a standard language term rather than the less standard and less respectful *cops*. In cases such as this, the alternative forms provided by a next speaker function as a type of correction, although the correction is more “off the record” than in exposed correction. These types of correction can also be resisted or rejected by the recipient of the correction as in extract (9.54).

(9.54) [SBL:3:6:4 (Jefferson, 1987)]

1 Adele: Do you think they might go tomorrow,  
 2 Milly: Oh I don’t think so,  
 3 Adele: Oh dear. They’re [( )  
 4 Milly: [No I don’t think until after uh  
 5 after new years now cause uh, New y- - New Years  
 6 is tomorrow eve [isn’t it.  
 7→ Adele: [it’s tomorrow night uh huh  
 8 Milly: Yeah tomorrow eve,

Here the trouble source is *eve*, in *tomorrow eve*, for which Milly provides the alternative *night*, with contrastive stress. However, in her further talk Milly continues to use the form *eve*. The corrections in these two extracts are like exposed corrections in that they have very similar sequential arrangement:

- a A speaker produces some object (X)
- b A subsequent speaker produces an alternative (Y)
- c The prior speaker produces the alternative (Y) (accepts correction) (extract (9.53))
- c’ The prior speaker produces the original (X) (rejects correction) (extract (9.54))

These extracts, both have the same sorts of structure based on repeating sequences which demonstrate either the acceptance of an alternative form (*police-cops-cops*) or the rejection of an alternative form, by repeating the original form (*eve-night-eve*). However, embedded correction differs from exposed correction in that it does not disrupt the action under way, but rather is incorporated (embedded) into it. The talk is not about the correction and the on-going action is not changed while correction happens. Embedded correction does not allow for accountings as these are really only possible if the talk is directed to the action of correction.

In the examples so far, the format of the correction is initiated by the recipient of the trouble and when the prior speaker accepts or rejects the correction, this is done following the same format as the one initiated by the speaker. This outcome is not inevitable. Embedded and exposed correction is actually achieved collaboratively by the participants. There are also instances in the talk in which a speaker initiates correction in one format, but the correction gets done using the other, as in extract (9.55).

(9.55) [Office II:5]

1 Barry: the girls in our office are really busy now  
2 so I don't like to give them too much more to do  
3→ Anna: you mean the women  
4 Barry: well they're all doin' so much now an' I  
5 need to get someone else to take on some of  
6 the admin load. The women just have too much to  
do.

Here, the trouble source is Barry's use of the word *girls* to describe the female employees in his office. Anna produces a correction in an exposed correction format, *you mean the women*. At this point Anna's talk is dealing with the work of correction. Barry, however, does not enter into the correction talk, but goes on with his telling, shifting to an embedded format, but accepting the correction to *women*. Jefferson (1987, 2018c) argues that, by converting the format to an embedded one, speakers are precluding the possibilities for accountings for the repairable in their earlier talk.

### *Third position repair*

Third position, after an interlocutor's response to a previous turn, allows for the possibility of repairing a trouble in understanding of a prior turn demonstrated by the recipient's response to it. This type of repair can be seen in extract (9.56).

(9.56) [CDHQ, I, 52 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Annie: Which one::s are closed, an' which ones are open.  
2 Zebrach: Most of 'em. This, this,  
3 [this, this ((pointing))  
4→ Annie: [I 'on't mean on the shelters, I mean on  
5 the roads.  
6 Zebrach: Oh!  
7 (8.0)  
8 Zebrach: Closed, those're the one's you wanna know about,  
9 Annie: Mm[hm  
10 Zebrach: [Broadway

In this extract, Annie asks a question in her first turn, which receives an answer in the next turn. Zebrach's answer in turn reveals something about how he has interpreted the question, and in particular the referent of Annie's *ones*. Zebrach's turn is sequentially appropriate for his understanding of Annie's question turn and is built to be responsive to this turn. He does not display a problem of understanding. In her next turn, the third turn, Annie treats Zebrach's understanding of her first turn as problematic and acts to repair the understanding.

Schegloff (1992b, 2007) has proposed a four component format for third position repair, consisting of:

1. a repair-initiating component
2. an agreement/acceptance component

3. a rejection component
4. the repair proper

These components have a canonical ordering, 1-4, and as Schegloff (1992b) shows, this ordering is the result of speaker's practices in constructing repair turns in third position.

The *repair-initiating component* commonly has the form *no* (extract (9.57)), possibly repeated as *no no* or *no no no*. *No* may also be found in combination with *oh* as *oh no* (extract (9.58)) and occasionally *oh* alone may be used to initiate the repair (extract (9.60) below).

(9.57) [NYI, 6-7 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Bonnie: Because I'm not even sure if we're goin' to  
 2 have it yet because a buncha people say  
 3 [maybe, maybe,  
 4 Jim: [Yeah  
 5 Bonnie: 't's buggin me.  
 6 (1.5)  
 7 Jim: Oh uhh hh I'm sorry, Ihh  
 8→ Bonnie: No, that's okay, I mean y'know I can  
 9 understand because- this was just a late  
 10 idea that Barb had.

(9.58) [Office 4:1]

1 Joe: Have the papers arrived yet,  
 2 Mary: uh-Nuh nothin's come down from admi[n so far.  
 3→ Joe: [Oh no I- uh  
 4 not- Have the papers arrived yet.  
 5 Mary: Oh you mean the newspapers,  
 6 Joe: Yeah.  
 7 Mary: No they don' usually get here until ten.

These turn initial *no*'s have a superficial appearance of being disagreements with the prior turn. However, they do not seem to be constructed as disagreements. Firstly, after issuing a *no* the speaker deals with a trouble source in their own prior talk, not with features of the second positioned talk itself. Secondly, disagreement is not ordinarily done with a direct *no*, especially at the start of the disagreeing turn. As has been seen in Chapter 5, disagreements tend to be done in a mitigated form and are usually pushed late in their turn (Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987). This means that Bonnie's turn in line 8 of extract (9.57) cannot be seen as a disagreement with Jim's prior apology, but rather as the initiation of a repair on a misunderstanding of her own prior turn. Lerner and Kitzinger (2019) argue that *no* in these contexts rejects the trouble source rather than being a disagreement and prepares recipients to understand what is said next as being a correction. The same is true with Joe's response in extract (9.58). *Well* is also possible as a repair initiator in third position repairs, but Schegloff (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2019; Schegloff, 1992b) indicates that where *well* is found the repair moves directly to the repair proper, without the other sequential features found with other initiators.

(9.59) [GHY:II:09-10]

- 1 Gary: Yuh got anymore screws.  
2 Harry: Yeah I got lo:ts.  
3→ Gary: Well, I wanted one  
4 Harry: O:h okay.

There, Gary's third positioned turn begins with a *well* and moves immediately to a recharacterization of his prior turn as a request not an enquiry. Lerner and Kitzinger (2019) that the use of *well* in self-repairs is a practice used to construct the repair as a revision of a problematic but not wholly wrong formulation and this is what is happening in (9.59), where Gary's reconstruction shows that Harry's understanding is not fully appropriate as it has not been understood as a request-related act.

The *agreement/acceptance component* is usually found where the original turn has been treated as a complaint and the next speaker has responded with a response such as an apology or an excuse: a response which is sequentially relevant for a complaint (Schegloff, 2005). In this case, the speaker accepts the complaint and then proceeds to deny that the turn was intended as a complaint, as in extract (9.60).

(9.60) [NB (Schegloff, 1992b)]

- 1 Agnes: I love it.  
2 (0.2)  
3→ Portia: Well, honey? I'll pob'ly see yuh one a' these  
4 day:s.  
5 Agnes: Oh:: God yeah,  
6 Portia: [Uhh huh!  
7 Agnes: [We-  
8 Agnes: B't I c- I jis [couldn' git down [there.  
9→ Portia: [Oh- [Oh I know  
10 I'm not askin [yuh tuh [come dow-  
11 Agnes: [Jesus. [I mean I jis- I didn'  
12 have five minutes yesterday.

In this extract, two sisters have been having problems getting together and the telephone call from which the extract is taken involves a comment from Portia (at line 3) about another failure to do so. Agnes treats this turn as a complaint and responds by providing an excuse for her not coming down. At line 8, Portia's turn is constructed first to accept Agnes' excuse for not getting together (*I know*) and then moves to rejecting the interpretation of her first turn as a complaint. Bonnie does the same in extract (9.57), in which her repair turn, *no, that's okay*, accepts Jim's earlier apology, before dealing with the problem in understanding this apology demonstrates.

In the *rejection component*, the speaker overtly rejects the understanding of the first turn revealed by the recipient's response to it. There are a small number of possible formats that speakers usually use to do this rejection. One common format is *I don't mean X*, where X identifies the problematic item in the trouble source. This format is used to repair problems with reference (Schegloff, 1987b). This use can be seen in extract (9.61).

(9.61) [CDHQ, I, 52 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

- 1 Annie: Which one::s are closed, an' which ones are open.  
2 Zebrach: Most of 'em. This, this,  
3 [this, this ((pointing))  
4→ Annie: [I 'on't mean on the shelters, I mean on the  
6 roads.  
7 Zebrach: Oh!

Here, Annie is dealing with a problem in understanding the reference of *ones*. Her turn, which does not begin with a repair initiation, rejects Zebrach's interpretation of the reference as *on the shelters*, before repairing the reference in her turn. Another common format for rejecting a prior speaker's understanding of a turn is the *I'm not X-ing* format, where X names an action which prior speaker has understood the talk to be doing. This format deals with problems in which the talk in second position shows a problem of sequential implicativeness; that is, where the next speaker's talk is not sequentially appropriate to the prior speaker's expressed understanding of the trouble source (Schegloff, 1987b). This can be seen in extract (9.62) from a group therapy session.

(9.62) [GTS (Schegloff, 1992b)]

- 1 Dan: ... See Al tends, it seems, to pull in  
2 one or two individuals on his side (there).  
3 this is part of his power drive, see. He's  
4 gotta pull in, he can't quite do it on  
5 his own. Yet.  
6 Al: W'l-  
7 Roger: Well so do I.  
8→ Dan: Yeah. [I'm not criticising, I mean we'll just=  
9 Roger: [Oh you wanna talk about him.  
10 Dan: = uh look, let's talk.  
11 Roger: Alright.

In this extract, Dan's turn in line 8 accepts Roger's response to a perceived complaint and then rejects this interpretation with *I'm not criticising*, where *criticising* is a formulation of Roger's understanding of the trouble source. This same format is also found in extract (9.60) above, where Portia formulates Agnes' understanding of her talk as *not askin* [*yuh tuh* [*come down*] and rejects this interpretation using the *I'm not X-ing* format.

The third common format is less specific in its design than the previous two. In the two preceding formats the speaker indicates an explicit understanding of the nature of the misunderstanding which has occurred. That is, Annie shows an explicit understanding of the referential problem in extract (9.61), while Portia and Dan show explicit understandings of their interlocutors perception of their trouble source turns in extracts (9.60) and (9.62). In the third format for rejection, however, the misunderstanding is not named, but is referred to using a pro-form such as *that: that's not what I mean, I don't mean that*, etc, as in extract (9.63).

(9.63) [Lunch]

1 Joy: I have so much to do at the moment i's gonna  
2 be tight fitting something else in, yih know.  
3 (0.2)  
4 Harry: Well I don' mean that yih have to [do-  
5→ Joy: [No uh-'as  
6 no' what I meant=I jis- (.) I jis' think I'll  
7 have to do something tuh make room for i'.  
8 Yih know reprioritise.

In this extract, Joy's turn indicates that there has been a problem in misunderstanding her first turn, but gives no explicit formulation of what the problem is. She overtly rejects Harry's understanding of her talk without naming it. Schegloff (1992b) argues that this format does not show a problem in understanding the nature of misunderstanding which has occurred, but rather some potential problem in expressing the understanding.

The *repair proper* is the component which is most likely to be found in any third position repair, although it too may be absent (Schegloff, 1992b). In the repair proper, the speaker takes up the problem that the recipient's response has revealed and modifies the prior turn in some way to deal with the problem. Schegloff identifies a number of ways in which this repair is commonly done. The speaker may repeat the prior turn with some modifications, such as prosodic marking, to display that the prior turn is being made clearer.

(9.64) [Office 4:1]

1 Joe: Have the papers arrived yet,  
2 Mary: uh-Nuh nothin's come down from admi[n so far.  
3 Joe: [oh no I'm  
4→ uh not- Have the papers arrived yet.  
5 Mary: Oh you mean the newspapers,  
6 Joe: Yeah.  
7 Mary: No they don' usually get here until ten.

Joe initiates repair with *oh no and* repeats his prior turn with stress on papers and falling intonation. Joe's contrastive stress on the word papers here is the only additional information he gives about what the word means. The stress indicates only that a different sort of papers is meant. Mary then reformulates this as newspaper and responds to this new understanding of the trouble source. Another possible format for the repair is a contrast with the recipient's understanding of the trouble source, usually introduced by *I mean*, as in extract (9.65).

(9.65) [CDHQ, I, 52 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Annie: Which one::s are closed, an' which ones are open.  
2 Zebrach: Most of 'em. This, this,  
3 [this, this ((pointing))  
4→ Annie: [I 'on't mean on the shelters, I mean on the  
5 roads.

6 Zebrach: Oh!

Speakers may also repair a trouble source in this position with a more specific formulation of the trouble source, as in (9.66).

(9.66) [CDHQ, I, 46-47 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Lehroff: What is the weathuh. Out in the area now.  
2 Zebrach: No winds, er its squalling, rain, the winds  
3 are probably out of north, -west, at uh  
4 estimated gusts of uh sixty to sixty five  
5 miles an hours.  
6 ( ): (Whew!)  
7 Zebrach: Sustained winds of thirty five to forty  
8 five miles per hour. and uh anticipated  
9 duration,  
10→ Lehroff: How is the wah- weather period outside.  
11→ Is it- rain(ing)? uh windy? or what?  
12 Zebrach: ('s what I said). 's windy?  
13 ( ): ( )  
14 Zebrach: An' it's raining.  
15 Lehroff: S' an' it's raining,  
16 Zebrach: An' it's raining.

Here Lehroff repeats his trouble source turn with modified prosody and follows this with a list of specific features of his general question about the weather in a non-technical way. Repairs may also be done by redoing the trouble source as an explanation of the prior turn, as in extract (9.67).

(9.67) [BC (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Host: and now, dear hearts, let's go to the  
2 next call. Shall we?  
3 Host: Good evening, WNBC,  
4 Caller: Good evening, this is uh, oh boy.  
5 Host ehh heh heh hyah [hyah!  
6→ Caller: [No I was listening to the  
7 commercial, and I'm just kinda- confused  
8 fer a min[ute].  
9 Host: [Sorry about that, it's a  
10 little rattling.

In the repair turn, the Caller provides an explanation of his earlier talk and addresses the Host's understanding of it as something which was designed to be laughed at.

A final type of repair identified by Schegloff (1992b) is a characterization of the trouble source as serious or non-serious. This repair is designed to address this one particular problem of

understanding and is associated also with withdrawing from the sequence in which the trouble occurred. Schegloff notes that such repairs do not occur with *I mean*.

(9.68) [TG 1:7-14 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Ava:                    [<I wan]' dih know if yih got a-uh:m  
2                    wutchimicawllit. A:: pah(hh)hking place  
3                    °th's mornin'. .hh  
4 Bee:                A pa:rking place,  
5 Ava:                Mm hm,  
6                    (0.4)  
7 Bee:                Where.  
8→ Ava:              t! Oh: just anypla(h)ce? I wz jus' kidding yuh.  
9 Bee:                Nno?=

In extract (9.68), Bee's response shows that she is treating Ava's first turn as a serious question, but is having difficulty in understanding the question as one to which she can give an appropriate answer. She deals with the problem through a series of insert repairs, which do not succeed in resolving the problem. Ava's repairs the problematic understanding by characterising her question as *kidding*, as non-serious.

The components Schegloff (1992b) has identified for third position repair are not obligatory in constructing any repair turn, and any element may be omitted from a particular repair turn. While no component is necessary for a repair, the components themselves are ordered as initiation, acceptance/agreement, rejection and repair and this ordering can be seen as achieved by participants through their orientation to this ordering.

The cases discussed so far are all instances in which a repair is initiated by a speaker in the turn after a prior speaker has demonstrated some problem in the understanding of a trouble source. Schegloff (1997a) describes another trajectory for self-initiated repair after a next speaker's turn, as in extract (9.69).

(9.69) [TG 286-289 (Schegloff, 1997a)]

1 Bee:                Y'have any cla- y'have a class with  
2                    Billy this term?  
3 Ava:                yeah, he's in my Abnormal class.  
4 Bee:                Oh yeah, [how  
5→ Ava:                [Abnormal Psych.

In this extract, Ava's repair follows Bee's turn, but it does not respond to problems of hearing and understanding emerging from this turn. Rather, Ava is performing an operation on her first turn without reference to Bee's talk. Ava's repair, therefore, is not really in third position as it is not designed sequentially to follow Bee's second positioned turn. Schegloff (1997a) terms this *third turn repair* to distinguish it structurally and sequentially from *third position repair*. These third turn repairs, in fact, seem to have more in common with transition space repair than with third position repair as they are often repairs on terminal components of the trouble source turn. The difference between the two is that some talk by a next speaker intervenes between the trouble source and the repair. The principal difference between the two repair formats is,

therefore, the presence or absence of talk by a next speaker after the trouble source turn. The phenomenon here is a little like Jefferson's analysis of overlapping talk where the overlap occurs just after the beginning of a new TCU (see Chapter 4, extracts 4.18) and (4.19)). In these cases, she argued that the onset of the talk just after the commencement of another TCU could be attributed to a pause in talk occurring just prior to the beginning of the overlapping turn. It appears that something similar is happening in the case of third turn repair.

(9.69') [TG 286-289 (Schegloff, 1997a)]

Ava:       yeah, he's in my Abnormal class.  
 Bee:       Oh yeah, [how  
 → Ava:       (\_\_\_\_\_) [Abnormal Psych.

In (9.69') Ava's talk appears to be constructed to have an intraturn pause *yeah, he's in my Abnormal class.* ((*pause*)) *Abnormal Psych.* However, at the end of Ava's turn she has reached a TRP and Bee legitimately becomes the next speaker. Ava, however, identifies a trouble with the reference of her *abnormal* and works to correct it after Bee has started. The repair needs to be as close to the trouble source as possible, however for Ava this can only come in a third turn, because Bee has already begun to talk. Third turn repair, therefore, demonstrates the vulnerability of the transition space for doing repair and the need to get the repair done quickly for this format to come off in the transition space itself.

There is an additional interactional issue involved with third turn repair, which distinguishes this repair format from transition space repair. In these repairs, the next speaker has produced a second positioned turn which demonstrates understanding of the prior talk. The subsequent repair in third position can imply that this claiming of understanding of the turn was not right at the point where the turn was produced. This can be seen in extract (9.70).

(9.70) [BC:Gray, 42-43 (Schegloff, 1997a)]

1    Call:     I never saw a single piece of action while  
 2             I was there.  
 3    Brad:     Mhmm,  
 4    Call:     I was (manning the) civil affairs, and I  
 5             had a very good time.  
 6    Brad:     Mm hm,  
 7→ Call:     Nothing uh lewd in any- by way of a good  
 8             time, I mean  
 9    Bard:     Yes, [I know what you mean  
 10 Call:       [(Perfectly) honest good time.

In this extract, Brad's second positioned talk is the *mm hm*. While this may not be a full turn, but rather a quasi turn which passes up an opportunity to take a turn at this point, it does nonetheless show that the prior talk has been received as unproblematic and as such has been 'understood' (Schegloff, 1982). Call's third turn repair changes the possible interpretation of *a good time* and Brad's response *Yes, I know what you mean* seems to be designed to address any implications that his prior understanding may no longer be appropriate. Transition space

repair, however, does not need to deal with such interactional difficulties as the repair is effected before any display of understanding by the recipient has occurred.

Third turn repair and third position repair are structurally different repair positions. Third turn repair refers to a phenomenon in conversation in which repair is done in the third turn from the trouble source, but it is not designed to be second to a recipient's response to the trouble. Third position repair is designed in relation to a recipient's response to a trouble source. While this is commonly found in the third turn after the trouble, this is not the only place in which third position repair can occur. That is, third position repair is commonly done in the third turn, but is not *necessarily* done in the third turn (Schegloff, 1992b). Extract (9.71) is an example of a repair which is found after a second positioned response, but is not in the third turn after the trouble source.

(9.71) [FD,IV,66 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Dispatch: Now what was that house number you said=  
2 = [you were-  
3 Caller: = [No phone. No.  
4 Dispatch: Sir?  
5 Caller: No phone at all.  
6→ Dispatch: No I mean the uh house number, [Y-  
7 Caller: [Thirty  
8 eight oh one?  
9 Dispatch: Thirty eight oh one.

In this extract, Dispatch's repair is positioned after the caller's SPP response to a FPP question *Now what was that house number you said*. The caller's SPP is however, not in the turn immediately following its relevant FPP as it is delayed by an insert repair sequence. Nonetheless, the caller's turn *No phone at all* is designed as second to the FPP and the repair in line 6 is both a repair of the FPP and designed as a sequentially next turn after the SPP.

#### *Fourth position repair*

Fourth position repair is very infrequent as most problems are dealt with before this point, however, some problems may persist. Fourth position repair allows an opportunity for a recipient of original trouble source to repair a problem of understanding which has become evident as a result of talk produced in the third position (Schegloff, 1992b). As third position repair allows a speaker of some trouble source to deal with talk which displays a problem of understanding, fourth position repair allows the recipient of the trouble to do the same, as in extract (9.72).

(9.72) [EAS:FN (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Marty: Loes, do you have a calendar  
2 Loes: Yeah ((reaches for desk calendar))  
3 Marty: Do you have one that hangs on the wall?  
4→ Loes: Oh you want one.  
5 Marty: Yeah

Here, Marty's original turn can be understood either as a pre-request to borrow a calendar or as a pre-request for a calendar. Loes' action following Marty's turn indicates that she is acting on the turn as requesting her calendar, reaching for her own desk calendar as an appropriate next action for such a request. Marty then produces another form of the request designed to follow-up his original turn. This new version of the talk leads Loes to reanalyse the original turn and she produces a repair turn stating this new understanding.

As with third position repair, fourth position repair deals with the sequential placement of talk relative to the actions performed by other speakers rather than simply a question of repair in a fourth turn. This can be seen in extract (9.73).

(9.73) [CDHQ:15; openings, 299 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

1 Phil: Hello?  
 2 Lehroff:Phil!  
 3 Phil: yeh.  
 4 Lehroff:Josh Lehroff  
 5 Phil: yeh.  
 6 Lehroff:Ah:: what've you gotten so far. Any requests  
 7 to dispatch any trucks in any areas,  
 8→ Phil: Oh you want my daddy.  
 9 Lehroff:Yeah, Phi[l  
 10 Phil: [Well he's outta town at a convention.

In this extract, Phil understands Lehroff's identification as having been correct. Lehroff's *Phil!* is constructed as an identification and demonstrates a degree of certainty in the identification. It is not designed to elicit in any way the identity of the interlocutor, but rather to confirm recognition and therefore provides for the possibility that the identification is correct (Schegloff, 1979b). In Phil's following turn, in which he accepts the identification, he displays his understanding that Lehroff's identification has worked. This talk is then followed by an identification sequence which runs off without a problem and in which the caller identifies himself and has this identity registered by the answerer (Schegloff, 1979b). The talk then moves to the first topic. Lehroff's move to first topic at this point is based on his understanding of the earlier identification sequence having identified his intended interlocutor and the turn is constructed for this interlocutor. The turn is, therefore, in third position in relation to the identification of Phil, although not the third turn in the talk (9.73').

(9.73') [CDHQ:15; openings, 299 (Schegloff, 1992b)]

|                                   |                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Lehroff:Phil!                     | first position  |
| Phil: yeh                         | second position |
| Lehroff:Josh Lehroff              | third position  |
| .                                 |                 |
| .                                 |                 |
| .                                 |                 |
| Phil: Oh you want my <u>daddy</u> | fourth position |
| Lehroff:Yeah, Phi[l               |                 |

Lehroff's turn, however, indicates that there has been a problem in the identification sequence, and this is repaired by Phil in the next turn, or in fourth position in regard to the trouble source *Phil!*

Fourth position repair consists of two components. The first component is a change of state token *oh* reflecting a new understanding of the talk under way (Heritage, 1984a). The second is a recharacterization of the trouble source addressing the problem of understanding, *you want one* in extract (9.72) and *you want my daddy* in extract (9.73). Reanalyses of the trouble source such as these are usually confirmed by the speaker of the original trouble source and this reconfirmation leads to a new response to the matter of the trouble source (Schegloff, 1992b). The recharacterization may, however be omitted and the repair turn constructed with the change of state token and the revised response.

Fourth position repair is sometimes found in conjunction with third position repair, as in extract (9.74).

(9.74) [Office 4:1]

- 1 Joe: Have the papers arrived yet,  
 2 Mary: uh-Nuh nothin's come down from admi[n so far.  
 3 Joe: [oh no I'm  
 4→ uh not- Have the papers arrived yet.  
 5→ Mary: Oh you mean the newspapers,  
 6 Joe: Yeah.  
 7 Mary: No they don' usually get here until ten.

Here, Joe produces a third position repair dealing with Mary's misunderstanding of his original turn and Mary follows this with a fourth position repair in which she also addresses the problem of understanding and confirms her new understanding. These two repair positions are used to perform the same operation on the prior talk.

### The multiple repair space

The above discussion shows that any utterance can be repaired at a number of points in the following talk and the form the repair takes determines which position the repair will occupy. Schegloff (1992b) describes this series of possible positions for repair as a *repair initiation opportunity space* consisting of four positions which normally occupy the four turns following the repairable. The repair space, however, can be longer if some intervening talk expands the sequence involved. As all talk is subject to repair, each turn can be seen as being followed with a repair space of its own and, in an ongoing conversation, each turn becomes a site for many possible repairs of preceding turns. This set of multiple possibilities for next turn repair can be represented as (Schegloff, 1992b, p. 1327):

|       |    |    |  |  |
|-------|----|----|--|--|
| Turn1 | A: | Q1 |  |  |
| Turn2 | B: | A1 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> position repair<br>on T1 |  |
| Turn3 | A: | Q2 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> position repair<br>on T2 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> position repair<br>on T1 |

|       |    |    |  |  |  |
|-------|----|----|--|--|--|
| Turn4 | B: | A2 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> position repair<br>on T3 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> position repair<br>on T2 | 4 <sup>th</sup> position repair<br>on T1 |
| Turn5 | A: | Q3 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> position repair<br>on T4 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> position repair<br>on T3 | 4 <sup>th</sup> position repair<br>on T2 |
| Turn6 | B: | A3 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> position repair<br>on T5 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> position repair<br>on T4 | 4 <sup>th</sup> position repair<br>on T3 |

In this representation, A initiates talk at Turn 1 with a question FPP. At Turn 2, B may either provide an answer SPP or initiate repair on the turn. In Turn 3, the alternatives available to A are to produce further sequentially relevant talk after B's answer (e.g. another question) or A may initiate second position repair of B's answer turn, or third position repair of A's Turn 1 in response to B's answer turn. In Turn 4, B may also be able to continue to produce sequentially relevant talk or may use the turn to repair earlier talk in Turns 1-3. The possibility that repair will be initiated on Turn 1 is still available at Turn 4, as is the possibility for repair on either of Turns 2 or 3. Each next turn has the same set of possibilities trailing after earlier turns. This means that, at any next turn, a speaker has a space in which to begin repair on a number of prior turns. The multiple repair space is further expanded by the possibility of initiating repair within the same turn as a trouble source. Any turn, therefore, may provide space for repairing both itself and a number of preceding positions within the talk so far.

### **The preference for self-repair**

Schegloff, et al. (1977) have identified a preference for self-repair in conversation. They argue that this preference is not simply a matter of an overwhelming number of instances of self-repair, but also that the system is designed to achieve self-repair. One feature of the system that favours self-repair is that the positions in which self-repair can happen precede the positions in which other repair can happen, providing a structurally first opportunity for speakers to repair their own trouble sources. The first two possible repair positions (within the turn and within the transition space) are allocated to the speaker. In conjunction with third position repair, this means that three of the five possible locations for repair are provided for the speaker who produced the trouble source and that these three positions represent three of the four possible spaces. The preponderance of locations for possible self-repair is further supported by the overwhelming success of repairs themselves. This means that many repairs are resolved before the possibility of other repair even arises.

Furthermore, the division of repair work into initiation and repair also allows for further possibilities for self repair. Other-initiated repair does not automatically lead to other repair; rather other-initiated repair most commonly leads to self repair. In particular, second position other-initiated repair is usually designed to provide for self repair. In the discussion above, most other-initiated repair techniques are techniques for indicating that there was a trouble in the prior talk, but do not perform any operations on that talk. In some cases, such as *huh?* or *what?* other-initiated repair does no more than indicate that there has been a trouble while in other cases (e.g. question words and partial repeats), the repair initiator more explicitly identifies the trouble source. These second position turns are typically occupied only with initiating repair and pass the work of the repair itself to the next positioned turn, that is, they pass the repair back to the first speaker who produced the trouble source. This means that other-initiated repair is usually designed to achieve repair in two turns: a FPP which initiates a repair sequence and requires talk from its recipient and constrains this talk to the work of repair. Other-initiations, therefore, are designed primarily to achieve self-repair.

This means that the four repair types discussed above – *self-initiated self repair*, *self-initiated other repair*, *other-initiated self repair* and *other-initiated other repair* – are not interactionally equal options. There is a strong preference for some of these types over the others. The preference does not affect who initiates repair. The need to deal with trouble in talk applies equally to all participants if conversation is to work as a self-regulating system. This means that self-initiation and other-initiation are alternatives responding to different interactional needs. Self repair and other repair, however, are not alternatives in the same way, and the preference organization involved in repair is such that self repair is favoured over other repair. Other repair is, therefore, a dispreferred. As with other dispreferreds, other repair usually shows interactional modifications which affect the turn shape in which other repair is found. Other repairs are often done in a mitigated way. They may contain makers of uncertainty, as in extract (9.75), or they may be produced in question form, as in extract (9.76).

(9.75) [JS:II:219-20 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

1 Ben: Lissena pigeons  
 2 (0.7)  
 3 Ellen: [Coo-coo::: coo:::  
 4→ Bill: [Quail, I think.  
 5 Ben: Oh yeh?  
 6 (1.5)  
 7 Ben: No that's not quail, that's a pigeon.

(9.76) [JS:II:97 (Schegloff et al., 1977)]

1 Lori: but y' know single beds'r awfully thin tuh sleep  
 on.  
 2 Sam: What?  
 3 Lori: Single beds. [They're  
 4→ Ellen: [Y'mean narrow?  
 5 Lori: They're awfully narrow [yeah.

In these extracts, the modification of the talk leads to other correction having a form in which the correction is not asserted, but rather put forward either to be accepted or rejected by the prior speaker. They have a *correction invitation format* (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979) in that they allow for the possibility of the prior speaker to disagree with the version being proposed, as in fact happens in extract (9.75).

## Conclusion

Repair is a fundamental part of conversation and reveals clearly the nature of conversation as a self-organising and self-righting system based on rules which operate and are managed locally by participants. The repair mechanism discussed here is a relatively simple device which can be employed by participants to deal with troubles as they emerge in talk. It is simple in that a single mechanism can be used to deal with a very broad range of troubles and the mechanism itself is independent of the nature of the problem as a speaker perceives it. While repair is simple, the mechanism is also highly organized, providing multiple possibilities for repair to be carried out on prior talk as interaction reveals a trouble at some earlier point. Thus, while repair is designed to deal with troubles as quickly as possible, it is also sensitive to the

possibility that a trouble may not be realized to be problematic until talk has progressed. Repair is also an interactionally sensitive mechanism which, while designed to deal with multiple types of trouble and allowing any participant to initiate repair once a trouble has been identified, is constrained by social as well as linguistic considerations.

### **Exercise**

In your transcript, see if you can locate instances of the following:

- Self-initiated self repair
- Other-initiated self repair
- Self-initiated other repair
- Other-initiated other repair

When you identify a repair, determine what the trouble source is that the repair is dealing with. Note how the repair is constructed and responded to by the participants. What is the form of the repair initiation? What does this show about the trouble source being repaired? Also note where the repair occurs in relation to the trouble source: in the same TCU? In the same turn? In the next turn? In a later turn? What does the location of the turn say about who identifies the possible trouble and how the trouble is identified as a trouble?

### **Further reading**

- Bergmann, Jörg A. & Paul Drew. (Eds.) (2018), *Repairing the broken surface of talk: Managing problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding in conversation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. (2000). When 'others' initiate repair. *Applied Linguistics*, 21(2), 205-243.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A., Gail Jefferson, and Harvey Sacks. (1977). The preference for self-correction in the organisation of repair in conversation. *Language*, 53(361-382).

## Chapter 10 Epistemics and action formation

### Focus

- how knowledge and understanding are realised and communicated
- how actions are created and recognised
- the resources that speakers can deploy to form actions to be recognisable to recipients

### Introduction

This chapter will examine two issues that relate to both turn-taking and sequence organisation and deal with the place of knowing in the design of conversation. Epistemics deals with how states of knowledge are built into talk and are relevant for how talk is designed. Action formation relates to how participants in interaction understand what is being done in the talk and how speakers design talk in ways that help participants know what actions they are performing.

### Epistemics

Epistemics focuses on how knowledge and understanding are realised and communicated. In interaction, knowledge plays a central role because interaction relies ultimately on developing intersubjectivity between participants as they perform mutual actions and establish joint understanding (Heritage, 2012, 2013; Sidnell, 2012). Recognising what each other knows about what is being said in interaction enables participants to design their contributions in ways that are relevant for their interlocutors and for their interactional needs. That is, epistemics is central to processes of recipient design, as designing talk for a specific recipient relies on knowing something about a recipient's state of knowledge (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979).

#### *Epistemic status and epistemics stance*

Heritage (2013) identifies two different dimensions of epistemics that play a role in conversation: *epistemic status* and *epistemic stance*. Epistemic status refers to participants' relative access to knowledge that is relevant for the unfolding of the interaction. Each participant possesses knowledge about the world, which Kamio (1994) calls territories of knowledge, and when communicating something about the world they may have different access to particular elements of knowledge; each participant will know more or less about some aspect of the world that is being talked about. Labov and Fanshell (1977, p. 100) have put forward a model of knowledge in interaction that provides a useful way of understanding epistemic stance:

|            |                            |
|------------|----------------------------|
| A-events:  | Known to A, but not to B.  |
| B-events:  | Known to B, but not to A.  |
| AB-events: | Known to both A and B.     |
| O-events:  | Known to everyone present. |
| D-events   | Known to be disputable.    |

The model is intended to show that during an interaction, participants can potentially be in different knowledge states about the events they are talking about. A-events are those that exist within the territory of knowledge of A (the speaker) and so A has access to knowledge about them in a way B does not, B-events are those that exist within the territory of B (the recipient)

and are less part of the territory of A, and AB-events and O-events are equally part of the territory of knowledge of both speaker and recipient, and in the case of O-events of other people present at the time. D-events have less secure epistemic status for participants as the truth of the proposition cannot be assumed by the participants and knowledge can be disputed by participants. Different types of events provide different affordances for interaction and this means that a participant's need to come to recognise the territories of knowledge involved in the interaction and how knowledge is distributed between participants in order to construct their talk. Heritage (2013) identifies two interactionally significant epistemic statuses: absolute epistemic advantage, in which the speaker knows the information and the recipient does not or the recipient knows and the speaker does not (e.g. A-events and B-events), and epistemic equality, where the participants share the same access to knowledge (e.g. AB-events or O-events). In reality, territories of knowledge may be less distinct than this categorisation between absolute advantage and equality, and access to knowledge may range along a continuum between absolute differences and equally shared knowledge. Heritage (2012, 2013), therefore, distinguishes between absolute epistemic advantage, which he refers to through the dimensions knowing/unknowing, and relative epistemic advantage, which he refers to more knowing and less knowing (which can be coded as K+/K-).

Epistemic stance relates to the way that epistemic status is expressed in specific moments of interaction through the design of turns at talk. In interaction, similar propositional content can be expressed in different ways that show differences in relative epistemic advantage.

(10.1) question:       When are you leaving?

(10.2) tag question:   You're leaving on Monday, aren't you?

(10.3) declarative:    You're leaving on Monday.

In the examples above, the propositional content of the turn at talk is essentially the same but its different realisations construct different epistemic stances in relation to the information. Each of these examples refers to something that is in the territory of knowledge of the recipient of the talk (a B-event). The question form (10.1), positions the speaker as unknowing about the information and the recipient as knowing; that is, the recipient has an absolute epistemic advantage over the speaker. The declarative form (10.3) expresses greater epistemic equality as the speaker claims to have knowledge about the recipient. In reality, the recipient and the speaker are not in full epistemic equality, as the information is much more located within the recipient's territory of knowledge than in the speaker's, and the recipient has greater access to and rights to know the information than the speaker. Thus, the recipient could reject the speaker's statement. The tag question in (10.2) takes an intermediary position in which the speaker expresses knowledge of the recipient's world but also acknowledges epistemic inequality in that access. The epistemic stance expressed in these examples is consequential for how interaction will unfold. In response to (10.1), the next speaker would be expected to produce an answer and the answer could implicate further sequence expansion. In this case, the next speaker is positioned as having epistemic advantage and provides knowledge from the perspective of that advantage. In response to (10.2) and (10.3), however, the next speaker is more likely to provide confirmation, for example a *yes* token, and the talk is more likely to lead to sequence closure (Heritage, 2010; Heritage & Raymond, 2012; Raymond, 2010).

### *Epistemics in interaction*

Both epistemic status and epistemic stance are relevant for participants in interaction. When speakers talk, they usually maintain consistency between their epistemic status and the way they construct their talk to show their epistemic status. Consistency would occur, for example, when relatively unknowing speakers ask questions, as questions construct a less knowing epistemic stance that agrees with the speakers' epistemic status. Similar consistency occurs when knowing speakers make declaratives to less knowing recipients, as declaratives construct a more knowing epistemic stance.

#### (10.4) [May and Jo]

1 May: I got them off Gwen's::.  
2 Jo: hoh. di [d you? (.) °he↑h°  
3 May: [she said I could ha- she said you could  
4 do what you like with 'em.=  
5 Jo: =oh ri:ght. Does she [not want them.  
6 May: [°she°  
7 May: oh she's gone awa::y, this m:[orning;  
8 Jo: [oh. has she? oh  
9 righ[t.] where's she o[ff to?

In (10.4), May begins at line 1 by making a statement about an A-event, that is about something that is in her territory of knowledge and for which she is in a state of epistemic advantage, and this is formulated as a declarative; that is, she claims the epistemic status of a more knowing teller. Jo responds with a receipt token *hoh.*, which shows that the information is new to her and presents her as an unknowing recipient, and adds a topicalising question, *did you?* that shows that she is available for more talk on the topic. May then continues in lines 3-4 with another A-event, constructed as a declarative and Jo again positions herself as an unknowing recipient, both by her *oh*-receipt and by her question. May's response again constructs a more knowing epistemic stance (line 7) to which Jo again orients by adopting a less knowing stance. Throughout this interaction, May has both greater epistemic status than Jo and also constructs a more knowing epistemic stance, while Jo constructs a less knowing stance. The two participants thus maintain congruency between their epistemic status and epistemic stance throughout the extract.

Identifying the epistemic status of participants through displays of epistemic stance is interactionally important, as shown in (10.5).

#### (10.5) [Lunch]

1 Harry: ... an then c'd you send those up to Jane and  
2 Mar[y,  
3→ Joy [Oh:tha' r-, did you hear what happened  
4 to Ja::ne.  
5 Harry: What?  
6 Joy: She w's working back late a couple a nights ago  
7 an' she heard this sound outside her office,

Here Joy has some news that is possibly tellable in this conversation, but only if Harry is an unknowing recipient for the talk; telling news to someone who already knows it is internationally problematic. In her turn, Joy uses her question about Harry's epistemic status to determine whether her news is tellable or not and Harry's response positions him as an unknowing recipient. As can be seen from extract (10.5) epistemics is closely connected to how speakers transmit information (see Chapter 15 on story telling for a fuller discussion of this issue). It is because a recipient does not know information that speakers are able to tell something legitimately. The talk in (10.5) shows that the recipient's epistemic status is appropriate for the telling to be done and so the action can be continued.

However, it is possible for speakers to use the inconsistency between epistemic stance and epistemic status to achieve particular interactional goals in performing certain types of actions. For example, when speakers make declaratives about B-events, these are regularly understood as requests for confirmation, as in (10.6).

(10.6) [5A1:9 (Heritage & Raymond, 2012, pp. 183-184)]

1 HV: Has he got plenty of wo:rk on,  
2 M: He works for a university college.  
3→ HV: O:::h.  
4 M: So: (.) he's in full-time work all the ti:me.  
5 HV: Yeh.  
6 (0.4)  
7→ HV: And this is y'r first ba:by:.  
8 M: Ye(p).  
9 (0.3)  
10→ HV: tch An' you had a no:rmal pre:gnancy.=  
11 M: =Ye:h.  
12 (1.1)  
13→ HV: And a normal delivery,  
14 M: Ye:p.  
15 (1.4)  
16 HV: Ri:ght.  
17 (0.7)  
18→ HV: And sh'didn't go into special ca:re.  
19 M: No:  
20 (1.8)  
21→ HV: An:d she's bottle feeding?  
22 (1.2)  
23→ HV: Um: (0.4) and uh you're going to Doctor White  
24 for your (0.6) p[ost-na:tal?  
25 M: [Yeah.

In this extract, taken from an interaction between a new mother (M) and a health visitor (HV), at each of the arrowed turns, the health visitor produces talk that orients to B-events that are constructed in declarative form. This contrasts with line 1, in which HV uses a question form. In line 1, the epistemic status of HV and the epistemic stance are consistent, HV is unknowing and the question is consistent with this. In the later turns however, although HV remains

unknowing in terms of epistemic status, she produces a series of turns that encode a more knowing epistemic stance. In each response, the mother provides a conformation of the information presented in the turn ratifying the information presented.

Pomerantz (1980) has also shown that talk about B-events can serve other functions. In her analysis, she distinguishes between Type 1 events; that is, events that are known first-hand, and Type 2 events that are known indirectly, for example by hearsay or other indirect means. Pomerantz argues that when a speaker includes Type 2 knowledge in talk that is intended for a recipient with Type 1 knowledge of the same event, the talk will be treated as a request for information or as Pomerantz calls it a ‘fishing device’, as in (10.7).

(10.7) [Rahmen II (Pomerantz, 1980, p. 192)]

Jenny: ...I rahng yehrlier b'tchu w'r ou:t,  
 (.)  
 Ida: Oh: ah musta been et Dez's mu:ms,

In this extract, Jenny reports on an event that concerns Ida (*you were out*) and to which she has some access, but not full access, and to which Ida has more access. She is heard by Ida as fishing for information to explain her whereabouts at the time of the earlier call. In her response, she constructs a less knowing stance using hedges (*I must have been*) to encode the information, possibly as a way of dealing with the non-specific time reference (*earlier*). The relevance of telling Type B events for fishing for information is shown clearly in (10.8), in which the first telling does not elicit information about the event, and this is then pursued by the speaker.

(10.8) [TC:I:1:2 (Pomerantz, 1980, pp. 186-187)]

1 G: ...dju j'see me pull up?  
 2→a S: =.hhh No::. I wz trying you all day .en the line  
 3 wz busy fer like hours.  
 4 G: Ohh:::::, oh:::::, .hhhhh We:::l, hh I'm g'nna c'm  
 5 over in a little while to help yer brother ou:t  
 6 S: Goo[:d  
 7 G: [.hhh Cuz I know he needs some he::lp,  
 8 ((mournfully))  
 9 S: .hh Ye:ah. Yeh he'd mention'that tihday.=  
 10 G: =M-hm,=  
 11→b S: .hhh Uh:m, .tlk .hhh Who wih yih ta:lking to.

In this extract, the initial telling of Type 2 information (arrow a) does not elicit an explanation for G's absence but rather talk related to future actions. When this talk is dealt with, S raises the issue of G's whereabouts in a more explicit way (arrow b). In this case, S abandons an epistemic stance of partly knowing, based on her failure in trying to get in touch, to one of not knowing by asking a question about a B-event. This modification of the epistemic stance is being used as a device to repair an earlier problem of not getting a response to the first, less explicit, attempt to get information.

