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**DIRECTING DINNERTIME:**

PRACTICES AND RESOURCES USED BY PARENTS AND CHILDREN TO DELIVER  
AND RESPOND TO DIRECTIVE ACTIONS

by

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A DOCTORAL THESIS

submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the subject

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

at

LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

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## Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of a number of people. I am grateful to all of you. Particular thanks must undoubtedly go to my participants, who so graciously invited me into their homes, and their lives, to record their mealtime conversations. Without you, this thesis simply would not exist and I would not have fallen in love with your brilliantly insightful and unendingly entertaining children.

Without the support and encouragement of my first supervisor, Jonathan Potter, I wouldn't have even begun to think about undertaking a PhD. Thank you for inspiring and nurturing my love of discourse and interaction, for always pushing me to think big (but not quite spinning planets), and for setting me so securely and firmly on the path I followed since our very first undergraduate dissertation supervision meeting in Oct 2005.

I am deeply indebted to Charles Antaki for taking over my supervision in the second year of the PhD and becoming my rock during a period of great change in my life. Thank you for infecting me with your confidence in my ability to actually produce a finished thesis, for keeping me on track when I began to wander, and for always, always finding the time to talk to me, calm me down, and offer me clear, straightforward advice no matter where you were in the world or how busy you were. Without you this thesis would still be unfinished.

Sincere thanks are also due to Alexa Hepburn for her generous support throughout my thesis. Thank you for your uncompromising approach to data analysis, always pushing me to refine and specify my arguments. My thesis is the better for it. Thank you also for stepping into the breach and becoming my supervisor during my distracted and chaotic final months.

In addition to my supervisory team I would like to thank all the staff members of the Discourse And Rhetoric Group (DARG) at Loughborough University. I could not have hoped for a more stimulating and welcoming 'home' in which to be socialised into the world of CA and DP. Thanks also go to all the postgraduate members of DARG, particularly Carrie Childs, Laura Jenkins, Chloe Shaw, and Rowena Viney. Thank you for

sharing the PhD journey with me and making it a thoroughly enjoyable experience. Good luck to all of you.

My work has benefitted significantly from the insight and advice of so many generous people, including, among others, Candy Goodwin, Paul Drew, Derek Edwards, Alessandra Fasulo, Kobin Kendrick, Mardi Kidwell, Eric Laurier, Jeff Robinson, Liz Stokoe, Sally Wiggins, Joerg Zinken, anonymous reviewers for *Discourse Studies*, members and participants of the Social Action Formats Workshop at Oulu University, the CA Day conferences at Loughborough University, the Everyday Interaction Across Cultures Conference at Portsmouth University and various data sessions at both Edinburgh and Loughborough University.

Dee, Tony, Ellie and Tim Craven: It's rare in life that we have an opportunity like this to say thank you to the people who are always there in the background. The unshakeable bedrock of love and belief you have created for me to stand on has held me up and kept me going throughout this process. Thank you for so many things: for knitting me fingerless gloves to type in, for proofreading insane quantities of gibberish and turning it into English (except this section), for always being at the end of the phone, for distracting me, for letting me rant, for making me sit down and work, for telling me when I stopped making sense, and for sharing my dream. Thank you for always being there.

This research has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. I am particularly grateful for their support.

Material based on the research undertaken for Chapter 5 of this thesis has been previously published in part as Craven A. and Potter J. (2010) Directives: Entitlement and Contingency in Action, *Discourse Studies*, 12(4), pp419-442

To Timmay!!!

For putting up with me while I practised my colouring skills.  
Here's what I've drawn.

Love from Alex

# Abstract

This thesis is about the discursive practice of telling someone else to do something: an action that has traditionally been called a directive. For example ‘Finish your fish’, ‘