In (10.9), the relationship between epistemic status and epistemic stance is more complex and shows the possibility that consistency between epistemic status and epistemic stance needs to be achieved by participants in interaction and is not a given in any context.

(10.9) [Car conversation]

- 1 Sasha: god Jason's a weirdo.  
2 Nick: o:(h)h fuckin' oath he is,  
3 [he's bee ]n smokin' so much pot.  
4 Sasha: [he's he's]  
5 Sasha: he's like that anyway.=when I used to go out with  
6 him he's just off, you- had- no idea what he w'z  
7 talking about any of the time; he's jus' so weird.  
8 (1.2)  
9 Sasha: boy that w'z a short-lived relationship.  
10 Elvis: ah [huh huh]  
11 Nick: [hhah ]hahhah  
12 Sasha: he's- [he's just  
14 Nick: [I didn' know yuh went out with Jaso:n.  
15 Sasha: [yeah  
16 tha[t's how I met Chris.]  
17 Nick: [ I probably did ] actually, [yeah]

In this interaction, Sasha begins with an assessment of a person who is known to all of the participants in the conversation; that is she is treating them as knowing when it comes to identifying Jason (see Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). Nick's response shows that he is a knowing participant, and he agrees with Sasha's assessment and expands on it. They are talking within a shared territory of knowledge. However, Sasha disagrees with Nick's elaboration of his talk and draws on her own knowledge (an A-event) to warrant the disagreement; that is, she is invoking a knowing epistemic status. In her talk at this point, she embeds some knowledge about her personal life not as the tellable for the conversation but rather as a claim for her epistemic status: she knows Jason because they went out together. In constructing the talk in this way, she is presenting her earlier relationship with Jason as something that is probably known by her interlocutor. Once the discussion of Jason is concluded, however, Nick repositions himself as unknowing: *I didn' know yuh went out with Jaso:n*. In this way, he appears to be repairing a breakdown in the consistency of the relationship between epistemic status and epistemic stance. He has been treated as a knowing participant but is in fact an unknowing one. Sasha goes on to talk about another known person (Chris) and her relationship with him, which she also treats as known by Nick and establishes a warrant for her assumption of epistemic equality in her earlier talk. In response, Nick provides a hedged acceptance of the epistemic stance he was given in the construction of the previous talk.

Epistemics is central to conversational action and is embedded within the ongoing actions that participants are performing as a way both to construct the action and to organise participation in it. Speakers' displays of knowledge serve more than simply showing knowledge states as they also offer ways of positioning the speaker in relation to the action that is unfolding and of designing the action for the participants in the interaction and their relative access to knowledge.

## Action formation in talk

Interaction succeeds because participants share a common understanding of what they are doing in the interaction. This means that participants must be able to understand what action is being performed in the talk and to do this while the talk is in processes. Recognising the action underway allows a next speaker to respond in a way that is coherent with the unfolding direction of the talk, that is, for example, to provide an appropriate second pair part in an adjacency pair. Recognising actions does however pose problems for participants as the time required to plan a response is much greater than the beat of silence that typically happens before turns (Levinson, 2013). This means that a participant in an interaction must be able to plan a next turn while the current turn is underway and so needs to predict what the action being developed by the current speaker is likely to be prior to a point at which speaker change becomes relevant. In order to do this, participants require ways of forming and recognising actions that allow such predictions to be made as to whether the action under way is a request, offer, question, or any of a very large number of other possible actions. This requires that participants share some set of resources that allow them to perform and recognise actions and the sharing of the interpretative procedures that allow for actions to be recognised is for Sacks (1992, p. 226) the inherent nature of 'culture'.

In Conversation Analysis, the focus is not on creating a list of possible actions and then using this list to analyse interactions. Instead the focus is to work from the analysis of talk in order to discover what happened in the talk and then to understand what the talk was designed to do by examining how the participants in the interaction understood the actions that they are performing (Schegloff, 2007). Participant's understandings of interaction can be seen in the ways they respond to the talk that has been produced; that is, participants' responses will show evidence of how they understood the previous talk and further talk will show how this response has been understood by others. As analysts track the talk over time, it may be the case that the action being performed appears to change as responses construct different ways of understanding the talk as it progresses. Recognising an action under way is a dynamic process and it is not the case that an action has a single correct interpretation that only has to be identified by the recipient for the interaction to be completed. Rather, the interpretation of a conversational action is open to change within the structure of the interaction itself. This can be seen in extract (10.10), which was discussed earlier as a pre-invitation.

(10.10) [Fiona & Jill]

- 1 Fiona: have yuh got any plans for Saddurday?
- 2 Jill: my sister's coming up tuh visit.
- 3 Fiona: o:h that will be nice for yuh.
- 4 Jill: why::=what're yih doin'
- 5 Fiona: oh:: well we jus' thought we might get
- 6 some friends together and go for a picnic,
- 7 yihkno:w nothin' special.
- 8 Jill: that's sounds like fu-<I think my sister
- 9 w'd like tuh do somethin' like that.
- 10 Fiona: yeah? w'll we thought we might go out tuh the
- 11 river. so whyncha both come.
- 12 Jill: yeah thadded be nice.

In this extract, line 1 is constructed as a question and, and as was argued earlier, it acts as a pre-invitation by checking if a subsequent invitation is likely to receive a preferred response. This turn is performing two actions: it is a question, and it is also a pre-invitation. In Jill's response in line 2, it is the action of questioning that is attended to and she provides information relevant to the question form. At the same time, she is also addressing the pre-invitation action, as any response that contains information about future plans constitutes a blocking response; however, it is the question-answer format that is here the most salient in the first two lines of the extract. Fiona's response in line 3 continues with this version of the unfolding action as she constructs her talk in relation to the content of the answer and not the blocking action in the pre-invitation sequence. The version of the sequence under way is, however, changed in line 4, where Jill's *why* orients to line 1 not as a question but as a pre-invitation and the subsequent action moves to inviting, although an actual invitation is not produced in the talk. In this way, it can be seen that although both possible actions remain relevant in the unfolding talk, at different points in the interaction different actions are made more salient and become in this sense *the* action of the sequence. The action that is recognised as what the participants are doing in the talk is revealed through the responses that are made as the interaction unfolds. If the action that is revealed by a response is not repaired, then it stands as an adequate understanding of the current conversational action for the participants at that point in the interaction. However, as example (10.10) shows, it is possible for multiple actions to be done simultaneously and that it would therefore be erroneous to think of action formation as identifying *the action* under way, but rather needs to be thought of as identifying which *actions* are potentially under way and how those actions relate to each other in the unfolding conversation. This means that even where an action seems to have been deflected, as in the case of the invitation in example (10.10), it may not have disappeared from participants' understandings of what is happening in the talk and may re-emerge.

Sequence organisation is closely connected with action formation in that first pair parts project particular second pair parts (e.g., greeting-greeting, question-answer, etc.), and adjacency pairs are thus to be understood in the context of realisations of a particular action. However, the fact that particular first pair parts project particular second pair parts oversimplifies what is involved in action formation. There are two main problems for participants in interaction in recognising actions in sequences. The first is that few first pair parts project second pair parts that do not involve choices of response (see Chapter 7); while greeting first pair parts project greeting second pair parts with little variation except in the linguistic form of the greeting and so are constrained, requests require the choice of either a compliance or a rejection response in the second pair part. The second problem is that contributions themselves may have multiple possible meanings (Heritage, 2012), at least when taken out of context. For example, sentences beginning with *Can you...* in English could be questions about ability or requests, and even when in context may sometimes be ambiguous. Ervin-Tripp (1981) gives the example of an adult cutting up carrots with a large knife being asked by a small child 'Can I help?'. If the adult assumes the child is capable of doing the action, she will interpret the talk as an offer; however, if she doubts the child's abilities or the safety of the child when cutting the carrots, she will hear it as asking for permission. In reality, turns at talk are constructed from a very limited set of possible structures. In English, for example, the main possible sentence forms available are declaratives, questions and imperatives, with some minor forms, such as exclamations, etc., but these need to be used to construct a large range of action types; questions can be questions, requests, offers, invitations, suggestions, etc. In addition, the same action can be performed by different grammatical constructions; for example English requests can be imperatives (*stop on the left*), questions (*can you stop here*), or declaratives (*this is where we*

*should stop*), among other forms (Fox & Heinemann, 2017). Similarly, producing the same words in different contexts can constitute different actions and actions can be plural and can be treated in their plurality, as was seen in example (10.10) above.

Moreover, while second pair parts may be constrained by first pair parts, turns in first position in a sequence are less constrained and so interpretation of the action underway is more difficult. Resources such as pre-sequences thus seem to orient to the problem of action formation in that they allow the main action of a sequence to be pushed later and so they can influence how the action will be understood when it occurs in the interaction. In extract (10.11), as discussed in Chapter 8, there is an example of a pre-offer. Unlike some pre-sequences, pre-offers are highly variable in their forms and usually take the form of mentioning something that may be available to the recipient. This raises the question of how such mentionings come to be understood as pre-offers.

(10.11) [S/J 04]

- 1 Sam: The farm's a long way outta town yih  
2 know bud i's gunna be a great party though  
3 [ i's (gunna) ]  
4 Simon: [I'm driv- I']m takin' my car  
5 Sam: Y'are?  
6 Simon: Yih c'd come with me if yih wan.  
7 Sam: Okay thanks

In this example, the talk begins with the discussion of a party that both Sam and Simon are planning to attend. Sam is talking about his difficulties in attending because he needs transport to get to the party. This talk provides a context in which Simon's mention that he is driving can be understood and a particular action. This turn could simply be a telling about his own situation, but in the context of a previous telling about difficulties with transport, there is a predisposition to hear this as something more than a simple mentioning. In the context of telling about a problem, the mentioning can be heard as related to a solution to the problem, and thus works to some extent to pre-condition the interpretation of the talk as being offer-related. That is, the mentioning is not simply a mention of something, it is in second position to Simon's talk and this predisposes a particular hearing of the talk as action. Similarly, Sam's response *Y'are?* takes the form of a topicalisation, saying that he would be prepared to talk about this further, but because it comes in second position to Simon's talk is also hearable as a go-ahead response to the pre-offer. Thus, each turn at talk is embedded within the series of turns in which discussion of a problem and its possible solution have been hearable as part of the unfolding action and this embedding provides a way of understanding the talk as a particular action.

### *Resources for action formation and recognition*

Action formation draws on the mechanisms of interaction that have been discussed elsewhere in this book: turn construction and sequence organisation but is not limited to these and also includes linguistic features of the communication, previous talk, and the context in which the interaction occurs (Levinson, 2013; Schegloff, 2007). The following discussion will examine some of these resources available for action formation.

## Turn formats

The design of turns at talk is central for participants in forming and recognising actions, as it is through turns that conversational action is done. This means that the way that a turn is constructed by a speaker can reveal practices of turn design that are relevant for recognising the action that is under way. While turn design globally is relevant for understanding actions, as had been discussed above, there are also some specific practices in turn design that can encode more specific aspects of how the turn at talk can be understood as an action.

Couper-Kuhlen (2014) has argued that it is possible to distinguish between a range of similar actions on the basis of the ways the beginning of turns are constructed. She has analysed a number of actions in which the speaker attempts to bring about a future action, event or situation: requests, offers, proposals and suggestions. In order to link linguistic form to action, she analyses the differences between these actions in terms of the agency involved in performing the future action (who will do the action) and the beneficiary of the action (see Table 10-1).

|            | <b>Agent of future action</b> | <b>Beneficiary of future action</b> |
|------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Request    | Recipient                     | Speaker                             |
| Offer      | Speaker                       | Recipient                           |
| Proposal   | Speaker and recipient         | Speaker and recipient               |
| Suggestion | Recipient                     | Recipient                           |

Table 10-1: Dimensions of actions of requesting, offering, proposing and suggesting (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014, p. 634)

This table shows that for each of the actions under consideration, there are different arrangements of agents and beneficiaries, and that recognising these arrangements is central for recognising the action under way. This recognition can be assisted by the ways a turn at talk is constructed. Kouper-Kuhlen argues that while many actions can be performed in turns at talk using a range of linguistic formats, some formats appear to be most commonly used to encode particular actions, some of which overlap across categories (see Table 10-2).

| <b>Format</b>                  | <b>Request</b> | <b>Offer</b> | <b>Proposal</b> | <b>Suggestion</b> |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <i>You should X</i>            |                |              |                 | ✓                 |
| <i>I will X</i>                |                |              | ✓               |                   |
| <i>I would X</i>               |                |              |                 | ✓                 |
| <i>I/we can/could X</i>        |                |              |                 | ✓                 |
| <i>I/we want/wish/need X</i>   | ✓              |              |                 |                   |
| <i>If you want/wish/need X</i> |                | ✓            |                 |                   |
| <i>Will/would you X</i>        | ✓              |              |                 |                   |
| <i>Can/could you X</i>         | ✓              |              |                 |                   |
| <i>Do you need/ want X</i>     |                | ✓            |                 |                   |
| <i>Why don't I/we X</i>        |                |              |                 | ✓                 |
| <i>Imperative</i>              | ✓              | ✓            | ✓               |                   |
| <i>Negative imperative</i>     | ✓              |              | ✓               |                   |
| <i>Why don't you X</i>         |                |              | ✓               | ✓                 |

Table 10-2: Distinctive frequent formats for action types in English (X = future action) (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014, p. 634)

Table 10-2 shows that the linguistic form at the beginning of a turn can give cues for understanding the nature of the action that is being performed, with the detail of the act being performed later in the turn. The early positioning of the elements that help with recognising actions allows for time in which the recipient of the action can begin to plan a response that is appropriate for the action type that is under way. Some of the turn formats in Table 10-2 are potentially ambiguous and provide speakers with little specific linguistic information about the nature of the act under way, most especially imperative forms. Imperatives indicate that the action it aims to bring about is something in the future but says little about the nature of the act; compare for example *open the door* (request) and *have a chocolate* (offer), which have similar linguistic formats but imply different beneficiaries for the action. This, and the diversity of possible turn formats, means that the linguistic form of a turn alone is not sufficient to help participants form and recognise actions in talk (Schegloff, 1984b), but it does provide some cues that are relevant for participants to attend to.

In addition to helping participants to disambiguate the particular action that is being performed in a moment of talk, there is evidence that the particular ways that turns are constructed in encoding the same action indicate something about the nature of the action being done. Most actions can be constructed using a variety of different turn formats and the differences in construction can provide resources for participants to know more about the action being formed. For example, requests in English can be made using a range of turn formats: questions with modal verbs (e.g. *can you...*, *could you...*), statements of needing or wanting (e.g. *I need...*, *I want...*), complex clauses (e.g. *I wonder if...*) (Curl & Drew, 2008; Fox & Heinemann, 2016, 2017). These different forms include information relevant for understanding the request and if there are any contingencies that would make the request more difficult to grant. The difference between request forms can therefore show different orientations to the requesters' understanding of their entitlement to make a request and to the contingencies that relate to the request being granted. In (10.12), the request is constructed with a modal verb *could*.

(10.12) [Field S088:2:8:1 (Curl & Drew, 2008)]

1 Les: Hello:?  
 2 (0.3)  
 3 Gor: It's Gordon.  
 4 Les: .hhhh oh Gordon. Shall I ring you back darling.  
 5 Gor: Uh:: no y- I don't think you can,  
 6 (0.3)  
 7 Gor: But uh: just to (0.3) say (.) could you bring up a  
 8 letter.  
 9 (.)  
 10 When you come up,

In (10.12), Gordon asks his mother to bring him a letter when she visits him. The request is constructed to embed bringing the letter into a pre-existing arrangement – the visit has already been planned (*When you come up*). Gordon is indicating that the request is easily performed as it does not require a special trip but can be done as part of a known contingency. As Gordon's mother is coming any way, bringing the letter is unproblematic and there are no other

contingencies that need to be dealt with in performing the request. Because, the request is thus easily performed, Gordon has an entitlement to expect the request to be granted, and Curl and Drew (2008) argue that by using the modal verb in the request from, Gordon constructs his request to show that the request is one that the speaker feels he is entitled to make and for which there are no unanticipated contingencies that would make the request difficult to grant.

Different formats can show different understandings about the possibilities for and expectations about a request being granted. In extract (10.13), which is taken from an interaction in a shoe repair shop, there are request made at lines 1 and 8.

(10.13)Shoe shop 25-10-20 (Fox & Heinemann, 2016)

1→ C: I, (0.2) need heels,=  
2 S: =okay,  
3 C: and (0.1)  
4 S: .shine ['em up,,  
5 C: [jus-  
6 C: well[:  
7 S: [clean 'em [up.  
8→ C: [die 'm and clean 'em up,  
9 S: make 'em look pretty, [  
10 C: yes ple:ase.

In line 1, the customer begins with a *need* statement (*I, (0.2) need heels.*). This request format states the desired outcome of the interaction and does so in way that indicates that the customer expects the request to be unproblematic, with no issues of entitlement or any contingencies that may impact on the granting of the request. In the context of a service encounter in a shoe repair shop, the customer has a high level of entitlement for a request relating to shoe repairs, and it is highly likely that doing basic shoe repairs will be unproblematic for the request recipient. The shoe repairer's *okay* response shows that granting the request is unproblematic. Similar issues of high entitlement and low expectation of problems in granting the request also appear in line 7, which is constructed as an imperative (*die 'm and clean 'em up*). This request is actually introduced into the interaction by the shoe repairer, showing the expectedness of such requests in the context. At line 3, the customer indicates that she has further requests to make (*and*) but the request form is pre-empted by the shoe repairer in line 4, where he produces a candidate next request (*shine 'em up*), which is again a normal request type in such a service encounter. This candidate request is not accepted by the customer and the shoe repairer tries another possible candidate request form (*clean 'em up*), which is again a typical request in the context and is again constructed as an imperative. The customer then gives her version of the request (*die 'm and clean 'em up*). The shoe repairer's turns at talk here show that he, as the recipient, has recognised the actions that the customer is constructing in the interaction, and shows his recognition by proposing candidate versions of the substance of the action. His proposals also indicate that the proposed actions are things that the customer is entitled to request from him, and that there are no contingencies that would prevent them from being done. In fact, by voicing the possible next requests of the customer, his talk here is hearable as offers of service and so shows that for the speaker the offered help is both possible and available to the customer.

All of the formats produced so far are thus orientations to requests that are represented as being for things that the requester is entitled to expect to be done and in which there are few contingencies that would block the granting of the request. The request forms in extract (10.13) are all designed in a way that shows the speaker considers that they have high entitlement to the service and that there is every expectation that nothing will be problematic in granting the request. The question form in extract (10.12), still encodes high entitlement and low expectation of problems, but the question form shows that there may be contingencies that need to be addressed in performing the request. In (10.12), for example, Gordon specifically addresses a contingency in granting the request, the need to travel to perform it. Extract (10.12) and (10.13) can be contrasted with extract (10.14), in which the request is performed using an *I wonder* construction.

(10.14) [Field:2:2:1 (Curl & Drew, 2008)]

1 Les: ...and ordered a boo:[k .hh and you said you'd ho:ld  
 2 Jen: [yeah  
 3 Les: it for me  
 4 Les: And (.) I was supposed to be coming in around  
 5 Easter well I haven't managed to get i:n a:nd I  
 6 wonder if you could se:nd it to me if you've  
 7 still go:t it

In this extract, the requester is asking for a new arrangement that differs from what was originally agreed as the way of getting the book. By constructing the request with *I wonder*, Les foreshadows that there may be unknown contingencies that prevent the request from being made, at least one of which is explicitly mentioned (*if you've still go:t it*), although others are implicit, such as whether the shop could or does send out books. The use of *I wonder* constructs the request in a way that acknowledges unknown contingencies that could impact on whether or not the request will be granted and also indicates that the requester does not have a strong entitlement to expect the request to be granted. There is a central difference between the request forms discussed so far. The modal request in (10.12) is constructed in a way that asserts an implicature (Grice, 1981; Levinson, 2000) – the questioning form *can you* includes a presupposition that you do or you can do the action requested, and simply enquires about whether or not you will do it, while the *I wonder* form constructs the presupposed information as an unknown as so orients to both whether the action is a possible action, and if possible if it will be done. Thus, in the construction of requests, the beginning of the request turn can indicate something about the nature of the request action that is being performed. All show evidence that requesters do work in creating their requests that help the recipient to understand the action that they are constructing.

## Prosody

Prosody plays a role in constructing actions and how they are understood. However, while prosody does seem to be linked with action formation, its exact role is difficult to map onto particular actions because there is a limited set of prosodic possibilities for a large set of actions and there is no direct matching of particular prosodic features to particular actions (Levinson, 2013; Szczepek Reed, 2012). It nonetheless appears that prosody can play a role in understanding action, but it may not do so independently of other features the construction of the turn and sequence.

One way that prosody relates to action formation is to indicate whether the turn at talk is being designed as a new action or the continuation of a prior action. A number of prosodic features have been shown to be resources that have been shown to play a role in linking or separating actions. One feature is high pitch onsets to initiate new actions within the turn of the same speaker (Couper-Kuhlen, 2004).

(10.15) [NB:VII (Couper-Kuhlen, 2004)]

1 Margy: .hhhhhh w:We:ll,=  
 2 =i[h wz jist ] one [a' tho:se things et nyou, =  
 3 Edna: [ih-hu:nh-hn] [.hk  
 4 Margy: = yihknow cu[z he- I::] bet hasn' used it since=  
 5 Edna: [Ye::::ah.]  
 6 Margy: =.hhhh Fa:ll(f) nyouknow mayb[e twi::ce.]=  
 7 Edna: [eeYe::::ah.]=  
 8 Margy: =u-So: but thehyiss n:-nevryti:me uh.hh (.)  
 9 Mo:m en Ralphie turn over in their  
 10 [beds the] b the thing jiggles,=  
 11 Edna: [ehh-huhh]  
 12 Edna: =uhh huh huhh.hehhhh=  
 13→ =Oh honey that was a lovely luncheon  
 14 I shoulda ca:lled you s:soo[:ner=  
 15 Margy: [(f))  
 16 Edna: =but I: l:[lo: ved it.  
 17 Margy: Oh:: ] [° ( )  
 18 Edna: Ih wz just deli:ghtfu[:l. ]=  
 19 Margy: [Well ]=  
 20 =I wz gla[d y o u] (came).

In (10.15), Margy is telling Edna about a problem she has experienced, and this telling is brought to an end with laughter in line 12. Edna then begins a new topic in line 13 and this new beginning is marked both by *oh* indicating a realisation of something new to talk about and a markedly higher pitch that begins her next talk (honey) shown here by the underlining. This new talk is a new action, complimenting and the prosodic features help to mark the disjunction between the previous talk and the new talk.

Other phonetic cues can also signal features of the relationship between actions. For example, in German the use or omission of glottal stops before vowels, in which the use of a glottal stop signals separation between actions

(10.16) and its omission signals continuation (10.17) (Szczepek Reed, 2014). The glottal stop is usually considered a regular feature of German phonetics, but Szczepek Reed shows that is variable and that this variation has consequences for how actions are understood.

(10.16) [C2 ‘Geil’ (Szczepek Reed, 2014)]

- 1 U: <<h,f> da SCHLEPP ich meine Umzugskisten> voller  
[SCHEIß Auch hin[ du:;  
I’ll take my removal boxes full of shit there too
- 2 M: [JA:; [JA:;  
Yes yes
- 3 .hh des IS- sie HATte- MEINte,  
That is- she had- said-
- 4 U: wie [GEIL];  
How cool
- 5 M: [ähm ]-
- 6 (0.8)
- 7→ .h na VÖLlig GEIL.  
Totally cool
- 8→ ?also die MEINte,  
So she said

In

(10.16), M has been telling a story and U has made a topic change to talk about her own actions. M participates in this talk responding to U’s contribution and agreeing with and upgrading her concluding assessment for her own telling in line 7. In the same turn he returns to his own telling beginning his talk with a vowel preceded by a glottal stop (?). This contrasts with (10.17) where talk is produced without a glottal stop.

(10.17) [C3 (Szczepek Reed, 2014)]

- 1 U: ja aber der kann dir doch TROTZ dem vieler zähl’n.  
Yes but he can still tell you anything
- 2 wenn er das ne gute geSCHICHte findet,  
if he thinks it’s a good story
- 3 ich heiß ALLadin,=  
My name is Alladin
- 4→ =und meine freundin heißt GENie,  
and my girlfriend is called Genie

Here U is referring to an unusual coincidence of names (Aladdin and Genie) in two units of which the first is constructed as a possibly complete TCU. However, in producing the next element he does so without using a glottal stop at the beginning of the conjunction *und* in line 4 linking the first and second components of his talk and signalling that the second component continues the first.

### Embodied actions

The ways that the body is engaged during interaction can signal aspects of action formation. For example, Haddington (2006) has shown that gaze can be relevant for understanding the





2 a J: [Just  
b \_\_\_\_\_Js\_\_\_\_\_

c M: ^Yeah. | [It's  
d \_\_\_\_\_,,,Ms\_\_\_\_\_,,,Mj\_\_\_\_\_

e S: I've only ... 'driven through, |  
f \_\_\_\_\_Sj\_\_\_\_\_Sm\_\_\_\_\_Sj

3 a J: snowshoed]. | [(Glottal)] |  
b \_\_\_\_\_

c M: beautiful]. | [It's ]  
d \_\_\_\_\_,,,Ms::::::::::::::::::

e S: But it--| Yeah it's [really ]  
f \_\_\_\_\_Sm\_\_\_\_\_::::::::::::::::::

4 a J:  
b \_\_\_\_\_

c M: a beau[tiful area ] |  
d :::::::::::::::\_\_\_\_\_,,,Mj\_\_\_\_\_

e S: --| [It's very pretty]. |  
f ::::::::::::::Sj\_\_\_\_\_

In extract (10.19), Mary produces an assessment (*I ^love 'West Virginia.*), which is produced in contrast with earlier talk by Jason (not shown) that has characterised West Virginia as a 'weird state'. This assessment projects a second assessment but instead Jason produces a question form that shows disaffiliation with the assessment. In her response, Mary restates her assessment ('*Yeah.*') and thus her stance in relation to the assessable in a context where Jason's talk has questioned her stance. Sophie's talk expresses her epistemic stance in relation to the assessable; that is, she has only driven through and is not in a position to perform an assessment. Mary then reiterates her first assessment (*it's beautiful.*) in overlap with Jason, who also expresses an epistemic stance in which he is less knowing about West Virginia (*just snowshoed.*). Mary's new version of her first assessment has moved from an assessment constructed in emotional terms (*love*), and this may deal with the epistemic problem that Sophie and Jason have expressed. Sophie's talk seems to orient to this, and she eventually produces a second assessment that agrees with Mary's (*it's a beautiful area*). This talk is accompanied by a complex interaction through gaze direction. Jason begins to look at Sophie from the point at which she expresses her lack of epistemic status to provide an assessment (line 2b), and he continues to gaze at her through the rest of the talk. When Mary produces her revised assessment both Mary and Sophie turn to look at Jason as the recipient of the assessment, but he does not engage with Mary either verbally or non-verbally. Instead, Sophie begins to respond; she shifts her gaze to Mary (line 3f), and Mary's gaze shifts towards Sophie (line 3c). With mutual gaze established, she again restates her assessment, this time directing it to Sophie rather than Jason. In this extract, the brief mutual gaze between Mary and Sophie is part of the action of assessing and agreeing. The gaze pattern and the redoing of the assessment by Mary here constructs who is engaged in this sequence (Mary and Sophie, rather than Mary and Jason) and the verbal and non-verbal work together to establish the nature of the action under way.

Jason's gaze has been withdrawn from Mary at the point where disagreement has been established (line 2b), and she repeats her initial stance (*Yeah,*). This suggests that gaze withdrawal can be involved in disagreement and disaffiliation. The mutuality of gaze between Mary and Sophie works as a part of constructing their agreement and affiliation in relation to their assessment, while the withdrawal of Jason's gaze is relevant to an emerging disagreement and disaffiliation.

### Sequence formats

The ways that sequences are formatted provides a way for participants to form and recognise actions. In fact, Schegloff (1984b) argues that sequential forms may be the most salient features for recognising actions. One notable sequence format for assisting participants in forming and recognising actions are pre-sequences as discussed above (see also Chapter 8). A particular function of such sequences is to foreshadow some future action and to provide indications of the nature of that action, as well as doing other work related to that action, such as dealing with possible problems to its achievement. Thus, for example, a pre-request can be constructed with a question about availability, as in (10.20).

#### (10.20) Morning

- 1 Mandy: Do we still have any of that choc'late cake left,  
 2 Olive: Yeah. (.) there's still a bit.  
 3 Mandy: (Th:en/an') uh could I take some f-for lunch?  
 4 Olive: Su:re.

In Mandy's first turn she asks a question about availability and foreshadows the possibility of some future talk about the cake. That is, her question is not simply a question but also a preparation for and cuing of an upcoming action. In this way, the pre-request forms a part of an action of requesting, although it is not in itself a request. As discussed earlier, such pre-requests can foreshadow an action so strongly that they remove the need for the action of requesting to be performed.

#### (10.21) [(Schegloff, 2007)]

- 1 D: Guess what. .hh  
 2 M: What.  
 3 D: My ca:r is sta::lled  
 4 (0.2)  
 5 ('n) I'm up here in the Glen?  
 6 M: Oh::  
 7 {(0.4)}{.hhh }  
 8 D: hhh  
 9 A:nd. Hh  
 10 (0.2)  
 11 I don't know if it's po:ssible, but `  
 12 {(0.2) / ((hhh)) }  
 13 see I haveta open up the ba:nk. Hh  
 14 (0.3)  
 15 A:t uh: Brentwood?hh=

16 M: =Yeah:- en I know you want- (.) en I whoa- (.)  
 17 en I would, but- except I've gotta leave in  
 18 about five min(h)utes. (hheh)

In this extract, D announces that he has something to tell and then proceeds to tell of a trouble that he has with his car. In the telling he not only talks about the problem with the car but also his location, bringing the two together and beginning to foreshadow a need that he has and which he is telling to M as a someone who could resolve the problem. That is, he is beginning to foreshadow a request in much the way that talk following a pre-pre *Can I ask you a favour?* would (Schegloff, 1980). In the talk beginning at line 9, he further develops this need that he has given his preceding telling. At line 16, M rejects the request and gives reasons why she cannot help. However, no request has actually been produced in the talk. What enables M to respond as she does is the recognition that D is forming an action of requesting through his use of preliminaries. It is the recognition of the action being developed that allows M to produce talk that is a relevant response to an action which has not been explicitly performed. Pre-sequences can thus be seen as resources that provide cues for participants in recognising actions and participants orient to the action being foreshadowed in designing their responses.

There are other formats than pre-sequences that help recognition of actions. For example, Schegloff (1988b) describes a sequential format for the telling of bad news that enables the teller to avoid having to tell the news by getting the recipient to guess what the news is. An example of this format is shown in (10.22).

(10.22) [DA:2:10 (Schegloff, 1988b)]

1 Belle: ... I, I-I had something (.) terrible t'tell you.=  
 2 =so[ uh: ]  
 3 Fanny: [How t]errible [is it.]  
 4 Belle: [.hhhh ]  
 5 (.)  
 6 Belle: Uh: ez worse it could be:.  
 7 (0.7)  
 8 Fanny: W'y'mean Ida?  
 9 (.)  
 10 Belle: Uh yah'hh-  
 11 Fanny: =Wud she do die:?=  
 12 Belle: =Mm:hm,

In this example, Belle begins the interaction with a pre-telling in which she announces that she has bad news but does not tell what the news is and continues to withhold the news after Fanny's response but characterising it again in terms of how bad the news is. In the interaction here epistemics is relevant for understanding how this trajectory of interaction unfolds. In the pre-telling Belle adopts an epistemic stance as more knowing, but as she does not move to the telling indicates that the topic about which she is speaking is also (potentially) knowable to Fanny. That is, at this moment in the conversation Belle may be more knowing than Fanny, but that what she knows is also equally knowable to Fanny. To progress the news, Belle gives clues about the nature of the bad news, although here these clues are minimal and relate only to the degree to which the news is bad. The clues Belle gives engage her recipient's knowledge of the world and indicate that to some extent this knowledge is based on something that is known

mutually. Fanny articulates a possible focus of the bad news in naming a shared friend of the participants (Ida) drawing on her own epistemic status as one who knows about something that could constitute bad news. When her guess about the focus of the news is confirmed she then names the bad news, although encoding her epistemic stance as less knowing than Belle. The sequential format here involves foreshadowing a telling and then withholding the telling that has been foreshadowed as a relevant next action, but instead to give clues about the foreshadowed telling. This withholding both claims that the recipient is a position to be able to work out the news and provides ways of directing the recipient in guessing the news. The sequence format here thus works to construct an identifiable action that the other participant is able to recognise and use to understand the news.

## **Conclusion**

Epistemics and action formation can be closely linked, and in fact epistemics has sometimes been referred to above in the discussion of the resources available for action formation, and action formation was relevant when discussing some aspects of epistemics, such as the way statements about B-events are treated as seeking confirmation. Heritage (2012) argues that the association of epistemics with action formation is important for understanding how language works in interaction and shows that the linguistic form of turns at talk does not function alone in helping participants to recognise actions. Rather it is the combination words and the epistemic context in which they are used that allow for such recognition to happen. It thus appears that there are many things in interaction that participants can be seen to be orienting to in designing and recognising actions in talk. Language plays an important role and features of turn design do signal important information about the action under way. However, language is always used in context. This context includes sequence organisation that helps to characterise actions in turn by their placement in relation to other actions and so helps to give them shape. It also includes the epistemic contexts of the participants and what they know about each other's states of knowledge. In action formation, many resources can be drawn on to help in the recognition of actions. It is unlikely that any particular resource will work alone. Instead, these resources can be considered as devices that are available to speakers in constructing their talk and they can draw from among them so as to construct the actions that they are performing. In many cases, recognising the action will involve attending to a number of different conversational practices as they are used in context. Recognising actions is thus a complex part of social interaction and shows that participants use multiple, sophisticated resources in constructing and understanding talk.

## **Exercises**

1. Examine a transcript of about 50 turns at talk and identify places where speakers construct an epistemic stance in their talk.
  - A. Identify instances of A-events, B-events, etc. and note how the speaker expresses their epistemic stance in relation to these events.
  - B. Are there cases where the epistemic stance expressed is different from the epistemic status of the speakers? If so, what does the speaker achieve through this inconsistency.
2. Examine your transcript to identify the actions that are present.

A. What actions are being performed in the talk? Does any of the talk potentially constitute more than one action? Does the version of any of the actions change over the course of the talk?

B. What language and non-language resources do the participants draw on to form these actions?

### **Further reading**

Levinson, Steven C. (2013). Action formation and ascription. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of Conversation Analysis* (pp. 103-130). Oxford: Blackwell.

Heritage, John (2012). Epistemics in action: Action formation and territories of knowledge. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 45(1), 1-29. doi:10.1080/08351813.2012.646684.

Sidnell, Jack (2012). "Who knows best?": Evidentiality and epistemic asymmetry in conversation. *Pragmatics and Society*, 3(2), 294-320. doi:10.1075/ps.3.2.08sid

## Chapter 11 Embodied actions and the multimodality of spoken interaction

### Focus

- Social interaction as a multimodal phenomenon that draws on multiple possibilities for meaning making.
- Multimodal features of the construction and regulation of talk.
- Bodily conduct and embodied action as components of social interaction.
- Some of the ways that gaze, gesture, posture and objects can be deployed in social interaction.

### Introduction

Spoken interaction obviously involves spoken language, and early work in Conversation Analysis focused on talk as its main interest (Neville, 2015). One reason for this was that early work in the field was based on audio recordings and these recordings provided information only about vocal communication. Moreover, much of the material that was used for research came from telephone conversations, which were relatively easy to record, and these conversations were ones in which only the vocal channel was used for communication. Even these early studies recognised that there was more involved in talk than just spoken language, and various forms of non-verbal communication such as laughter, audible breathing, and other vocal noises were shown to be relevant for understanding spoken interaction. As video data came to be used more widely, studies began to show that spoken interaction involved much more than just the vocal channel and embodied actions, such as gaze, gestures, posture, etc, the ways that speakers interacted with objects, and the ways they integrate other aspects of their contexts into the talk came to be understood as important for understanding interaction. Conversation Analysts, while still maintaining an interest in spoken interaction and the ways that participants in interaction use language, have increasingly focused on the ways that spoken action is multimodal. The multimodality of interaction has been a part of the discussion throughout this book but in this chapter it will become the main focus. The chapter will consider the ways that participants in interaction build their communication by drawing on a range of different meaning-making resources (C. Goodwin, 2018).

When people communicate, they use all of the resources available to them to construct their meanings. The message that a participant communicates is made up of all of the modalities that are available for the communication. Each modality is used for an identifiable purpose; these purposes may include encoding the content of the interaction, elaborating aspects of the content, regulating how the interaction occurs, and performing relational work, although modalities may do all of these things and potentially play other roles as well. In some cases, different modalities may do different things in the interaction, but modalities also often work together, and multiple modalities may go together reinforcing each other in the interaction. In the discussion that follows, a number of key modalities will be discussed in separate sections for convenience. However, in the examples discussed, it will be clear that multiple modalities are at play in the interactions reported. The aim in this chapter is not to cover the full complexity of embodied actions and the multimodality of interaction but rather to point to some of the ways that multimodality can be consequential for understanding how human beings communicate.

## Gaze

Vision is an important part of human conduct and activities associated with seeing, such as gazing, play a significant role in the conduct of social interaction (Mondada, 2019b). Gaze is not simply an act of seeing, but also a communicative act about what is being attended to visually. It therefore involves more than just movements of the eyes and directing and maintain gaze may also involve head movements and postural changes (Blythe, Gardner, Mushin, & Stirling, 2018). In interaction, gaze plays a number of different roles in the construction and performance of social actions. Participants gaze at other participants, and at points in the interaction may establish mutual gaze, in which each participant is looking at the other, usually at the other's face (Knapp, Hall, & Horgan, 2013). These gaze patterns have interactional importance for the participants and for the unfolding of the interaction.

One of the ways in which gaze has been shown to be relevant in interaction is in enacting the participant roles of speaker and recipient. Much research has shown that listeners tend to look at speakers more than speakers look at listeners. However, this seems to a feature of the particular languages and cultures where research has been done (English-speakers in countries such as the USA and the UK, and speakers of major European languages) and some research has shown that gaze may be used differently in other contexts (Rossano, Brown, & Levinson, 2009).

As a general pattern, Goodwin (1981, p. 57) has argued that there seem to be two rules that influence gaze:

1. A speaker should obtain the gaze of the recipient during a turn at talk
2. A recipient should be gazing at the speaker when the speaker is gazing at the hearer.

In Chapter 9 (examples 9.26-9.33), it was shown that when the second of these rules was not the case, speakers adjusted their turns in ways that worked to resolve the problem of talking to a non-gazing participant. This behaviour shows that the speakers in Goodwin's study attended to these rules as ways of enacting their participation in the interaction. These rules also help to explain what a greater proportion of participants' gaze is directed at speakers than at recipients that has been noted in the research. If a recipient is gazing at the speaker most of the time, then the speaker and the recipient are likely to conform to rule 2 when the speaker's gaze moves to the recipient.

Goodwin (1981, 1984) argues that gaze is used to display engagement; looking at a speaker shows engagement with what the speaker is saying, looking away from a speaker shows diminished engagement. This is because gaze, which may be accompanied by other activities such as postural shift, equate to displays of reciprocity (Heath, 1984). By gazing at a speaker, a recipient is claiming interest in the action which is under way and is not taking opportunities to become a speaker while during the action. This means that gazing may be particularly significant for actions such as stories that are told over multi-unit turns. Withdrawing gaze would indicate that the recipient is less interested in the action under way and thus would be a form of disaffiliation from the speaker and what is being said, and therefore could call into question the participants' continuing to talk. However, it is sometimes the case that activities may compete with talk, for example eating, drinking or manipulating objects, and Goodwin (1981, 1984) argues that such temporary withdrawals of gaze appear to be socially less problematic than other cases of looking away from the speaker.

Gaze is also relevant for embodying participant roles of recipients in terms of who is addressed and who is not addressed. In multiparty interactions, normally speakers gaze at addressed participants and addressed recipients gaze at speakers. This means that unaddressed participants are not typically the recipients of either talk or gaze. Non-addressed participants do however engage in the interaction through gaze and gaze at the speaker and the addressed recipient (Auer, 2017). This can be seen in Carol’s gaze in extract (11.1).

(11.1) [ABC:2:10 (simplified)]

Ab, Ac, etc. = Andy gazes at Brian, Andy gazes at Carol, etc.

- 1    Andy:        ,    [Ab\_\_\_\_\_ , , [Ac\_\_\_\_\_ , , , , [Ab\_\_\_\_\_
- [So [I’d [really [like t’ go along [yih know.
- Brian:    [Ba\_\_\_\_\_
- Carol:     . . . [Ca\_\_\_\_\_ , , . . . , , , , , [Cb\_\_\_\_\_ , ,
- 2    Brian:    So h- how [y’ gonna do [it,
- Carol:    , , , , , [Ca , , , , [Cb
- 3    Andy:        I’ll [just take s:ome ti[me off
- Carol:    , , [Ca\_\_\_\_\_ , , , , , [Cb\_\_\_\_\_ =

In line 1, Andy and Brian are gazing at each other at the start of Andy’s turn in line 1, selecting him as the addressed recipient for the turn, and Brian maintains his gaze as an engaged recipient of the turn. Carol moves her gaze to Andy during his talk but when she looks at Andy he is looking at Brian, and she moves her gaze away from Andy and also looks at Brian. As a consequence, when Andy moves his gaze to Carol, she is not looking at him, and he returns his gaze to the gazing recipient, Brian. Brian then takes a turn, responding to Andy’s talk, and during this talk Carol again alternates her gaze between the speaker and the addressed participant. In the extract, eye gaze plays a role in who becomes the addressed recipient – Brian, who is gazing at the speaker and so showing engagement in what is being said, and also is implicated as a way of presenting oneself as a non-addressed recipient – Carol attends to the others as the people doing the interaction and by shifting her gaze between them positions herself as an audience rather than as the addressed recipient.

Gaze is not only involved in enacting participation roles but is also linked to the regulation of talk in terms of turn-taking or sequence organisation. For example, it appears that across quite different cultures questioners are more likely to look at their recipients than answerers do (Rossano et al., 2009). This difference seems to orient to the expectation that recipients of questions will become next speakers, as they could be selected by the current speaker to be the answerer of the question. However, recipients of answers are less likely to be required to become the next speaker as the answer is less likely to select a next speaker or require a next action.

Gaze is also relevant in turn allocation as it can be one means of identifying a next speaker. For example, gaze can help to disambiguate the meaning of the address term *you* in multiparty interactions, as the recipient of the gaze is selected by the gaze as the addressed recipient, and can thus be selected as the next speaker (Lerner, 2003). In this case, the gaze works as a deictic gesture that indicates the reference of the pronoun and counts as a direct addressing of the participant. However, as Lerner notes, the success of gaze as a turn allocation device depends on both the addressed participant and the non-addressed participant noting the speaker’s gaze.

That is gaze direction has to be seen for it to be effective in selecting a speaker. This can be seen in (11.2), which extends the talk from (11.1) above.

(11.2) [ABC:2:10 (simplified)]

Ab, Ac, etc. = Andy gazes at Brian, Andy gazes at Carol, etc.

- 1 Brian: So h- how [y' gonna do [it,  
Carol: , , , , , [Ca , , , , [Cb
- 2 Andy: I'll [just take s:ome ti[me o[ff  
Carol: , , [Ca \_\_\_\_\_ , , , , , [Cb \_\_\_\_\_ =
- 3 Brian: [tha's the w[ay.h heh  
Carol: =[ \_\_\_\_\_ , , , [Ca \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Carol: \_\_\_\_\_  
But how [c'n [yih.  
Andy: , , , , [Ac  
Brian: , , , , , [Bc
- 4 Andy: W'll I'll jus' call in sick like

Extract 10 begins with Brian asking Andy a question to which Andy replies and then Brian produces a response to the answer (lines 1-3). During this exchange, Carol, the unaddressed recipient alternates her gaze between Andy and Brian. At Brian's turn in line 3, she is gazing at the speaker and begins to move her gaze to Andy, and prior to beginning her turn she is gazing at Andy and holds his gaze throughout her question turn in line 4. As Carol is speaking, both Andy and Brian redirect their gaze towards her and at the pronoun *yih* both of them are gazing at her. However, at the production of *yih*, which is a current speaker selects next technique, only Carol and Andy have established mutual eye gaze. At this moment, Carol is displaying engagement with Andy while selecting the next speaker, and the combination of gaze and talk here works to select Andy as next speaker, who then answers the question. Gaze is not the only resource she is using here to select the next speaker as the turn is designed in such a way as to orient to Andy's previous talk rather than Brian's, and so the talk also works to select Andy as speaker. Thus, she achieves speaker selection through a combination of resources in talk and in embodied action.

Related to the idea that gaze selects a next respondent, is the idea that gaze can work to solicit a response from a participant. Stivers and Rossano (2010) show that when speakers in a face-to-face interaction produce assessments while gazing at the recipient, the assessment is more likely to get a response from the recipient who is being gazed at than in case where the speaker is not gazing at the recipient. It also appears that gaze may work to elicit a response without talk (Rossano, 2013a) as shown in

(11.3). In this extract A and B are seated at a table; A has accused B of eating a chocolate rabbit she was planning to give to her guests at dinner, and B has admitted to this after first having denied it.

(11.3) 2PLUNCH1 radicchio 9:10 (Rossano, 2013a)

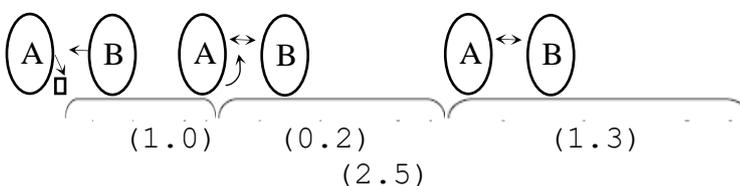
1 (2.5)

2



A: Io ci son rimasta male che non c'era la sorpresa  
 I CL am left bad that not CL was the surprise  
 I was disappointed because there was not the surprise  
 ((inside the rabbit))

3.→



(1.0) (0.2) (1.3)  
 (2.5)

4 ((B makes a gesture + facial expression like "what a pity"))

B's talk in expresses her disappointment and announces that there is now no surprise inside the rabbit. She says this while looking down at her plate and then moves her gaze to A, prior to the transition relevance place of her turn. However, A is also looking down until part way through the silence in line 3, where he looks up and they establish mutual gaze. After this, B produces a facial expression and a gesture that can be understood as a response to A's previous talk. In this example, A has not responded to B's talk, but B does not pursue a response by further talk but rather through gaze, which eventual procures a response to her turn, in this case in gestural form.

### Gesture

Gestures are embodied actions that express meanings (Kendon, 2008). Gestures can be central parts of turn construction and meaning can be carried by gestures, which are integral to the meaning making that is being done. That is, gestures need to be seen as a core part of interaction itself are should not be considered to be incidental to it. Gestures may be used to achieve a range of interactional outcomes, including turn allocation, for example, when a gesture is used to gain the floor as a speaker (Mondada, 2013b) or they may be involved in the organising of the turn-taking system (Streeck & Hartge, 1992); that is, they provides forms of non-verbal completion (see Chapter 5). One of the most obvious uses of gesture however is in the construction of turns at talk, when gestures have a central communicative function. Gestures may construct turns either alone, as in the case of nodding to signal agreement, for example, or

in combination with talk. The ways that gestures are incorporated into talk as meaningful elements can be seen in extract

(11.4).

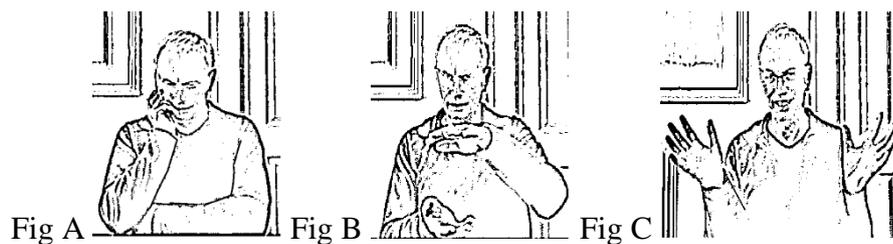
(11.4) [Home:cov]

Zs, Sz = Z gazes at S, S gazes at Z  
R = right hand, L = left hand

1 a Z: [eyes down \_\_\_\_\_  
b [Let me see.h (0.3)uh [how c'n I descri:be it, (.)  
c [moves R to face #Fig A  
d S Sz \_\_\_\_\_, ,

2 a [ , , , [Zs \_\_\_\_\_ , , [eyes to R\_ , , [Zs  
b [.hhh [Well it [was [abou::t thi:s h[i[gh,  
c [raises R lowers L #Fig B  
d S: , , , [Sz \_\_\_\_\_ [, , Z's hands , , [Sz

3 a \_\_\_\_\_ , , [eyes to R, [Zs \_\_\_\_\_  
b [And [round[ed out like u[hm [this- [this wi[de.  
c [lower R & L [moves R & L outwards  
# Fig C  
d S: , , , , , [Z's hands \_\_\_\_\_ , , , [Sz



In extract (3.66), Zack is describing an unusual pot he has recently seen in an exhibition. In making his description he uses gestures as a way of organising his description. He begins with a gesture of holding his right hand to his face (1c, d), in what could be called a thinking position. His accompanying talk is indicating problems with formulating the description and his gesture is echoing this search for the description. He has also withdrawn his gaze from his partner, Shane (1a) and so has disengaged from the interaction during his search. As he begins his description, he returns his gaze to Shane (2a), and moves his hands to mimic the dimensions of the pot (2c, d) while he describes it. This gesture creates a meaning for the expression *abou::t thi:s high*, which without some visual support would not be meaningful. Thus, both the gestural mode and the speech work together to construct the dimensions of the pot. This continues with

the next component of the description where he again changes the gesture to show other dimensions of the pot (*And rounded out like uhm this- this wide*) (3c, d), where again it is the combination of words and gesture that construct a multimodal description of the pot. In designing his talk and embodied actions, Zack gathers together the different meaning-making resources in the two modes to build the action of describing. His talk is thus laminated (C. Goodwin, 2003b, 2018), made up of layers of resources that create meaning. As he constructs the description, he moves his gaze between Shane and his hands. The shift of gaze to his hands not only allows him to monitor the dimensions he is describing but also directs attention to his hands and the meaning making that is being done by them. Shane's gaze follows this change of direction, establishing shared attention on the gestures (lines 2e and 3e). Throughout the talk, gesture, talk and gaze are coordinated (see also Sidnell, 2006) to construct and organise the description that Zack is making.

In extract (3.66), Zack uses gestures to bring a non-present entity into his talk. Where an entity is present in the context, pointing is a frequently used gesture for incorporating something such entities into the talk (Kita, 2003). Pointing as an interactive gesture occurs in a situation in which there are at least two participants – the pointer and the recipient of the pointing. The pointer is attempting through the gesture to create a shared focus of attention on a particular space and something or someone in that space in order to organise some aspect of cognition or action in relation to this space (C. Goodwin, 2003b). This can be seen in (11.5).

(11.5) [Office:cv20]

St, Ts, etc. = S gazes a T, T gazes at S  
 X = looking at screen

1 a S:  
 b X\_\_\_\_\_ , , , , , , , , , [St\_  
 c T: And (.) [I think (.) uh [there's a [proble[m  
 d X\_\_\_, , [Ts\_\_\_, , , , , [X\_\_\_\_, , [Ts\_\_\_\_, ,

2 a S:  
 b , , , , [X\_\_\_\_\_   
 c T: with [uh [(.) [this on:e [there.  
 d , , , [X\_\_\_\_\_   
 e [raises hand [points #fig



In this extract, Toby and Sam are looking at a table on the computer screen and are checking the data in the table. In line 1, Toby and Sam are both gazing at the screen. Toby glances at Sam and begins the next action in the data checking by indicating that the next item for checking is a problem in the data. As he does this he moves his gaze between Sam and the screen. At *there's a*, he is gazing at the screen, and then he moves his gaze to Sam, who is now gazing at Toby, but returns his gaze to the screen as does Toby. Toby's *uh* and pause fills a space during which both come to gaze at the screen but also coincides with the beginning of a pointing gesture, which is completed at the end of *on:e*. As a result, at *there* both are attending to the screen and to the object of the pointing gesture. The pointing gesture is situated within a series of actions relating to gaze and talk that eventually culminate in pointing to an object on the screen.

In this extract, Toby has created a field of attention between him and Sam in which the pointing gesture can be seen as a meaningful communication of a space and its contents. He does this by using a number of semiotic resources. The most obvious is the bodily gesture of pointing itself, which establishes where on the screen the focus of attention is being directed. He also produces talk that is coordinated with the act of pointing. This talk does a number of things, including organisation of the construction of the shared focus, a deictic word *there*, which coincides with the deictic gesture of pointing, meaning that the relevant space is indicated through two modes – verbal and non-verbal, and also constructs how the object that exists in this space is to be understood by his interlocutor (*problem*). Although there are two deictic elements, the word and the gesture are not simply two instances of the same act, as the word without the gesture would not be sufficient to indicate the space of shared attention. The spoken word needs the embodied action for its completion and serves more to bring the talk and gesture together into a laminated action (C. Goodwin, 2003b, 2018) of talk and gesture than as a deictic indicating space. The gesture is also accompanied by patterns of gaze, and it is Toby and Sam's joint gaze towards the screen that make the pointing a salient action for their attention to the space designated. The pointing serves to direct gaze, and thus attention, to a particular spatial location so that this location may become a focus for further talk/action.

As Goodwin (2003b, p. 218) states, “pointing is not a simple act, a way of picking out things in the world that avoids the complexities of formulating a scene through language or other semiotic systems”. This example shows that pointing is a complex and highly contextualised action in which multiple modes are deployed to create the meaning of the talk. Pointing is successful because it is embedded within other meaning making resources that allow for the focus of pointing to be perceived and understood.

## **Posture**

Posture, that is body position, is also relevant for understanding social interaction and bodily alignments can show aspects of engagement in interaction (Schegloff, 1998a). In interaction different segments of the body constitute resources that participants can use to show aspects of their involvement in the interaction. In contexts where people are seated while interacting, the lower body may be relatively stationary for large parts of the interaction (C. Goodwin, 2003a) and this can serve to display a continuing orientation to other participants in the interaction or to some aspect of the surrounding context with which the participants are engaged. In contexts where people are in motion, however, the lower body may be less fixed, and engaged in actions such as walking that are not primarily communicative but when participants stop, the orientations of their bodies towards or away from participants or phenomena can show engagement with or disengagement from them (Broth & Lundström, 2013). While the lower

body may be more static, the upper body can move, and through movements can mark shifts in alignment between speakers and their participant roles (speaker, recipient, etc.) at particular moments. For example, in (11.6), the lower body arrangement of the two participants shows that they are orienting to each other and maintaining their social encounter, while their upper body position shows shifts between engagement and disengagement, especially in the orientation of their heads.

(11.6) [(C. Goodwin, 2003a)



(Source Goodwin 2003a, p. 32, used with permission)

Posture can also be used in relation to other activities in which case it may show an orientation to some phenomenon relevant to the interaction rather than to the participants in the interaction, as in (11.7).

(11.7) [Home:cov]

- 1 Zack: . . . . . / / / / / / / / / \_\_\_\_\_  
 and then we jus[s' c[ut across th[e park [there  
 [Leans back  
 [Turns body R  
 [Raises R hand  
 [Gesture  
 #fig
- 2 Zack: / / / / / / / / / [gazes down  
 An[d headed [f' [home.  
 [turns body L  
 [lowers hand to lap  
 [places R hand on L hand  
 (0.3)



In this extract, Zack is telling Shane about a walk he took the day before and is outlining his itinerary. In line 1, he refers to a nearby park, that is not visible to the participants and does this through an embodied action in which he moves back in his chair, turns his body and head to the right and gestures towards the park with his thumb. The park is not visible to either participant. Instead, he is indicating something from the local environment, constructing it as a jointly known location. He then turns back towards his interlocutor and lowers his right hand to his lap, where it joins his left hand. In this extract, Zack uses his posture to do two things. First he uses his whole body twisting his torso and head around to orient towards the direction of the park, which is behind him. This involves a pointing gesture, but it is not just his hand and arm that produce this but his whole postural alignment. The posture adopted here is an example of ‘body torque’ (Schegloff, 1998a) in which the upper body is placed in a very different alignment from the lower body. Zack is seated during his talk and has twisted his upper body to orient to the direction of the park and shows an engagement with something that is not present in the interaction, by withdrawing part of his body from an orientation to his co-participant and redirecting it to the location he is referring to. However, as he is sitting, his lower body remains in alignment with his recipient. Secondly, at the end of his telling he produces a relatively static posture returning to a home position in which his posture is facing forwards with his hands in his lap and his eyes looking downwards. Home position (Sacks & Schegloff, 2002) is a position from which an action such as a gesture begins, and return this position marks a possible ending to an activity. Broth and Lundström (2013) call postures such as that adopted by Zack a frozen posture; one in which the speaker is largely immobilised and using gaze to engage with others, and here it signals that Zack is possibly done with the action that had been under way. He closes down not just the telling but his display of engagement in the telling as a non-verbal completion for his talk.

### Manipulating objects in interaction

Objects are ubiquitous in human life and human beings in their social lives interact not only with each other but also with objects in their environment (Nevile, Haddington, Heinemann, & Rauniomaa, 2014). It is therefore important to analyse how and when such objects are used by participants in social interactions. People can interact with objects in many ways; they can handle them, move them, orient to them with gestures or other body movements, or refer to them through talk. For example, in extract (11.5) above, the computer screen is a centrally important object in the interaction and was incorporated into the talk by a pointing gesture. Such interactions with objects are not only important for understanding the ways people interact, but also for understanding the ways that the physical world is incorporated into interactions. Interactions with objects show orderliness in the ways they are situated within the social actions in which they are used.

In a study of interactions of ordering in bars, Richardson and Stokoe (2014) found that bar staff interact with the till as an important component of the task of placing an order, and their interaction with the till is closely integrated into the talk that is produced, as in (11.8).

(11.8) [Richardson LG-27N-C67 (Richardson & Stokoe, 2014) altered transcription]

- 1 Bar: Yes please  
 2 Cus: Can I order some food.  
 3 Bar: [ Course y’can ] (.) there’s a twenty minute  
 [((B logs onto till))]



- 4 Elli: \_\_\_\_\_  
 [(1.3) hhh. (2.1) so::: (1.4)  
 [Sliding thumb over photos #fig B
- 5 Elli: \_\_\_\_\_  
 [uhm:, (0.9) hhh.  
 [Sliding thumb over photos
- 6 Elli: \_\_\_\_\_, [Ef \_\_\_\_\_, [X\_\_\_\_\_,  
 s: Tha[:t's [(0.5) the:[re [it is.  
 [Moves phone towards Fran  
 [Points to image with R  
 index finger #fig C
- Fran: \_\_\_\_\_, [Ef \_\_\_\_\_, [X\_\_\_\_\_,
- 7 Fran: \_\_\_\_\_, [Fe\_\_\_\_\_,  
 O↑[ouh that's jus' [lov'ly  
 Eli: \_\_\_\_\_, [EF\_\_\_\_\_,
- 8 Elli: \_\_\_\_\_, [X\_\_\_\_\_, [Ef\_\_\_\_\_,  
 [And [thi[s (0.2)[is [jus' [so: cu::[te.  
 [Returns phone to self  
 [Slides thumb over photo to next image  
 #FigD  
 [Holds phone towards Fran
- Fran: \_\_\_\_\_, [X\_\_\_\_\_, [Fe\_\_\_\_\_, [X\_\_\_\_\_,
- 9 Fran: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mm. yeah: cute.



Fig A



Fig B



In this extract, Elli registers a realisation ( $\uparrow oh$ ) that she can show Fran a picture of the squirrel she has been talking about and proceeds to take out her phone. Her talk here occasions a change in the talk from being a telling that is accomplished solely through language to a multimodal telling using her phone. Her talk in this way calls attention to the object she is about to manipulate in the interaction and explains how the object will be used as an element in her talk. Producing the phone, however, does not equate with showing the picture and so she needs to go through the steps of turning on the phone, opening the photo folder and locating the photo, while still holding the floor as a part of her telling. Her manipulation of the phone is integrated into her talk, which covers the getting and starting of the phone. Once she has produced talk that explains her planned action, she then pauses (line 4) while searching for the image. She continues looking while producing talk that consists of false starts or hesitation markers that allow her to continue to hold the floor, but do not progress the talk. She then marks having located the image in line 6 and moves the phone so that it is oriented towards Fran's visual field, pointing at the same time to direct attention to the phone. She then reorients the phone back towards herself and searches for the next image and then orients the phone back to Fran to show her the image. She uses a combination of gaze, gesture, and posture to achieve the incorporation of the image in her phone into the conversation.

### Concluding comments

Embodied actions are a central part of human communication and although communication can happen in the absence of information about embodiment, as in the case of telephone calls, this does not mean that embodied actions are peripheral to communication. In investigating Sacks' (1992 Vol. I, p. 484) observation that there is "order at all points", embodied action is a much a feature of that order as talk. Human communication is inherently multimodal, and information is available for speakers and recipients in all of the modes that are available to them. Some of these modes, such as smell or taste, are not easy to capture in recording but can be nonetheless relevant for understanding interaction, see for example Mondada's (2019c) study of a tasting session. As Conversation Analysis has moved to videoing interactions, the complexities, and intricacies of talk as an embodied human activity have become increasingly apparent and challenge the idea that talk is simply a linguistic activity.

### Exercise

Look at a short interaction recorded on video data and examine the embodied action the speakers use and how this is co-ordinated with the talk. Consider the gaze movements of the speakers, their gestures and postures and if any objects are drawn into the interaction consider how and when this is done.

### Further reading

- Goodwin, Charles (2003a). The body in action. In J. Coupland & R. Gwyn (Eds.), *Discourse, the body, and identity* (pp. 19-42). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Mondada, Lorenza (2013). Embodied and spatial resources for turn-taking in institutional multi-party interactions: Participatory democracy debates. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 46(1), 39-68. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2012.03.010>
- Nevile, Maurice, Pentti Haddington, Trina Heinemann & Mirka Rauniomaa (2014). On the interactional ecology of objects. In M. Nevile, P. Haddington, T. Heinemann, & M.

Rauniomaa (Eds.), *Interacting with objects: Language, materiality, and social activity* (pp. 3-25). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

## Chapter 12 Online written interaction

### Focus

- Applying Conversation Analysis to written online interaction
- Turn construction and turn allocation in online written interactions
- Sequence organisation in online written interactions
- Repair in online written interactions
- Multimodality in online written interactions

### Introduction

The development of social media has meant the technology now plays a significant role in the ways that people interact. One of the significant development of new technologies has been the development of a large number of contexts where social interaction colours through writing, such as text-based chat, blogs, forums, Facebook and Twitter. The development of such ways of interacting has changed the nature of written language use (Crystal, 2008). In the past, written language was largely used for asynchronous communication, that is, communication in which there is a time lag between the production and reception of the message (Chafe, 1985). Increasingly, however, technology has allowed for the development of ways of communicating in writing that involve synchronous communication; that is, communication in which production and reception occur together. In reality, much online written communication is not truly synchronous as there may be a time delay between when a message is composed and when it actually becomes available for other participants, even if they are online at the same time and this can have implications for how the interaction unfolds. Herring (1999) refers to such forms of communication as quasi-synchronous as it appears superficially to be synchronous, but there is in reality some delay in the production and reception of messages.

The development of synchronous or quasi-synchronous forms of written communication means that central distinctions that have existed in the past between written communication and spoken communication have become blurred and that written language can now be used in contexts that closely resemble aspects of spoken communication. This change in how writing has been used for communication has led to interest in understanding how Conversation Analysis can be used to analyse written communication, and if the structuring mechanisms of face-to-face interaction also apply in written interaction (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2009; Tudini & Liddicoat, 2017).

This chapter will consider various types of online written communication, and consider the ways they work as communication and how they reflect what is known about spoken interaction. In order to do this, it is important to consider some questions of terminology. Although reading and writing involve different processes from speaking and listening (e.g. writers, readers, etc.), for convenience and ease of comparison, this chapter will use the same terms as used in spoken interaction (e.g. speakers, recipients, etc.) in order to connect the ideas across this book. Also, there are some specific terms associated with some forms of online communication, such as posts, tweets, threads, etc. These terms will be used, but they will be used alongside more established Conversation Analysis terms such as turns, sequences, etc. Given that the main mechanisms for conversation are turn-taking, sequence organisation and repair, the chapter will look at how each of these is done in online written environments. It will

also examine the forms of multimodality that exist in online environments and consider how these are relevant for understanding online interactions.

## **Turn-taking**

### *Turn construction*

The turn-taking system of written online interaction appears to be quite different from that found in face-to-face spoken interaction and the ways that turns are constructed and organised is very much influenced by the technology that enables the conversation (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999; Markman, 2010; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003). In face-to-face conversation as Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) have said, there is an overwhelming practice of one person speaking at a time (see also Chapter 5). In online environments, who the speaker is at any moment may be less obvious and there is less certainty about who holds the conversational floor. In online environments, multiple participants can compose and post messages simultaneously and the order in which contributions become available in the online environment depends on a number of factors that cannot be negotiated during the interaction, for example the length of the turn, the participant's typing speed, and technological constraints such as the connection speed between the participant's computer and the server. There is thus a disjunction between the composition of a turn at talk and its appearance in the conversation, and the construction of the unfolding turn at talk is one to which only one of the participants has access, even in cases where the technology indicates that a participant is in the process of typing a response (Tudini & Liddicoat, 2017). Because the production of turns is not available to all participants, processes such as the projection of talk are not possible for recipients. These differences between written and spoken interaction mean that coming to have a turn works differently in these online environments. In face-to-face interaction becoming next speaker may be subject to competition, and who becomes next speaker will influence what happens subsequently in the conversation. Participants who miss their chance to speak may find that what they wish to say may remain unsaid as the local content of the interaction moves to new things. There is thus a temporal constraint on the production of talk. Thorne (2000) argues that in online environments there is no temporally constrained competition, as messages can be submitted at any time and become available at any point in the interaction. This does not however mean that there is no competition, and being the first to respond to a previous posting can be highly desirable as the later a contribution comes and the farther it is positioned from the turn to which it responds, the greater the possibility it will be ignored or misunderstood (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003). Thus, turn-taking practices are less constrained in online environments, but this does not mean that there are no constraints on how turns are taken.

The ways that turns at talk are experienced in online written interactions is also different from those in face-to-face communication. In online interactions, turns appear as completed units, and thus projection and monitoring for possible completion of a turn under way is not a feature of turn turn-taking. Instead turns appear as actually complete in their interactional context. The act of posting a message constitutes the completion of a turn, and thus is a transition-relevance place (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999) at which speaker change becomes relevant. This does not mean that a current speaker does not have the possibility of extending a turn or that what appears to be a complete turn is all that the speaker will contribute.

(12.1) [Penny's mum]

- 1 Penny: i'm stressed out cause i'm sooo busy just now
- 2 Fran: oh love why?
- 3 Penny: there's the kids
- 4 Penny: and work's hell
- 5 Penny: and it's almost Christmas
- 6 Fran: that's so tough
- 7 Penny: and i have to look after mum
- 8 Fran: what's wrong with your mum?

In (12.1), Penny's chat contributions are spread over a series of posts each of which is designed to add an increment to the prior talk so that the message is spread over four turns. Fran's turn at line 4 is designed as a second to Penny's initial turn and assesses her telling but does not appear until that telling has already been extended, although the extension is not yet finished. Tudini (2010) argues that in dyadic chat, splitting a single message into multiple turns is motivated by a need to maintain the appearance of co-presence and participation in the conversation. Where longer messages are needed, they need to be typed and, as the recipient has no access to this, a long turn may be perceived by the other participant as a silence and as a lack of participation. Thus, by spreading her message over a number of turns, Penny is displaying her in-conversation presence while creating a longer message. Thus, extensions to a turn can be achieved in online environments, and there may be interactional reasons to construct turns in incremented ways.

Although, as (12.1) shows, there may be a mismatch between the posting of contributions and actual completion of a turn, there seems to be little benefit from a distinction between possibly complete and actually complete turns at talk in online environments, as the moment a message is posted it can be considered to be not just possibly complete but also actually complete. Moreover, some forms of interaction are not found in online interactions, such as recycled turn beginnings, collaborative completions and continuers, because the interactional contingencies that these turn shapes are designed to achieve are not relevant in the online environment or are not possible given the constraints of the technology (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003). For example, recycled turn beginnings may be related to securing a gazing recipient (C. Goodwin, 1980), but eye gaze is not a feature of written online interactions. Similarly, collaborative completions are based on the projection of turns under way (Liddicoat, 2004b), and so is not possible where turns are only made present in a completed form. Interruptions would seem also to be impossible in online environments as interruptions involve speaker change a point where talk is not possibly complete and such environments do not occur in online interactions.

The shape of turns in online written interaction is influenced by features of the technology being used. Some platforms, such as Twitter, restrict the size of turns that can be used. In other cases, turn size may be influenced by the temporal nature of the interaction. For example, in synchronous interaction turns tend to be short as in the text message exchange in (12.2) while in asynchronous interaction they tend to be longer and often are constructed from multiple units, such as the email in (12.3), in which several topics are dealt with in the same message (Herring & Androutsopoulos, 2015).

(12.2) [Late home]

- 1 Tommy: Hi just leaving so will be late home.  
2 Bill: Should I do anything about dinner.  
3 Tommy: No it's just bangers and mash so I'll do it when I get home  
4 Bill: Ok. I'll be ready with a drink then :-)  
5 Tommy: :-)

(12.3) [Sister]

Kate: Hi Nicholas, how are you? Sorry it's so late but Thankyou for John's birthday card and money. He was so excited when it came in the mail, we were away in Queensland for 3 weeks and I forgot all about it. Have you moved into your new house yet? Hope you're both well xxxxxx.

However, there seems to be more than simply synchronicity/asynchronicity that is relevant to understanding the length of turns in online interactions. For example, responses to Youtube clips are asynchronous but are typically very short:

(12.4) [Monty Pythons worshipers]

**Sky Collowrath** 3 years ago

Well, I certainly didn't expect the Spanish inquisition reference.

**Pikaia Gracilens** 3 years ago

Atkinson does a spot-on impression of the real bishop

**MrMetalover666** 5 years ago

Jesus Christ is not the comic messiah He is a very naughty boy.

**Amazin69** 3 years ago

An absolutely brilliant riff on the whole stupid "controversy" over "Life of Brian". Completely on point by Rowan and Mel.

**GawdOfThunder** 3 years ago

Oh my god, this is hilarious. I've seen the original interview that this sketch is lampooning, but I never knew this existed.

Genius! Made my day.

This example shows that even in very asynchronous contexts, posts can be quite short and this suggests that features of the genre of the text seem to influence turn construction, even where these are less explicitly formulated than the character limits for tweets.

Written interactions lack some of the information that is available for speakers who are using spoken language in interaction such as intonation, volume, pitch, smiling, laughter, etc. Turn construction in written interaction has attempted to address this by using feature of the visual mode such as punctuation features and emojis to add information that would otherwise be missing. For example, in (12.2) above the last two turns end with symbols that capture the emotional content of the talk (:-), 😊), while (12.3) uses xxxxx to indicate affection. Similarly, (12.5) uses capitalisation, punctuation and repetition of letters to reinforce and strengthen the positive emotion of the message.

(12.5) [Arrangements]

Kate: THAT IS SOOOOO COOOOL!!!!

In turn construction, written online communication appears to have removed some of the key dimensions of turn construction in spoken interaction, most especially the possibilities for turn projection and the interactive possibilities that this affords, and the need to monitor for possible completion for organising speaker change. This means that when analysing how turns are constructed, it is importance to take this difference between the two turn-taking systems into consideration and examine the consequences of this difference for how turns are designed. In addition, the fact that in written interaction there is a more permanent record of the interaction than there is in naturally occurring spoken language contexts means that there are different possibilities for understanding how turns are placed in relation to each other and for connecting with prior talk in turn design.

*Turn allocation*

Turn allocation seems to be similar in online interaction in that turns may either be designed to select a next speaker or next speakers may self-select. However, the ways the current speaker selects next strategy works out is different as, while it is possible for the current speaker to select a next-speaker, this next speaker may not always be next in terms of absolute positioning of contributions (Herring, 1999; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003).

(12.6) [(Herring, 1999)]

1 ashna hi jatt  
2 \*\*\* Signoff: puja (EOF From client)  
3 Dave-G kally i was only joking around  
4 Jatt ashna: hello?  
5 kally dave-g it was funny  
6. ashna how are u jatt  
7 LUCKMAN ssa all  
8 Dave-G kally you da woman!  
9 Jatt ashna: do we know eachother?. I'm ok how are you  
10 \*\*\* LUCKMAN has left channel #PUNJAB  
11 \*\*\* LUCKMAN has joined channel #punjab  
12 kally dave-g good stuff:)  
13 Jatt kally: so hows school life, life in general, love life, family life?  
14 ashna jatt no we don't know each other, i fine  
15. Jatt ashna: where r ya from?

In this interaction, there are a number of exchanges (lines 1, 6, 9, 13, 15) that have been constructed using current-speaker selects next techniques, in all cases naming a next speaker. However, these interactions are interleaved into an interaction across a number of postings that are not part of the conversational interaction involved with these speaker selection techniques. The first of these interactions is shown in (12.6').

(12.6') [(Herring, 1999)]

1 ashna hi jatt

- 4 Jatt ashna: hello?  
 6. ashna how are u jatt  
 9 Jatt ashna: do we know eachother?. I'm ok how are you  
 14 ashna jatt no we don't know each other, i fine  
 15. Jatt ashna: where r ya from?

In (12.6'), Ashna begins an interaction with Jatt using a greeting first pair part and names the next-speaker. Jatt responds with a name and a greeting. The naming here works to select Ashna as the recipient of this talk and thus helps to disambiguate the intended recipient in an interaction in which multiple people are present. Ashna and Jatt then continue an interaction in which naming occurs both to indicate speaker selection, in first pair part turns (lines 6 and 14), and to indicate the intended recipient (lines 9 and 15). A further interaction in which a next speaker is selected here in is line 13, although there is no response turn in the extract. The way these interactions unfold show that in online interactions with multiple participants, a current speaker selects next strategy can be used and where it is used it requires a response from the selected speaker; that is, it gives an obligation for the speaker to speaker (Sacks et al., 1974). However, this technique does not constrain who the next speaker can be; contributions are posted as they are created. This means that while the obligation to speak is established by speaker selection, it does not give a right to be the next speaker or constrain what can appear after it, and any resulting intervening turns are not treated as a problem in the turn allocation system.

The use of naming in this extract not only also shows that reciprocity is a problem for participants in interactions where there are a large number of participants and in which a subset of participants communicate with each other rather than with the group as a whole. Naming can be used to indicate an addressed recipient in (12.6'').

(12.6'') [(Herring, 1999)]

- 3 Dave-G kally i was only joking around  
 5 kally dave-g it was funny  
 8 Dave-G kally you da woman!  
 12 kally dave-g good stuff:)

Here and the speakers are using naming as a way of indicating intended recipient, which may occasion further talk but that recipient as a next speaker but is used also to make a bid for attention by a particular recipient. Werry (1996) has argued that in multi-participant public environments participants need to recapture their recipients' attention with every new turn given the complexity of the visual representation of the talk. In some forms of online written interaction, this need to signal recipients of talk has developed into a conventionalised element of turn construction in which a function of the @ symbol is to indicate a recipient. This is a not the only function of @; it may also be used to connect a current message to a previous message without signally reciprocity. In both cases, however, the use of @ signals a need to identify contributions and participants in a context of high volume, multi-participant interaction (Honey & Herring, 2009).

### Sequence organisation

Sequence organisation in online written interactions is based on sequences involving adjacency pairs as is the case in face-to-face interaction but the ways that sequences appear in the

interaction appears less orderly than in face-to-face interaction (Herring, 2013; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003). While sequences exist in online interactions, the placement of the turns in the sequence can be highly disrupted by the lack of control that participants have over where their turn will appear in the unfolding interaction. In contexts where there are large numbers of participants, the disruption of sequences will be more apparent.

(12.7) [Arrangements]

- 1 Ben: Why don't we run a fund raiser.  
2 Alley: Hiya everyone how are you?  
3 Ben: Hiya Alley  
4 Dan Hi  
5 Kate: I'm cool. How're you Alley?  
6 Eric: Alley great you're here  
7 Dan: I think we should try something different.  
8 Alley: Happy  
9 Ben: What do you want Dan?  
10 Kate: Why r u happy?  
11 Dan: I don't know. I just think the stuff we've been doing hasn't worked so well.  
12 Alley: I've just started my holidays.  
13 Alley: No more work for 2 weeeeeeks!!!  
14 Kate: THAT IS SOOOOO COOOOL!!!!  
15 Eric: I agree with Dan.

In (12.7), the organisation of turns appears problematic and the sequencing appears to have broken down. The extract begins with Ben making a proposal (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014) for how the group could contribute to a charity that they are all involved in. Alley's entry into the conversation interrupts this trajectory with greeting related talk that receives responses in lines 3, 4 and 5. In line 6, Dan responds to Bens' proposal, which superficially seems to have been suspended by the other talk. However, Kate has launched another sequence at line 4 with her *how are you?* question and the answer to this comes in line 7. In line 8 Ben responds to Dan's rejection of his earlier proposal. In line 9 Kate responds to Alley's answer in line with a topicalising question. In line 10 Dan responds to Ben's question from line 8, and in lines 11 and 12, Alley answer's Kate's question, which receives an assessment from Kate. At this point Eric then contributes an agreement with Dan's position. The interaction is, however, much more structured than it initially appears when the sequence organisation is examined from the point of view of what is presented visually on the screens of participants. In this interaction between five people, there are a number of sequences being performed. First, Ben's talk is interrupted by Alley's entrance into the conversation and talk that ratifies her participation in the interaction. The conversation then schisms (Egbert, 1997) between Ben, Dan and Eric who return to talk about Ben's initial proposal, while Alley and Kate continue talk occasioned by Alley's arrival in the chat. In face-to-face interaction some aspects of this talk would occur simultaneously: the responses to Alley's greeting could have been done chorally for example and the two parts of the schism would have been done at the same time by different participants. The medium, however, does not allow for simultaneous contributions to the interaction and imposes a particular sense of linearity on the interaction presented on screen. When allowance is made for this, the interaction can be seen as sequentially ordered and based on sequences composed of adjacency pairs, with some sequence expansion.

The sequences launched by Alley are made up of two components commonly found in opening sequences (see Chapter 13), a greeting and a *how are you?* question. The greeting is a first pair part that makes greeting second pair parts relevant and the *how are you?* question launches a question-answer sequence. Both of these actions are addressed generally to the group and neither involves selection of a next speaker and so any participants can self-select to respond. The greeting sequence is played out in (12.7a):

(12.7a)[Arrangements]

- 2 Alley: Hiya everyone
- 3 Ben: Hiya Alley
- 4 Dan: Hi
- 6 Eric: Alley great you're here

In this sequence, Alley produces a first pair part and receives multiple second pair parts involving greeting or acknowledgment of her presence in the conversation. The sequence launched by her question can be seen in (12.7b).

(12.7b)[Arrangements]

- 2 Alley: how are you?
- 5 Kate: I'm cool. How're you Alley?
- 8 Alley: Happy
- 10 Kate: Why r u happy?
- 12 Alley: I've just started my holidays.
- 13 Alley: No more work for 2 weeks!!!
- 14 Kate: THAT IS SOOOOO COOOOL!!!!

In (12.7b), Kate answers Alley's question and then reciprocates launching a question-answer sequence of the same type. Alley answers this and Kate expands by asking a topicalising question designed in response to Alley's answer. Alley expands her talk over two turns and Kate provides an assessment SCT. The sequence launched by Ben's proposal can be seen in (12.7c).

(12.7c)[Arrangements]

- 1 Ben: Why don't we run a fund raiser.
- 7 Dan: I think we should try something different.
- 9 Ben: What do you want Dan?
- 11 Dan: I don't know. I just think the stuff we've been doing hasn't worked so well.
- 15 Eric: I agree with Dan.

In this sequence, Dan provides a rejecting second pair part to the proposal and Ben expands the sequence in the face of this dispreferred response. The subsequent talk here is thus a sequence expansion dealing with the disagreement.

In this example, it can be seen that if the interaction is analysed turn by turn, then there is not a clear sense that the interaction is constructed through paired turns at talk of the same type, a basic part of the definition of adjacency pairs. However, it is also clear that the talk is organised

into initiating first pair parts and responding second pair parts. These parts are separated by other talk, which is not relevant to the action that is being constructed by the first pair part and the second pair part; that is, it cannot be seen as an insertion sequence. Instead, it appears that a feature of sequence organisation, that a first pair part and a second pair part should normally occur together, which is central in face-to-face interaction, is not a feature of sequence production in online interaction. Tudini (2010) refers to this sort of sequence organisation as *split adjacency*, in which adjacency is the organising structure but intervening unrelated turns separate the elements of the structure. Split adjacency means that participants themselves have to reconstruct the orderliness of the talk from the superficial disorder of its presentation. The visual nature of the interaction provides a resource for doing this as prior turns have not disappeared from the context but remain present for the participants. This means that participants can refer back to prior material to help them construct the orderliness of the interaction. This appears to be the case in (12.7) in which Ben's initial talk has been interrupted by Alley's entry but does not get relaunched and nonetheless remains in play, as Dan's turn in line 7 shows. Split adjacency has been described for a number of types of online written interaction, including instant messaging (Woerner, Yates, & Orlikowski, 2007), Twitter (Honey & Herring, 2009), Facebook home threads (Farina, 2018) and Youtube comments (Lorenzo-Dus, Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, & Bou-Franch, 2011).

In some online contexts, sequencing is made more difficult by the fact that not all participants are engaged in the same conversation at the same time and there may be multiple co-occurring conversations appearing on the screen at the same time as was the case in (12.7). This means that recognising and selecting conversation partners within an interaction and designing relevant responses to the talk are interactional problems that participants need to deal with during interaction (Greenfield & Subrahmanyam, 2003). There is evidence that participants construct their talk to deal with the communicative complexities of coherence in sequence organisation in such environments. Strategies for dealing with these complexities include naming participants to identify conversational partners, as shown in extract (12.6) above or repeating parts of messages in responses. In some contexts, the technology may itself provide resources for resolving the problem of matching responses to the turns they are designed to follow, especially in contexts of high-volume, asynchronous interaction.

(12.8) [Cyclechat]

1. Globalti Cooking is an instinctive thing, sure it helps to know some techniques and a bit about caramelisation and so on but I find I can cobble together a decent meal or snack from the contents of the fridge or cupboard if necessary.  
  
Pronouncing new words depends on the ability to pick up nuances of sound and mimic them. Try listening to an Igbo or a Yoruba saying a word that has several meanings depending on the vowel intonation then try to copy them; it's hard when you've grown up hearing only guttural language sounds.

|    |               |  |
|----|---------------|--|
| 2. | Wheeledweenie | marinyork said:<br>Cycling no handed.<br>Remember EPG numbers for tv channels. Infact remembering numbers full stop. Always amazed me as you talk to people who talk about music and remembering notes and when you look at a piece of music it looks very similar. Always wondered why some people are so good at remembering poetry too (different reasons obviously).<br>I remember telephone numbers AND read music very well. Perhaps it's all connected! Although the music thing can be taught... |
| 3. | Fnaar         | I'm terrible with people's names, but I have an absurdly good memory for postcodes 🍷   |
|    | TheDoctor     | marinyork said:<br>Cycling no handed.<br>Agree. I reckon it's simplicity itself, but some folk just can't. Or don't, anyway.   |
| 4. | Jane Smart    | I can go a pogo stick no hands 😊<br>I can cook, I love cleaning, I make my own curtains 😊<br>Oh and one thing I can do that no one else can is ride MY bike, that is because I would never ever lend it to anyone 🍷  |
| 5. | Wheeledweenie | Jane Smart said:<br>Oh and one thing I can do that no one else can is ride MY bike, that is because I would never ever lend it to anyone 🍷<br>Me too 😊   |
| 6. | dan_bo        | Jane Smart said:<br>I can go a pogo stick no hands 🍷<br>Is that not called 'jumping up and down'?  |
| 7. | Chuffy        | Fnaar said:<br>[glasgow accent] Is that a Pavlova, or a meringue? [/glasgow accent]<br>No, it's definitely a pavlova. 🍷  |

In (12.8), some prior talk has been incorporated into the current turn as a quote, with an indication of the speaker of the relevant talk. This quoting provides a way that the split adjacency of contributions can be resolved for participants and provides a visible structuring of the interaction.

Other forms of online interaction can show different features of sequence organisation. In a study of Facebook Home threads, Farina (2018) has shown that the sequence organisation basically takes the form of a telling and response adjacency pair. In which the initial post of a thread constitutes a telling and responses to the telling. He observes that over a series of turns at talk, there will be multiple responses to the telling; that is, the production of the response second pair part does not seem to cancel the sequential implicativeness of a telling first par part for the participants and a single telling can generate multiple second pair parts.

(12.9) [Tiramisù (Farina, 2018)]

- 1 Claudio: Doesn't look very nice now??? :P  
[Claudio publishes a new photo which shows him and the bowl that contains half of the original tiramisù cake]

A 2 persone piace questo  
2 people like this

2 Raffaele: NO

3 Claudio: Cazzo! :P Ora ci manca che anche Yan se ne accorga :P  
Fuck Now all we're missing is Yan knowing about it

4 Lucia: mi hanno detto che non scendi D:  
they told me not to come down

5 Alex: that's mineeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee

6 Claudio: run run ;)

7 Jorge: poor tiramisù..... didn't do anything to you.... yet xD

8 Claudio: it did! it was saying "you can't have meeeee... you're on a diet..." So  
I showed you that for me the diet doesn't start on Monday :P

9 Jorge: it's weird... some chocolate cookies said the same thing to me in the  
morning... is the word coming to an end?... Show that tiramisù who's  
the boss xD

10 Claudio: 2012 is very close yep ;)

In (12.9), the sequence begins with Claudio's post of a picture and a comment on it that Farina argues constitute a telling about the tiramisù. His turn receives a number of responses that accept the telling (lines 2, 3, 4, 5, 7). Such responses suggest that where a telling is performed responses are possible from some or all the participants in the interaction and that the first pair part remains sequentially relevant for any participant at any point at which they respond. When participants make a first contribution in an already existing thread, they do not appear to orient to much of the interaction that has preceded and respond only to the first contribution, or sometimes to the most recent one. This means that a participant's first contribution may return to the original first pair part even where subsequent interaction has expanded beyond it. The fact that the initial contribution remains present on the screen would seem to provide a resource that enables respondents to orient to the initiating turn at later points in the interaction.

Farina also observes that most contributions to Facebook threads are usually either designed as second to an original telling, which can occur at any point in the thread, or else they are designed as responses to an immediately prior post. In (12.9), there are examples of talk designed in response to immediately prior turns in lines 6 and 8-10. In line 5, Alex responds to the initial turn by making a claim for ownership of the remaining tiramisù, to which Claudio then responds in line 6. In line 7, Jorge posts a response to the initial turn; that is, his turn is not designed in relation to the immediately prior talk but returns to the initial first pair part. Claudio then posts a humorous rejection of Jorge's talk and Jorge then responds by claiming a similar experience to the one related by Claudio. At line 10, Claudio shows his understanding of Jorge's turn saying that 2012 (year of the supposed end of the world as mentioned elsewhere in the interaction) is coming. The pattern of responses to immediately prior turns here would seem to suggest that the split adjacency found in some other online contexts is not a feature of this interaction. One explanation for this may be that the contributions in the thread are asynchronous with postings being separated by relatively extended periods of time as can be seen in the time marking of the interactions shown in (12.9')

(12.9') [Tiramisù (Farina, 2018)]

1 6:08am  
2 6:13am  
3 6:15am

4 6:23am  
5 6:41am  
6 6:42am  
7 7:06am  
8 7:09am  
9 7:11am  
10 7:20am

Many of these turns are separated by significant time gaps and the temporal separation of contributions may therefore have an impact on adjacency, and work against split adjacency. There is therefore evidence that split adjacency may be less relevant for some types of interaction than others, as Facebook home thread and also Youtube comments may involve many turns that respond to the previous turn (Bou-Franch, Lorenzo-Dus, & Blitvich, 2012; Farina, 2018). It may be the case that split adjacency is more common in quasi-synchronous interactions than in more asynchronous ones and that synchronicity has an impact on how talk is designed.

## Repair

As in other forms of interaction, problems occur and need to be dealt with in online interactions. Where participants undertake repairs “interlocutors adapt the basic repair mechanisms which are available in ordinary conversation to the technical specificities of chat communication” (Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003, p. 272). However, while participants may draw on similar mechanisms, the medium used for the communication has some consequences for how repair is performed. In particular, repair organisation is influenced by similar features of the interaction that lead to split adjacency and other appearances of disrupted order in online interactions.

In face-to-face interaction, repair is routinely initiated at the point where a problem has been identified. However, in online interaction, the point where a participant identifies a problem and where the repair is initiated in the visible interaction may be separated by intervening talk.

(12.10) [Social chat]

1 A: So I think I’m going  
2 B: i haven’t got a clue  
3 C: 😊  
4 B: im sooo clueless. 😬  
5 A: Sorry I’m not going.  
6 C: hahaha  
7 D: great!!! itll be a blast  
8 B: 😊  
9 D: that’s a pity. I was going to say we could meet up.

In extract (12.10), A repairs his initial turn in which he had omitted the negative *not* in line 65 and this is separated from the trouble source by intervening talk between B and C about another issue. It is possible, but unverifiable, that A had noticed the trouble immediately and the intervening turns were in overlap with his composing of the repair, but the delay in composing the repair means that the repair gets separated from the trouble. Moreover, D’s turn at line 7

has been constructed as a response to the version at line 1, even though it comes after the repair showing other timing related disruptions in the organisation. Schönfeldt and Golato (2003) argue that because of the disruptions to adjacency in online interaction, the position of repair needs to be understood as occurring in the next opportunity space for the repair and that this could be the turn immediately after the trouble source or may be delayed until later.

There is evidence that, in some contexts, participants have adopted conventions relevant to the visual online context to mark contributions as repairs. For example, in World of Warcraft participants may use the convention of adding an asterisk to a turn to indicate that it repairs an earlier contribution (Collister, 2011).

(12.11) [(Collister, 2011)]

- [2. Trade] Wafflez: Now that you throw me, cage and all into a wall, I'm technically "damaged" goods :p  
[2. Trade] Wafflez: \*threw

In (12.11), Wafflez repairs a problem of linguistic form in in the original turn and makes his repair, using the \* before his corrected word *threw*. According to Collister (2011), the asterisk is used only in repairs of linguistic form, and can be used in both self-repairs as in (12.11) and in other-repairs as in (12.12).

(12.12) [(Collister, 2011)]

- [2. Trade] Shak: NEED SOME MORE FOR ZG RAID. GOT A HOLE BUNCH!!  
[2. Trade] Azria: \*whole

The use of asterisks thus appears to have been developed by the community of users as a repair indicator. Although it's position at the beginning of the turn would seem to indicate that the asterisk as a repair initiator, Collister (2011) has found that the placement of the \* in the repair turn seems to be a matter of personal style and it may be used at either the beginning or the end of the turn. It thus serves to mark the action of repairing rather than having a more specific role within the repair. It also indicates that specific communities of users may develop conventions that differ from those of spoken language to deal with interactional needs in an online environment.

One significant difference between repair in face-to-face interaction and in online interaction is that instances of same-turn repair do not appear in the interaction. Such repairs would need to be made in typing the turn and so would not be publicly available to others. Instances of repair that are available for all participants are performed in turns after the trouble source has been produced. Meredith and Stokoe (2014) distinguish between what they call *visible repair*, which is available to all participants and *message construction repair*, which is available only to the person creating the message.

(12.13) [JM/IS/F: 263-269 (Meredith & Stokoe, 2014)]

Shaded turns = publicly available turns; ⚡ = turn composition (not visible); ~~strikethrough~~ = deleted text; (.) pause in writing of less than 1 second

- 1 Isla: right sorry but i'm off to bed
- 2 I\*: ~~absolutely knackerd & ed!~~ ?
- 3 Isla: absolutely knackered!
- 4 I\*: ~~?speak t speak~~ let me know when (.) ~~when (.) let me know~~ you  
training tuesdA ~~&A~~ a a day? ?
- 5 Isla: you training tuesday?

Extract (12.13) shows both the visible contributions (shaded) and the compositional process (marked by ). The composition lines show that Isla is making repairs of language forms and also restructuring her turn before publishing it, revealing some of the complexity of what is happening in the composition process. However, as message construction repair is not available to all participants, it is not interactionally relevant for understanding the online interaction and a research focus on such repair involves adopting an analyst's rather than a participant's perspective. Nonetheless researchers on interaction have sometimes observed the composition process as a way of understanding aspects of the creation of interaction. Meredith and Stokoe argue that examining the practices of participants as they compose messages shows that that they deal with the same sorts of issues that are repaired in in-turn self-initiated self-repair in everyday conversation.

One further observation about repair practices in online environments is that the preference for self-repair observed in face-to-face interaction may not be as strong in online interactions as other-initiated other-repair seems to be relatively common and are often done in unmitigated forms, as (12.14) shows.

(12.14) [Technology (Liddicoat, 2016)]

- 1 A: i'm think i not do it like that
- 2 B: u should say "I don't think I'll do it like that"
- 3 A: That is not how i mean. i think that i'll not do it. i might not say  
it right if you don't understand you ask me. my English is not good  
but i still know how i mean.

In this extract a second language speaker of English is contributing to a discussion of technology and does so using a construction that is not usual in English grammar. The speaker's language is immediately corrected in line 2, and the correction is done without any of the features of a dispreferred turn (such as delaying the dispreferred, mitigating it, etc.). This immediate and unmitigated other-initiated other repair is similar to the asterisked turns used in World of Warcraft as discussed above. The reasons for this difference in preference organisation may be related to aspects of the context in which the interactions are taking place. One possible reason may be that the disruptions in adjacency that occur in online interactions may encourage repairs to be done as quickly as possible to deal with the possibility of trouble source and repair being too far separated in the interaction. An other-initiated self-repair would require three turns to be accomplished and in contexts with multiple participants and the result may be that many turns at talk may separate the trouble and the repair initiation and the repair initiation and the repair itself. This is not to say that other-initiated self-repair is not relevant in online interactions; in many cases recipients of a trouble cannot resolve the trouble themselves, and other-initiated self-repair will be the only repair format that allows for repair to be achieved. However, it may be the case that where it is possible for the recipient of a trouble to repair it, this is more efficient. Alternatively, the weakening of the preference for self-repair may be

related to the anonymity of many online interactions. As Santana (2014, p. 6) argues “In general, anonymity can foster a sense of impunity, loss of self-awareness and a likelihood of acting upon normally inhibited impulses in a way that is markedly inconsistent with a person’s offline self”. Where social relationships are less stable, the identities of participants less available and perhaps less relevant (Haythornthwaite, 2002), and the possibilities for future interactions more tenuous, it may be the case that orientation to ongoing social relationships is less relevant for shaping interactional trajectories.

### Multimodality in online written interactions

Online interaction allows for possibilities for incorporate material in non-linguistic modes into the interaction. In fact, Herring (2019) argues that technologically mediated form of communication are inherently multimodal and image, text, sound, video and other semiotic possibilities can now be easily integrated into messages. She notes that these multiple modes are not additions to messages but are fully integrated into the content of contributions: “All have structural properties; all signify meanings in context; all can be used to hold conversational exchanges; and social behavior can be enacted through every mode” (p. 47).

In Facebook postings, Farina (2015) demonstrates that it is possible to include material other than talk in the construction of a message and that messages may even consist on non-language material. He identifies three possible way of constructing Facebook posts. It is possible for posts to consist entirely of linguistic forms; in this case, the turns could be considered as monomodal in the sense that they contain only written language. However, even in such posts it is possible to include paralinguistic symbols such as emoticons, and Herring and Dainas (2017) argue that such contributions should be considered as multimodal because they integrate graphic forms with language. This is especially the case when graphics replace linguistic elements in turn construction as in (12.15) where the emoticon ☺ is the complete answer to Netta’s question and also Netta’s response to the answer.

(12.15) [Netta & Iris]

- 1 Netta: So how r u feeling?
- 2 Iris: ☺
- 3: Netta: ☺

A more complex example is shown in (12.16), in which part of the turn is constructed with emojis, which constitute a message as the result of the concatenation of the images.

(12.16) [StickersFB; Rilakkuma thread; emoji (Herring & Dainas, 2017)]

Get well soon 🍔🍷💖😭😡💔OK

Gloss: ‘Get well soon. May you eat fast food and chocolate, and your sickness break, ok?’

In examples such as these, it is clear that even quite simple messages can be constructed using multiple modes and one mode can supplement another. These instances reflect Farina’s (2015) second possibility, which is for turns to be made up of an image or a hyperlink together with language. In this case, the turns are more multimodal and rely on the juxtapositions of linguistic and non-linguistic modes to create the turn content.



- 2                   A Roberto piace questo  
Roberto likes this
- 3     Elia:           AH MA BRAVI È COSÌ CHE SI PRODUCE!!!  
AH WELL DONE THIS is THE WAY YOU PRODUCE!!!
- 4     Vanessa:       erano le 15.30 e approfittavamo del sole!!!  
it was 3:30pm and we were making the most of the sun!!!
- 5     Alessia:       ke belli ke siete!!!!  
What a spectacle you are!!!!
- 6     Vanessa:       Eravamo tanti stanchi è stata una settimana dura!!!!  
We were really tired, it's been a busy week!!!!
- 7     Piera:          ah però! Devo cambiare ufficio ... ho deciso  
wow! I've got to move to your office...I've made up my mind.

In (12.18), Vanessa's turn consists only of a photograph, but this photograph is treated as a complete action by her recipients who respond to it as a telling about a recent event in her life. The recipients use linguistically constructed turns to respond and Vanessa develops her talk in subsequent turns to produce a more elaborated telling.

Other platforms allow for more complex uses of multimodality in the construction of turns. For example, in online games, such as World of Warcraft, on-screen images can be integrated into talk and avatars can be used to create embodied actions as contributions to the interaction (Pearce, 2017).

(12.19) [Blimp (Pearce, 2017)]

- 1     22:28           [V] says: it likes you
- 2     22:28           [K] says: WHY IS THIS THING FOLLOWING ME?!
- 3     22:29           [K] says: omg, its on fire, ITS ON FIRE (# Fig)
- 4     22:30           [K] says: Save me [V]!!
- 5     22:30           [V] steps on the plane.
- 6     22:30           [K] thanks [V].
- 7     22:30           [V] flexes at [K]. Ooooooh so strong!
- 8     22:30           [K] flirts with [V].



(World of Warcraft © Blizzard Entertainment, Inc. 2020, Source: Pearce 2017, p. 184, used with permission)

This interaction shows a complex interaction between the written language mode and the graphic mode of avatars and other images involved in the game. The images in the game provide points of reference of the construction of the talk and are integrated into the talk in a way that is similar to the multimodal Facebook turns described by Farina (2015). In lines 1-3, there is an interaction about a small blimp that has appeared in the game and is following K's avatar on the screen. The blimp is encoded by the pronoun *it* or the fuller reference *this thing* and the resolution of the reference requires access to the screen and to the written text for interpretation. Thus, in turn 3 *omg, its on fire, ITS ON FIRE*, the turn is constructed in such a way as to integrate the visual elements of context into the turn and require access to the visual context to interpret the reference of the pronouns. The immediate visual environment is a resource used to create the turn at talk. The technology also allows the participants to integrate different modes in their response talk. At lines 6-8, the players use the 'emote' function of the program that allows them to combine linguistic and non-linguistic features in the turn (Pearce, 2017). In line 6, the entry [K] thanks [V] in the chat log is accompanied by a bow by the avatar on screen. In line 7, the avatar flexes his muscles as a hypermasculine enactment of a heroic stance in saving V from the blimp, and in line 8 K's avatar enacts an embodied flirtation. In each of these the main element of the turn construction is the representation of embodied action with the text in the chat log functioning largely as a gloss of the embodiment. The turn is thus constructed from two modes that exist in a concurrent relationship (Daly & Unsworth, 2011); the meaning is equally available in each mode.

## Conclusion

There is evidence that participants in written online interactions draw on similar resources to construct their interactions as those found in face-to-face spoken interactions. Basic conversational structures such as turn-taking, sequence organisation and repair are equally relevant to understanding how such written interactions are achieved by participants. It thus appears that participants draw on their knowledge of how face-to-face interactions are done in

order to construct other interactions. This is unsurprising in many ways as the nature of the interactions is very similar. For any interaction, speaker change needs to occur, turns need to be organised in relation to each other to create coherent sequences and problems in the communication need to be addressed so that communication can continue. As the basic interactional needs are similar across written online and spoke face-to-face communication, it would be expected that participants would draw on similar resources to construct them. However, the technological mediation of these interactions also plays a role in shaping how these interactions play out. Various technological platforms provide constraints on the communication that influence how basic conversational structures are deployed and how they appear in the interaction. Participants' interactions can be seen as orienting to these constraints when they adopt practices that allow them to overcome limitations of the medium. One key consideration in online written conversation appears to be the impact of the synchronicity of interactions. As most interactions are at best quasi-synchronous, with delays between the construction and presentation of contributions to the interaction, the delays between production and reception appear to have important consequences for aspects of interaction. They can influence turn design, for example the use of short turns to hold the floor as alternative to longer wait times for recipients while longer turns are being prepared. They can also influence sequence organisation, producing split adjacencies that participants need to reconstruct to enact longer stretches of conversation.

This chapter has not treated all possible types of online interaction and in reality many forms of written online interaction have not been studied from a Conversation analytic perspective. However, the field of online communication, whether in writing or using other modes is an expanding one and new platforms emerge that provide for new ways of interacting. As platforms for online written communication multiply, it is likely that new ways of interacting will emerge that deal with the constraints of the medium that draw on the affordances that the medium provides for communicating.

### **Further reading**

- Farina, Matteo (2018). *Facebook and Conversation Analysis: The structure and organization of comment threads*. London, New York: Bloomsbury.
- Garcia, Aangela C., & Jennifer B. Jacobs. (1999). The eyes of the beholder: Understanding the turn-taking system in quasi-synchronous Computer-Mediated Communication. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 32(4), 337-367.
- Herring, S. C. (2019). The coevolution of computer-mediated communication and computer-mediated discourse analysis. In P. Bou-Franch & P. Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (Eds.), *Analyzing digital discourse: New insights and future directions* (pp. 25-67). Cham: Springer International.

### **Exercises**

Put together a small corpus taken from an online interaction that involves more than three participants. It could be from any form of online interaction (e.g. chat, Twitter, Facebook or an online game). Using this corpus, address the following:

1. Is your collection drawn from an asynchronous or quasi-synchronous interaction? How might this influence how participants constructed their contributions and what consequences may it have for your analysis?

2. Are turns purely linguistic in form or are they multimodal? If there are multiple modes, consider how each mode is used in constructing the turn and what role each has in creating the overall meaning.
3. Are there instances of split adjacency in the collection? If so, reconstruct the sequences in the interaction to identify the relevant adjacency pairs and any sequence expansion that is used. Have participants used features of the turn design to help deal with split adjacency?
4. Are there instances of repair? What do you notice about how this repair is done (that is, who initiates it and who does the repair)? Where is the repair positioned in relation to the trouble source?

## Chapter 13 Opening conversation

### Focus

- Conversational openings in telephone calls and in face-to-face interactions
- The sequential organisation of conversational openings
- The interactional achievement of conversational openings

### Introduction

The discussion so far has focussed on the practices through which conversation is managed and maintained by speakers. However, in order to use these practices, speakers must have begun a conversation. The beginning of a conversation does not just happen. Like other things in conversation, the opening of a conversation between two or more participants must be interactionally achieved. This chapter will investigate how the opening of a conversation is achieved. It will start by examining telephone conversations as most work to date on conversational openings have focussed on the opening of telephone conversations. These studies make a useful starting point for a more general discussion of conversational openings because the interactional issues involved are made more obvious by the limitations involved in telephone talk (Schegloff, 2002a). In particular, the opening of a telephone conversation is done by participants who do not have access to non-verbal cues which rely on visual aspects of communication (gaze, expressions, etc.) and everything has to be done through sound.

### The interactional accomplishment of telephone openings

The early studies of the opening of telephone calls (e.g. Hopper, 1992; Sacks, 1975; Schegloff, 1968, 1979a, 1986a) showed that there was a very clear sequence of sequences involved in creating a telephone interaction and that these sequences dealt with the various interactional needs of participants in establishing the interaction. Schegloff (1968, 1979a) identified a four-part structure that was common to telephone openings in English:

- a summons-answer sequence: addressing the interactional task of establishing the channel and the availability of the participants for the interaction.
- an identification/recognition sequence: establishing the identity of the participants in the conversation.
- a greeting sequence: ratifying participation
- *how are you?* sequences: provide opportunities to make participants' state of being a matter for talk or to pass this up as a relevant action at this point in the talk.

#### *The summons-answer sequence*

In examining the first few moments of a telephone opening, a regular pattern of talk emerges similar to that found in extract (13.1):

(13.1) [Tel11:1-3]

```
                ((ring))
Anna:    Hello?
Caller:  Oh hi:.
```

On the basis of this extract we can make the following observations: the telephone rings, the recipient of the call (the answerer) speaks and after this the caller speaks. It is this quite simple structure which has to be accounted for first of all in understanding a telephone opening. Schegloff (1968) has observed that this pattern can potentially be accounted for by a distributional rule which says that the answerer speaks first. A further refinement of this rule would include a restriction of the sorts of talk which happens at this point. Typically in everyday calls in English the answerer's talk takes the form *hello*, although other sorts of talk, such as a self-identification by name or telephone number are also possible (Schegloff, 2004). This demonstrates that the sorts of talk which are usually performed as the first turn at talk in a telephone conversation are restricted to a small set of possible utterances.

Schegloff (1968) challenges the validity of the distributional rule as the organising basis of telephone openings by considering what can potentially happen if the distributional rule is violated; that is, if the answerer picks up the phone, but does not speak. Where this happens, the caller may speak after a pause, as in extract (13.2):

(13.2) [Gran:3:1-3]

```
          ((ring))
          (0.8)
    Caller: Hello?
```

In this extract, the caller's first turn *hello?* is the same as the sort of talk routinely produced by answerers as their first turn. Schegloff argues that the caller is now acting like an answerer by speaking first and using part of the limited subset of options available to answerers, while the answerer is acting as a caller by not speaking in first position. While both the caller and the answerer use *hello* in this position, the function of the two *hellos* is different. A caller's *hello* in this context must be viewed as an attempt to check whether or not the channel of communication has been established. This *hello* is, therefore, an attempt to repair the problem of a missing answerer's turn (Hopper, 1992). The argument at this point is that the repair can be affected by supplying the missing talk as it is understood in terms of the distributional rule. If the role reversal begun by the caller is to continue, the answerer should now offer talk typical of a caller's turn. Such talk, Schegloff argues, typically takes one of a limited number of possibilities.

One possibility is the form of a *hello* token, along with some expansions as in *hello, this is Harry*. Such talk, however, produces an interactional problem for the answerer-as-caller. Real callers have access to different information from that available to real answerers: callers know the likely identity of their answerer, but answerers do not know the likely identity of callers. While the caller's *hello* turn has provided a voice sample on which to base a possible identity of the caller, this can only be done if the caller is known to the answerer. As such, a true caller can construct a self-identifying turn in a way which is suitable for their recipient depending on factors such as the relationship between the caller and the answerer, the degree of intimacy, etc. (Schegloff, 1979a). Answerers-as-callers, however, cannot construct such a self-identification as they do not have the necessary information to know how to formulate it. Another possibility is to produce a simple unexpanded *hello*. This is done in situations where the callers have a relationship which is close enough to allow for the expectation that the caller will be able to identify the recipient from a voice sample (Schegloff, 1986a). Again, the answerer does not have the necessary information to know if this is a viable option in constructing the next talk. A further possibility is that a caller may produce a *hello* token, along with an identification of

the recipient, and again the answerers cannot do this as they do not yet know the identity of the caller and has little information with which to make the identification. A final possibility is that the caller may produce a ‘reason for call’ (Sacks, 1992Vol 1, pp. 773-9) and again answerers-as-callers face an interactional problem as they as yet do not know the reason for the call.

Such violations of the distributional rule cannot be resolved by a role reversal and a redistribution of speakers’ roles according to the distributional rule. The distributional rule may, therefore, be an adequate description of what happens in most telephone openings, but it is not an adequate account of the ways in which participants organize their talk to achieve a telephone opening. Deviant cases, in which the distributional rule is not adhered to, provide evidence for a different explanation of the structure of telephone openings. In returning to the deviant case given above, (given here as extract (13.3)) it is possible to see how these structures are achieved by participants.

(13.3) [Gran:3:1-7]

1                    ((ring))  
2                    (0.8)  
3    Call:        Hello?  
4                    (0.2)  
5→    Answ:      °Loh?°  
6    Call:        Is that Sally?  
7    Answ:        Yes

In this extract, the answerer’s arrowed response, a *hello* token, is a typical answerer’s response, even though it is delayed in its turn. To understand what is happening in this extract, it is necessary to look beyond the distributional rules formulation of who speaks first. In fact, the first spoken turn is not the first action in a telephone opening. Telephone openings begin with the ringing of the telephone, and while this ringing is not speech as it is usually considered, it is a communicative action performed by one of the parties to the conversation: the caller.

The callers are faced with an interactional task in attempting to begin a telephone conversation: they must secure a non-present co-participant for the conversation. The ringing of the telephone is the caller’s attempt to secure an interlocutor. This indicates that the telephone’s ringing is a technologically enacted case of a summons turn: like other summons, it is an attempt to get the attention of another participant in order to undertake further talk (Nofsinger, 1975; Schegloff, 1968, 1986a). As was seen in Chapter 8, summons turns are first pair parts which require a second pair part to complete their sequence. The second pair part in telephone openings is the answerer’s *hello*. This *hello* is not a first turn, but rather it is produced as a second to a prior action. The answerer’s *hello* is, therefore, to be understood not by a telephone conversation specific distributional rule, but rather as an instance of the broader phenomenon of sequence organization adapted to the technological reality of telephone mediated talk.

In extract (13.3), the caller’s *Hello?* in line 3 can be understood not as a doing of a missing turn, but rather as a redoing of the summons in the absence of an answer turn. The *hello*, therefore, is a repair which is achieved by redoing the first pair part, and as such it is an unexceptional form of repair within the context of sequence organization: FPPs are routinely redone in the absence of an SPP, or of some sequentially related talk (Schegloff, 1968). The

answerer's turn, then, is the supplying of the missing SPP and the completion of the sequence begun with the ringing of the telephone.

The ringing of the telephone is a special form of summons specific to telephone conversations and the same is also true of the answer response *hello*. In other summons-answer sequences there are a wider range of answer responses including *what, yeah* and nonverbal responses. However, *hello* is not normally replaceable by other answer forms in telephone openings. The absence of nonverbal responses is obviously a result of the non-visual nature of the medium; however, the absence of the other possible responses is not explainable by any constraint imposed by the technology, but rather it is a socially imposed constraint in telephone interactions. *Hello* has emerged as the default way to answer a telephone, at least in domestic contexts (Hopper, 1992). The summons-answer sequence addresses the interactional problem of availability for talk (Schegloff, 1968).

### *Identification/recognition work*

Securing an interlocutor is only one of the interactional problems that participants face at the beginning of a telephone call. As mentioned in the discussion above, telephone calls begin with asymmetric epistemics. Callers know both their own identities and the likely identity of the answerer, although where there are several possible answerers for any given number, the exact identity of the answerer is still an unknown (Schegloff, 2002a). Answerers, however, know only their own identity and the identity of the caller is at best speculative and more typically unknown. Having secured an interlocutor, it becomes important to confirm the identities of the parties in the conversation before the conversation can proceed. This means that identification work is a relevant next action once the channel for communication has been opened and each party to the conversation must identify the other before the interaction can proceed. The first possible place that identification work can be done, therefore, is in the first caller's turn (Schegloff, 1979a).

Identification is achieved when one party recognizes the other. This recognition is based on the information available to the participants. In a telephone conversation, this information may be quite limited: the caller knows the possible set of answerers at a given telephone number, however, at the beginning of caller's first turn, the answerer has as yet no information on which to base an identification. Having received the answerer's *hello* turn, the caller also has a voice sample on which to base further recognition. On the basis of this information, it is quite possible for a caller to recognize an answerer, as can be seen in extract (13.4).

(13.4) [Tel5:1-3]

```
                ((ring))
Kate:   He:llo::,
Jill:   KATie::[:!
```

Schegloff (1986a) argues that answerer's orient to their response token as being available for recognition through the use of *signature hellos*: a particular delivery of the *hello* token which is relatively standard across occasions and therefore allows for recognisability in opening contexts. A trouble in the signature hello may become a problem for recognisability as in (13.5) or it may occasion accounts for why the hello sounds different as in (13.6) and (13.7).

(13.5) [Tel24:1-9]

1 ((ring))  
2 Sue: \*H' llo::, \*  
3 (0.2)  
4 Joe: Sue?  
5 Sue: Yeah.  
6 Joe: `s Joe  
7 Sue: Hi:.  
8→ Joe: I didn' recognize your voice.  
9 Sue: O:uhgh I go' such a co:l'.

(13.6) [Tel4:1-3]

((ring))  
Faye: hhhH' llo::? .ghh  
→ Gale: Hel-yih sound outta breath.

(13.7) [Wong:NNS,3 (Schegloff, 1986)]

1 Answ: Hello,  
2 Call: Tch Hi Mei Fang?  
3 Answ: (Hmm?)  
4 Call: This iz Joan Wright.  
5 Answ; Hi [How are you.  
6→ Call: [Did I wake you up?  
7 (0.4)  
8 Answ: No.  
9 (0.2)  
10→ Call: Oh: you soun:ded as if [you might have=  
11 Answ: [(no really)  
12→ Call: =been (0.2) resting.  
13 (0.2)  
14 Answ: I have a cold.  
15 Call: Oh:::  
16 (0.4)

In both extracts (13.6) and (13.7), recognition is successfully achieved by the caller on the basis of the voice sample given by the answerer, in combination with knowledge the caller has about the possible identity of the answerer for that given number. Schegloff (1979a) argues that identifications are achieved through a 'recognitional source' and a 'recognitional solution'. In these extracts, the recognitional source is the voice sample provided by the answerer in the answerer's first turn, the recognitional solution is the naming of the answerer by the caller. This naming displays recognition and does this strongly and overtly (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). These successful recognitions involve more than a cognitive act of recognition, they have a social dimension as well. The rapid recognition of the answerer by the caller invokes a relationship between the caller and the answerer which is close enough for the two participants to be able to recognize each other easily quickly and with a minimum of information (Schegloff,

1979a, 1986a). Rapid recognition invokes “we know each other well” and this in itself has interactional consequences, if the caller can recognize the answerer, the answerer should be equally able to recognize the caller.

Here there is an issue of preference in identification. Schegloff (1986a) argues that there is a strong preference for recognition by the other over self-identification in English-language telephone openings. Requests for a self-identification, such as *Who is this?*, are not frequent in telephone openings and can be highly vulnerable to topicalization and may be accountable, as in extract (13.8).

(13.8) [Tel7:1-17]

1 ((ring))  
2 Cindy: Hello:,  
3 Dale: hHi.  
4 (0.6)  
5 Cindy: uh- hu-Who is this?  
6 Dale: H've you forgotten me already?  
7 (0.2)  
8 Cindy: uh hh Uh-yNo: [I- uh  
9 Dale: [huh huh Now I'm rea(h)lly  
10 offe(h)nded [hh  
11 Cindy: [Bu-  
12 (0.3)  
13 Dale: I'll let yuh off the hook. I's me Da:[le.  
14 Cindy: [DA:LE OH MY  
15 †GO::D=I didn' expect- I didn know you were back  
16 [in the country]  
17 Dale: [ huh huh hhh ] Long time no [see huh?

Here Cindy is unable to identify Dale from his voice sample in his first turn. She pauses, as much a sign of a dispreferred as of a problem of recognition, and then produces a request for self identification. This does not produce the requested recognition, but rather leads to teasing about the accountability of not having recognized the caller. Eventually, Dale self-identifies in line 12 which encodes the interactional dilemma with which Cindy is faced: *I'll let yuh off the hook. I's me Da:[le*. Cindy's response involves ratifying her recognition by repeating *Dale* with marked prosody, and includes a warrant for her inability to recognize him earlier and unassisted: he is an unexpected caller and as such not one of the recognisable set of potential callers (Schegloff, 1986). In lines 13-5, Cindy's talk also encodes surprise through the loudness and heightened pitch of her response and through the construction *OH MY †GO::D=*. Cindy's request for self-identification *Who is this?* in line 5 cuts to the heart of the interactional problem for the answerer. The answerer has few clues to the identification of the caller, as callers may be either known or unknown to the caller. Dale's *hHi* in line 3 implies that the caller is a known caller and gives a small voice sample to provide for recognition. When Cindy fails to recognize her caller from among the set of potential known callers, she is placed in an interactionally difficult position; one which a request for self-identification does not resolve.

The discussion so far demonstrates that recognition is far more than a cognitive activity; it is also a socially constructed activity and the ways in which recognition is achieved has social consequences. It is now necessary to consider the possible forms of talk found in caller's first turns which have a bearing on questions of identification and recognition. Schegloff (1979a) notes that in his corpus of approximately 450 telephone calls, there are only nine component types of caller first turns, which may occur either alone or in combination with another component. Greeting tokens are a very common turn type in the caller's first turn.

(13.9) [Tel7:1-3]

                          ((ring))  
     Cindy: Hello:,  
 → Dale: hHi.

(13.10) [Tel11:1-3]

                          ((ring))  
     Anna: Hello?  
 → Cal: Oh hi:.

Callers may also produce the name of the recipient and this may be done in a number of ways. Names may be try-marked: callers may answer with the answerer's name, or the name of the presumed answerer or with a relevant address term, such as *Mum* in example (13.12)(13.11) with a rising question intonation or with a quasi-intonation contour which has a terminal rise, but to a lesser pitch peak.

(13.11) [Tel19:1-3]

                          ((ring))  
     Carla: hello.  
 → David: Carla?

(13.12) [Tel12:1-3]

                          ((ring))  
     Betty: hello.  
 → James: hh mum?

Name components may occur with other intonations which do not have an interrogative force, such as with an assertive, exclamatory or terminal intonation contour.

(13.13) [Tel5:1-3]

                          ((ring))  
     Kate: He:llo::,  
 → Jill: KATie::[:!

(13.14) [Tel2:1-3]

                          ((ring))  
     Andy: H' llo?

→ Gary: hHi Andy.

Callers may also self-identify. Self-identifications are usually found in combination with some other components.

(13.15) [Tel:10:1-3]

                  ((ring))  
Frank: h' llo:,  
→ Jay: hi, it's Jay

They may ask questions regarding the identity of the answerer.

(13.16) [Tel5:1-3]

Kim: Hu: llo::,  
→ Lee: Oh hallo, is that Kim is it?

Schegloff (1979a) notes that the overwhelming majority of caller's first turns are made up of greetings, others' names with interrogative intonation and others' name with declarative intonation or combinations of greetings and one of these two naming components. While only some of the possible turns overtly address questions of identification, Schegloff argues that all nine types of caller first turns are oriented to the issue of identification. This can be seen in the case of greetings, in which no overt identifying talk is produced, but where the recognition of participants in the talk is fundamentally at issue. Schegloff (1979a) argues that, in face-to-face interaction, greetings are not simply the beginning of an interaction, but rather they are the conclusion of other interactional work associated with identification: that is, greeting is a relevant action only after identification work has been done. In face-to-face interactions, a difference in recipient design can be seen between forms such as *excuse me*, which are designed to begin interactions with people who are identified as strangers, and forms such as *hello*, which are not so designed. As greetings are adjacency pairs, a greeting FPP invites a greeting SPP and makes such an SPP the relevant next action in the talk. Therefore, a greeting can display recognition of a recipient by its speaker and invite reciprocal recognition of the speaker by the recipient as the relevant next action and the sequence organization involved here is fundamentally linked to the achievement of the social outcome of recognition.

In telephone calls, the production of a greeting in the caller's first turn can be seen in this context. At this point in the talk, the answerer has provided a voice sample on the basis of which, an identification may be made by a familiar caller. The caller's greeting displays recognition of the answerer on the basis of the voice sample and invites reciprocal recognition of the caller by the answerer. In producing the greeting, the caller also provides a brief voice sample, providing the answerer with information on which to base the recognition. The answerer does the work of recognition by providing a greeting SPP, as in extract (13.17).

(13.17) [Tel4:1-3]

                  ((ring))  
Tina: H' llo:,  
→ Sue: hHi.  
→ Tina: Oh hi..

Here, Sue's *hHi*. displays recognition of Tina, while Tina's return greeting displays reciprocal recognition. The *oh* which prefaces the greeting is a further indication that more than just greeting is occurring at this point. The *oh*, as a change-of-state marker (Heritage, 1984a), registers that Tina now knows something that she did not know earlier and this new state of knowledge is that she now knows the identity of her interlocutor. In this extract, recognition is achieved through very minimal resources. The terminal intonation on the two greetings turns indicates further certainty of the identification. The talk here, therefore, makes very strong claims about recognisability because it has been accomplished with very limited amounts of information (Schegloff, 1986a). Strong displays of recognition can also be achieved by following the greeting with a name with falling intonation, giving evidence of the recognition which has been made, as in extract (13.18).

(13.18) [Tel2:1-3]

```

                ((ring))
    Andy:      H' llo?
→ Gary:      hHi Andy.

```

Alternatively, the greeting can be omitted, and the recognition can be done by the naming, with a falling intonation, as in extract (13.19).

(13.19) [Tel5:1-3]

```

                ((ring))
    Kate:      He:llo::,
→ Jill:      KATie::[:!]

```

Having been the recipient of one of these displays of recognition, the answerer has two possible actions: either produce a display of recognition, following the trajectory established by the FPP or produce a request for identification. Here then, there are issues of preference organization with a display of recognition following the preference for agreement by following the trajectory established by the prior recognition (Sacks, 1987) and the request for identification being dispreferred. Recognitions are typically done immediately as in extract (13.20).

(13.20) [Tel5:1-4]

```

                ((ring))
    Kate:      He:llo::,
    Jill:      KATie::[:!]
→ Kate:      [JI:::LL::.

```

Where recognition is not done, it is usually prefaced by a pause, and perhaps other devices delaying the question in its turn, as in extract (13.21).

(13.21) [Tel7:1-5]

```

                ((ring))
    Cindy:    Hello:,
    Dale:     hHi.
→           (0.6)
→ Cindy:    uh- hu-Who is this?

```

Here Cindy's pause withholds a recognition that hasn't be achieved and here the question is prefaced by disfluencies which further delay the production of her *Who is this?* The pause thus indicates a problem which is both cognitive and social. It displays both that recognition has not been achieved and that a preferred SPP cannot be produced. The caller at this point may speak to resolve the problem as in the extract below.

(13.22) [Tel8:1-3]

1                    ((ring))  
 2    Rob:        Hello?  
 3    Sam:        Hi: Ron.  
 4→                (0.3)  
 5→    Sam:        I' s Sam  
 6    Ron:        Oh Hi Sam. Yih sound diff'rent.

Here, Sam backs down from the trajectory his first turn established: that recognition can be achieved on the basis of the minimum information of a short voice token. In so doing he adds more information on which to base recognition, in this case his name, and reduces his claim to being recognized on the basis of voice alone. Ron provides the recognition in his next turn and also provides a warrant for having failed to achieve recognition earlier and on the basis of the voice sample Sam had provided: the voice sample was in some way defective as a basis for recognition.

The strong preference for recognition in sequences such as the ones examined above gives rise to the possibility of claiming recognition by returning the greeting even where it hasn't been achieved (Schegloff, 1979a). This can be seen as paralleling the cases of token agreement in other types of dispreferreds discussed in Chapter 7: that is the preferred action is done as a precursor to the dispreferred. The false claim of recognition may gain extra time and/or extra talk so that recognition may be achieved by the answerer at a later point and a false recognition may avoid the problem becoming known to the other participant. However, there some cases in which a false recognition may be seen clearly in the talk:

(13.23) [EN#183 (Schegloff, 1979a)]

                         ((ring))  
           A:        Hello  
           B:        Hi:  
 →    A:        Hi: (0.3) Oh Hi Robin

Here, A's second turn contains a greeting term *hi*: which claims recognition. A brief pause and then an *oh*-prefaced greeting and the caller's name follow it. The *oh* here marks success and success just now in recognising the caller (Heritage, 1984a; Schegloff, 1979a) and demonstrates that the prior claim of recognition was false.

In the discussion above, it has been argued that a greeting or a name with falling intonation or a combination of these is a strong claim for recognition and that it makes an equally strong reciprocal claim of recognition a relevant next action. However, names can also be delivered with a rising intonation, in which case the issues for recognition appear to be less stringent (Schegloff, 1979a). These identifications are designed to encode an element of doubt about the

accuracy of the recognition and are try-marked (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) by the intonation as a best attempt at recognition on the basis of the voice sample given.

(13.24) [Tel12:1-3]

                  ((ring))  
Betty: hello.  
→ James: hh mum?  
Betty: Hi James.

However, it is equally the case that the answerer's turn will not be addressed to the recognition of the caller, but rather to confirming the tentative identification made in the caller's prior turn as in extract (13.25). In these cases, it is usual to find a self-identification by the caller in the immediately following turn.

(13.25) [Tel19:1-5]

                  ((ring))  
Carla: hello.  
→ David: Carla?  
Carla: Yeah,  
David: It's David.

The form with rising intonation, regardless of its correct or incorrect identification of the answerer, has sequential consequences which are quite different from names produced with falling intonation. In the latter case, recognition of the caller becomes the required next activity, while in the former case, only confirmation or disconfirmation of the answerer's identity is required as a next action. This means that names with rising intonation allow the possibility that the recognition of the caller will be delayed beyond the immediate next turn. Schegloff (1979a) argues that naming with rising intonation functions as a pre-sequence, with a self-identification as the projected base sequence. Pre-sequences work to avoid dispreferred actions and so naming with rising intonation works as a pre-sequence by projecting self-identification, but by allowing the possibility of doing a more preferred recognition before this self-identification takes place. Schegloff (1979a, p. 51) argues that try-marked address terms function as a pre-sequences by:

1. providing a voice sample;
2. displaying doubt about the recipient's ability to recognize the speaker on the basis of the voice sample alone;
3. providing a position in the next turn for the recipient to display recognition is recognition is achieved on the basis of the voice sample;
4. providing an option in the next turn for talk which does not explicitly show a failure to achieve recognition; and
5. projecting a place in the next turn but one for the caller to self-identify if recognition is not achieved on the basis of the voice sample and displayed in the answerer's turn.

The pre-sequence therefore allows for the possibility of a preferred recognition turn, but retains the possibility of a less preferred self-identification if the preferred outcome is not achieved.

Sacks and Schegloff (1979) argue that in cases of recognition there is a preference to “oversuppose and undertell”. That is, in referring to people, speakers design their talk so as not to tell recipients what they ought to suppose the recipient already knows. This means that it is possible for speakers to be in a position where they assume that the recipient knows a person and can identify that person by name, but may have doubts about whether this is truly the case. Where such a doubt is held speakers try-mark their reference. In the case of these try-marked identifications in telephone openings, however, it is not really a case of problems about whether or not the answerer will be able to make the identification of the try-marked address term as the recipient is the supposed referent of the address term. In this case, the problem of identity lies in the possibility for recognising the caller on the basis of a voice sample. Therefore, the try-marking here is not addressed to problems for the recipient knowing who the recipient is, nor to problems in the speaker knowing who the recipient is, at least in many cases, but rather to problems in the recipient knowing who the speaker is (Schegloff, 1979a).

In these telephone openings, callers are in position in which they do not know who they are speaking to at the beginning of the call and so some form of identification work is needed for the call to proceed. The form of working with identification described here is specific to the context in which the talk occurs; a context in which identification must be done interactionally through talk at the beginning of the talk. Changes in technology such as caller identification, which will be discussed below, may change how identification is accomplished but they do not cancel the need to participants to identify each other in talk. Such identification is central to how the talk will progress; for example, recipient design can only be a feature of talk where there is some identification of the recipient for whom one is designing talk.

### *Greetings*

In the above discussion, it was seen that greetings are fundamentally linked to recognition work in telephone openings and that much of the work of recognition is done through the exchange of greetings. However, not all recognition work is done as an exchange of greetings and greetings are not solely means for achieving recognition, as is the case in extract (13.26).

(13.26) [247a (Schegloff, 1986a)]

1                    ((ring))  
2    R:            Hallo,  
3    C:            Hello Jim?  
4    R:            Yeah,  
5    C:            's Bonnie  
6→ R:            Hi,  
7→ C:            Hi, how are yuh

In this interaction, there are four *hello*-like words distributed over four turns. However, it would be inappropriate to call each of these a greeting as they have quite different functions: the answer to the summons (line 2), the *hello* in the try-marked identification (line 3) and the paired *his* at lines 6 and 7. While the first of these paired *his* is related to recognition, the second is not. R's *hi* is in fact doing two things: it is both claiming recognition and it is greeting. The greeting is then accomplished as an adjacency pair. Sacks (1975) has noted that greetings are not properly repeated and so wherever multiple examples of *hello*-like tokens occur, they typically have very different functions in the interaction. However, Schegloff (1979a) has noted

that, in some cases, greetings may be repeated but where this is the case, they are usually humorous or teasing.

Greetings are adjacency pairs (Sacks, 1975) and the initial *hi* turn requires an SPP for completion. As such, while much recognition work is done through the exchange of greetings, it is also possible that greetings may be done once recognition has been achieved. When greetings are being used as greetings they serve to put the participants in the conversation into a state of ratified mutual participation (Goffman, 1963). Sacks (1975, p. 64) has argued that greetings are “ahistorically relevant”, that is, they are deployed by people regardless of what previous interactions or relationship may exist between them. This means that greetings themselves are designed primarily for beginning conversation, not for other social or interactional goals, even though, as has been seen, other things, such as identification, may also be done with greetings.

In some cases, greetings may be substituted with other turn-shapes, which still have a greeting function, most commonly *how are you?* type turns, as in (13.27).

(13.27) [Op3:1-2]

Joan: How're yuh goi[ng,  
Brian: [Hi:.  
Joan: I haven't seen you for a:ges.

Where this happens, the *how are you?* is used where a greeting would normally occur, but at the same time, the greeting is not seen as absent: rather the contribution is treated as a greeting and is responded to as a greeting. Moreover, Brian's response, *Hi:* is not treated by Joan as a problematic answer to her *How're yuh goi[ng*, and she does not try to repair it.

### 'How are you?' sequences

Not all *how are you?* tokens are greetings, as in extract (13.27), and in many cases the *how are you?* is found after a greeting sequence and/or it is treated as question rather than a greeting. The question *how are you?* and its variants in telephone openings function as enquiries about the current state of the participant and are designed to get an answer. Schegloff (1986a) notes that this is slightly different from other contexts in which 'how are you?' can function as a greeting substitute (Sacks, 1975). *How are you?* sequences are typically *exchange sequences*; that is, once the first question is launched and answered, it is usual for the recipient of the first question to launch a reciprocal sequence, as in (13.28).

(13.28) [Tel19:1-4]

1 ((ring))  
2 Will: H'llo.  
3 Val: Will?  
4→ Will: Oh hi. How're things,  
5→ Val: Okay n how're you.  
6→ Will: Okay=  
7 Val: =That's good.

*How are you?* questions may receive a response which is either positive (e.g. *terrific*), negative (e.g. *awful*) or neutral (e.g. *okay*) and these possible answers have different sequential outcomes. Neutral responses are closure relevant and are typically followed by talk on a next subject, or if relevant by a reciprocal *how are you?* (Schegloff, 1986a). At most, neutral responses engender assessments as sequence closing thirds, as in line 7 at the end of the second sequence in (13.27). These neutral responses effectively pass up opportunities to talk on this topic and allow the conversation to move on to other matters. Highly positive and negative answers to the question routinely lead to sequence expansion and further talk on the topic (Sacks, 1975).

(13.29) [Tel8A:1-7]

1                    ((ring))  
 2    Kim:        Hullo.  
 3    Sam:        Hi!  
 4→ Kim:        Hi. How're you:.  
 5→ Sam:        Re:ally grea:t.  
 6→ Kim:        Why?  
 7    Sam:        Well I just had some really good news...

In line 5 of extract (13.29), Sam's re:ally grea:t. is a highly positive response to the question and rather than passing up an opportunity to talk, indicates that there is something tellable about how she is. Kim's response positions her as a recipient for this tellable and this then becomes the first topic of the call. Similarly where a response to the question is negative, a similar trajectory is found, as in (13.30).

(13.30) [Tel11:1-8]

1                    ((ring))  
 2    Kay:        `Lllo?  
 3    Sue:        Hi Kay  
 4→ Kay:        Oh hi=How're you,  
 5→ Sue:        `Kay, n you,  
 6→ Kay:        Sstressed.  
 7→ Sue:        Stressed,=wha's a matter.

Here Kay answers with a negative formulation of her state as stressed and this becomes the topic of the following talk as Sue provides an opportunity for a further telling with her question. Kay as the answerer in this call therefore is allocated the first topic in the talk, although it is Sue who initiated the call and presumably has a reason for making the call, which would typically become the first topic (Sacks, 1992Vol 1, pp. 773-779). By producing a negative response here, Kay has introduced her own tellable as the first mentioned matter in the conversation.

The prosody with which a response is delivered may affect the way in which it is treated sequentially. Prosodic features which mark the response as very upbeat or as depressed commonly engender sequence expansion in the same way as positive or negative responses. Where there is a mismatch between the lexicon and the prosody, e.g. where the lexical is neutral but the prosody is negative, the prosody is usually taken as the 'true' response (Schegloff, 1986a).

(13.31) [Tel&B:1-8]

1 ((ring))  
2 Kim: Hullo.  
3 Tom: Hi  
4→ Kim: Hi. How're you:  
5→ Tom: Fi:ne, how're you,  
6→ Kim: .hhh hhh. ↓o:ka:y:hh.,  
7→ Tom: W-what's up with you.

Here Kim gives a neutral response *okay* at line 6 but it is realized in a highly marked way. The *okay* is preceded by a sigh and is produced slowly, at a lower pitch and with an exhalation at the end. These features of the talk mark the *okay* as other than neutral although the form does not: it is like an 'off the record' negative response. This response is pursued by Tom as a negative response and he positions himself as a recipient for a troubles telling.

### *Technological changes and the structure of telephone openings*

Recent developments in telephone technology have changed some aspects of the way telephone calls work. For example, it is often possible for answerers to know in advance who the caller is as both landlines and mobile phones may allow for caller identification. Caller identification (caller id) changes the epistemics of the opening of telephone calls as it is now possible that answerers may have similar access to the identity of participants as callers; the epistemics may thus be less asymmetric than in the past. This would seem to change aspects of the ways that identification and recognition may be played out in calls. Nonetheless epistemic asymmetries do still exist for example, "caller id" blocking allows callers to preserve the asymmetry of older landline calls (Schegloff, 2002a). Similarly, when a caller identity is not already programmed into a mobile phone for a particular number, the epistemic asymmetry remains. Caller id however does not ensure that answerers know who is calling, they can know whose phone is calling but not who is using the phone and so, while caller id may narrow the epistemic difference between callers and answerers, it does not lead to complete epistemic symmetry.

Although aspects of technological development may have changed some aspects of telephone calls, it appears that opening sequences as described in earlier work persist in spite of these changes (Hutchby & Barnett, 2005), as can be seen in extract (13.32).

(13.32) [Mobile:X]

1 ((ring))  
2 Sam: H' lo.  
3 Phil: Hiya.  
4 Sam: Phil?  
5 Phil: Yeah=y'a:'right?  
6 Sam: Yeah. What's up,

In this extract, the sequencing is identical to other examples discussed above, including a difficulty for the answerer in recognising the caller. This example is a reminder that, while technology may provide ways of resolving identification issues, this does not mean that

participants necessarily attend to the affordances of the technology and that the use of any affordances of technology is thus an analytic issue that needs to be taken into consideration.

Although technological changes may not affect how telephone openings run off, there is evidence that there can be some modifications to opening sequences (Hutchby & Barnett, 2005). Hutchby and Barnett note that it is possible to find examples of recognition being done before a voice sample is available on which to base the recognition, a phenomenon they term ‘pre-voice sample identification’. An example of this sort of recognition can be seen in (13.33).

(13.33) [Mobile:IV]

((ring))  
Kerry: Trace.  
Tracey: Ke:z.  
Kerry: Hi:.

In this extract, Kerry begins the call by naming her caller before the call has spoken. There is thus no voice sample involved in Kerry making this identification. Kerry needs to have had other information that makes a voice sample unnecessary for identifying the caller, and here it would appear that caller id provided such a resource for her. Hutchy and Barnett’s data included information about whether caller identification was enabled for the call and found that such recognition work was done in cases where the caller id was made available to the answerer. They also note that the way that mobile phones are used in Western societies also has significance for assisting this sort of recognition work, as mobile phones are rarely shared by multiple users and so answerers can be more certain of the identity of the caller than is the case for shared landlines. Thus cultural knowledge about telephone use practices provides a resource that participants can draw on to help their identification work.

Pre-voice sample identification is also something that can be found in callers’ talk. Hutchy and Barnett refer to this as pre-voice sample answerer identification.

(13.34) [24.04.02 INC NCD: c1 (Hutchby & Barnett, 2005)]

1 ((ring))  
2 Neilton: Hullo Sammy  
3 SB: Yeah  
4 Neilton: Yes sis! Happy birthday man  
5 SB: Ar::h thank you Neilton  
6 Neilton: I’sa day early doh innit  
7 SB: No

In this example, Neilton has called SB and speaks first, identifying the answerer before the answerer has spoken. This identification is then confirmed by the answerer. In this case, the caller is exploiting his knowledge of who he is calling, and the cultural conventions of phone use discussed above, to assist his recognition work. Knowing who the likely speaker will be gives Neilton the possibility of taking the first turn in the conversation and allows recognition to be accomplished very early in the talk.

There is also a possible impact of mobile phone technology on the nature of talk that occurs towards the end of the opening and precedes the main topic of talk (i.e. the reason for the call).

This talk in English is usually done in the form of ‘how are you?’ questions but the fact that mobile phones can be answered anywhere allows for the possibility of talk about location as a way of moving from the establishment of communication into the main topics of talk (Hutchby & Barnett, 2005; Laursen & Szymanski, 2013). This can be seen in (13.35).

(13.35) [Mobile:VII]

1 ((ring))  
2 Hannah: Huhllo,  
3 Elli: `Lo Hanna:h.  
4 Hannah: Where are you?  
5 Elli: On th' bus.

This call begins with a summons-answer sequence and some recognition work in line 3 and then moves to a question about location rather than asking ‘how are you?’. Because location is not predictable for mobile phone users and can vary with each call, location is a potentially something that can be talked about in ways that it is not for fixed landlines. It can therefore provide a legitimate topic for talk. Location may also therefore be potentially relevant for whether the talk can go ahead as in the continuation of the above example shown in (13.36).

(13.36) [Mobile:VII]

1 ((ring))  
2 Hannah: Huhllo,  
3 Elli: `Lo Hanna:h.  
4 Hannah: Where are you?  
5 Elli: On th' bus.  
6 Hannah: Oh↓ (.) s-so yih can' talk then.  
7 Elli: Why- n- (.) no i's a:'right, i's practic'ly empty.

Here, talk about location is not only a possible topic, but may provide preconditions for whether or not a call could go ahead, and this is Hannah's understanding in line 6. Here the location (*on th' bus*) appears to preclude talk, or some possible type of talk. Elli's response then responds to the possible problem and dismisses its significance for continuing a talk.

Location may also be relevant for the purpose of the call as in (13.37).

(13.37) [Mobile:V]

1 ((ring))  
2 Vi: Hello Tina.  
3 Tina: Hiya:.  
4 Vi: Hhi.  
5 Tina: Where'r yuh.  
6 Vi: Just about to leave work.  
7 Tina: Good uh c'd you pick up some milk on the way home.

Here, Tina's question in line 5 is not simply an enquiry about location but a precondition for the request she is about to make.

Location talk is not always performed as a question-answer sequence (Laursen & Szymanski, 2013), as in the examples above but may be introduced by participants as tellings, as in (13.38).

(13.38) [Mobile:IX]

- 1                    ((ring))  
2    Zane:        H'lo.  
3    Anna:        Hi uhm I'm jus' leaving work an:: I'll be there in  
4                    about fifteen minutes.  
5    Zane:        Okay see yuh then.

Here Anna's talk is produced immediately after a greeting token and a filled pause and constitutes in itself the reason for the call.

These examples show that telephone talk has maintained much of the previously described opening sequences for landline conversation but also that there is the possibility of reworking these given the affordances of the technology. There is thus no clear requirement for the changes in technology to change interactional patterns but rather that the technology provides possibilities for doing some aspects of the interaction in a different way.

### *Telephone conversations as conversational openings*

Telephone call openings have been the way that Conversation Analysts have come to understand the opening of conversation. This research has shown that there are a number of interactional needs that have to be addressed in opening a conversation (Pillet-Shore, 2018). These needs include:

- becoming co-present in order to be able to talk;
- securing an interlocutor – copresence itself is not enough to establish talk;
- knowing who one's interlocutor is;
- ratifying participation.

In telephone calls, the first two elements are achieved through the summons-answer sequence of the ringing of the phone and the answering and thus are closely linked together in telephone interactions. In telephone calls, the participants are not co-present, and it is the technology that allows for the possibility of a form of co-presence; that is, one needs to make a telephone call to become co-present. In this sense, the act of dialling a number can be considered as a part of the process, even though it is not visible in audio data (Mondada, 2008). In other contexts, these actions may be more separable. Knowing one's interlocutors is also important for designing talk for that interlocutor. In telephone talk, this may be a problem because the caller may be unknown to the answerer until after talk has begun, even if there are technological possibilities for dealing with this, and the caller may also not be able to identify the answerer specifically until after talk has begun, especially where phones are shared. In other contexts, recognition/identification may be done differently, but is still an interactional need. Finally, ratifying participation, which is done through greeting tokens, marks, the beginning of engagement in talk (Pillet-Shore, 2012).

Telephone calls are however particular instances of interaction and have their own features that influence aspects of how talk proceeds. As discussed above, there can be an epistemic asymmetry about the identities of participants in telephone calls that may not occur in other

contexts as it results from the limited information that participants have access to owing to the nature of the technology and the spatial distance between them. Moreover, telephone calls are intentional in the sense that one has to do something specific – dialling the phone – for the interaction to happen. This means that reasons for calls, which have been a common part of the discussion of telephone openings is a natural entailment of the type of interaction. Such reasons will not universally exist for all interactions, for example when encountering a friend unexpectedly while shopping. Moreover, because the technology of telephone calls limits interaction to the verbal channel, there is little scope for considering the embodiment of opening and how this may differ between phone calls and other forms of interaction (Mondada, 2008; Pillet-Shore, 2018). Therefore, while telephone openings show the elements involved opening interaction, they may not be organised the same way in all contexts. The discussion will now move to examining face-to-face interactions, which have been much less studied than telephone calls.

### Openings in face-to-face interaction

Talk itself is not the starting point of conversational interaction. Participants become physically co-present so that talk may occur and this is accomplished by actions that precede talk (Pillet-Shore, 2018). The work of becoming co-present can be thought of as a form of pre-opening (Kidwell, 2018; Schegloff, 1979a) or pre-beginning (De Stefani & Mondada, 2018; Mondada, 2015). These pre-openings deal with the same interactional need as the dialling and ringing of the phone; they are ways of securing an interlocutor for interaction.

One common place where pre-beginnings can be observed is at doorways, where a summons-answer sequence can be observed in the form of knocking on a door or ringing a doorbell, for example.

(13.39) [Office2]

```
→          ((knock, knock))
→ Steve:  c'min.
           (0.3)
Harry:  Hi.
```

Like the ringing of a telephone, the non-vocal sounds are designed to secure a co-participant for a conversation (Kendon & Ferber, 1973; Pillet-Shore, 2018). In this case, the summons is designed to secure the attention of someone who is already present in a particular space (in Sack's (1992) terms pre-present persons) in order to gain entry to that space. Again like the ringing of the telephone, it either secures a response such as *come in* or the opening of the door, or, if it goes unanswered, it may be repeated until the summoner has sufficient grounds to believe that the summons will not be answered. Such summons-answer sequences are used as the first action in an interaction where there is some barrier between the potential participants, typically a door.

Knocking, and similar summons forms may be designed differently for different interlocutors (Pillet-Shore, 2018). On some cases, the summons knocking may be done in a relatively unmarked way that is used similarly with both known and unknown pre-present persons. That is, such a summons can equally be issued where the interlocutors do not know each other, as in the case of a door-to-door salesperson initiating an interaction, or when they know each other

well, as in the case of friends paying a visit. These summons-answer sequences, therefore, may precede identification work, by the participants as in extract (13.40).

(13.40) [Office 4:1-]

1 A: ((knock knock knock))  
2 B: Come i:n,  
3 A: Dr Smith?  
4 B: Yes,  
5 B: I'm Sally Jones, I'm uh planning to take your  
6 class on Fridays, ...

Alternatively, the summons may be marked (for example, by rhythm duration or pattern) that can project that the relationship between participants is more or less familiar.

Doorways however represent different sorts of barriers depending for example on whether they are opened or closed, locked or unlocked and these allow for different interactional possibilities. For example, arriving at someone's home in most instances involves confronting a door that is both locked and closed, and so knocking ringing a doorbell or some other summoning activity would be needed to gain entry. However, approaching a colleague's office in a workplace may present a closed, but unlocked door or even an open door. In both cases, the door represents a barrier, but of different types. Where the door is open for example, the presence of the pre-present person in the space can be known by the person arriving and the interaction may work differently as in (13.41).

(13.41) [Office3:2]

Sally: ((Walks towards Ben's open doorway))  
((Looks towards Ben))  
Sally: Ben?  
Ben: ((Looks towards Sally))  
Ben: Hi.

In this extract, Sally approaches Ben's office and produces a spoken summons. In this case, the pre-present person is both known to be present by the arriving person and the verbal summons also works to display identification of the pre-present person by naming him. The answer is also done non-verbally through the shift of gaze to the arriving person, as well as receiving a verbal response *hi*. The participants have here established co-presence both non-verbally and verbally, through Sally's movement and her speaking, and through Ben's gaze and speaking. In this extract, it can be seen that Sally and Ben accomplish mutual gaze, which constitutes a coming into co-presence (De Stefani & Mondada, 2018). Gaze also makes moving into a different, closer spatial configuration a potentially relevant next action: participants for a conversation normally need to be close to each other in order for the conversation to proceed (De Stefani & Mondada, 2018; Goffman, 1963; Kendon & Ferber, 1973).

Such summonses do not have to be vocal and a knock could also be used. In cases, where a knock is given on an open door, at least one of the participants may have done some recognitional work before the summons was produced. In face-to-face interaction, unlike telephone calls, participants have an additional resource available to them – sight – to help do some of the work involved in beginning a conversation. What this means is that, where

participants are co-present, know each other to some degree, and can see each other, recognition can be done non-verbally and may, at least in part, precede other interactional work, including the summons-answer sequence. This means that recognition may be a relevant pre-beginning in face-to-face interaction, and is not contingent upon establishing communication (see Schegloff, 1979a).

Doorways are not the only place in which participants come into co-presence and extract (13.41) shows a form of interaction that is not specific to doorways, although in this case a doorway was involved. Participants in other spaces also achieve co-presence using sighting and verbal summoning in similar ways. For example, in extract (13.42), the two participants are walking across a university campus.

(13.42) [Campus]

```
Ally: ((walking towards Sue, raises gaze from ground
      towards Sue))
      ((stops walking))
      ((gazes towards Sue))
Ally: [(waves)
      [Sue,
Sue: ((gazes towards Ally))
      Ally::, hi:.
      ((Moves towards Ally))
```

In this extract, Ally sights Sue walking and stops producing a wave and a verbal summons. The naming in the summons selects Sue as the relevant recipient and the waving constitutes a marking of the producer of the summons in the physical space of the campus. In responding to the summons, Sue redirects her gaze towards the waving Ally and produces a name as a recognition of her interlocutor and moves towards her creating closer proximity and co-presence for talk.

Kendon and Ferber (1973) argue that in face-to-face interactions in which individuals are available to be seen, sighting a potential interlocutor is the first action in establishing interaction. Such sighting involves two actions. Firstly, it does the work of identifying someone as known and secondly, it identifies the other as someone whom one wishes to greet. However, interaction cannot begin until the sighting has occurred and one participant does not typically approach another until the other has indicated they are aware of the first participant. If the participant is not aware of the potential interlocutor, the other participant typically does something to secure this awareness by producing a summons of some type. This summons can be verbal or non-verbal (for example, a wave of the hand or a head gesture) (De Stefani & Mondada, 2018; Goffman, 1963; Kendon & Ferber, 1973). The response to this summons may also be verbal or non-verbal, but the important interactional outcome of the summons-answer sequence is that the participants establish mutual gaze. Goffman (1963, p. 92) argues that this mutual gaze establishes an “avowed openness to verbal statements and a rightfully heightened mutual relevance of acts”, which is necessary for beginning an interaction.

The examples in (13.41) and (13.42) are instances in which participants who know each other come into co-presence and attempt to secure an interlocutor for further talk. In cases where interlocutors do not know each other, a summons answer is also used as in (13.43).

(13.43) [Henry]

Henry: Uh excuse me,

Joe: Yeah,

Henry: D' you know where Smith Street is.

In this case, the summons *excuse me* is designed for an unknown recipient and constructs the interaction as being between strangers rather than familiars (De Stefani & Mondada, 2018).

After participants have established co-presence and have secured an interlocutor, greetings as a common next action (Pillet-Shore, 2012), although not always as (13.43) reveals. By greeting, the interlocutors ratify participation in the interaction and make further talk relevant, and greetings are also commonly followed by an exchange of *how are you?* sequences (Kendon & Ferber, 1973). However, Sacks (1975) has pointed out that a minimal proper conversation can consist simply of an exchange greetings, without participants coming into closer proximity, or even interrupting other activities. Greetings in face-to-face interactions may also co-occur with embodied actions involving touching, such as handshakes, hugs and kisses, or a combination of these (Pillet-Shore, 2018).

In face-to-face conversations, therefore, the opening of the conversation is quite similar to that found in telephone openings, although it does not seem to be as strictly ordered because of the multimodal possibilities that face-to-face interaction allows. The initial actions in the opening involve issues recognition and securing availability. However, because the interaction is not limited to a single communicative channel, it is not necessary to secure an interlocutor before identification or recognition can be done. In fact, recognition is typically a pre-cursor to interaction and an attempt to establish an interaction may be undertaken as a result of having recognized a potential co-conversationalist.

## Conclusion

Participants beginning a conversation use a set of devices designed to deal with the interaction problems they face in beginning a conversation. These sets of devices can be considered a sequences of sequences through which conversationalists pass as they establish their interaction and enter into a conversation. While this sequence of sequences provides a format which participants can use to begin a conversation, it is important not to consider this format to be a routine or ritual through which the participants invariably pass. Rather this format provides a resource which conversationalists can use or modify in order to achieve interactional ends (Hopper, 1989; Schegloff, 1986a). This means that deviations from the format represent a form of interactional work which achieves a different action from following more closely the sequences of sequences. If participants produce a sequence of sequences in its typical format, then, this must be seen as a interactional product achieved by the participants, rather than as a ritualized entry into a conversation. Likewise, a deviant sequence cannot be seen simply in terms of its departure from an 'expected' norm, but rather as talk designed to do some other task in the conversational opening.

## Exercises

1. Make a small collection of openings of conversations in similar situations. How do these interactions open? What elements of the talk orient to issues such as getting a recipient for talk, identity work, ratifying participation and introducing topic talk. Are any of these missing from

the openings you have collected? Do participants orient to that absence? How can their absence be explained in the interaction? If you have video data, how do participants embody the circumstances of opening conversation in terms of actions, postures or movements?

2. Make a small collection of openings of conversations in different situations. How do these interactions open? In what ways are the openings similar or different? How can you account for the similarities and differences?

3. This chapter has discussed openings in telephone conversations and how telephone technology have influenced how telephone openings have been done. Make a collection of telephone calls on telephones with caller identification functions. Does this difference in technology lead to a difference interaction? How do you account for any differences you observe?

### **Further reading**

De Stefani, E., & Mondada, L. (2018). Encounters in public space: How acquainted versus unacquainted persons establish social and spatial arrangements. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 51(3), 248-270. doi:10.1080/08351813.2018.1485230

Pillet-Shore, D. (2018). How to begin. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 51(3), 213-231. doi:10.1080/08351813.2018.1485224

Schegloff, Emanuel A. (1986). The routine as achievement. *Human Studies*, 9(2-3), 111-151.

## Chapter 14 Closing conversation

### Focus

- Conversational closings as negotiated activities
- The sequential organisation of conversational openings
- Interactional environments which allow for conversations to be closed
- Moving out of and re-establishing closing in conversation

### Introduction

Closing a conversation provides a particular interactional problem. Participants need to disengage from talk in a way which does not make the relationship between participants vulnerable (Bolden, 2017) and which ensures that all participants to the conversation have had the opportunity to talk about the all of the things which need to be dealt with in the conversation. Moreover, they have to disengage from the turn-taking system itself (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). The turn-taking system described in Chapter 5 provides for the on-going possibility of speaker change at every possible completion. Absences of talk after a completion are heard as silences in the conversation, not as endings of the conversation. Moreover, some silences are heard as belonging to particular speakers of whom further talk is required by the talk so far. This means that reaching the end of some bit of talk does not in itself provide for closing and absence of talk does not equate with the end of a conversation. Instead, speakers need to employ practices which are designed in such a way that they will not occasion further talk and at the same time will not be heard as a particular speaker's silence (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). This chapter will explore the practices speakers use to end conversations.

### Terminal sequences

It is readily apparent to speakers of English that a conversation is usually ended by an exchange of *good-byes* or similar tokens and that after such an exchange, a conversation is considered closed and the turn-taking system is suspended, as in (14.1):

(14.1) [ES:1:3:17-22]

- 1 Emma: So we'll do it at 7.30
- 2 Sue: It'll be fun
- 3 Emma: Alright,
- 4 Sue: Okay
- 5 Emma: Bye=
- 6 Sue: Bye:,

An exchange of *good-byes* therefore is a terminal sequence for conversation: it declares the conversation to be at an end. This indicates that in English (as in other languages) there is a particular class of speech tokens which are used to perform closing. The issue, however, is how these tokens achieve this. One of the first things to observe about this exchange of *good-byes* is that it constitutes an adjacency pair. The production of one *good-bye* makes the production of another a relevant next action for a co-conversationalist. The effect of such paired turns in conversational closings is that the first proposes the end of the conversation and the second accepts this. Closing is achieved with the production of the second component: the completion

of the adjacency pair completes the conversation and removes the relevance of the continued application of speaker change for this conversation (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). The use of an adjacency pair to close conversation means that closing is achieved collaboratively by the parties to the conversation. Failures to collaborate in closing (for example by saying a first *good-bye* and immediately hanging up the telephone) have a very different interactional affect from paired closings and are potentially interpretable as expressing anger or some other emotion. Terminal components may be expanded with other tokens, such as tag-positioned address terms and endearments. Where this happens the expansion does not affect the emerging sequence and closure proceeds in the same way as when unexpanded turns are used, although such tag-positioned utterances may be vulnerable to overlap (Jefferson, 1973).

*Good-bye* and similar expressions are not the only components found in the closing of conversations and several other components are found. A conversational closing is in fact a series of activities which lead up to an exchange of terminal components and the closing of the conversation. While it is true that a terminal sequence ends a conversation, it is not the case that a terminal exchange can legitimately be introduced at any moment in talk. Conversational closing is an action which orients to the completion of the current conversation as an event and must be sensitive to what is happening or potentially could happen in a conversation. One feature of conversation is that participants may have a number of things they wish to talk about in the current conversation ('mentionables') but at any point in the conversation, not all mentionables may have been introduced into the talk. This means that it is important when closing a conversation to determine if all potential mentionables have been mentioned. Conversation, therefore, needs a structure which will allow participants to check if there are further things to be talked about before they close the conversation. Terminal sequences do not do this.

### Pre-closing sequences

Terminal sequences are regularly preceded in conversation by talk which is designed to verify if all relevant mentionables for this conversation have been mentioned. This talk usually takes the form of a short turn such as *okay*, *alright* or *right* with falling intonation as in (14.2), possibly with a tag positioned address term or endearment, as in (14.3) and

(14.4).

(14.2) [ES:1:3:19-22]

1→ Emma:     Alright,  
 2→ Sue:       Okay.  
 3   Emma:     Bye=  
 4   Sue:       Bye:,

(14.3) [MM:87-90]

1→ Mark:     hn' kay  
 2→ Mary:     Okay Ma[rk  
 3   Mark:                    [Bye  
 4   Mary:     B'bye

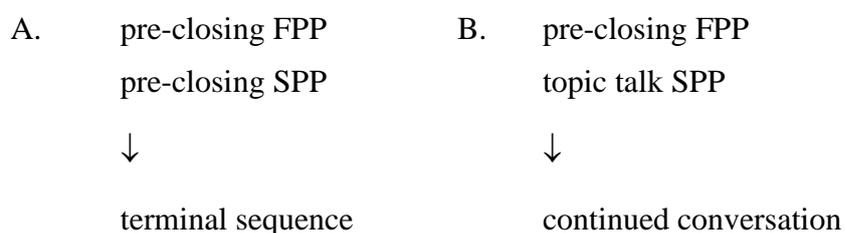
(14.4) [JSK:11:8ii]

- 1→ Helen: Okay Mum  
2→ Dora: y-Oka[y, h.  
3 Helen: [G' dby[:e  
4 Dora: [Bye:,

These short turns meet the requirements of the turn taking system in that speaker change occurs, however, they do not advance topical talk. They pass up an opportunity to do further talk or to introduce some new matter into the talk at this particular moment and provide for the possibility that for the current speaker all mentionables have been mentioned and that closing to conversation could now be done. A pre-closing sequence is then one in which “each party declines at least one opportunity to continue talking” (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 214) before producing terminal components. These turns work to provide a place to determine whether closing could be a next activity and are known for this reason as pre-closings. Pre-closings appear to project closing quite strongly and Broth and Mondada (2013) have shown that participants may begin to move away from each other on production of pre-closing talk.

At their completion a pre-closing component provides for speaker change and passes the talk to an interlocutor, who may at this point introduce some new mentionable into the conversation. This means that the turn immediately after the pre-closing provides a place in which a speaker may legitimately introduce new material rather than indicating that the conversation may move to closure (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). As pre-closings provide a space in which new mentionables may be inserted, therefore, they do not always lead to closing and are never more than *possible* pre-closings.

Pre-closings are adjacency pairs: production of a first pre-closing requires some next talk. This next talk may be a new topic, or it too may be a pre-closing component. Where interlocutors have no new mentionables to introduce into the talk, they too can produce a turn such as *okay* passing up an opportunity to introduce new talk and providing for closing as the next relevant activity. We therefore have two possible trajectories for the sequence:



The first trajectory makes closing a relevant next action while the second cancels the relevance of closing for this point in the conversation. In both cases the FPP provides for the possibility of closing, while the SPP either advances that possibility or cancels it.

Schegloff and Sacks (1973) argue that the pre-closing sequence and the terminal sequence form a sequence of sequences or a ‘closing section’ and that both sets of actions are required to achieve closing. This means that conversational closing is a two part action. First it involves

determining whether all mentionables for this conversation have been introduced. Second it involves agreement to end the conversation and suspend the relevance of turn-taking. It is the completion of both of these activities that constitutes a typical conversational closing.

### **Closing implicative environments**

While the closing section itself achieves closing, there are limits on where the closing section can commence. Not all instances of *okay*, *alright*, etc. are heard as pre-closings and whether such a turn will be treated by a speaker as proposing closing or not depends on its placement in the talk in progress. Specifically, pre-closings are placed at the analysable end of a topic (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). When one participant produces talk that closes down a topic in some way, this provides for the possibility that there is nothing further to be said on the current topic. This allows for the possibility of a co-participant in the conversation to move to closure of the conversation. In addition, some particular conversational actions appear regularly as last topics in a conversation and lead to closing as a relevant future activity. These actions can be considered *closing implicative environments*. The term closing implicative environment refers to sets of actions after which closing may be a relevant next activity and after which closure commonly occurs but it does not imply that closure will necessarily happen after such an action. Conversational closure only happens where the participants to a conversation pass up opportunities to introduce new mentionables into the conversation. A closing implicative environment provides a place where such possibilities for passing up opportunities for introducing new talk can be located but it does not cause conversational closure. Once the closing-implicative environment has been established, the use of pre-closing tokens can achieve the movement towards closing (Bolden, 2017).

#### *Announcing closure*

One obvious way in which a conversation may move to closure is if one of the participants announces closure as a relevant next activity at some point in the conversation. Such announcements of closure usually invoke some external circumstance which warrants ending the current conversation, with a greater or lesser degree of specificity. In addition, the circumstances which warrant ending to conversation may orient to the speaker's circumstances or the recipient's circumstances. For example, an announcement of closure such as *I've gotta go* invokes an unspecified external circumstances which affects the speaker's ability to continue in the current conversation (Button, 1991b; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Announcements of closure of this type may however be expanded to invoke a more specific reason for closure, as in extract (14.5).

(14.5) [MK 2:II]

- 1→ Mandy: Look Karen I gotta go now Tom's jus' got home
- 2 Karen: Okay [love
- 3 Mandy: [Okay
- 4 Karen: B-bye=
- 5 Mandy: =By::e

Here Mandy invokes Tom's getting home as an external circumstance which warrants her ending of the current conversation. The announcement of closure, however does not immediately lead to a terminal component, but rather leads into a pre-closing sequence where further opportunities to introduce new items of talk are passed up before the conversation is

finally closed. As such, such announcements of closure are not unilateral declarations of closure, but rather proposals for closure as a next activity. In this extract, Karen's next turn (*Okay love*) accepts the proposed closure and at the same time is treated in the talk as the first element of a pre-closing sequence. However, it is not always the case that such an announcement of closure will be followed by a paired pre-closing sequence, and cases such as (14.6) can be found.

(14.6) [Office:II:6]

- 1 Zane: ((getting up form seat)) We'll I'd better
- 2 be (.) getting back to work.
- 3 Andy: Oka:y (Zane moves to door)
- 4 Zane: See yuh later.
- 5 Andy: Bye:

In this case, the announcement of closure is being treated as a pre-closing component in its own right and the closure is achieved by a pre-closing SPP followed by a terminal exchange. The pre-closing nature of such utterances is derived from their passing up of opportunities for further talk: the announcement of closure proposes that for the speaker there are no further mentionables which are felt relevant for inclusion in the conversation at this time. The following response can then be treated as a pre-closing component through which the recipient of the announcement also passes up the opportunity to introduce further talk. That is, in the extract above, Andy's *oka:y* does more than accept the announcement, it also expresses a stance towards that announcement: she too displays she has no more talk which she feels has to be included in the current conversation and that closure could now happen. It is equally possible for the pre-closing nature of the announcement to be rejected by a recipient, as in (14.7).

(14.7) [MF:2:IV]

- Fay: Okay, w'll I've gotta go.  
May: Jus' before you do,=have yuh deci:ded about  
what you're doin' Fri:day,

Here rather than preceding to closure, May resists the trajectory established and raises a further mentionable which is relevant to the current conversation.

In many cases, the announcement of closure invokes the circumstances of the recipient of the announcement as in the case of (14.8).

(14.8) [Clay I 5]

- 1 Mary: and he's going to come by himself I think
- 2 Hope: Okay well I better let y' go now
- 3 Mary: Alright
- 4 Hope: Okay
- 5 Mary: By:e Hope
- 6 Hope: Bye

Here Hope proposes closure with an inexplicit formulation of some external need for her recipient to terminate the conversation. Her turn is designed not to express her own needs or desires, but rather as an obligation to consider her recipient's needs or desires.

Announcements of closure are often designed specifically for the conversation in which they occur and may reintroduce material which has been raised earlier in the talk as a warrant for closing the conversation. This is the case with Bee's *I've gotta go an get to this meeting* in extract (14.6) above which had been mentioned earlier in the talk. In fact the formulation of the meeting as *this meeting* is an explicit invocation of the meeting as mutually known information at this point in the conversation. Speakers can also invoke recipient's issues from earlier in the talk as in (14.9).

(14.9) [Clay II 5]

Mary: Okay w'll I'll let you get back to y'r  
tee vee then,  
Hope: Okay  
Mary: Bye bye  
Hope: Bye.

While announcement of closure is an explicit way in which a speaker may move a conversation to closure, the majority of closures do not seem to result from such announcements, but rather are done through closing explicit environments which make closure relevant, but without talking explicitly about closure as a relevant activity.

### *Arrangements*

Arrangements for some future interaction between participants are very commonly found as the last topic in conversation and after an arrangement a conversation may proceed very quickly to closing (Button, 1991b; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), as in extract (14.10).

(14.10) [JH: 5:09-22]

1 Julie: .hh Yeah hh. (.) b'd I really won' know much  
2 more `n that until Kris gives me a call tuh  
3 say wha' she's gonna do.  
4 (0.2)  
5 Julie: Then I'll know more about it.  
6 (0.2)  
7 Helen: Yeah.  
8 (0.2)  
9→ Helen: So lemme know w'ts happenin' when yih know.  
10→ Julie: Yeah okay I'll call yuh then.  
11 Helen: Okay:  
12 Julie: Okay  
13 Helen Bye [bye  
14 Julie: [bye::

The achievement of closing after an arrangement occurs because of properties of arrangements as conversational actions. First arrangements provide for a linking between the current conversation and future conversations and as such they orient to the potential vulnerability of conversational closing for social relationships. Moreover, the invoking of an arrangement implies that the next encounter between the participants will be orderly rather than accidental and is designed to show that a future encounter is both expected and desired by the participants (Button, 1991b). Secondly, because arrangements provide for a future encounter, they allow for closing of this current conversation by proposing that other potential topics for talk could be held over until the next conversation (Button, 1987). These two properties allow arrangements to be oriented to as closing implicative and for speakers to initiate closing talk as a next action on the completion of an arrangement.

### *Formulating summaries*

One possible activity that conversationalists may engage in during talk is to talk about the talk so far: that is they may formulate a summarized version of the talk which characterizes what has been happening in the talk so far (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). While these formulations may have a range of conversational functions (Heritage & Watson, 1979), one outcome of formulations is to provide a possible conclusion to the topic in progress by producing a characterization of the talk as a whole. Such formulations present the talk as a thing which is potentially complete to the point where it can be now talked about as a bounded event and if the formulation is accepted as an accurate formulation by other participants, it can be treated as a proposal that the talk underway could be concluded (Button, 1991b). Where there is agreement about the formulation, conversations may move to a close as in (14.11).

(14.11) [WPH:5 (Button, 1991b)]

- 1→ Phil: We::ll what I've been saying to you for the  
2→ last ten minutes is that I don't like him.  
3→ Yeah?  
4→ Jack: Uh-huh  
5 Phil: Okay Jack  
6 Jack: Okay  
7 Phil: By[e  
8 Jack [Goodbye.

Here Phil's formulation of his own talk summarizes the gist of his talk so far and is accepted by Jack's *uh-huh*, which accepts to formulation and does not add further talk on the topic in progress, and after this Phil begins a pre-closing proposing no further talk in this conversation. A similar role is played by assessments, which rather than summarising the gist of the talk so far, characterize what has been said in a particular way (Antaki, 2002). Where the assessment receives a next turn assessment which affirms this characterization, the conversation may then move to closing, as in (14.12).

(14.12) [TS3:9]

- 1 Tom: and then we have to repeat the whole thing over  
again.  
2→ Sally: It's silly.

3→ Tom: Yeah really silly.  
 4 Sally: h. Alright  
 5 Tom: Okay Sal  
 6 Sally: Bye  
 7 Tom: Bye.

### *Appreciations*

In telephone conversations, appreciations for the call are also closing implicative. Like summaries, they have a bounding function because they design a segment of talk as potentially complete.

(14.13) [Phone12:9]

1 Lucia: Okay I'll talk to yuh later  
 2→ Fatima: Yeah thanks for calling  
 3 Lucia: Okay  
 4 Fatima: Okay  
 5 Lucia: Bye  
 6 Fatima: Bye

Similarly, appreciations function as closing implicative environments in face-to-face interactions, where the thanking is relevant to some aspect of the conduct of the conversation itself.

(14.14) [Office I:22]

1 Mary: Well thanks for stopping by t' tell me.  
 2 June: I just wan'ed to tell you my news.  
 3 Mary: yeah it's so great.  
 4 June: Okay  
 5 Mary: Okay  
 6 June: I'm jus' so exci:ted. I jus' want to tell  
 7 every(h)one .heh.

In (14.14), Mary has dropped into June's office to tell her that she has been successful in getting a new position. When Mary thanks her for, she is thanking her for the fact of the conversation and this thanking moves towards a pre-closing sequence. In this case, the pre-closing does not lead to a closing being realised as June produces further talk. In (14.15), however, which is taken from the end of a conversation between a student and his academic advisor, the thanking moves to a closing (for similar cases, see Thonus, 2016).

(14.15) [Office: II:25:30]

1 Olly: ((packing bag)) Thanks so much for all the help.  
 2 James: You're welcome.  
 3 Olly: Okay thanks  
 4 James: Okay  
 5 Olly: See you next time. ((moving to door))

- 6 James: Yeah bye  
 7 Olly Bye ((leaves))

An appreciation after a period of time talking implies that the conversation has in some way reached a conclusion, because the appreciation only becomes relevant once the activity has been completed. Once the interaction has been appreciated, such an appreciation, therefore counts as a proposal that for one of the participants there is no relevant future talk for this current conversation and that the conversation may now be completed and the conversation can move to closing.

### *Sequence closing sequences*

As was seen in a previous chapter, sequence closing sequences are strongly topic bounding and as such they may serve as the final action in a conversation before the initiation of a closing. Where sequence closing sequences occur as a preliminary to closing, they are commonly initiated by a closing implicative action such as formulating a summary as in (14.16) and (14.17).

#### (14.16) [Phone1:2]

- 1→ Peter: So maybe somethin'll turn up=  
 2→ Bob: =Yeah yeh never know when somthin'll turn up  
 3→ Peter: °Yeah°  
 4           (.)  
 5 Bob: hh. Okay.  
 6 Peter: Okay.  
 7 Bob: G'bye  
 8 Peter: Bye.

#### (14.17) [Phone2:5]

- 1 Mark: so I'm not gunna do anythin' about it now  
 2 Rob: yea::: [hh  
 3 Mark:           [°y:::e [::h°  
 4 Rob:                           [°yeah.°  
 5           (0.2)  
 6 Mark: Alright then.  
 7 Rob: Okay  
 9 Mark: Bye:  
 10 Rob: B'bye.

In these cases, the sequence closing sequence works to close down a topic and prepare the way from another action. This action could be talk on a new topic or it could be the passing up of this talk. If no new topic is generated, the talk naturally moves to closure.

### *Back references*

Back references to material that has already been talked about may be found as the last topical talk before a closing. This is especially true of arrangements which are frequently reintroduced

at the end of a conversation. The inclusion of prior material in the emerging talk may indicate that the possible new mentionables in the conversation have been exhausted at this point and there is nothing new to be introduced into the conversation, as the talk is not dealing with new items but with items already discussed. This means that a back reference passes up an opportunity to introduce something new into the talk and makes closing a potentially relevant next action. Back references to arrangements are strongly closing implicative as they additionally take on the closing implicative nature of arrangements.

(14.18) [House 5:8]

- 1 Grant: Then I wanna be able to do somethin' 'bout  
paintin' it  
2 Phil: Yeah yuh need ta paint it  
3 (0.3)  
4 Phil: So we'll meet up on Saturday  
5 Grant: Yeah Saturday night  
6 Phil: At seven  
7 Grant: Yeah  
8 Phil: Okay  
9 Grant: Okay  
10 Phil: See yuh  
11 Grant: Bye

Back references to reasons for telephone calls are also strongly closing implicative as such a reference late in the conversation presents the call as having achieved its goals and therefore being potentially concluded for the caller who initiated the conversation.

(14.19) [Wentworth 2:2]

- 1 Mary: Anyway I just called to see you what was happening  
2 Mark: Okay  
3 Mary: Okay  
4 Mark: Bye  
5 Mary: Bye

### **Moving out of closing**

Not all closing implicative environments move to closing and not all closings, once they are initiated, succeed in bringing a closing to completion. An important consideration for closings is that they have to be negotiated between participants in a conversation. This allows for the fact that while one participant is prepared to close a conversation, other participants may still wish to offer further talk and, rather than moving to close the conversation, they may move out of the closing sequence (Bolden, 2008; Button, 1987) to continue the conversation, as in (14.20).

(14.20) [Reef 5:3:6]

- 1 Betty: Yes. So I told that tuh somebuddy yeh know  
2 an' 'z I said I didn't think it'd happen

3                   no:w but it did.  
 4    Lisa:       Yeah.  
 5→ Betty:       Okay  
 6→ Lisa:       So we'll see you Thursday then  
 7    Betty:       Yeah Thursday after work  
 8    Lisa:       At the café  
 9    Betty:       Yeah

In this extract, Lisa and Betty have bounded a conversation in their first two turns after Betty formulates a summary of her talk and Lisa accepts this. Betty then produces a first pre-closing component *okay*, however instead of this receiving a second closing component, Lisa produces a back reference to an arrangement, which leads to further talk and the closing is broken off. In this extract, the conversation initiates a closing, but the participants then move out of the closing sequence and begin new talk (Button, 1987). What happens in moving out of closing, then, is that a turn is found in a slot which could normally be occupied by a closing-related component (that is a pre-closing component or a terminal component) and the deployment of such a turn cancels the trajectory of the closing. When participants move out of a closing, they cancel the relevance of the closing which had previously been proposed and to close the conversation at some later point a new closing sequence must be initiated. The closing work done earlier in the conversation is disregarded and it is not assumed by participants that if a closing was offered earlier in the conversation that the offer still exists once there has been a move out of the closing (Button, 1987).

Moving out may lead to a brief prolongation of the conversation, where a closing is re-established very soon after the moving out, or it may lead to much longer talk. A new closing can quickly re-established where the talk which results from the moving out is itself closing implicative and no further work needs to be done to re-establish a closing, however, where the new talk is not closing implicative more talk is required to come to the point of closing. Button (1987, 1991a) characterizes these types of moving out as either minimal (where a participant moves out to a closing implicative action) or drastic (where participants move out to talk that is not closing implicative). He further makes the point, however, that whether or not a closing is quickly re-established or a moving out is followed by a significant amount of talk before a closing is re-established is the result of the unfolding interaction and is not determined entirely by the nature of the interactional activity that participants move out to (Button, 1991b).

### *Locations for moving out*

It is possible to move out of closing at any point in a closing sequence. The earliest point at which a moving out can occur is after the first pre-closing component. At this point in the talk, one participant has proposed closing by passing up an opportunity to introduce a new mentionable and provides a slot for another participant to do the same, however, rather than passing up the turn, this participant produces further talk, as in the case of (14.21), where the okay is followed by an arrangement.

(14.21) [TJT: 4:5]

1    John:       Yeah n tha's wha' I called t'tell yuh.  
 2                   (0.2)  
 3→ John:       Jist so y'd know if y' sa:w him.

4 Tina: Okay  
 5→ John: So I'll see you Friday  
 6 Tina: Yeah

It is also possible for a moving out to occur after the second pre-closing component. This means that although both participants indicate that they have no further talk to contribute in the current conversation, rather than proceeding to closure, a belated bit of additional talk is introduced as in (14.22)

(14.22) [GATT: 4:5]

1 Gina: So that's goo::d  
 2 Anna: Yeah  
 3 Gina: Okay  
 4 Anna: Okay  
 5→ Gina: I just thought I'd call to let you know  
 6 Anna: Okay

Further talk may also be introduced after the conversation has moved to termination by the introduction of talk after the first terminal component as in (14.23).

(14.23) [PP II: 4:15]

1 Pam: Okay  
 2 Penny: Okay  
 3→ Pam: Bye  
 4→ Penny: Don't forget to pick me up on Saturday  
 5 Pam: No I won't  
 6 Penny: Okay

Finally, participants may move out of a closing sequence even after the final terminal component has been produced. In this case the talk is really relaunching a conversation which has been terminated rather than moving out of the closing sequence. When this happens the moving out turn is usually marked as having been suddenly remembered and this shows that in some ways relaunching a conversation after its termination is potentially accountable.

(14.24) [GHFT 7:1]

1 Pete: Okay  
 2 Marty: Okay  
 3 Pete: See ya  
 4 Marty: By[:e  
 5→ Pete: [Oh, by the way, I forgot to tell you about  
 6 what happen tuh Mary.

Here, Pete's *oh* marks a 'discovery' of a new tellable together with an account for introducing the tellable at this point in the conversation as a misplaced item of talk. These moving out turns are most common in face-to-face interaction where closure of the conversation does not lead

to a breaking of the channel of communication. However, these may be attempted in telephone calls as in (14.25).

(14.25) [GOffice]

1 Fay: Okay  
2 Carol: Okay  
3 Fay: Bye bye  
4 Carol: Bye  
5→ Fay: O:h, CAROLE DO[N'T HANG uh-  
6 [(click))

Here's Fay's discovery *o:h* is followed by loud talk involving an attempt to re-establish attention with a summons naming, CAROLE, and an attempt to prevent the closure of the communication, although her the attempt is unsuccessful.

*Typical sequences found in moving out*

### Arrangements

Arrangements are very common in moving out and they may overspill into the closing of a conversation if the arrangement occupied a turn prior to the closing. In this case, the arrangement continues as a topic after one of the participants has offered a closing (Button, 1991b).

(14.26) [TLAS:1107]

1 Angie: Well I'll talk to you about it tomorrow then  
2 Tony: Yeah  
3 Angie: Right  
4 Tony Okay  
5 Angie: By[e  
6→ Tony: [I'm looking f(h)orward t(h)o it  
7 Angie: Me too:..  
8 Tony: Okay  
9 Angie: Alright  
10 Tony Bye  
11 Angie; Bye

An arrangement which was not the topic of the turns preceding the closing may be reintroduced in the closing itself.

(14.27) [Reef 5:3:6]

1 Betty: Yes. So I told that tuh somebuddy yeh know  
2 an' 'z I said I didn't think it'd happen no:w  
3 but it did.  
4 Lisa: Yeah.  
5→ Betty: Okay

6→ Lisa: So we'll see you Thursday then  
7 Betty: Yeah Thursday after work  
8 Lisa: At the café  
9 Betty: Yeah  
10 Lisa: Okay then  
11 Betty: A'right

After an arrangement is produced as a moving out, the participants may move to close the conversation immediately as an arrangement is a closing implicative environment. Such a moving out can be said to be minimal – it doesn't relaunch the conversation, although it does delay the closing. In extract (14.27), however, the reintroduction of the arrangement leads to four turns of arrangement talk before the closing is re-established.

### Back references

Material which has been a previous topic of this conversation may be reintroduced in moving out.

(14.28) [Green 9:1]

1 Joan: and then there's nothing more to do  
2 Brett: Yeah  
3 (.)  
4 Brett: hhh. Okay  
5 Joan: O:kay  
6→ Brett: I hope you get everything sorted out  
7 Joan: Yeah it's a mess an' I've got s:o much to do now

Back references may not be closing implicative, so while they are found in moving out, they do not lead directly to re-entering a closing. What happens here is that a back reference re-topicalizes material drawn from earlier in the conversation. The next turn may now continue this topic in a manner which does not provide a closing implicative environment.

(14.29) [Green 9:1]

1 Joan; O:kay  
2 Brett: I hope y' get everythin' sorted out  
3 Joan: Yeah it's a mess an' I've got s:o much to do now  
4 Brett: Can you get any help with it  
5 Joan: Dunno, b' Kate said she c'd do somethin' but  
6 she's only around on Mondays  
7 Brett: Yeah  
8 Joan: But I mi:ght be able to get Terry in to help out  
9 Brett: Yeah he c'd do it.  
10 Joan: s-So there are possibilities  
11→ Brett: Yeah it sounds like yer not left on yer own  
12 Joan: Yea:h

13 Brett: Oka:[::y  
14 Joan: ['Kay  
15 Brett: Bye  
16 Joan: Bye

Here the talk continues on topic until Brett's formulation which allows a new closing implicative environment which then proceeds to a closing section which is completed.

### Topic initial elicitors

A topic initial elicitor is an object which is designed to generate a new topic (Button and Casey, 1984). Topic initial elicitors explicitly provide a space for launching any mentionables which have not yet been included in the conversation and at the same time signal that the speaker is available for further talk in the conversation although no further mentionables may be available to continue the talk.

(14.30) [Grace 9:1]

1 Diane: So you'll come on Thursday then  
2 Helen: Yeah=  
3 Diane: =Okay  
4 (0.2)  
5→ Helen: Anything else happening,

These objects signal availability for talk, but do not present a specific item for the next speaker to talk about. These things are quite interesting because they are oriented to the fact that a closing would be relevant at this point, but they also allow scope for a drastic movement out of a closing. There are two ways in which these topic initial elicitors can be treated in the conversation. First, the next speaker can use the turn to introduce a new topic which can lead to subsequent talk about the topic.

(14.31) [Grace 9:1]

1 Diane: =Okay  
2 (0.2)  
3→ Helen: Anything else happening,  
4→ Dianne: Oh yeah=I saw Grace the other day  
5 Helen: Yea:h, how is she  
6 Dianne: She's f-fine she looks a bit tired still  
7 but she's fine  
8 Helen: 'S good

In this case the moving out is drastic and potentially leads to extended talk on the topic before a closing is re-established. Alternatively, the next speaker may use the turn to decline to initiate a new topic. This means that the next speaker has passed up an opportunity to introduce a new mentionable in the conversation and that further talk is not necessary in this conversation. Following a decline, therefore, the closing may be reinitiated and the moving out is minimal, as closing becomes a relevant next activity on completion of the topic seeking sequence.

(14.32) [Home 1]

1 Tracy: ...but it's okay now=  
2 David: =Yeah (.) °good°  
3→ Tracy: Anthin' else  
4→ David: No nothin's happening  
5 Tracy: Ok:ay.  
6 David Okay  
7 Tracy Bye  
8 David: Bye

Topic initial elicitors therefore allow for both a drastic movement out a closing by providing opportunities to introduce a new topic which will occasion further talk or they may occasion minimal movements, because, when a decline is produced, closure again becomes relevant, as both participants to the conversation have signalled that they have no further talk to introduce.

**In-conversation objects**

In-conversation objects are objects which are used to mark the receipt of prior talk and to provide for the speaker to continue (Button, 1987). They show that the speaker is available for talk and remains in the conversation, although not offering any new material for talk in the conversation.

(14.33) [Gail 1]

1 Gail: .hhh We'll have a coffee.  
2 Shir: Okay  
3→ Gail: Mmhmm?  
4 Shir: An' then we'll go and get that book.

These sorts of objects can also be found where a closing related component would be expected and therefore constitute a moving out of the closing. When this happens, rather than continue with the closing the next speaker may provide new material for the conversation. This means that the speaker is orienting to these tokens as signalling that the prior speaker is 'in-conversation' and is available for further talk and produces the talk required to continue the conversation, which may become quite extended before a closing is re-established, as in (14.34).

(14.34) [KS:SH:II]

1 Kylie: ... and then we can get some m:ore of those  
2 picnic things a'the market.  
3 Sally: Yeah.  
4 Kylie: Okay?  
5→ Sally: Uh::::m,  
6 Kylie: Cos' they were really good.  
7 Sally: Yeah an' so chea:p too.  
8 Kylie: An' I could do with more y'know,  
9 Sally: Yeah, they're like always handy.  
10 Kylie: Well then I'll see yuh Sa'day.

11 Sally: Yeah see yuh then.  
 12 Kylie: Okay.  
 13 Sally: Okay.  
 14 Kylie: By:[e,  
 15 Sally: [Bye

In-conversation objects work in a similar way to topic initial elicitors. They do not offer any new material, but they indicate that the speaker is available for further talk. This means that they may occasion drastic movement if the next speaker chooses to produce more talk on topic, and closing is, therefore, no longer relevant at that point in the conversation. Unlike topic initial elicitors, which are closing implicative if they are declined, in-conversation objects do not seem to be closing implicative as they simply signal continuation rather than inquire about the availability of topics for talk (Button, 1987) and rejection of an in-conversation object does not have the same unequivocal status of passing up an opportunity to introduce new material as has a topic initial elicitor.

(14.35) [KS:NB:I]

1 Kylie: Call me when you get in woncha?  
 2 Norm: Yeah.  
 3 Kylie: Okay then, Norm  
 4 Norm: `Kay  
 5→ Kylie: Uh:m,  
 6 (0.4)  
 7 Kylie: So have a safe trip.  
 8 Norm: Yeah.  
 9 Kylie: An a goo' time.  
 10 Norm: Sure will.  
 11 Kylie: Right.  
 12 Norm: Alright.  
 13 Kylie: Bye bye  
 14 Norm: Bye

In extract (14.35), Norm does not continue with talk after Kylie's *u:hm* and in so doing passes up on further talk following the in-conversation object. While Kylie signals that she is still in the conversation, norm's silence is a declining of further participation at this point. However, here the declining does not lead to closure and after a pause Kylie continues with further talk.

### Solicitudes

Solicitudes are often found in closings and result in a movement out of the closing with the next speaker making some sort of response to the solicitude. This response is usually a minimal turn accepting the solicitude.

(14.36) [YS:LL]

1 Lynn: I'll see you soon  
 2 Yvonne: Okay Lynn=

3 Lynn: Okay  
 4→ Yvonne: Have a good trip  
 5→ Lynn: I: will hh.  
 6 Yvonne: Okay  
 7→ Lynn: Okay give my love to Steve  
 8→ Yvonne: Yeah I will  
 9 Lynn: Okay  
 10 Yvonne: Oka:[y  
 11 Lynn: [Byebye  
 12 Yvonne: Bye

Solicitudes usually constitute a minimal moving out of the closing as the closing will be re-initiated after the solicitude is completed. This is not always the case, however, and some solicitudes may be elaborated to such a point that a minimal response is no longer appropriate.

(14.37) [MK 2:IV]

1 Mandy: Yeah I'll tell you what happens when I see yuh  
 2 Bryan: .hh Okay  
 3 Mandy: Awrigh'  
 4 Bryan: [Bye  
 5→ Mandy: [An' be careful drivin' home. Tom says the  
 6→ traffic's real bad out there 'n' with the rain  
 7→ 'n' all. In fac' he said he saw 'n accident on  
 8→ the way home.  
 9 Bryan: Yeah there'll be a lot uh those tunight  
 10 [I guess  
 11 Mandy: [Yeah 's bad out now  
 12 Bryan: Yeah  
 13 Mandy: Okay so take care  
 14 Bryan: Yeah  
 15 Mandy: Okay  
 16 Bryan: A'righ' Mandy  
 17 Mandy: Bye,  
 18 Bryan: Bye

### Reasons for call

Reasons for call may be reintroduced in closings and they may lead to turn on the topic by the next speaker or, as they are closing implicative, they may be followed by the initiation of the closing. Reasons for call usually produce a minimal move out of the closing.

(14.38) [GATT: 4:5]

1 Gina: So that's goo::d  
 2 Anna: Yeah(h)  
 3 Gina: h-Kay  
 4 Anna: Okay

5→ Gina: I just thought I'd call to let you know  
6 Anna: Okay Gina,  
7 Gina: Okay  
8 Anna: Bye  
9 Gina: Bye

### Appreciations

An appreciation may refer either to an appreciation of a telephone call itself or it may refer to some other appreciable which is relevant to the conversation and both types may be found in moving out, although their sequential consequences appear to be different. In particular, an appreciation for the call may be inserted within a closing sequence without affecting the trajectory of the closing. Where this occurs, the closing continues as if no additional material has been inserted and closing does not have to be re-established. This means that the closing sequence becomes longer than the expected archetype of four components, but it remains a closing sequence.

(14.39) [Franco: I: 14:15]

1 Clara: Okay I'll talk to yuh later  
2 Fran: Yeah  
3 Clara: Okay  
4→ Fran: Okay thanks for calling  
5 Clara: Bye  
6 Fran: Bye

This expanded but uninterrupted trajectory occurs where the appreciation is not acknowledged by the recipient. Where there is an acknowledgement, the closing is usually interrupted and the closing needs to be re-established, as in 14.40).

(14.40) [Franco: II: 14:15]

1 Mavis: Okay I'll talk to yuh later  
2 Fran: Yeah  
3 Mavis: Okay  
4→ Fran: Okay thanks for calling  
5 Mavis: I's nice to talk to you.  
6 Fran: Okay  
7 Mavis: Okay  
8 Fran: Bye  
9 Mavis: Bye

Where the appreciation is a back-reference to some other appreciable in the prior talk, the appreciation is typically acknowledged and produces a moving out of closing, after which the closing must be re-established.

(14.41) [Luisa]

1 Rosa: so I'll talk to you about that later

2 Luisa: yeah sure  
3 Rosa: okay  
4→ Luisa: okay Rosa thanks again for picking up the kids  
5 Rosa: that's fine  
6 Luisa: okay  
7 Rosa: okay  
8 Luisa: bye  
9 Rosa: bye

### *Expanded closing sequences*

It is possible for a closing sequence to be expanded in ways which are specific to a conversation and which do not constitute moving out for these conversations. This is the case in (14.42), a conversation between a couple who are living apart for work reasons.

(14.42) [Commute]

1 Tom: Talk to yuh tomorrow.  
2 Terry: Okay.  
3 Tom: Okay  
4→ Terry: Love you.  
5→ Tom: Love you too.  
6 Terry: Bye.  
7 Tom: Bye.

Here the endearments do not interrupt the closing and the pre-closing components are not redone before proceeding to the closing, rather these endearments seem to be included as a part of the leave-taking routine for these two participants in a particular conversational setting. The closing sequence is expanded by an endearment adjacency pair, which accomplishes interactional work for these participants, ratifying their on-going relationship. This is a closing sequence designed by and for these recipients rather than being interactionally relevant for other participants or other conversations. Examples such as this highlight clearly that the sequential organization of conversational closing is achieved by participants rather than being a set routine through which all conversations must pass.

### **Conclusion**

Conversational closings are interactionally delicate events which are achieved collaboratively by participants by deploying a set of sequential resources. These resources allow them to negotiate their respective orientations to the current conversation and to determine the relevance of continuation or closure of the conversation at various relevant points in the talk. The sequential structure of closings works to determine at various stages in the talk whether closing or continuing is the appropriate conversational undertaking and to allow possibilities for previously unmentioned mentionables to be raised in the talk. Closing, therefore, is achieved by passing up opportunities to do something other than closing rather than by providing specifically for closing as the activity which is currently being undertaken.

## Exercises

1. In the interactions you have collected, examine how participants end their talk.

- How is this structured? Does the interaction end quickly or does it require extended talk?
- What is the structure of the closings? Who proposes the closing? What sorts of talk lead to closing becoming a relevant next action? How do participants negotiate the closing of the interaction? How do they close it?
- Are there instances where participants move out of the interaction? How is this done and what are the consequences for the interaction? When is closing re-established?

2. Make a small collection of interactions from a media source. How is the interaction closed in these instances? What is the structure of the closings? Who proposes the closing? How do participants negotiate the closing of the interaction? How do they close it?

## Further reading

Broth, M., & Mondada, L. (2013). Walking away: The embodied achievement of activity closings in mobile interaction. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 47(1), 41-58. doi:10.1016/j.pragma.2012.11.016

Button, Graham. (1987). Moving out of closings. In Graham Button and John R.E. Lee (Eds.), *Talk and social organization* (pp. 101-151). Clevedon: Avon: Multilingual Matters.

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## Chapter 15 Storytelling in conversation

### Focus

- Stories as extended turns and the interactional issues involved in producing such turns.
- Conversational practices for introducing stories into interaction.
- Aspects of the orderliness of stories as conversational practices.

### The interactional problem of extended turns

It was argued above that the basic organization of speaker change in conversation revolves around the first possible completion of a TCU as a transition relevance place – a place at which speaker change can legitimately occur. This feature of conversation produces an interactional problem for actions, such as telling stories and jokes, which by their nature cannot be completed in a single TCU and which must extend beyond the first possible completion if they are to be accomplished. The organization of speaker change would appear to make such actions impossible, as they would become vulnerable to speaker change before they could be completed. The interactional problem which faces speaker is how to create a space in which to undertake an action which requires an extended turn when the turn-taking system provides for the possibility of speaker change at the first possible completion of the TCU underway. This chapter will examine how speakers achieve orderly solutions to this interactional problem and create interactional spaces in which extended turns can be accomplished.

### Stories

Stories in conversation are tellings which occur as multiunit, extended turns at talk. They occur during interaction and their telling is accomplished collaboratively by the participants in the conversation. This means that the telling of a story is not simply the act of a speaker/narrator, but also the act of a story recipient. Moreover, stories do not occur incidentally in conversation, but rather are designed for the interaction in which they occur (Sacks, 1992). Stories are located within turn-by-turn talk. They are both preceded and followed by such talk. However, stories are not simply interruptions of turn-by-turn talk, they articulate with it. They emerge from the turn by turn talk which precedes them and are also sequentially implicative for the turn-by-turn talk which follows them (Jefferson, 1978).

One important interactional issue for stories in conversation is how those stories come to be told. In some cases, stories may be told in response to a question by a prior speaker: that is, stories are elicited by the story recipient and their production is required as the answer SPP in an adjacency pair. In such contexts, story recipients make themselves available as story recipients by eliciting the story and the interactional work required of the story-teller to place the story in conversation is minimal. While some studies of story-telling have been based on such elicited stories, such as Labov and Waletzky's (1966) seminal study of story structure, elicited stories are not the usual way stories are introduced into everyday conversation. Many stories are introduced by the tellers themselves, who have to deal with the interactional problems associated with placing a story in conversation and securing a recipient for the story.

In telling their story, story-tellers also have to deal with the legitimacy of the story for the current conversation. Story-tellers take a risk in that their story may not be accepted as relevant or newsworthy. Hearers' response may be "So what?" or "What's the point?" (Labov & Fanshell, 1977; Polanyi, 1979; Sacks, 1992). The main constraint on whether or not a story

may be legitimate in a particular conversation is that the story is unknown and of potential interest to the story recipient. If the story is unknown and of potential interest, the story is tellable in that conversation. A story which is tellable in one conversation may not be equally tellable in another because the story may already be known or the circumstances of the story may be inappropriate for a particular participant (Sacks, 1986).

### Beginning and ending stories

The study of a story in conversation is not simply the study of the turn in which the story occurs. In order to understand how stories are placed in conversation it is important to examine the talk preceding the story itself as much important and relevant interactional work is done before the story-telling itself. In addition, because stories are sequentially implicative, the interactional relevance of stories does not end with the end of the story turn but continues into the following turns at talk. This means that the analysis of beginnings and endings of stories begins before the story is told and ends after the story turn has finished.

Stories may be introduced by their tellers by reference to the talk which precedes them, that is they are locally occasioned by the emerging turn-by-turn talk (Mandelbaum, 2013). Jefferson (1978) argues that this local occasioning has two possible trajectories:

1. the prior talk may remind a participant of particular story, which may or may not be topically coherent with the turn-by-turn talk;
2. a story may be methodically introduced into the talk.

Where the teller is reminded of the story, it is usually preceded by a disjunct marker such as *oh*, *by the way* or *incidentally* (Jefferson, 1978). This is shown extract (15.1):

(15.1) [Lunch]

1 Harry: ... an then c'd you send those up to Jane  
2 and Mar[y,  
3→ Joy [Oh: tha' r-, did you hear what happened  
4 to Ja::ne.  
5 Harry: What?  
6 Joy: She w's working back late a couple a nights  
7 ago an' she heard this sound outside  
8 her office, ((Story))

In this extract, the *oh* marks Joy's talk as having been triggered by Harry's prior talk and that the prior reference to Jane has recalled a possible tellable about her. At the same time, it marks a disjunction between the topic of Harry's talk and Joy's which has been prompted by the discovery of the possible telling. It is also possible that something outside the talk itself may prompt recall of a possible tellable as in (15.2).

(15.2) [J:FN (Jefferson, 1978)]

((Three people walking together; someone passes  
them wearing a photograph teeshirt))  
Nettie: Oh that teeshirt reminded me ((Story))

In extract (15.3), the story is topically coherent with the prior talk and is not marked as being triggered by the prior talk. Rather the topic has been introduced methodically through the prior turns.

(15.3) [Park]

- 1 Sue: So whaddid yuh end up doin' on Sunday.  
2→ June: We decided to have a picnic in the park.  
3 Sue: Yeah?  
4 June: Yeah. (I w's fun.)  
5→ Sue: Yeah. I's a great place for a picnic.  
6 June Yeah.  
7 (.)  
8→ Sue: Yeah. We went there f'r a picnic once an' i'  
9 was the wo:rst.  
10 June: What happened?  
11 Sue: Well it looked like I was going to be a grea:t  
12 day, i' w'z sunny n everything and we thought  
13 it would be nice there by the river... ((Story))

Here, Sue's question elicits the first mention of picnicking in the park, which is taken up by Sue in her later turn-by-turn talk before being introduced by Sue as a pre-telling at line 5, and eventually as the story from line 11. Thus Sue's first question eventually opens a space for her to tell a story (see Zhang & Peng, 2019). Here there is no sudden remembering of an event occasion by the prior talk, but rather continuing talk about the topic with frequent repetitions of the key elements *picnic* and *park*. These repetitions are embedded into the emerging talk and serve to locate the element of prior talk which has occasioned the story (Jefferson, 1978; Mandelbaum, 2013). It is also possible that both devices will be found in the emergence of a single story, as in (15.4).

(15.4) [Schenkein:I:7 (Jefferson, 1978)]

- 1 Ellen: tuh relax er during this last illness, on top  
2 of the antibiotics.  
3 (1.0)  
4→ Ben: W-well on top a'thee, cough medicine.  
5→ Ellen: Yeah, and the cough medici- incidentally.  
6 Did I tell you?  
7 Ben: No.  
8 Ellen: That the d- he told us to give Snookie  
9→ a third of a teaspoon of uh: cough medicine.  
10 Cheracol, is there a- Is there a  
11 cou[gh me[dicine call'Cherac'l=  
12 Bill: [Yeah.  
13 Ben: [Yeah,  
14 Ellen: =.hhh We happen'tuh have Vic's Four Forty  
((Story))

Here Ben’s mention of cough medicine is followed up by a topically coherent embedded repetition of cough medicine in the next line, which is interrupted by a disjunct marker and the tellable for the story is introduced as having been triggered by the mention of cough syrup.

Both devices for introducing stories into talk involve indicating that the story is in some way relevant to the prior talk, either because it develops the turn-by-turn talk or because some element of the turn-by-turn talk has prompted the recall of the prior talk (Mandelbaum, 1989). These devices then deal with issues related to the relevance of a story at a particular point in a conversation, however, there is more involved in telling a story in conversation than the legitimacy of the story at a point in the unfolding talk. The story teller needs also to undertake work to secure an interactional space in which the extended story turn can be told. Stories are usually preceded by a type of pre-telling, usually called a *story preface* (C. Goodwin, 1984, 2015; Sacks, 1974, 1986, 1992). Like other pre-tellings, story prefaces deal with issues of the tellability of a particular story however they perform additional interactional work. A speaker who wishes to tell a story requiring an extended turn not only has to deal with the issue of tellability, that is whether or not the story can be told in this particular conversation, but also must deal with the interactional problem of securing the space in which to tell the story if it is a tellable (Berger, 2017). Story prefaces also deal with this problem. As with other pre-sequences, story prefaces consist of two turns at talk: the first by the intending teller, the second by the intended recipient (Sacks, 1974). The first turn projects a forthcoming story and the second turn aligns its speaker as a story recipient. Such responses present their speakers’ epistemic stance as unknowing in relation to the story to be told (Heritage, 2012; Heritage & Raymond, 2012), and this stance warrants the story being told. Once these two turns have been completed, if the next speaker gives a go-ahead response, this positions this speaker as a recipient for this story (Berger, 2017; Jefferson, 1978). This means that the canonical form of a story beginning involves a three-turn structure:

1. a first turn with the story preface in which the story teller projects a forthcoming story and indicates a position in the conversation as a potential story-teller
2. a second turn in which another participant aligns as the story recipient
3. a third turn in which the story is told

Chapter 6 examined some formulaic pre-tellings which are also potentially usable as story prefaces, these are given again in (15.5):

|        |                                    |                              |               |
|--------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (15.5) | guess<br>(do) you know<br>remember | what<br>who<br>when<br>where | ± information |
|--------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

Story prefaces with question forms like *do you know what?*, *guess what?* are very effective ways of securing a the next turn for a story because are designed to get an SPP answer which is also a question: *what?*. They therefore require further talk from the speaker of the original question and provide not only for an opportunity to talk, but for an obligation to do so (Sacks, 1992Vol 1, pp. 256-7). However, many story prefaces do not have these formulaic forms but rather are designed for a specific story in a specific interaction. In addition, story prefaces may also include formulaic turns such as:

|        |  |              |
|--------|--|--------------|
| (15.6) | did you hear about<br>did I tell you about | +information |
|--------|--|--------------|

Where these forms are used, a *no* answer indicates that the story being proposed is a tellable in the conversation and orients to the issue of telling unknowns. This can be seen in extract (15.7), in which the *no* response leads directly to a story.

(15.7) [Gina and Hal]

- 1 Gina: ↑OH, did I tell you about what happened to  
 2 me on Friday night?  
 3 Hal: No:.  
 4 Gina: ((Story))

If the information is unknown then the story is potentially tellable, however, if the story is known then it cannot be told in this conversation, as in (15.8).

(15.8) [Car conversation]

- 1 Sasha: an all- did he tell yuh about his problems  
 2 with his wife an [that  
 3 Nick: [yeah. oh I knew all  
 4 about that anyway.  
 5 (0.2)  
 6 Nick: an he's got this tattoo on his ↓che:st

Here Nick's *yeah* means that Sasha's story about *his problems with his wife* is not a potential tellable for Nick and no story is produced. After a pause, Nick continues with related talk, but on a different topic.

Story prefaces may also be constructed using evaluative adjectives which characterize the nature of the story to be told, as in extracts (15.9) to (15.11).

(15.9) [S&S:1]

- Sam Someth'n' great happen' to me this morning.  
 Sal: What?  
 Sam: ((Story))

(15.10) [Trial]

- Al: You wanna know th' wo:rs' thing th's ever  
 happen to me?  
 Ben: What?  
 Al: ((Story))

(15.11) [Dinner3]

- Chris: You wanna hear something really amazing?

Dan: What?  
Chris: ((Story))

In these cases, the go-ahead response is *what* and in extracts (15.10) and (15.11) the *what* response is especially interesting because it replaces a possible *yes* response to the question. The *what* here orients quite strongly to the status of the prior turn as a story preface and the alignment of the speaker as a story recipient.

Story prefaces are not always formulaic but may be designed in reference to a specific story and context as in the case of (15.12) and (15.13).

(15.12) [D:1:DC]

Donna: We h'd the worst weekend?  
Cath: What happened?  
Donna: ((Story))

(15.13) [G:26:5:53 (C. Goodwin, 1984)]

1 Ann: well- ((throat clear)) (0.4) we coulda used a  
2 liddle marijuana. tih get through the weekend.  
3 Beth: what h[appened].  
4 Ann: [((Story))

Here the story preface takes the form of a formulation about an event which is unknown to the recipient and as such resembles a telling, although as a telling its is incomplete. The turn gives a small amount of information about an event, which could potentially allow the recipient to identify the event as known or unknown, and implies that there is more to be told about this event. The recipients' response *what happened?* indicates that the event is unknown and therefore tellable, and orients the speaker as a recipient for a story about the event.

Story prefaces may, therefore, be used to achieve a number of things relevant to the telling of a story:

1. they negotiate an interactional space in which the story can be told as a multiunit turn;
2. they negotiate issues of tellability;
3. they provide some indication of roughly what the story is about.

All story prefaces are concerned with the first of these tasks and many are concerned with the second. However, prefaces of the sort *guess what?* provide little information which would be useful for a recipient to use in gauging whether the projected event was known or unknown. Those prefaces which include some evaluative information, such as the adjectives in extracts (15.9), (15.10), (15.11) and (15.12) or the evaluation implied by *we coulda used a liddle marijuana. tih get through the wekend* in extract (15.13) indicate roughly what the story is about. In so doing, these prefaces provide a type of interpretive framework which the recipient can use to understand the story and its import in the current conversation. These story prefaces, therefore, signal to the recipient roughly what it will take for the story to be completed and provide the recipient with a format in which to display that they have recognized the story as having been completed (Sacks, 1992Vol. 1, p. 766).

In opening an interactional space to allow for a multiunit turn to be produced, story prefaces and their responses suspend the turn-taking system which allows for speaker change at the next possible completion. This suspension is temporary and the turn-taking system is restored on completion of the story. This raises a new interactional problem for participants: they need to be able to determine when the turn-taking system can legitimately be restored. As with the operation of the turn-taking system itself, this is also a question of completion. The turn-taking system is restored when participants recognize the story as being possibly complete. The recognizable completions of stories signal that a unit of talk is possibly complete, not because of the possible completion of a TCU, but because of the possible completion of a recognizable activity (Sacks, 1992 Vol. 1, p. 682). Story prefaces play a role in this in that they may project roughly what it will take for the extended turn underway to be possibly complete (Sacks, 1992, Vol 2, pp. 10). They do this when they characterize the story in some way. For example, a story about “something wonderful” will not be seen to be properly complete until something occurs which is recognisable as “wonderful”. In this way, the story preface provides a framework in which a recipient can attend to each next bit of the story as being possibly a final bit of the story.

On completion of a story, a response to the story from the recipient is relevant. This response firstly displays the recipient’s understanding that the story is now over and secondly it involves a display of how the recipient has understood the story (Selting, 2017).

(15.14) [SSHHTJ:1:8]

Heli: ((Story)) an' now I just go li:ke all c-cold  
whenever I see a ssnake.  
Jo: Sh::it Kerry I'da die::d.

Here, Jo’s response displays an understanding that the prior story about encountering a snake at home was traumatic and shows a strong affective response. Where there is no response to the story, this is a noticeable absence and is repaired, as in (15.15) in which the speaker may solicit a relevant response (see Sacks, 1992, Vol 1, pp. 766).

(15.15) [Pets]

1 Tina: ((Story)) but my father had to have her put  
2 down after.  
3 (0.2)  
4 Tina: Wasn' that sa:d?  
5 Sally: I' was awful.

In this extract Tina is telling a story about her pet dog who had to be destroyed. Her story is followed by a pause, after which she prompts an assessment from Sally. The lack of talk by Sally here is problematic, as she has failed to register the end of the story. Tina’s question elicits an assessment which evaluates the story and in so doing shows a recognition that the story is now completed. In other cases, story-tellers may respond to such pauses by proposing that the story is incomplete at the pause and add a further component to the story as in (15.16).

(15.16) [Sue]

1 Dina: ((Story)) and in the end she got this really ugly

2                    bag th't doesn't go with anything.  
 3                    (0.4)  
 4    Dina:        but she's like so proud of it.  
 5    Clara:      \*o:h shi:t\* that girl has no taste.

Here Dina's possible story ending is followed by a silence of 0.4 seconds after which she adds an increment to the turn, converting the pause from an inter-turn pause to an intra-turn pause. In so doing, the pause is converted from a missing response to the prior story to a pause during the ongoing story itself. After the added component, Clara produces a response which displays here understandings of the story and as the story as a now completed action.

(15.17) [JJ]

Jill:        ((Story)) an now I don' know what she's gonna do.  
 Jane:        O:H that's te:rr[ible].  
 Jill:                    ['S just awful.

In extract (15.17), Jane's turn includes an assessment *O:H that's terrible* which displays her understanding of the import of the telling of this story, an understanding which is ratified by Jill's assessment in the following line. The participants are thus aligned affiliatively with the each other and the telling itself (Selting, 2017). Sometimes a recipient and a story-teller may not share the same understanding of the import of a story as in extract (15.18). Here A is relating a story to B of what happened when she advertised a house for rent.

(15.18) [(Sacks, 1992, II:10)]

1    A:            So I thought just for fun, I would uhm -- uh,  
                   since  
 2                    I had this much time, I'd run a little add myself?  
 3    B:            Uh huh,  
 4    A:            and maybe handle it myself if I could?  
 5    B:            Mm hm,  
 6    A:            and do you know I was just amazed, it was in  
 7                    last night, I was amazed at the responses I got.  
 8    B:            Mm hm,  
 9    A:            and uh its-I already have a (1.0) a deposit for  
                   it.  
 10→ B:            Well good!  
 11→ A:            Isn't that something?  
 12→ B:            Well I should say.

In this extract, Sacks (1992, Vol 2, p. 10) argues that B's *well good!* displays an understanding of the story as having been about how good it is to have rented the flat quickly. However, A's next turn displays a different understanding of the import of the story, as being something amazing rather than something good, and proposes a repair of B's understanding of the story. B repairs her understanding of the story in the next turn. An understanding of the story could potentially be developed from a hearing of the talk which makes up the story, however, story prefaces not only provide information about what the story might contain, but also provide a

resource for designing the recipient's response to a story. A story about "something wonderful" requires a response that shows the recipient's understanding of the event as "wonderful".

Jefferson (1978) has noted that recipient's talk after a story may be either directly continuous with and fitted to the story or may be tangential to the story. Where the talk is continuous there is no problem as issues of understanding have been dealt with in the talk. However, where the talk is tangential it is potentially problematic as a display of understanding. Jefferson notes that in cases of tangential talk, story tellers do not explicitly challenge such talk, but rather propose that the story is not yet completed by adding further talk to the story.

(15.19) [Labov:T.A.:4r (Jefferson, 1978)]

1 Rita: She didn't have time tuh cook yesterday she got  
 2 home la:te,  
 3 (0.4)  
 4 Rita: So ah met'er et (Promptiers).  
 5 (0.2)  
 6 Rita : She had a:, (0.3) a broi:led hambuhrger, (0.6)  
 7 with no gravy awnit, (0.5) She hadda serving  
 8 of cabbage, 'n she hadda salad.  
 9 (0.3)  
 10→ Marge: Very- It's terrific I  
 11 bec[ause I'm telling yih-]  
 12→ Rita: [ En she couldn' ev]en fini-sh[:: i(h)t,]=  
 13 Marge: [There's ]  
 15 Marge: =E:vrybody's e[couraging[ her there.]  
 15 Rita: [enna cupp[a ca:wfee. ]

Here Marge initiates tangential talk at line 10 after the story has reached a possible completion. In overlap, Rita produces a further component of the story *En she couldn' ev]en fini-sh[:: i(h)t*, during which Marge's tangential talk continues, at line 12, Rita adds a further component to the story, backing up to the list of things which the women being discussed ate. This shows that stories have a relationship with the sorts of talk which follows them just as they have a relationship with the talk which precedes them. Jefferson (1978) argues that the ends of story are sequentially implicative in two ways:

1. they can be a source for topically coherent talk; and
2. a range of techniques are used to display a relationship between the story and the subsequent talk.

This means that stories not only project possible trajectories of talk, but that participants in the talk orient to the relevance of such coherent talk in designing their further talk.

### Story structure

Stories have internal structures which are interactionally relevant for the telling. Goodwin (1984) has described the internal subcomponents of stories as interactionally accomplished elements which participants use as a resources for structuring and understanding their

participation in storytelling. The subcomponents of story structure are described by Goodwin through an investigation of the telling of the story in extract (15.20).

(15.20) [(C. Goodwin, 1984)]

1 (0.4)  
2 Ann: well- ((throat clear)) (0.4) we coulda used a  
3 liddle marijuana. tih get through the weekend.  
4 Beth: what h[appened.  
5 Ann: [Karen has this new hou:se. en it's got  
6 all this like- (0.2) ssilvery:: g-go:ld  
7 wwa:llpaper, .hh (h)en D(h)o(h)n sa(h)ys,  
8 y'know this is th'first time we've seen this  
9 house.=fifty thousn dollars in Cherry  
10 Hill.=right?  
11 (0.4)  
12 Beth: uh hu:h?  
13 Ann: Do(h)n said. (0.3) dih-did the ma:ke you take  
14 this [wa(h)llpa(h)p(h)er? er(h)di[dju pi(h)ck]=  
15 Beth: [hh! [Ahh huh huh]=  
16 Ann: =[i(h)t ou(h)t.  
17 Beth: =[huh huh huh [huh  
18 Don: [uhh hih huh hu[h  
19 Ann: [UHWOOghghHHH!=  
20 =y'kno(h)w that wz [like the firs' bad one.  
21 Beth: [uh:oh wo::w hh  
22 (0.2)  
23 Don: but I said it so innocuously y'know.  
24 Ann: yeh I'm sure they thought it wz- hnh hnh!

Goodwin (1984) has shown that this story has a basic internal structure made up of background information (lines 5-7) and a climax (lines 13-14) and this structure is interrupted at line 8, which begins a climax (*Do(h)n said.*) which is subsequently aborted and a parenthesis (lines 8-11) in which additional background information is inserted, before returning to the climax. This story is preceded by a story preface, in lines 1-2, and an acceptance of the preface in line 4. In the story, the background elements provide the necessary information that the recipient needs to in order to be able to understand the climax as a climax, and to hear the climax as something relevant to the way in which the story is characterized in the story preface *we coulda used a liddle marijuana. tih get through the weekend*, that is a story about a problematic or difficult weekend. Sacks (1974, 1978) has made a similar observation about certain types of jokes which require a pattern to be established through the early talk in the joke in order to enable the punch line to be heard as humorous.

Goodwin (1984) argues that the division of the story into background and climax is oriented to by the participants as a resource for their participation in the story. Ann, the teller, marks the climax as distinctive by including laughter tokens. She does this in both the aborted attempt at the climax at line 8 and in the redoing of the climax at lines 13-14. In so doing she performs the climax differently from the background and as such interactionally displays the structuring



Ann:        =.hh (h) en D(h) o(h) n sa (h) ys,  
Beth: \_\_\_\_\_

Beth returns her gaze to Ann just before the beginning of the climax and continues to maintain her gaze through the laughter-marked delivery of the first try at the climax. In so doing, the participants orient to this talk as being different from the preceding talk and relevant to the possible completion of the extended turn at talk. However, this climax is aborted and the teller returns to relating background information and the recipient again withdraws her gaze from the speaker. Beth then requests greater engagement from her recipient with the tag question *right?* at line 10. In the new version of the climax, Beth accepts the invitation to laugh and in so doing displays her co-participation in the storytelling. Goodwin (1984) argues on the basis of this behaviour that the telling is organized by the actions of both the teller and the recipient and is not simply an accomplishment of the teller herself. In fact he further argues that the other participants in the conversation also orient to this story structure in the ways in which they coordinate their behaviours with the unfolding structure of Ann's talk.

The story structure which emerges is not a mechanical performance based on the emerging speech, but rather an interactional accomplishment of structure through the process of interaction. This means that interaction is precisely organized through systematic procedures that are not simply relevant to the talk but also play a role in constitution of the talk as a structured activity. The division of a story into background and climax is therefore an interactionally relevant story structure and that some parts of the story will be heard by participants as talk which is incomplete as a telling and talk which is potentially complete, that is as a climax. The accomplishment of this structure through talk involves multiple TCUs in which talk is grammatically and intonationally complete, but which are not attended to by the participants as places at which speaker change is a relevant next action. Recipients in conversation routinely use devices which show their understanding of the talk underway as not complete. Continuers such as *mmhm* show that the story has been heard to be not yet to have reached a point of recognisable completion and that the recipient of story is continuing the reciprocity (Sacks, 1992, Vol 2, pp. 9; Schegloff, 1982). Talk other than a continuer, especially assessments, show that the recognisable completion has been reached (Sacks, 1992, Vol 1, pp. 766). Schegloff (1982) maintains that continuers such as *uh huh* both claim understanding of the talk underway and also display the nature of that understanding by declining to produce fuller talk in that position. Schegloff argues continuers are not so much turns at talk but rather cases of passing up turns at talk in order to display understanding of the action under way as not yet being complete. Continuers are heard as displays of continued states of reciprocity in extended turns because they are hearable as the withholding of other possible forms of talk in such positions, especially as withholding repair initiation. That is, the deployment of a token such as *uh huh* or *mm hmm* demonstrates that no interactional work is required at this point in the unfolding talk to deal with problems of hearing and understanding. The withholding of repair indicates that the talk can proceed unproblematically. This in turn means that the accomplishment of a long turn at talk is not simply the production of such talk by a speaker, but also the continued orientation of a recipient to such production and the passing up of alternatives which could prevent the turn from continuing.

The discussion so far indicates that stories are interactionally accomplished actions which involve the collaboration of participants in the interaction in order to succeed. This means that stories in conversation are not simply the deployment of generic structures in the conversation nor are they simply instances of teller's talk which can be analysed only as the linguistic

production of a single participant in the interaction. However, stories also have a role in the development of further talk in the conversation and can have an affect beyond the turn in which they are produced.

## Second Stories

Sacks (1992, Vol 1, pp. 706) has observed that “given the telling of a story, other stories may be forthcoming”, however it is also the case that not any story can follow any prior story. Next stories are characterisable as next stories in that they will have a shape determined by the prior story and they will be about something related to the prior story. Each story is constructed as being in second position to a prior story. Second stories are not second simply because they occur after first stories, they are also second in that they show relationships to first stories. That is they show a relationship of relevance to the preceding story. These stories, therefore, not only do storytelling, but also are a way of showing understanding of a prior story. This relationship between first stories and second stories can be seen in the story beginning at line 32 in extract (15.24).

(15.24) [Melb:2]

- 1 A: We can't decide whether we wanna go tuh Melb'ne  
2 or not fuh th'break.
- 3 B: O:↑h. Did I tell you wha' happened last time I  
4 went t' Melb'ne,
- 5 A: Na:h wha' happen.
- 6 B: Well we had a really a::wful time yuh know,  
7 i' was last March 'n John an' I decided we'd  
8 fly down, (w'll) the plane left n' as we were  
9 takin' off well I started tuh get this fu:nny  
10 feelin' in my ears, [ and] we were goin' up=  
11 A: [mm? ]
- 12 B: =an' this feeling' just keeps gettin' wo:rse an  
13 wo:rse an it's startin' to hu:rt.  
14 An' I said tuh John ↑there's sumthin' wrong  
15 with the pla:ne. Well yuh know I' was the  
16 pressure an' air was lea:kin' [ out.]=  
17 A: [yeah?]
- 18 B: =An the pilot come on tuh say that we're gunna  
19 hafta go back coz there's this problem with  
20 the plane. So we turn back. and yuh know  
22 everyone is so sca:red, 'n jus' holding their  
23 breath, hopin' that it would come out alright.  
24 Anyway we got back safe an we didn' need the  
25 oxygen masks 'r anything.  
26 But it was the worst trip of my life  
27 an' I sti:ll get nervous 'bout it when I get on  
28 planes.
- 29 A: THat mus:t have been terrible.

30 B: Yeah it was, but it came out alright.  
 31 I mean yuh hear about much worse.  
 32→ A: Yeah (I kno:w) I saw a story in the paper 'bout  
 33 a man who w's almost sucked oudda the window of  
 34 a pla[ne].  
 35 B: [hh.=  
 36 A: =The window nexta him broke while  
 37 they were flying an' the pressure sortta blew  
 38 him through the hole,  
 39 B: o:[:hɛ]  
 40 A: [An ] the person nexta him grabbed ontta his  
 41 legs an' lotsa other people too I think,  
 42 an' they had tuh hold him until the plane could  
 43 land (yih-) hanging outta the window all the  
 44 time it musta been terrible but he got back  
 45 alright, I guess he was pretty lucky.  
 46 B: Yeahh..

In this extract, there are two stories each about a problem occurring during an aeroplane flight. The first of the stories (lines 6-28) is a story of personal experience while the second (lines 32-45) is a telling of a reported account of another's experience. The topics of the stories are similar and the second is triggered by the first. However, the similarity between second stories and prior stories is an interactionally achieved similarity (Sacks, 1992, Vol 2, pp. 4-5). A recipient of a story has to show understanding of the story and needs to find something that can be used in talk to do this. One way of doing this is to use "things this reminds me of", that is to relate the story to elements of one's own personal experience. This means that when a recipient is listening to the teller, part of this listening will involve a search for some relationship between the story and one's own experience (Sacks, 1992, Vol 1, pp. 768). In extract (15.24), the second story is framed as a reminder of a recalled story. The second story is designed as relevant to the first in that it takes as its topic problems occurring during flights, but is also tied to the story by the formulation *I mean yuh hear about much worse*. The story is simultaneously dealing with the topic developed by the prior talk and with the characterization of what something much worse could entail. The second story is also tied to the first at a level of greater detail in that both refer to instances of 'pressure' being the source of the problem and as the upshot of the story being characterized as *it came out alright* in the first story and as *he got back alright* in the second. As such, there are parallels of form as well as of content between the two stories (see also M. H. Goodwin, 1990).

Another feature of second stories is that they are often not preceded by interactional work to establish the story. In the case of extract (15.24), for example, the story is not launched by a story preface and accepting turn but rather in lines 32 onwards, the story begins immediately with an announcement of a reminding. Second stories do not need to announce the sort of action they are second to in order to be considered as cases of the activity to which they are second. They rely on their positioning after a prior activity and invoke the structure which has previously been made relevant. Second stories can therefore be simply delivered without the prior interactional work of establishing storytelling as a relevant activity in the conversation (Sacks, 1992, Vol 1, pp. 683).

## Stories of shared experience

Stories are not necessarily the work of a single speaker and other participants in the conversation may contribute to the talk (Elinore Ochs, Taylor, Rudolph, & Smith, 1992; Sacks, 1974). It may be the case that others present at the telling were involved in the events related in the story, but even those who were not involved may insert additions, corrections, comments, questions, protests, etc. The role of teller is therefore potentially interactionally problematic, especially when two or more participants in the conversation share participation in the events being narrated. Stories of shared experience are problematic for two reasons: (1) there are two (or more) participants who are qualified to tell the story, (2) there are two (or more) people who are not possible recipients of the telling (Mandelbaum, 1989). The presence of two potential tellers leads to the possibility of competition for the role of “narrator” of the story (Tanner & Stirling, 2017). These difficulties are addressed interactionally in conversations in which stories of shared experience are told. In some cases, the teller may involve another potential teller in the story by eliciting corroboration of the information told in the story through means of a repair initiation (C. Goodwin, 1987).

### (15.25) [Car Conversation]

1 Sasha: o:h. we saw some briyant ones recently, like um  
2 (1.0)  
3 oh what was that one about- (0.4) like Double  
4 In- (.) Indemnity= n like lots of movies from  
5 the thirties that ha- had amazing plot lines?  
6 (0.9)  
7 some of them were really full on: like um:  
8 (0.3) A Place in the Sun?  
9 Nick: yeah.  
10 Sasha: like this man: (0.8) was um (0.6) out in a  
11 boat and his wife drowned or something, and  
12→ (.6) he did d-=was it he didn't do it (.) Elly?  
13 Elvis: yeah.  
14 Sasha: he didn't do it but (.2) he didn't say he  
15 didn't do it so he got (.) killed at the end,  
16 like hanged or something=but it was really  
17 [full on

In this extract, Sasha's *=was it he didn't do it (.) Elly?* provides an acknowledgement that Elvis, although not acting as a teller in this story is qualified to tell the story. The repair initiation displays Elvis' access to the story and involves him in the telling. In this talk, Sasha displays that Elvis was a co-participant in the events being told and is a knowing recipient for this story, although he is not the addressed recipient. Alternatively, knowing recipients may claim knowledge and involvement by correcting details of the telling (Mandelbaum, 1989; Tanner & Stirling, 2017).

### (15.26) [MU:1:20]

Penny: yih see he w'z readin' this book or s[ometh:i-  
Louise: [ 's a

newspaper  
Penny: yuh a newspaper and he didn' see ...

In this extract, Louise initiates an other initiated other repair on the word *book* in Penny's talk. In so doing, she displays her own qualification to tell the story and her co-participation in the event and that she is a knowing recipient of the story. In these cases, the role of the knowing recipient is collaborative and secondary. That is, the knowing recipients support the telling of the story, but do not become tellers in their own right. However, it is possible that participants may compete to become tellers of a story and in this case, the status of teller is contested by participants in the talk and this issue is managed locally by the participants.

In extract (15.27), three people in a car are driving home from a party: Sasha, Elvis and Nick. Sasha is driving. Sasha and Elvis are partners. Interactionally this raises the possibility that Sasha and Elvis have a store of shared experiences which are potential tellables with Nick as recipient.

(15.27) [Car Conversation]

1 Nick: jus' go like follow this roa[d almost all the=  
2 Elvis: [yea:h  
3 Nick: =way through  
4 Sasha: yep  
5 Elvis: an' run intuh (.) buses  
6 Sasha: o:h g[od Elvis ] I thought we were dead=  
7 Elvis: [heh huh huh]  
8 Sasha =that day.  
9 Sasha: that wa[s so l-  
10 Elvis: [that w'z the closest ca:ll man goin'  
11 throu-I'll show yuh which [w-  
12 Sasha: [o:h I ne[ver been  
13 Elvis: [it's the=  
14 Sasha: =s:o-  
15 Elvis: =one right up (0.9) [the ]top of th[is  
16 Nick: [( )] [the top,  
17 Elvis: ye:p.  
18 Sasha: h[e jus' goes-  
19 Elvis: [i' w'z fuckin'  
20 Elvis: like there was a bus right the:re man, in that  
21 FUCKIN' BLI:ND spot, [an' I] looked =  
22 Nick: [yeah,]  
23 Elvis: =th[rough an I didn't see ]=  
24 Sasha: [an he's drivin' through]  
25 [an' I'm jus screamin' ] my lung[s out  
26 Elvis: =[anything so I wen' through]  
27 Elvis: [.hh an  
28 you jus screa:med an I just stopped.=  
29 Sasha: =slammed on the breaks. in the middle of



resolution of the overlap. This is interactionally important as last speaker emerges as current speaker, and in this context as story teller. Elvis overlaps the end of Sasha's turn and reformulates Sasha's talk. This time as a reminiscence designed for his knowing recipient (*you*). This talk integrates Sasha's talk into Elvis' own version of a narrative, and also invokes an earlier activity. It acknowledges, through reminiscence, Sasha's shared experience, while simultaneously transforming her talk into his own. He then adds a further element to the story. This element, however, is designed for either recipient as it both continues as reminiscence with Sasha, but also functions to advance the story for Nick. At this point, Elvis has emerged as the last speaker in the story, and potentially as the last teller of the story to Nick. However, Sasha then self-selects and again reformulates Elvis' addition and adds further information to emerge as the final speaker and the final teller. This turn becomes the last story turn, as Nick's question returns the interaction to turn-by-turn talk. Nick's question is not designed in a way which unambiguously selects a next speaker, although it does require further talk. The form 'you' is potentially problematic here (see Lerner, 1996b): it may encode 'the driver of the car' as a singular or 'the occupants in the car' as a plural. Sasha, replying here, treats it as being the occupants and continues with the status of teller she won at the end of the story. Nick's next question is again ambiguous in terms of speaker selection, potentially allowing either to become next speaker and again it is Sasha who self-selects, replying with a tellable about Elvis (*he*), although this time, Elvis also self-selects in overlap but does not emerge as a current speaker.

This extract illustrates a number of things about story telling. First, the event being studied here is not a single activity that participants are engaged in: it is not simply a story told to Nick by a story-teller. Stories are not self-contained generic units but are interactionally accomplished events. There are in fact two different activities, with different participation frameworks involved here: a) a story of shared experience invoked by Elvis with Sasha as the (knowing) addressed recipient and with the possibility of shifting the roles of teller and recipient; and (b) a story told to an unknowing addressed recipient about which the role of teller is disputed interactionally. It is not simply a question of one activity leading to the other in this conversation, but that both activities are possibly present through the talk. Secondly, the identity of teller is not a given in conversation but rather it is achieved interactionally. Where only a single teller has knowledge of the event being told, the identity of teller is interactionally unproblematic and a single teller is the normal outcome. In the case of stories involving experiences shared by some of the participants, the identity of story-teller is interactionally problematic, a single teller does not follow unproblematically for the launching of the story preface and speakership may be competed for through the talk. Thirdly, collaborative examples of story telling, in which one knowing participant is a teller and the other plays a supportive role in the telling are likewise interactionally achieved. That is, stories which run off with a single story teller throughout do so because the other knowing recipient does not become or attempt to become a teller. One does not gain a right to tell a story as a sole narrator, one is given the opportunity to tell the story in this way.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter began by arguing that stories are interactionally problematic because of the way in which the turn-taking system functions. In order to secure the space for multi-unit talk speakers have to negotiate a space in which this talk can happen, and this means they have to suspend the normal operation of turn-taking. The suspension of turn-taking is, however, not an exception to the turn-taking rules of conversation; rather it is a special application of these rules.

Firstly, stories are introduced through an operation of turn-taking through the story preface which is constructed with an orientation to the normal function of the system: story prefaces are constructed as single TCUs and provide for speaker change at their completion. This enactment of speaker change in this context, however, serves to suspend turn-taking as the normal consequence of a possible completion until the story is told. Secondly, during stories, story recipients display their orientation to turn-taking by passing up opportunities for talk through the use of continuers. Thirdly, the turn-taking system becomes relevant again at the moment the story is completed and comes into operation at the possible completion of the activity of story telling. This means that, although turn-taking has been suspended, participants continue to orient to the turn-taking system in organising their participation in the talk. Stories, therefore, are not simply told by tellers who in some sense take a long turn at talk, rather they are collaboratively achieved by the participants through and in the telling of stories.

### Exercise

Examine the data you have collected and see if you can identify instances in which participants tell stories. You may need to transcribe some more interactions to do this.

- How is the story designed for its recipients? Is the story designed for an unknowing recipient? Is it a story told to or in the presence of a knowing recipient? How does this influence how the story is told?
- Examine how the story is introduced into the conversation. Is there a story preface? If so, how does the preface set up the story to come? What is the response to the preface? What happens after the response? If there is no story preface, how is the story introduced by the storyteller?
- How does the story end? How does the talk show that all participants recognise the story to be over? What happens after the story is finished?
- Are there any second stories in the data? If there are, how do the second stories relate to a preceding story? How does the storyteller show that the stories are related?

### Further reading

- Goodwin, C. (2015). Narrative as talk-in-interaction. In A. D. Fina & A. Georgakopoulou (Eds.), *The handbook of narrative analysis* (pp. 197-218). New York: Wylie.
- Jefferson, Gail. (1978). Sequential aspects of storytelling. In Jim Schenkein (Ed.), *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction* (pp. 219-248). New York: Academic.
- Mandelbaum, J. (1989). Interpersonal activities in conversational storytelling. *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 53, 114-126.
- Sacks, Harvey. (1986). Some considerations of a story told in ordinary conversation. *Poetics*, 15, 127-138.

## Chapter 16 Applying Conversation Analysis

### Focus

- Applying methods and ideas from Conversation Analysis in other contexts
- The interactional practices found in institutional settings as modifications of everyday interaction
- Investigating computer-mediated communication using Conversation Analysis
- Using Conversation Analysis to study second language acquisition

### Introduction

The discussion in this book so far has focused on describing the main findings that Conversation Analysis has provided for understanding how conversation is structured as a form of social interaction. This is an important part of the work of Conversation Analysis, which, in its pure form, seeks to understand how human interaction is structured and what the consequences are of this structuring. Many researchers also use Conversation Analysis in order to understand how interaction works in specific settings. Heritage (1997) identifies this distinction as involving two interrelated ways of doing research on spoken interaction.

There are, therefore, at least two kinds of conversation analytic research going on today, and though they overlap in various ways, they are distinct in focus. The first examines the institution *of* interaction in its own right; the second studies the management of social institutions *in* interaction (Heritage, 1997, p. 162, emphasis in the original).

This book so far has been concerned with the first of these ways of studying conversation. We now turn to the second. This is sometimes known as “applied Conversation Analysis” (Antaki, 2011a; Lester & O’Reilly., 2018; ten Have, 2001). Applied Conversation Analysis covers a wide range of studies and in considering how Conversation Analysis can be helpful in understanding interaction in a range of settings this Chapter will consider a selection of different areas in which applied Conversation Analysis research has been done. The discussion will begin with the general topic of institutional talk; that is, ‘the management of social institutions *in* interaction’ in Heritage’s words above, and will then examine medical interactions as a specific instance of institutional talk. This will be followed by a discussion of conversation analytic studies of second language acquisition, an area in which Conversation Analysis has established a distinctive research approach and agenda. It will finish by considering the application of Conversation Analysis to intercultural and interlinguistic communication as this is an area where micro-level analysis presents particular challenges.

### Institutional talk

The study of institutional talk involves understanding how language constitutes particular work- or task-oriented settings (Drew & Heritage, 1992a; L. Jones, 2019). This involves a very broad understanding of what constitutes an institution. In fact, it is possible to consider any interaction which is not “conversational” to be a form of institutional talk. The distinction here is not based on a theorised view of what constitutes an institution but rather on an understanding of the ways in which setting influences how language is used in interaction. In fact, it is not the setting itself which characterises talk as institutional but rather the identities of people that are relevant to the interaction. This means that in any setting talk may or may not be institutional.

For example, a surgical team at a hospital may engage in conversation as part of their talk in the workplace. In such interaction, their particular institutional roles are not relevant to the talk and the way it unfolds. It is casual conversation. At other moments in the work day, such as when performing an operation, the talk of the team will be institutional. Their roles as surgeons, nurses, etc. will be the roles and relationships which influence how interaction is done. Although the participants may be the same, the nature of the interaction will be qualitatively different.

From its beginning Conversation Analysis has recognised that in everyday conversation participants locally manage interaction, however, in many situations, the setting imposes constraints on what can be done and how. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) argue that conversation represents the most basic level of human interaction and other ways of interacting are derived from them and that the differences found between everyday talk and the specialised ways in which talk is used in institutional contexts are relevant to the particular roles and tasks of the institutional setting.

The main underlying idea in research on talk in institutional settings is that institutions and institutional identities are created and carried out through talk. In institutional settings, the interaction is therefore shaped and constrained by the participants' orientation to the institution involved. Drew and Heritage (1992a) argue that institutional talk is characterised in a number of ways. Firstly, in institutional talk there is an orientation by at least one participant to some core task, goal or identity which is usually associated with the institutional setting in question. For example, in a medical consultation, the doctor and the patient will orient to these particular identities as being relevant to their particular roles in the conversation and that these roles will be understood in terms of a particular goal, such as making a diagnosis. Moreover, the talk of the doctor and the patient will be influenced by their particular role and will be directed towards the relevant goal. Secondly, institutional talk usually involves special and particular constraints on what participants consider to be allowable contributions to the interaction. In the case of communication between a doctor and a patient to reach a diagnosis, particular topics will be allowable that might not be considered appropriate topics in other settings. In developing these topics, doctors may be expected to ask questions and patients will reply to these. Thirdly, institutional talk may be associated with inferential frameworks procedures particular to the institution. If the talk between participants certain actions may be understood in ways that are different from the ways they would be understood in other settings. For example, in professional settings, it is not uncommon for people to withhold certain forms of talk, such as expressions of surprise, sympathy, etc. In everyday interactions, the lack of such talk may be considered to be disaffiliative, as signalling some social difficulty in the interaction, but in professional contexts they are understood as appropriate practice. Thus, patients do not expect doctors to express surprise at answers to diagnostic questions and the lack of such expressions is not interpreted as socially problematic. In fact, the expression of surprise in such settings may be what is socially problematic and subject to different interpretations.

### *Turn-taking in institutional settings*

In institutional contexts, one of the significant differences which can be observed is the way in which the turn-taking systems operate. These differences are not simply differences in kind, but are consequential for the functioning of the institution as an institution. That is, turn-taking can be seen as one of the ways in which the institution creates itself as an institution through talk. Understanding the ways in which institutions use turn-taking can be an important element in understanding how the institution works. Heritage (2004) has identified two main ways in

which turn-taking can differ in institutional contexts: turn-type pre-allocation and the management of turn allocation.

### Turn-type pre-allocation

Turn-type pre-allocation refers the fact that, in some institutional contexts, what participants are able to say is determined by the institutional setting rather than being locally managed by participants. In such contexts, one or more parties in the talk may be restricted to performing only a limited range of actions through the talk. That is, the institutional contexts requires participants to say things that count as particular types of action and to withhold talk that would perform other actions. In many institutional contexts, the pre-allocation of turn types involves a restriction of one party to answering questions. This restriction is found, for example, in courtrooms, in interviews and in classrooms. In these contexts, the restriction is placed on the participant in the interaction who is not the representative of the institution: in courtrooms, witnesses and suspects are restricted to answering questions; in interviews, the same is true of interviewees; in school classrooms, at least at some points in a lesson, students are restricted to answering teachers' questions.

Extract (16.1) shows a small part of a new interview and shows clearly the turn-taking system found in interviews of this type.

(16.1) [WAO:13.3.79 (Greatbatch, 1988)]

1 Int: What did that mean=moving the patient or  
2 bringing a mach:ine, =or what.=  
3 GC: =This meant u- moving the patient u- about e::r  
4 three hundred yards from the intensive care unit  
5 (.)to the x-ray department,= the only place where  
6 the available facilities (.) er were.=  
7 Int: =And what happened.  
8 GC: .h Initially a phone call was made by the ward  
9 sister to the: (0.2) portering department .hh  
10 asking for help to move this .hh patient because  
11 equipment attached to him, (0.2) the .hhh  
12 of the (.)and the:y flatly refused to do so:.  
13 =.hhh (0.2)Following this e:r they put the phone  
14 down,=immediately another phone call was made, (.)  
15 same response, =even though it was pointed out  
16 that this was an emergency .hhh  
17 the:: people concerned .hhh er gave as their  
18 reason for not coming the fact that .h x-ra:y:ng  
19 porteri is not covered by the emergency .hi er  
20 porting service.  
21 Int: Were these hospital porters or a union officials  
22 or what.  
23 GC: These were hospital porters acting I belie:ve .hh  
24 e:r under instructions from . . . (continues)

Each of the interviewer's turns takes the form of a question and each of the interviewee's turns is an answer. Over the course of these turns, no other talk is produced by the participants. The talk here is interesting in terms of what forms of talk have been omitted. In particular, there are no turns in which the interviewer responds to the content of the interviewee's answers. That is, there are no SCTs which would register that the interviewee's turn constitutes information which was previously unknown (*oh*), that the interviewer has accepted what the interviewee has done in his turn (*okay*), or makes an assessment of the information in the turn. The interviewer does not treat the talk as being designed for him and withholds those forms of talk which would display his reciprocity of the talk as a conversational participant. Instead, the interviewer distances himself as a participant and foregrounds his institutional role as an elicitor of information for an audience.

The pre-allocation of turn types in these contexts restricts who can speak and what can be said. Moreover, the restrictions of participation found in such settings gives institutional members control over the ways in which the interaction can proceed and allow them to determine the ways in which non-members can participate and how their contributions are to be understood. In extract (16.2), the lawyer (Mr Cochran) and the witness are involved in a question answer adjacency pair and there is a dispute about whether the sequence has been completed properly.

(16.2) [(Cotterill, 2003)]

- 1 Mr.Cochran: All right. Now, in the course of your preparing or shooting  
2 the video that day, did you ever have occasion to either touch  
3 or bump into Mr. Simpson at all?  
4 Witness: There was one situation. It was a break, whether they're  
5 relighting or redoing cameras or whatever they're it was, and  
6 they asked us to stay on the floor, stay in our spots because,  
7 as you saw the videotape, each person has a spot and –  
8 Mr.Darden: Objection, your Honor. Pardon me, sir. This is non-responsive.  
9 Mr.Cochran: Your Honor, this is – he's responding seems to me.  
10 Mr. Darden: The question called for a yes or no answer.  
11 The Court: Sustained. The witness may answer yes or no.  
12 Witness: I'm sorry, I've forgotten the question.

Here, the lawyer poses a question which is designed as a closed yes-no question which predicts a response which either confirms or denies the content of the question. The witness then produces a multi-unit turn in response to the question (lines 4-7). This turn is rejected as an answer by a second lawyer (Mr Darden), who claims that the witness' talk is not a response to the prior question (line 8. *This is non-responsive*); that is, the lawyer disputes whether the witness' talk constitutes a valid second pair part for the question. At one level, the talk does appear to be designed as an answer to the prior talk. The witness states *there was one situation* and this appears to be designed in response to Cochran's *did you have occasion*. The turn then proceeds to give details about the situation. Cochran considers that the witness has produced a turn at talk which is hearable as an answer turn (line 9, *he's responding seems to me*). Darden' then rejects this understanding of the witness' talk referring to the design of the question turn as selecting only a limited range of response types – that is a yes or no answer. This interpretation is upheld by the court. This demonstrates that not only is the witness restricted in providing answers to questions but may also be restricted to answering questions in particular ways with limited control over the design of the answer turn.

If a participant violates the restrictions on the sorts of talk that can be produced, such talk is accountable and it may lead to formal or informal sanctions against that participant.

(16.3) [CHECKkkkkk p. 421 (Greatbatch, 1988)]

1 JG: ... despite the fact there were fou:r major  
2 factories that you knew about,= despite the  
3 fact there was a two hundred and thirty million  
4 capital investment programme that you knew  
5 about, =.hhh that we dealt in companies you  
6 stated and restated toda::y, .hhh despite the  
7 fact that ninety one percent of our companies  
8 are still there:, =and only the marginal ones  
9 which you knew were sold, .hhh and you e:ven  
10 mislead people by suggesting for instance that  
11 we owned the Parisian publishing house Brooke.  
12 Why.=  
13 Int: =s-s-s-Sir James  
14 I['m so sorry ( ) I'm so s-]  
15 JG: [No,=I'm asking a question no]w.=  
16 Int: =It's more conventional in these  
17 programmes [fo:r]  
18 JG: [Well] I don't mind  
19 ab[out convention.]=  
20 Int: [me to ask questions,]  
21 JG: =I'm asking you why  
22 (.)  
23 you distorted those facts.  
24 (0.2)  
25 Int: Well we didn't distort them.  
26 [I mean er ]  
27 JG: [Well w- then] did you

In this extract, the interviewee abandons his role by rejecting the constraints on his participation in the interview and by asking a question. That he is adopts a behaviour which is allocated to the other participant in the interview. This departure is sanctioned by the interviewer in line 13, who points out the abnormality of his conduct (*It's more conventional in these programmes [fo:r] me to ask questions*). The interviewee then rejects this formulation of the situation, not as a legitimate understanding of the way turns are organised but as being something that he intends to allow to constrain his talk in this case. Here, the sanction is relatively minor – the behaviour becomes accountable and is treated as deviant. In other cases, the consequences may be more formally done and more consequential for participants. For example, courtroom interactions require that witnesses answer questions as they are put by lawyers. That is, when a lawyer poses a closed question, the witness is required to provide a response which counts in form and manner as the answer to this closed question. Failure to do so could result in a charge of contempt of court (Penman, 1991).

Often the institutional setting not only restricts what the non-member can do but also influences what the institutional members can do. In the contexts considered above, for example, institutional members may be restricted to producing turns that count as questions, at least for some of the interaction. The extent of this restriction of course varies according to the institutional context. It would appear to be most strongly relevant in broadcast news interviews, in which interviewers are restricted to asking questions, except when managing the opening and closing of the interview. This restriction relates to the understanding of the role of the interviewer in the setting as have the task of eliciting information from the interviewee. In courtrooms, lawyers are restricted to asking questions during examination of suspects and witnesses but can also perform other actions relating to their institutional role.

The restriction of the turn-types used by institutional members can be seen as a consequence of their institutional roles and identities. For example, news interviewers appear not to have the right to produce certain actions, such as making statements, producing evaluations of interviewees' responses, or making routine acknowledgements (*mmhmm, uh huh*, etc.) of what the other has said. The removal of such turns from the interviewers' talk positions the interviewer in a particular way – they become the institutional elicitor of information not an individual engaged in interaction with another. Their questions become questions on behalf of their audience and the answers are treated as designed for the audience not for the interviewer. If the interviewer is not the addressee of the talk, producing response token to the talk is not a relevant action as such responses would indicate the interviewer is the recipient. Moreover, the restriction against producing statements means that the interviewer is not given the right to make statements of personal views during the course of the interview and this promotes the neutral stance of the interviewee.

In classrooms, teachers have fewer restrictions on what their contributions can be and in fact, responsive talk is a very common feature of teachers' talk.

(16.4) [12jen 687 (Hellermann, 2003)]

```
1   T:         if an object that's placed in front of a glass
2             plate(.) will the image appear in front (.) of (.)
3             or behind the glass plate.=
4   Jim:       =behin[d.
5   Dory:           [behind.
6   Jill:         [behind
7   T: =         =behind. (.) a candle is placed ten centimeters
```

The teacher here asks a question which is answered by a number of students. He then ratifies this answer as the correct answer by repeating the students' contributions. This use of responsive talk can also be seen as relevant to the institutional role of the teacher and relates directly to the nature of the questioning activity that the teacher is undertaking (Seedhouse, 2005). In many cases, questions by teachers are questions for the purpose of information display – they want to gauge what the learners know – rather than information seeking. In such contexts evaluative talk provides feedback to the student about the quality of their answer and so their position in relation to the material being taught.

These interactions show that not only does the restriction of turn types influence the sorts of turns that can be produced by particular participants, it also means that the sequential

organisation of such interactions has restricted possibilities compared to everyday interactions. For example, there is a basic questioning structure in classrooms that consists of three turns at talk: a first pair part (question), a second pair part (answer) and an SCT (assessment).

(16.4') [12jen 687 (Hellermann, 2003)]

```
1   T:      if an object that's placed in front
2           of a glass plate(.) will the image
3           appear in front (.)of (.) or behind
4           the glass plate.= FPPquestion
5   Jim:    =behin[dSPPanswer
6   T: =    =behind SCT
```

This structure is found in everyday conversations, as discussed in Chapter 8. In the classroom, a possible structure becomes a typical structure and its frequency is connected to its role in achieving the institutional practice of teaching, which requires feedback to be given on responses. This feedback works to confirm or disconfirm the accuracy of the student's response both for the student and for other students who are the overhearing audience for the interaction.

In news interviews, the sequence organisation largely precludes SCTs by interviewers, as was seen in extract (16.3). The sequence organisation in interviews is based on typical structure made up of questions and answers only without SCTs. This does not mean that there may not be other forms of post-expansion of sequences, but rather that these sequences usually preclude minimal post-expansions which would express evaluation of the previous information. In the interviewing practice of many interviewers, these restrictions may apply differently and where there are differences between interviewers, something can be determined about how the interview is being constructed and presented for the audience.

In the cases discussed above, the restrictions place on the turn-types that can be produced and hence of the possible sequential structures that are used are restrictions which relate to the institutional nature of the interaction. In this way, Conversation Analysis allows researchers to observe how ways of speaking in institutional settings are designed in particular ways to achieve institutional purposes and how these ways of speaking construct participation in such contexts.

### **Turn allocation**

Heritage's (2004) second form of modification in turn-talking systems concerns the mediation of turn allocation. Where turn allocation is mediated, one participant has the right and responsibility to determine the operation of speaker change. Such turn-taking systems are often found in meetings, where the chair of the meeting has control of who speaks and when and in some activities in school classrooms. Such systems are typically used to manage interactions in large groups in which local management may prove difficult to achieve.

In large, formal meetings, it is not uncommon for a designated chair to control the turn taking structure. Boden (1994) notes that in formal meetings turn allocation, topic, and sometimes turn duration may be the responsibility of the meeting chair. The control of the interaction allows the interaction to be a jointly attended production of a single sequence of talk. It allows for transitions of speakers to be done in an orderly way and for all participants to be recipients of a single stream of talk. She also argues that it is the management of the turns at talk which

mark the meeting as a formal meeting, rather than any factor external to the interaction itself. As meetings vary in their formality, they vary in their use of pre-allocation of turns at talk. Thus, less formal meetings have more local management of talk than formal meetings. Participants in meetings can be seen to orient to the chair's right to allocate turns in their requests for speakership, as can be seen in Extract (16.5).

(16.5) [Council (Boden, 1994)]

Rock: Question?  
(0.6)  
Chair: Yeah?  
Rock: What is the (0.3) C-PEC (0.1) stand for?

Here, Rock produces a pre-question and, through this, he indicates that he wishes to speak and what his contribution will be. The chair gives a go-ahead response to the pre-question and Rock becomes the next speaker and produces the question. Although Rock's *Question?* is in fact a self-selected speaker change, it orients to not being the real speaker change and that such change would need to be legitimated as an activity. That is, Rock self-selects in order to make a bid to be selected by the chair as next speaker.

The ordering of speakers may be done in a number of ways. Speaker selection may be done by having possible next speaker bid for a next turn during the current turn. This is what happens in Extract (16.5), although bids can also be done non-verbally. Where turns are negotiated in this way it is not uncommon for the chair to indicate to participants the order of speakers, as in

(16.6) [Meeting]

Chair: Ok, we've got Tony, then Clai:re and then Tom.  
(0.2)  
So Tony,

Here, the chair is developing a list of next speakers in order and ratifying these as legitimate next speakers in the interaction. The interactional structure of turn taking in this context is that after each speaker, the turn will return to the chair and the chair will then allocate the turn. This means that the order being specified here is not the actual order of speaker, but the order of speakers other than the chair. The order of speakers here is being developed as the interaction progresses and individuals seek to respond to earlier comments. In more formal meetings, the order of speakers may be specified in advance. Larrue and Trognon (1993) describe a meeting between 30 participants in which the chair of the meeting designated a next speaker from a list of speakers. On the conclusion of a turn by a current speaker, the talk therefore passes back to the chair and the chair then allocates the floor to the next speaker, often simply by naming the speaker or by using a formulaic *vas-y* (go ahead) after the name.

The system provides some particular difficulties because before the chair can allocate a turn the current speaker must have marked the ending of the current turn. A contribution at the meeting is typically a multi-unit turn and so there is nothing akin to a TRP which would allow the chair to self-select as the next speaker. This means that speakers themselves have a responsibility to minimise the time they spend speaking, although not all speakers do this. Where speakers continue too long, the chair does have the authority to interrupt the turn underway, to withdraw speakership and reassign it. This means that the interaction problem

resulting from the turn-taking system in use does not result from the turn allocation process itself but rather that the person responsible for allocating turns is dependent on others to design their turns in a way which enables the chair to operate the turn-allocation system. The system controlled for turn allocation but not for turn duration.

A similar process of turn allocation is found in formal large-group interactions in school classrooms. One of the first Conversation Analysis studies of school classroom interaction (McHoul, 1978) investigated how turn allocation operates and describes the ways in which speaker selection is pre-allocated. The talk McHoul describes is just one of the many types of interaction which are found in classrooms and deals with formal, teacher-led instructional talk. Classroom interactions are more complex and involve many different situations in which different interactional patterns can be found (Kääntä, 2010). However, McHoul's analysis is one which shows a particularly tightly controlled form of turn allocation. McHoul argues that the pre-allocation of turn types restricts the range of options that can be legitimately used in contexts in which the class as a whole is engaged in a large-group interaction. One significant restriction in such situations is the limitations placed on turn allocation. The student can only select the teacher as next speaker. This means that there is a restriction on the turn allocation possibilities that operate for student participants. The only speaker is ratified as a legitimate recipient for students' talk by the way the turn-taking system operates. Teachers can select any participant as a recipient and when the teacher selects the next speaker, that speaker has the right and obligation to speak.

(16.7) [Maths Class I:45]

T:           Okay. Jake, (0.3) what's the next o:ne.  
Jake:       Uhm (0.2) Nineteen: point two five.

The operation of this form of turn allocation means that, although classrooms can be characterised as multiparty settings, formal classroom interaction is designed as a two-party interaction, with the teacher as one party and the whole class of students as a collective cohort the other (Kääntä, 2010).

Teachers may select specific participants as next speakers as in Extract (16.7) or they may simply producing first pair part that someone should speak next without selecting a particular next speaker. Where this is the case, students do not self-select as next speaker and begin to speak at the transition relevance place. Normally classroom interaction practices at this point require students to make a bid to become the next speaker, for example by raising their hands (Kääntä, 2010). The teacher then selects the next speaker, as in Extract (16.8).

(16.8) [Maths Class I:89]

T:           So (.) who can tell me what we do next.  
              (1.2) ((several students raise hands))  
T:           Sarah?  
Sarah:      We put that one down the bottom.

What happens then is that the teacher produces talk that makes speaker change relevant, but the turn-taking system operates on the principle that the teacher selects specific next speakers. The teacher remains the manager of the turn-taking system. The system is therefore institutionally managed not locally managed. In Extract (16.8), it is not Sarah who self-selects

as next speaker. Rather she indicates her preparedness to be a next speaker and waits to be selected before she begins to speak.

A further restriction on the turn taking system in classrooms is that if the teacher does not select a next speaker, then the teacher normally continues to be the current speaker. That is, the order rule set identified by SSJ, in which “current speaker continues” becomes an option only if another speaker does not self-select, does not operate in classrooms when the teacher is the current speaker. Again, in this context, if students wish to become a next speaker, they need to bid for speakership.

(16.9) [Maths Class I:96]

T: And then we can multiply these two together.  
(Teacher writing on the board)  
Fee: Sir? ((raising hand))  
T: Yeah, Fee?  
Fee: How did you get the three: there?

In Extract (16.9), Fee’s bid is a vocal summons, produced while raising her hand. In this case, the teacher’s back is to the class as he writes on the board and so a vocal summons is necessary. Fee’s *Sir* is a pre-sequence designed to secure the teacher as a recipient for her talk and is a precondition for her to be able to talk in this position. In some classrooms, these non-specific forms of selecting a next speaker do not lead to such formal bids for the floor but rather result in self-selection by the students, as in Extract (16.10)

(16.10) [2pen 10:30 (Hellermann, 2003)]

1 T: ok.  
2 so she’s just making the point that there  
3 were many grou:ps (.) most of them lived in  
4 which of the three regio[ns].  
5 Andy: [middle.  
6 Tara: the middle.  
7 T: the [middle.  
8 ?FS: [°the middle°.  
9 T: with the ex[ception of ↑what m[ajor group,  
10 ?fs: [(I forgot)  
11 Andy: [°the middle.°  
12 Fay: (here) the pur[itans?  
13 T: [was in the south.  
14 Tara: °Africans°.  
15 T: the Africans. (.3) .hh a:nd in? New England  
16 there was the:?

Here, both Andy and Tara self-select to respond to the teacher’s question. In such situations, where no one is selected as the next speaker, a number of speakers may self-select, possibly resulting in overlapping talk among participants. One reason for the more managed turn-taking procedures found in some classrooms is to prevent such turn-taking problems. The restriction placed on self-selection in classrooms applies only to student participants. When the student is

the current speaker, the teacher may self-select at a TRP in the student's turn and become the next speaker. That is, only the teacher has the possibility of self-selecting as a next speaker.

McHoul (1978) argues that the turn-taking practices of school classrooms create a 'social identity contrast' between the social categorisations of 'teacher' and 'student'. That is, it is through the application of turn-taking that the roles of teachers and students are created and signalled and through this system that the power and authority of teachers is reproduced in the classroom. McHoul also notes that the system operates with some differences in different classrooms and that the more formal the teaching context is, the more strongly speaker selection is organised through the teacher. Thus, turn allocation can be seen as one area in which the pedagogical approach and expectations found in classroom cultures can be identified and understood. It demonstrates a particular orientation to the ways in which learning occurs through language and the sorts of relationships which are enacted by participants during instruction. The system described here is not the only one which operates in classrooms (Seedhouse, 2005). In other classroom contexts, such as small group work, turn allocation may be locally managed and students may be legitimate recipients for other students' talk. This means that one of the important operations in classroom talk is the framing of activities as being ones in which particular turn-taking practices become relevant.

The turn-taking systems discussed here are designed to provide smooth transition of speakers in contexts where local management would be problematic. In interactions in large groups, the operation of speaker self-selection could lead to many speakers beginning at the same time and then having to repair this so that one speaker was left. This could lead to frequent disfluencies and difficulties in the interaction which could undermine the effectiveness of the activity. Moreover, in classrooms and in meetings, it is usually important not only to consider how speaker change is managed but also to ensure that speakership is distributed through the group in particular ways. For example, meetings may wish to determine that all views on a matter have been expressed or a teacher may wish to monitor the understanding of as many students as possible during a class. Self-selection in large groups may not lead to the desired patterns of speakership and so may prevent the institutional interaction from being able to achieve its goals.

### *The structure of institutional interactions*

All social interactions are structured. For example, earlier chapters discussed the openings and closings of conversations. These are structural points in the conversation, they are designed to occur at particular points – the beginning and end of an interaction – and their omission from an interaction would be considered problematic. Such omissions would be accountable actions which would require explanation as deviating from the normal structure of conversation. In conversation, there is also talk which comes between an opening and a closing, however, they ways in which this talk is relatively free. In some institutional interactions, the body of the talk may be much more structured and this structure is relevant to the institutional purposes of the talk.

Heydon (2005) has found that in Australia a police interview in which a police officer questions a suspect is constructed of three main sections: opening, information gathering and closing and each of these parts of the interview orients to particular institutional needs. The opening and closing sections are used by police officers to inform suspects of their rights and to undertake relevant administrative work, such as taking details and laying charges. The opening and closing of the interviews are influenced by regulatory requirements placed on police officers in this situation and they involve much formulaic talk which varies little from interview to

interview. In Australia, such interviews are normally taped, and the taping begins with a confirmation of the participants' identities and the location, date and time of the meeting. This is a formal requirement for the interview. The interview then moves to dealing with administrative matters relating to collecting personal details of the suspect: name, address, date of birth, age, citizenship and occupation.

(16.11) [INT 1 (Heydon, 2005)]

1   pio1:     (0.6) Right could you state your full name please↓  
2   SPT1:     Jonathon Arthur Young↑  
3   pio1:     (1.0) and your address↑  
4   SPT1:     (0.4) one hundred Black Street Littlevillage↓  
5   pio1:     (1.2) your date of birth?  
6   SPT1:     fourteenth of the third fifty-four↑  
7   pio1:     (0.5) and how old are you↓  
8   SPT1:     (0.7) forty-oneΛ  
9   pio1:     (1.0) r't you're an Australian citizen↑  
10  SPT1:     yes↑ I am↑  
11  pio1:     (1.6) and your occupation↑  
12  SPT1:     (0.7) unemployed at the moment⇒  
13           I'm (0.3) on a (0.6) support (0.4) parents'  
14           pension at the moment⇒

The turns here are relatively routine and are organised in relation to a form which the police officer has to complete. When the personal details of the suspect have been collected, the opening then moves to confirming the purpose of the interview.

(16.12) [INT 3 (Heydon, 2005)]

pio3:     (0.6) Leigh I intend to interview: in relation to  
          ah (0.4) some drug offencesΛ

The interview then moves to stating the suspects rights during the interview: the right to remain silent, the right to contact a lawyer or friend and confirming whether or not suspects have exercised the right to contact a lawyer or friend and asking if they wishes to do so if they have not already.

(16.13) [INT 2 (Heydon, 2005)]

pio2:     do you wish to exercise any of these rights before  
          the interview proceeds↓  
SPT2:     °no°↓  
pio2:     (1.0) awright' Charles on um⇒ (0.4) if y' c' jus  
          tell me in your own words⇒ there's an incident  
          wuz: ah reported to me on New Year's Day this  
          yearΛ

The opening the moves to restating the time and place of the alleged crime as a bridge between the formalities required to establish the interview and the information gathering itself. In this

way, the topic is returned from the administrative and legal details of the opening to the substantive issue of the interview.

(16.14) [INT 13 (Heydon, 2005)]

1   pio13:   okay↓  
2           Pete on Tuesday the fourth of October this year^  
3           um a burglary occurred in Jones Road^ in Smith's  
4           Creek^premises er owned by Mr Johnson and his  
5           family^ that's a du- white double story premises^  
6           on top of a hill↓  
7   SPT13:   yes↑  
8   pio13:   um I believe that ah you were involved in that  
9           burglary↑ would you care to tell me in your own  
10          words^ um if or what you know about that burglary↓

Here the police officer provides details of a burglary and then indicates that the interviewee is being interviewed because he is a suspect in the crime. That is, the police officer not only states the particular crime that will be the focus of the interview, but also the relevant association between the interviewee and the crime. He then moves to beginning the information gathering by inviting the suspect to tell him about the burglary. The question form here is designed to elicit an extended telling about the burglary, during which the suspect may or may not confirm his participation. In this extract, it can be seen that the police officer has the role of moving from the opening of the interview to the information gathering phase and that it is the police officer who controls the topic of the talk through the question-answer format pre-allocated by the institutional requirements of the interaction.

The information gathering is not simply a case of finding out what is not known but also has the role of asking the suspect to confirm information already known to the police.

(16.15) [INT 3 (Heydon, 2005)]

1   pio3:     (0.4) film container^ (0.6) ah (0.5) containing  
2           approximately half full of ah (1.3) marijuana (.)  
3           seeds↑  
4   SPT3:     yes⇒  
5   pio3:     is that correct↑  
6   SPT3:     yes⇒  
7   pio3:     whose are they↓  
8   SPT3:     mine⇒  
9   pio3:     (1.2) and (0.2) can you tell me (1.2) what they  
10          what they are↑  
11   SPT3:     (0.7) marijuana↑ le- seeds↓  
12   pio3:     seeds↑ all right↑ (.) why have you got them↓

The interaction at this point has a certain amount of redundancy: the suspect is asked to confirm that there was a film container half full of marijuana seeds and later that the seeds were marijuana seeds. Such questions are being asked in order to get the suspect to confirm, in his

own words, aspects of the alleged crime, that is, he is being asked to make a confession. A confession is the strongest possible evidence that the police can submit in court and therefore one of the key institutional tasks for the police officer in the interview is to elicit a confession. In extract (16.14), the police officer begins this process by eliciting a telling about an event in which a confession may be produced. In extract (16.15), the police officer is eliciting a confession in different ways. The confession here is elicited not as a telling by the suspect but as the confirmation of known information. Although the information here is provided by the police officer not by the suspect, the talk at this point constitutes the suspect's confession that he was in possession of marijuana seeds.

Although the police officer normally controls the agenda it is possible that the person being questioned may also influence the ways in which the course of the talk unfolds.

(16.16) [(Haworth, 2006)]

1 P: ... there's one or two points I'd like to pick  
2 up [on from]  
3 S: [ errr ] can I clarify something first.  
4 P: yeah  
5 S: I've had a chance to mull over the questioning  
6 this morning (.) and perhaps I've made clear  
7 what ha- happened when Mrs (.) Grundy asked  
8 me to witness the will ...

In this extract, S is able to launch his own topic as the topic of talk at the beginning of the interview. In doing this, he uses a pre-telling form to ask to introduce his own first topic. The pre-telling here does not cancel the relevance of the police officer's topic as something to be talked about, it rather casts S's projected turn as something to be done prior to this topic. The police officer gives a go-ahead response and only after this does S begin his topic. The sequence organisation here shows that S is orienting towards a norm that the police officer has control of topic and that his own attempt to introduce a topic needs to be done with reference to that norm.

Once the information gathering has been completed, the police officer then moves to close the interview. The closing is again relatively formulaic and involves a statement that charges will be laid for a particular offense and a repetition of some of the rights of the suspect in this situation.

(16.17) [INT 2 (Heydon, 2005)]

1 pio2: (1.0) OK Charles you going to be charged  
2 with an assaultΛ  
3 SPT2: (0.2) mm hm↑=  
4 pio2: =you're not obliged to say or do anything  
5 unless you wish to do soΛ (0.6) but whatever  
6 you say or do may be given in evidence↑ (.)  
7 do you understand this↑  
8 SPT2: mm hm↑

The structure is a relatively controlled format for talk which each section addressing particular institutional requirements for the task of the police interview to be accomplished. The interview format is one which allocates control to the police officer: it is the police officer who opens and closes the interview, who moves between the various sections of the interview and who controls the topics for talk. This positions the suspect is largely a passive participant with little control over the way the interview proceeds, although there are ways in which suspects can introduce their own topics and also can resist the format by producing turns which are not answers to the questions being posed. The format is created around institutional requirements relating to both fulfilling external regulations relating to the conduct of interviews, carrying out administrative necessities and developing the central goal of obtaining information necessary for making a charge.

## Medical interactions

Communication between doctors and patients is central to the practice of medicine and Conversation Analysis has been applied to medical interactions in order to understand and develop medical practice. One context in which Conversation Analysis has been applied in studying doctor-patient communication has been the area of primary health care and in this field two aspects of care have received particular treatment: the ways that diagnoses are delivered by doctors and received by patients, and the planning of treatment.

Doctor-patient interactions have a discernible structure of activities that are undertaken between the doctor and the patient. Interactions in acute primary care for example have an ordered structure of component activities: an opening sequence, problem presentation, collecting additional information (history taking, physical examination), diagnosis, and treatment recommendations, and a closing sequence (Robinson, 2003). The structure of such interactions is an institutionalised one that is explicitly taught to students of medicine and is also part of the socialisation of patients in their interactions with doctors (Robinson & Heritage, 2005). This overall structure is accomplished in the interaction by the doctor and the patient and provides an overall frame of activity, which is in turn constructed of sequences and turn types.

The problem presentation involves the patient describing the reason the patient has come for a medical consultation, as in (16.18).

(16.18) [cough (Robinson, 2003)]

- 1 Doc: So how I can help you.  
 2 Pat: h Well I've ha:d uh:m (0.8) a cou:gh,  
 3 (.)  
 4 Doc: Mm hm,  
 5 Pat: for=uh- quite a while an' it really (.) just  
 6 got ba:d maybe last (week,) it's just-.h I  
 7 had a cold about two months ago,  
 8 Doc: Mm hm,  
 9 Pat: .h An' I had a cough with thuh col:d and it  
 10 seemed to be getting better but it never ha:d  
 11 (.) rin- gone away entirely?

12 : .hh Then about a week ago it jus:' (0.4)  
 13 came back real[l y - ] (.) strong an' it's uh:m  
 14 Doc: [Mm hm,]  
 15 Pat: 0.5).tsk.hh uh:=h I don't feel- (.) any other  
 16 symptoms really other than.hh st- getting  
 17 headaches from cough(h)ing s(h)o m(h)u(h)ch,  
 18 Doc: Okay,=  
 19 Pat: =.hh  
 20 Doc: .h Uh:m (0.2) didju take anything for that  
 21 cough?

The presentation of the problem begins with an open-ended question from the doctor, which in this case has the form of a question about providing help. The doctor's question may have a range of forms, such as *What seems to be the problem?*, *What brings you in today?* and question specifically oriented to health such as *How are you?*, but more focused questions about perceptible symptoms or information from other sources may also be used (Robinson & Heritage, 2005). All of these questions are general and orient either to the purpose of the visit or the health of the patient, and they routinely prompt recitations of symptoms. In (16.18), the patient orients to the presentation of symptoms as the relevant action to undertake in response to the doctor's question at lines 15-16, where she explicitly mentions presenting symptoms (*I don't feel- (.) any other symptoms really other than.hh st- getting headaches from cough(h)ing s(h)o m(h)u(h)ch.*). At this point, the presentation of the problem is completed as the patient has both presented a chronological account of symptoms that end at the present and also explicitly referred to the list of symptoms being completed. The presentation of problems is achieved through a question-answer sequence begun by the doctor. As the patient outlines the symptoms, the doctor positions himself as the recipient producing continuers at various points in the extended telling of symptoms until in line 18, which has an SCT that accepts the listing of symptoms as completed and accepted. Once the presentation of the problems in completed, there is a transition between the problem-presentation phase, which is controlled by patients as the tellers of their current situation, to a physician-controlled information-gathering phase during which the doctor may or may not ask further questions about the problems, as in lines 20-21 in (16.18) or conduct a physical examination (Robinson & Heritage, 2005).

After the information about the patient's problem has been elicited, the consultation moves to the diagnosis and recommendation of treatment as in (16.19).

(16.19) [Ear problem (Robinson, 2003)]

1 Doc: >Okay.< So it looks like you have a little  
 infection  
 2 (on the) ear drum.  
 3 (0.8)  
 4 Pat: °hh=That's what I thought it might be.  
 5 (1.5)  
 6 Doc: °Okay, °  
 7 (0.2)  
 8 Doc: (>Alright< so) I'll putchu on some antibiotics an'  
 9 a: decongestant,

10 (0.5)  
11 Doc: An' a nasal sprayer

Here the doctor closes the previous activities with *okay* and then presents a diagnosis, telling the patient the conclusion being reached on the basis of the information presented. This telling receives a response from the patient completing the diagnosis sequence. The doctor then moves to the treatment recommendation, again marking the boundary between the activities with *okay*.

Recommendations for treatment may be accepted or resisted by patients. In (16.20), the doctor's recommendation for treatment receives acceptance responses (*mm*., *okay*), while in (16.21), the patient resists the recommendation by withholding responses. Where a patient accepts the treatment recommendation, the consultation routinely moves to closure (Robinson, 2001) but where the patient does not accept the recommendation, this leads to further talk.

(16.20) [1183 (Dr. 1) (Stivers, 2005)]

1 Doc: Well I think what's happened is is that she ha:s  
2 this: uh- (.) .h ear infection in her left ear?,  
3 Mom: [Mm:.  
4 Doc: [And we'll put her on some medicine and  
5 she'll [be fine.  
6 Mom: [Okay.

(16.21) [2043 (Dr. 8) (Stivers, 2005)]

1 Doc (Is) it's not infect:e:d, [There's- uhm no fluid=  
2 Mom [Mm.  
3 Doc =or anything,  
4 Doc .hh An' his lungs are completely clea:r\_ Uhm\_  
5 (0.5) An' he's not- breathing very fa:st, or  
6 har:d,Uhm\_ .mlkh So I think he's just on his  
7 road to recovery:\_ he just needs another\_ .h  
8 prob'ly another week or so to get rid of thuh  
9 cou:gh completely,  
10 Mom: (°Mm hm, °)  
11 Doc: Just lots of=flui:ds,  
12 Uhm he was prob'ly uh little bit dizzy cuz  
12 he was:-°he had fever and he prob'ly hadn't  
13 drank enough at thuh ti:me, prob'ly.°  
14 .h Uh:m\_ .h So lots to dri::nk,  
15 and then uhm .mlk if he gets- - fever agai:n,  
16 (0.2) thou:gh uhm .h in thuh next two or three  
17 day:s, .h uhm\_ (0.2) we may need to see him  
18 ba:ck,in case he-n- does come down with  
19 something secondarily,

At line 7, the doctor begins to give a treatment recommendation, which in this case is to do nothing for another week. At this point, the mother produces a continuer, which signals the relevance of further talk. By doing this she withholds her agreement with the doctor's proposed course of action. In response, the doctor further develops the treatment recommendation, adding giving fluids. Here too, the mother withholds acceptance and produces no talk in response. The doctor then offers an account (lines 11–13) for some of the symptoms that supports her treatment recommendation. The mother again withholds acceptance of the proposed treatment. The doctor then restates the treatment recommendation (*So lots to dri::nk,*) as a way of pursuing agreement and making acceptance of the proposal relevant again, but again the mother does not provide this leading to a further modification of the treatment recommendation (*we may need to see him ba:ck,*). The mother again withholds acceptance and the doctor continues saying that a different treatment may be needed in the future. At the points where acceptance is not provided, the doctor modifies the treatment recommendation. This example shows relatively passive resistance in the form of withholding acceptance, but resistance can also be more active, such as questioning or challenging the treatment recommendation. Resistance can lead to the doctor changing the treatment recommendation, not simply in the terms of the doctor in (16.21) modifying the proposal from doing nothing, to something mother could do (give fluids), to the possibility of a different treatment in future, but may also lead to quite different treatment recommendations, such as prescribing medicines that were not previously a part of the original recommendation (Robinson & Heritage, 2014). This means that aspects of interaction between doctors and patients may be linked to inappropriate or unnecessary prescribing of drugs and demonstrates one way that a conversation analytic study may not only have the potential to elucidate the interactional nature of professional practice but may be able to reveal how interaction itself is implicated in what would appear to be non-interactional problems in the context (Mangione-Smith, Elliott, Stivers, McDonald, & Heritage, 2006).

### **Conversation Analysis and second language acquisition**

The study of language acquisition is a relatively new area of research within the framework of Conversation Analysis studies. It has its origins in a move away from psycholinguistic approaches to second language acquisition research towards a more socially oriented approach (Firth & Wagner, 1997, 2007). An important part of this shift is a move away from seeing the language learner simply as a learner and recognising that they are simultaneously language users how are speaking in order to achieve interactional goals (Kern & Liddicoat, 2008, 2011). One of the consequences of looking at the speech of second language users from the perspective of Conversation Analysis has been to focus more attention on how their language is a social product.

Conversation Analysis gives a methodology which allows the language learners to be investigated as participants in interaction. This means that the language used by the learner is not understood as language produced in isolation but as an activity produced in and responding to its interactional context. By seeing learners' language as situated it is possible to develop more sophisticated analyses of what is actually involved in second language learning and use. Liddicoat (1997) has argued that such situatedness has important implications for how the language use of both native speakers and language learners is to be understood.

(16.22) [(Liddicoat, 1997)]

1 M: so y- you ve been learning (0.2) for three weeks.  
2 I: 'yeah (.) yes?  
3 M: 'mm mh?  
4 (1.5)  
5 M: did you learn=  
6 I: =small  
7 (1.0)  
8 M: just a little bit. ['mm mh?  
9 I: ['mm mh?  
10 (1.0)  
11 I: m  
12 (0.2)  
13 M: and did you learn English in: (.)↑Po↓la↑nd?=  
14 I: =no.  
15 (0.4)  
16 M: no:?  
17 (1.2)  
18 M: after ↑Po↓la↑nd (0.6) where did you (0.2) go.  
19 (1.0)  
20 I: yes?  
21 (.)  
22 M: from ↑Po↓la↑nd  
23 I: yes?  
24 M: where did you go.  
25 (0.8)  
26 M: (to)  
27 (0.2)  
28 M: you went to (1.5) did you come to Australia?  
29 I: 'mm mh?  
30 M: Poland  
31 (1.0)  
32 M: to Australia?  
33 I: no. em: (0.2) Wes(t) Gherman. (.) Wes(t) Ghermany.  
34 (.)  
35 M: West Germany.  
36 I: ten e: mon(th)s (0.6) in (.) West Ghermany in  
37 (0.8)in Australia.  
38 (.)  
39 M: right. mm mh?  
40 (1.5)  
41 M: an: a:: (.) can you speak (.) German?  
42 (0.8)  
43 I: (veilish) l(h)ishen. hh hhe  
44 (.)

45 M: a little. mh mh? did you learn? (.) German.  
46 I: no. °e:m° (1) a:m (0.4) no school (0.8) e:m  
47 (2.5) and=eh (.) my husband  
48.→ (5.0)  
49 I: hhe  
50 (14.0)  
51 M: you and your husband  
52 (2.0)  
53 M: [learn I  
54 I: [learn(ed) e:m Germany e: (4.0) at home.=  
55 M: =at home.

This interaction is taken from an interview between a teacher and a student which has as its aim determining the proficiency level of the speaker for placement purposes. As discussed above, in an interview, the salient roles are those of interviewer and interviewee and these institutional roles are attached to certain required types of behaviour: interviewers ask questions; interviewees provide answers. In addition, interviewers have greater rights to topic control than interviewees. Given that this is an interview and that the status of interviewer is assigned to the native-speaker teacher, it is important to consider the possible validity of explanations about native speaker-non-native speaker interaction drawn from such data. For example, it has been claimed that one feature of native speaker-non-native speaker interaction is that native speakers frequently ask questions (e.g. Yano, Long, & Ross, 1994). This behaviour is found in the data given above. However, in the data presented above, is the presence of question turns the result of native speaker-non-native speaker interaction or is it the result of the institutionally assigned roles of interviewer and interviewee that require the interviewer to ask questions? As Firth & Wagner (Firth & Wagner, 1997, p. 292) indicate, "native speaker or non-native speaker is only one identity from a multitude of social identities, many of which can be relevant simultaneously" although "for the SLA researcher, only one identity really matters, and it matters constantly and in equal measure throughout the duration of the encounter being studied".

In the interaction above, it is important to consider not only the institutional roles, but also the purpose of the interaction. Essentially, what is happening here is an interaction designed to allow the non-native speaker to produce a language sample. Therefore, in addition to the institutional roles being enacted here, we have a social effect of the aim of the interaction in which the identities of the salient participants are that of native speaker and non-native speaker. The roles that need to be achieved in this interaction are, therefore, limited primarily to these identities. In the above data, the task of getting speech samples from the non-native speaker is, in a sense, constructing the non-native speaker as a defective communicator by making the extent of the deficit salient to the interaction. Moreover, such a focus necessarily creates an asymmetry in the relationship between the two, as the native speaker's speech production is not at issue and is frequently not considered as relevant to understanding the learner's production. Therefore, it can be argued here that the interaction is achieving the social identities of native speaker-non-native speaker, rather than native speaker-non-native speaker being incidental to, and in a sense external to and independent of, the actual talk in progress.

Moreover, in the data examined, the pausing behaviour is a powerful marker of this conversation as being one in which there is defective communication. However, when we examine the pausing behaviour of the native speaker, the placement of pauses and the duration

of pauses is typical of disfluent or hesitant native speaker speech (Pawley & Syder, 1975, 1983). Pausing and hesitation within turn construction units is rare and is marked in native speaker interaction as problematic. Wong (2004) has argued that pausing behaviour is interactionally salient in such conversations and that it does not signal an upcoming dispreferred utterance, as it would in other conversational contexts (see Chapter 7). Rather Wong sees such pausing as allowing a space in interaction in which a language learner may produce further talk in contexts where it is not clear that a speaker has reached a possible completion. The pause in the arrowed turn in line 48 of extract (16.22) can be seen in this context. I's turn can be understood in one way as concluding with *my husband* (my husband also did this) or as projecting further talk about her husband. The five-second pause therefore allows a space in which projected talk could be undertaken but is not. It does not resume speakership, and her audible breathing is the only sound breaking a longer stretch of silence. After this silence M then proposes a projected next bit of talk that is completed by the learner. That is, the pausing behaviour here is interactionally significant and allows time for earlier talk to be recycled or reworked. At the same time, when pausing occurs within turn construction units, coupled with frequent restarts, the result is a narrative that is difficult to comprehend. In this native speaker-non-native speaker conversation, the practice of providing opportunities for the non-native speaker to complete sentences creates utterances by the native speaker that are in themselves indicative of defective communication. This is clearly a conscious attempt by the native speaker to provide the non-native speaker with opportunities to complete utterances. However, this practice has the effect of achieving disfluency interactionally in the talk; that is, the disfluency is co-constructed.

A socially oriented view of language acquisition contrasts with a view which has largely focused on the psycholinguistic difficulties that language learners' production is taken to represent. This has meant that researchers have developed a more sophisticated understanding of what constitutes an error in second language use. A traditional psycholinguistic account of error would code anything that is not produced in a grammatically accurate way as being an error; however, such a coding of errors oversimplifies the processes involved in speaking. For example, Carroll (2004) shows that a purely psycholinguistic analysis of extract (16.23) produces a very different understanding of the learner as a language user than a conversation analytic analysis would.

(16.23) [(Carroll, 2004)]

S:           dyu: did you: (0.7) did you watch?

This turn, considered in isolation, shows considerable disfluency. The same TCU is begun three times before being completed, there are elongated sounds and a significant pause before the third and final attempt. A psycholinguistic analysis of this would argue that processing problems were responsible for this disfluent talk. Such disfluencies are found in talk by competent users of English, as was discussed in the context of self-repair in Chapter 9 (see also Schegloff, 1979b), where they can signal a problem in producing the turn. However, there are other contexts in which such disfluencies are found in talk. A turn in isolation cannot really indicate fully what is happening in the interaction. Instead turns need to be understood in their sequential context so that their relationships to other aspects of the talk can be understood and considered in the analysis. When extract (16.23) is considered in its context a very different picture emerges.

(16.23') [(Carroll, 2004)]

1 A: yes yes .hh [mm ]  
2.→ S: [dyu]: did you: (0.7) did you watch?  
3 (0.5)  
4 A: OO[H!  
5 S: [>did you se[e<  
6 A: [little little=

In context, the initial *dyu:* can be seen to be in overlap with the previous speaker's *.hmm*. In this case, the disfluency of the beginning of this turn can be seen as a restarting of talk which was produced in overlap in order for the turn to be articulated in the clear and so be more readily available as a contribution at this point in the conversation. That is, the restart here is not so much indicative of an internal processing problem by of an interactional problem in turn-taking which is repaired by the restart. Moreover, the restart is articulated in a fuller form that in the first attempt making the form of the turn more specific and so more available. As seen in Chapter 6 (see also Schegloff, 2000b), this is a common way of repairing overlapping talk and is not an indicator of a limited competence in the language. This account does not however explain what is happening with the lengthening of the *you* in the second attempt or the long pause. In order to understand these, it is necessary to consider not only the language but also the non-verbal context of the talk, as shown in extract (16.23'').

(16.23'') [(Carroll, 2004)]

|    |                                |                           |
|----|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
|    | /oblique gaze at A)            | /direct gaze at A)        |
| S: | /[dyu]: did you: (- - 0.7)- -) | /did you watch?           |
|    | /A not gazing at S             | /A gazes directly<br>at S |

The lengthening and pause are now associated with the actions of both the speaker and the recipient. The speaker is gazing at A, the recipient of the talk, although the gaze here is oblique. The first parts of the talk are articulated while the recipient is looking away from the speaker – that is the speaker has not secured a gazing recipient. At this point, she restarts here talk, which is a way of repairing the problem of speaking to a non-gazing recipient (see Chapter 11 and C. Goodwin, 1980) and during the pause, A moves to gaze directly at the speaker and once gaze is obtained the speaker completes her talk without further hitches or perturbations in the delivery. Seen from this perspective, S's talk is not evidence of a defective command of the language leading to processing problems, but of finely tuned talk which is responsive to the interactional necessities of the context. The same features that signal a problem in one analysis can be shown as interactionally relevant ways of using language to achieve communication in another.

To argue that disfluencies can demonstrate sophisticated interactional capabilities is not to argue that language learners do not have difficulties in producing language. Rather the point here is that language has to be analysed in such a way that it is an adequate account of what the speaker is doing through the language. It means that whether a particular bit of language use is seen as indicative of a limited capacity to use a language has to be the result of an analysis of learners' talk rather than being the starting point for understanding the nature of the talk being produced. An analysis which sees disfluency in language production as indexical of a second

language speaker has constructed the language learner as a deficient communicator prior to the analysis having been done. It sees the language learner as qualitatively different from the competent speaker. In doing this, the analysis does not recognise that disfluencies in language use are found in the talk of competent users and that their use in this context is not always indicative of problems in producing language. For competent users such an explanation is just one possible account which needs to be defended by analysis: for language learners the same is true.

Conversation Analysis has also been useful in understanding what is involved for language learners in using a language for social interaction and thus for highlight what interactional needs learners have in their language acquisition. Language learners bring to their learning already established interactional abilities and knowledges in their existing language repertoire but need also to develop the language abilities to realise this knowledge in a new language and to recognise them when they encounter them in another language. Pekarek Doehler (2019) proposes that language learners need to develop interactional practices in the following areas:

*Turn-taking organization:* Language learners need to develop practices that will allow them to take the floor in interactions in ways that are precision-timed with the on-going interaction and are locally appropriate to the context in which they are interacting. This includes knowing how to select next speaker, how and when to self-select, dealing with overlap and projecting multi-unit turns at talk. Learners' practices of turn-taking change over time and learners become more able to replicate their first language practices in their second language; however, some aspects of turn-taking appear to be more easily developed than others and participation in multi-party interactions is most challenging as there is more significant pressure in competing for the floor (Pekarek Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2015).

*Repair organization:* Language learners need practices for dealing with and overcoming problems in speaking, hearing, or understanding of talk while maintaining the progressivity of talk. This means knowing the practices available for self- and other-initiated repair and for getting help from other participants in the interaction when needed.

*Action formation:* Language learners need to be able to design turns at talk that are recognised as accomplishing particular actions and to recognise such actions when they are performed. This means knowing how to design talk as action both in terms of first pair parts that initiate actions and ways of responding.

*Sequence organization and preference organization:* Language learners need to be able to develop practices that display that turns at talk and the actions they create are coherently related to other turns and actions and construct preferred and dispreferred turns at talk in appropriate ways.

*Overall structural organization:* language learners need to develop practices for structuring language into larger sequences and for recognising and constructing boundaries between these as in the case of opening and closing a conversation, opening or closing storytelling sequences, and transitioning between larger interactional sequences.

These aspects of interaction may not receive attention in existing models of language pedagogy, including those that claim to be communicatively based, and students' abilities to interact in such terms are not usually recognised in assessment approaches. Conversation analytic research therefore has the potential to contribute to language pedagogy and assessment and not

just to the development of more nuanced studies of language acquisition. Some experimentation on pedagogy using Conversation Analysis has begun (e.g. Barraja-Rohan, 2011; Wagner, 2015), but there is a need for much more development in this field.

### Conversation Analysis across languages and cultures

Although there has been some interest in comparing how interactions happen in different cultural and linguistic contexts (e.g. Moerman, 1988), Conversation Analysis has been reluctant to take on cross-cultural or cross-linguistic comparisons largely because of the difficulty involved in comparing highly contextualised moments of interaction across contexts. Comparisons between languages and cultural contexts can shed light on how human beings deal with the same issues and problems of human interaction using the linguistic and cultural resources that they have available to them.

Comparative studies of interaction are able to show that interactional practices involve both aspects that are universal and others that vary. For example, Rossano, Brown, and Levinson (2009) compared how gaze is coordinated with talk in question-answer sequences, in two-speaker interactions among acquainted participants speaking Italian, Yélf Dnye, and Tzeltal, and revealed that the gaze of speakers producing questions is more consistent across the three cultural groups than the gaze of the question recipient. The study therefore shows that a prevailing view that gaze is a cross-culturally valid indicator of reciprocity may not be correct as recipients use gaze differently across the three languages. The study also shows that Tzeltal speakers, who do not use gaze consistently as a marker of reciprocity, are more likely to use repetition to show reciprocity. This reveals shows that enacting reciprocity is a universal interactional issue that speakers need to accomplish, but that different systems of resources may be used to implement it.

Comparative studies can also reveal how the difference resources that exist in a language can influence how particular actions are constructed using that language. For example, there has been research that shows that the structure of Japanese grammar has consequences for the way the turn taking system works in Japanese. These features include flexible word order at the beginning of turns, the prevalence of unexpressed constituents, the use of postpositions rather prepositions and the use of final particles that can transform the nature of the turn being constructed (Hayashi, 2004; H. Tanaka, 2000 ). The nature of the issues in question can be seen in (16.24).

(16.24)

- |   |                        |    |         |                   |
|---|------------------------|----|---------|-------------------|
| a | Tokyou                 | e  | ikimasu |                   |
|   | Tokyo                  | to | go      |                   |
|   | (I will) go to Tokyo   |    |         |                   |
| b | Tokyou                 | e  | ikimasu | ka                |
|   | Tokyo                  | to | go      | Question particle |
|   | (Will you) go to Tokyo |    |         |                   |

These two sentences differ only in terms of a single element, which occurs at the end of the word, but this final element has considerable interactional implications. In sentence (16.24a), the sentence would constitute a telling and depending on other elements in the context would probably consist of a telling about the actions of the speaker. This understanding however gets modified at the last minute in (16.24b), which is recast as a yes/no question by the final question

particle, and again depending on the context is probably a question about the recipient's future actions. The two constructions have very different possibilities for speaker change as (16.24a) does not require a response and so does not have consequences for who speaks next, while (16.24b) does require a response and has consequences for turn allocation. Although, other aspects of the production of talk such as intonation play a role in constructing questions and answers (L. Tanaka, 2015), such properties of Japanese grammar mean that there is limited projectability of turns in Japanese compared to other languages such as English, where, as the translations in (16.24) show, the beginning of the TCU contains information that helps to project what the action is likely to be. These syntactic practices then indicate that turn-taking is "managed in a different way in Japanese than it is in English" (Fox, Hayashi, & Jasperson, 1996, p. 209). While in languages like English recipients are able to use the beginning of a TCU to project a possible trajectory for the turn and to predict how the TCU is likely to end, in Japanese recipients need to wait to see how the turn will develop before they can start their own turn at talk.

Studies of variation in interactional practices have sometimes taken a naïve approach to comparison and use similarities or difference in interactional practices in different languages as either confirmation that previous analyses were accurate models of interaction or not. However, the aim of Conversation Analysis is not to develop models of interaction but rather to understand how interactional practices show about the nature of human interaction. As Schegloff (2002c) notes:

Although there is a certain interest in exploring the commonality or variation of some activity, and its detailed implementation in talk, across cultural contexts, it should not be imagined (as sometimes appears to be the case) that variation *disappoints* the preceding literature and commonality *confirms* it. Whatever is, is. When we find settings where openings appear to be done differently, one question is whether the differences can nonetheless be understood by reference to a same or similar underlying structure, addressed to the same or similar issues posed for the interaction and/or its participants (p. 249, emphasis in original).

That is, in comparative analyses, it is not the surface features of the interaction that reveal what is common or different about human communication but rather what the ways of speaking show about how the participants are achieving particular actions. The similarities and differences are thus indications of how participants deal with the interactional requirements of particular situations and what these interactional requirements are. For Schegloff, cross-cultural comparisons are potentially problematic because they can divorce interactional practices from the contexts in which they are found and the actions that they attempt to achieve. The problem of cultural comparison is that it "treats as of special relevance alternatives (alternative practices, modes of conduct, etc.) which are not alternatives to one another for members of *either culture*" (Schegloff, 2002c, p. 273, emphasis in original). This means that cultural differences become reified as explanations rather (Dervin & Liddicoat, 2013). Rather than carrying out simple cross-cultural comparisons of similarity and difference, Schegloff argues that "[a]t the very least, the practices and forms being described need to be grounded in their within-culture sets of alternatives. Then we know we have got something culturally real" (Schegloff, 2002c, p. 273). This means that interactional practices for action formation need to be understood in their own terms, for the participants who enact them, and only once they are understood in this way can they be compared with others sets of practices.

The consequences of these ideas for examining interactions across languages and cultures can be seen in analysing the following examples of telephone opening sequences drawn from different language contexts. As discussed in Chapter 13, Schegloff (1968, 1979a, 1986b) has identified a four-part structure for telephone openings:

- a summons-answer sequence
- an identification/recognition sequence
- a greeting sequence
- *how are you?* sequences

The examples below, could be considered as ways of testing the universality of this structure.

(16.25) [Australian English: Tel8B:1-8]

1 ((ring))  
 2 Kim: Hullo.  
 3 Tom: Hi  
 4 Kim: Hi. How're you:.  
 5 Tom: Fi:ne, how're you,  
 6 Kim: .hhh hhh. ↓o:ka:y:hh.,

(16.26) [Dutch (Houtkoop-Steenstra, 1991)]

1 ((ring))  
 2 R: Met Rene van Rijn  
 It's Rene de Rijn  
 3 C: =Karl Ko:nings=  
 4 R: =Hai.=  
 Hi  
 5 C: =Hallo  
 Hallo  
 6 R: Hoe gaat het met je?  
 How are you?  
 7 C: Goed, en je?  
 Good and you ?  
 8 R: Goe:d.  
 Good

(16.27) [Samoan: AT:III (So'o & Liddicoat, 2000)]

1 ((ring))  
 2 Tiva halou?  
 hello?  
 3 Alani Tiva  
 Tiva  
 4 Tiva: oe  
 yes

- 5 Alani: o a tou mea o faiga  
what are you doing
- 6 Tiva: e leai ni mea o lea e fai a'u mea:'oga,  
I'm not doing anything, I'm studying
- 7 a o lea e matamata le tivi a le 'auli'i ia  
but the boys are watching television

(16.28) [Japanese (Liddicoat, 1995)]

- 1 ((ring))
- 2 Eriko: hai Kawakami desu  
yes, It's Kawakami
- 3 Keiko: moshimoshi::
- 4 Eriko: hai::  
yes
- 5 Keiko: Eri::?  
Eri
- 6 Eriko: hai::  
yes
- 7 Keiko: Keiko  
Keiko
- 8 Eriko: KOMBAN[WA : :]  
Good evening
- 9 Keiko: [KOMBAN] WA. hh.  
Good evening
- 10 Eriko: [>kokusaidenwa]ne=  
It's an overseas call isn't it
- 11 Keiko: [ otanjoobi-]  
Birthday
- 12 Eriko: =moshikashite go[men]nasai<  
I am sorry
- 13 Keiko: [soo]  
that's right
- 14 Eriko: otanjoobi omedetoo:  
Happy birthday

These examples show a number of variations in the ways that telephones are answered. The first relates to the first turn by the answerer, which is the response to the summons of the ringing of the telephone. In Australian English (16.25) and Samoan (16.27), the first spoken turn is made up only of an answer to the summons, but in Dutch (16.26) and Japanese (16.28), the answerer self-identifies in the first turn. In (16.28), this is preceded by a response to the summons (*hai*), but in (16.26) there is only the self-identification. Moreover, in Japanese, there are two summons-answer sequences – ring–*hai* and *moshimoshi::–hai ::*. This seems to relate to another difference in Japanese calls, which is that the caller is often the first speaker and produces a vocal summons (*moshimoshi*). In Japanese telephone openings, it may be the caller not the receiver who produces the first turn (Kumatoridani, 1992). What appears to be happening is that the ringing of the telephone does not necessarily constitute a complete summons and that an additional verbal summons is required to ensure that the callers' summons



structural slots and what fills them. It is thus important in cross-cultural analyses of interaction to consider carefully the nature of the analysis that is being done and to focus on the interaction that is occurring and the actions being realised, and not just the form that are used.

Schegloff (2009, p. 378) has proposed a number of analytic steps that are important for avoiding problematic analysis when undertaking comparative studies:

1. State explicitly your understanding of what the target phenomenon or practice is.
2. Ask whether the same features that constitute the phenomenon or practice can plausibly be expected to hold in the new environment(s) in which you will be examining it/them; if not, say what should be taken as recognition criteria in the new environment.
3. Describe the ways in which the new environment(s) are like, or different from, the environment(s) in which the target of inquiry has previously been examined, and assess whether there is a robust basis for comparability.
4. Specify what makes the phenomenon or practice to be examined of interest, and what is to be gained by pursuing it/them in these different environments.

Comparative studies in Conversation Analysis face a methodological challenge in that they must remain within a conversation analytic perspective that places attention on the orientations of participants that are made visible in the data as the basis for any analytic claims and at the same time make comparisons across languages and cultures. Kasper and Wagner (2014) identify two main methodological directions can be seen in comparative research. The first approach is to select a practice or action and investigate how the phenomenon is implemented in different languages. This involves establishing a collection of practices for each language, which are analysed internally to examine the participants' orientations to the practice and then to bring these language internal perspectives together in a comparative analysis to show how participants with different linguistic repertoires accomplish the practice and what variations can be seen in the different collections of examples of a practice. This is the most widely used methodological approach in comparative Conversation Analysis. The other, less widely used, approach is to use a quantitative method to establish the extent to which a practice is universal or linguistically and culturally variable. These studies seek to establish similarities and differences in how a practice is used to see if there are common associations between the ways a practice is used in one language and how it is used in another that show whether there is a consistency in the way the practice is used across linguistic and cultural contexts. Both approaches however may fall into the sorts of problems discussed above in which the talk becomes isolated from the specific contexts in which it is produced risking reification of culture and an explanation of differences in practices.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has given some indications of how Conversation Analysis has been used to understand contexts other than everyday talk. It shows some of the ways in which Conversation Analysis can be applied to practical issues. The application of Conversation Analysis can lead to two ways of understanding the world (ten Have, 2001). The first is to understand how interaction is carried out in settings other than the everyday social world. It allows us to understand how institutions work and how they are shaped by their interactional patterns. It also allows us to understand how power relations are maintained and contested in institutional contexts. The second focus is using Conversation Analysis to advise people and organisations about how to solve specific practical problems. These two ways of understanding applied

Conversation Analysis are in reality very closely related and many applied Conversation Analysis projects in fact contain both dimensions.

## Exercise

Record an institutional interaction, such as a meeting or a media interaction.

1. Examine the turn-types used in the interaction. Is there evidence of a restriction on the turn types used? What turn-types are used? Who uses which sorts of turns? How do these turn types relate to the institutional roles of the participants and to the institutional purpose of the interaction?
2. What is the overall structure of the interaction? What purpose does each section of the interaction have? Who opens it and how is this done? Who closes it and how is this done? How does the structure relate to the institutional roles of the participants and to the institutional purpose of the interaction?

## Further reading

### *Institutional talk*

Antaki, Charles (2011). Six kinds of applied Conversation Analysis. In C. Antaki (Ed.), *Applied Conversation Analysis* (pp. 1-14). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Heritage, John. (2004). Conversation Analysis and institutional talk. In R. Sanders & K. Fitch (Eds.), *Handbook of Language and Social Interaction* (pp. 103-146). Mahwah NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

### *Medical interactions*

Robinson, Jeffery D., & John Heritage (2014). Intervening with Conversation Analysis: The case of medicine. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 47(3), 201-218. doi:10.1080/08351813.2014.925658

Maynard, D. W., & John Heritage (2005). Conversation Analysis, doctor–patient interaction and medical communication. *Medical Education*, 39(4), 428-435. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2929.2005.02111.x

### *Conversation Analysis and Second Language Acquisition:*

Barraja-Rohan, Anee-Marie (2011). Using Conversation Analysis in the second language classroom to teach interactional competence. *Language Teaching Research*, 15(4), 479-507. doi:10.1177/136216881141287.

Pekarek Doehler, Simone, & Evelyne Pochon-Berger (2015). The development of L2 interactional competence: evidence from turn-taking organization, sequence organization, repair organization and preference organization. In T. Cadierno & S. W. Eskildsen (Eds.), *Usage-based perspectives on second language learning* (pp. 233–268 ). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

### *Conversation Analysis across languages and cultures*

Schegloff, Emmanuel A. (2009). One perspective on Conversation Analysis: Comparative perspectives. In J. Sidnell (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 357–406). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sidnell, Jack (2007). Comparative studies in Conversation Analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 36(1), 229-244. doi:10.1146/annurev.anthro.36.081406.094313

## Glossary

**action formation:** how participants in interaction understand what is being done in the talk and how speakers design talk in ways that help participants know what actions they are performing.

**adjacency pair:** the basic form of a sequence that consists of two turns by different speakers, which are placed next to each in their basic minimal form, which are ordered and, which are differentiated into pair types.

**affiliation:** a display that a recipient's stance toward some aspect of the interaction matches that of the speaker: a display that both recipient and speaker think or feel the same.

**asynchronous communication:** communication in which the production and reception of talk are separated in time.

**closing implicative environment:** a conversational action after which closing may be a relevant next activity and after which closure commonly occurs.

**deviant case (analysis):** searching for and discussing cases of the data that do not appear to fit the patterns or explanations that are emerging from the analysis in order to refine the analysis and to understand what such cases show about the thing being studied.

**disaffiliation:** a display that a recipient's stance toward some aspect of the interaction differs from that of the speaker.

**dispreferred:** contributions that are socially more problematic to perform and that may be avoided, delayed in their production or produced in a mitigated form.

**epistemic stance:** the way that participants' knowledge (epistemic status) is expressed in interaction through the design of turns at talk.

**epistemic status:** participants' relative access to knowledge that is relevant in the interaction.

**epistemics:** the ways that the knowledge of participants in an interaction is distributed and represented in the talk.

**extended turn:** a turn constructional unit that extends beyond a possible completion by adding more talk that expands the current turn constructional unit rather than creating a new unit.

**first pair part (FPP):** the first turn of a basic adjacency pair, which initiates an action, and which makes a further turn sequentially relevant for its completion.

**hitches in talk:** resources which interrupt the continuity of the talk, e.g. by cutting of the talk underway.

**home position:** a position from which an action such as a gesture begins: return this position marks a possible ending to an activity.

**insert expansion:** expansion of a base sequence by talk following the first pair part and preceding the second pair part.

**insert sequence:** an adjacency pair found in between the base first pair part and the base second pair part. It may either orient to the completed first pair part or to the upcoming second pair part.

**institutional talk:** interaction that occurs in institutional setting and where institutional roles and tasks shape the ways that interaction occurs. .

**lapse:** a long silence in conversation in which participants remain co-present but may not be engaged in talk.

**mentionable:** something that could be talked about at the current point in the conversation.

**moving out of closing:** moving out occurs when a participant introduces a new mentionable into the conversation after a closing sequence has begun and so stops the movement towards closing. .

**multimodality:** the presence of multiple different modes such as speak, nonverbal sounds, gestures, actions, etc. as components of interaction.

**multi-turn constructional unit turn:** a turn at talk made up of multiple turn constructional units such a story.

**multi-turn turn constructional units:** a turn constructional unit that is produced by more than one speaker in which the next speaker adds an element that continues the structure of the previous speakers turn.

**multi-unit turn:** a turn at talk made up of more than one turn constructional unit.

**mundane talk:** everyday talk, the unmarked form of social interaction.

**naturalistic data:** data drawn from interactions that would have happened independently of the research process, although in effect such data may be influenced by the fact that it is being recorded for research (see also **observer's paradox**).

**observer's paradox:** a situation in which the interaction being observed is unwittingly influenced by the presence of the observer and the fact of observation. .

**other initiated repair:** a repair in which the recipient of the original trouble source indicates that there is a problem in the talk.

**other repair:** a repair in which the recipient of the original trouble source provides the repair.

**overlapping talk:** talk in which more than one participant speaks at the same time.

**pause:** any silence in the talk. These may be inside turns and turn constructional units (intraturn pauses) or between turns (interturn pauses). Longer silences may be called lapses.

**perturbations in talk:** resources which depart from the prosody of the turn so far such as changes in loudness, pitch or speed.

**pivot:** is a short item of talk that is grammatically a part of the turn constructional unit currently under way and also of a new turn constructional unit that is produced in the same turn.

**possible completion:** a point in the turn constructional unit at which the talk under way could be considered complete. .

**post-expansion:** expansion of a base sequence by talk following the second pair part and dealing with aspects of it.

**post-first insert sequence:** an insert sequence that orients to some aspect of the preceding first pair part that must be dealt with for the sequence to proceed, for example by repairing a problem in hearing or understanding of the first pair part.

**post-sequence:** an adjacency pair found in post-expansion, i.e. following the base second pair part on designed in relation to it.

**pre-beginning:** in turn design a component of the turn that precedes the start of a turn construction unit proper: in conversational opening an action that is relevant to the opening of a conversation but which occurs before the participants begin to talk (also known as a pre-opening).

**pre-closing sequence:** a sequence in which participants negotiate that they have nothing further to mention in this conversation as a prelude to closing their talk.

**pre-expansion:** expansion of a base sequence by talk preceding the first pair part that orients to the projected upcoming action.

**preference:** where there are possible alternative contributions in talk, preference refers to the possible ways in which some conversational action may be accomplished with regard to the possible social consequences of its performance. Certain actions may be avoided, or delayed in their production (dispreferred), while other actions are normally performed directly and with little delay (preferred).

**preferred:** contributions that are socially less problematic to perform and that are normally performed directly and with little delay.

**pre-opening:** an action that is relevant to the opening of a conversation but which occurs before the participants begin to talk (also known as a pre-beginning).

**pre-present person:** someone who is already present in a particular space prior to an interaction occurring.

**pre-second insert sequence:** an insert sequence that orients to some aspect of the projected second pair part that must be dealt with for the sequence to proceed, for example by establishing information needed to complete the second pair part.

**pre-sequence:** an adjacency pair found in pre-expansion, i.e. preceding the base first pair part and orienting to it.

**pre-voice sample identification:** in a telephone calls, an opening where one participant identifies the other before the other produces a voices sample.

**quasi-synchronous communication:** communication in which the production and reception of talk appear to be happening at the same time but are in reality separated in time by a short delay between production and reception.

**recipient design:** the ways in which the talk is constructed or designed to display an orientation and sensitivity to others who are co-participants in the conversation.

**recipient:** a participant who is receiving the talk produced by another, a listener.

**repair:** the processes available to speakers through which they can deal with problems of hearing or understanding or other problems which arise in talk.

**rush-through:** decreasing the transition space between two turn constructional units by speeding up delivery, withholding falling intonation and bridging the juncture between two units.

**schism:** points at which a multiparty conversation divides into more than one conversation happening between different participants at the same time.

**second pair part (SPP):** the second turn of a basic adjacency pair, which responds to and completes the action initiated by the first pair part.

**self repair:** a repair in which the speaker who produced the original trouble source provides the repair.

**self-initiated repair:** a repair in which the speaker of the original trouble source indicates that there is a problem in the talk.

**sequence expansion:** the development of a longer course of action beyond a base adjacency pair with talk relating to the main action either before or after the adjacency pair or between the first pair part and the second pair part.

**sequence:** a clustering of turns that is coherent and orderly and orients to the accomplishment of an action. The basic form of a sequence is an adjacency pair.

**sequential implicativeness:** the property of talk that a turn at talk may occasion the talk that follows it and that the progression of turns at talk comes from the ways that turns are linked together by participants. .

**specimen perspective:** the idea that conversational data is a specimen of reality and so can be studied in its own right. .

**split adjacency:** in written online discourse, adjacency pairs in which the first pair part and the second pair part are separated by unrelated talk.

**story preface:** a pre-telling that works to introduce the interactional space to produce a multi-unit turn at talk (story).

**synchronous communication:** communication in which the production and reception of talk occur at the same time.

**terminal sequence:** a sequence of turns that ratifies the closing of a conversation, such as a sequence of good-bye turns.

**territories of knowledge:** participants' knowledge about the world.

**transition relevance place:** a point at which speaker change could be legitimate. This occurs at a possible completion of a turn constructional unit.

**transition space:** as that part of a stretch of talk in which transition may occur and it can be characterized as commencing just prior to the transition relevance place of the turn constructional unit and finishing just after its end.

**turn allocation:** the ways that a speaker comes to have a next turn – current speaker selects next or self-selection. .

**turn construction unit (TCU):** the units from which a turn at talk is constructed. These units can vary in form (word, phrase, sentence) but they are possibly complete contributions to the talk under way.

**turn space:** the interactional space in which a turn at talk can be produced.

**turn taking:** speaker change in conversation.

**unmotivated looking:** looking at data without any prespecified analytic goals and noticing features of the talk or action that occur in the data.

## Transcription conventions

### Speech sounds

wo:rd lengthened sound – the number of colons show the duration

a full-stop marks a falling intonation.

? a question marks a rising intonation.

, a comma marks a slightly rising intonation, but is also used when the intonation contour is hearable as incomplete.

¿ an upside down question mark is used for intonation which rises more than a slight rise (,) but is not as sharp a rise or does not reach as high a pitch as for a question mark.

wo:rd rise-fall contour, underlining of the letter preceding the indicates the rise; the fall is indicated by the full stop.

wo:rd a fall-rise intonation where the underlined colon is at a lower pitch than the rest of the final part of the contour

↓word sharp fall in pitch

↑word sharp rise in pitch

CAPS louder talk

°words° talk which is quieter or whispered

°°words°° talk which is very soft

>words< talk which is noticeably faster than the surrounding talk

<words> talk which is noticeably slower than the surrounding talk

whord breathy voice

#words# creaky voice

### Other vocal sounds

t!, tch dental clicks

pt or p! bilabial clicks.

hhh. out breathing

.hhh in breathing

wor- a sound is cut off abruptly

hah, hih, heh laughter pulses, with the vowel showing sound of the laugh

wor(h)ds laughter while speaking

£ smile voice, talk produced while smiling

>hhuh< sharp exhalation or inhalation

.shih wet sniff while crying

skuh snorty sniff while crying

~words~ ‘wobbly’ voice or a break in the voice heard during crying

### Contiguous or simultaneous talk

=word latching – no discernible space between two turns at talk.

word<word rush through – do discernible space between TCUs within a unit of talk

[word start of simultaneous talk

word] end of simultaneous talk

## Pauses

(.) very short pause  
(0.3), (1.2), etc timed pause in seconds

## Problems of hearing or comprehension

(words) problematic talk, with possible hearing  
( ) talk which cannot be understood for transcription  
(words)/(words) alternative possible hearings

## Embodied actions (based on Goodwin & Mondada)

.. non-gazing by participant  
X gaze meets other  
\_\_\_\_\_ holding gaze  
, , , , moving eye gaze  
Ab, Ba A is gazing at B; B is gazing at A  
\* \*, etc start and finish of gesture by participant, with different symbols for each participant. For multiple lines of embodied actions different symbols are used for each line, but ideally symbols are similar, such as \* \* (gesture), • • (gaze), + + (gesture), † † (gaze)  
NAMEspeaker  
name other participant  
--> action continues across lines of talk, concluding at -->  
>> action begins before transcript  
-->> action continues after transcript  
.... the action is being prepared  
---- the apex of the action is reached and maintained  
,,,, the action is being retracted  
#fig screen shot location

## Adding transcriber's information

((word)) transcriber's comment, description  
→ highlighted feature in transcript  
: lines omitted  
.. lines omitted  
= placed at the end of one line of a transcript and a later line by the same speaker this indicates continued talk that has been split for typographic reasons.

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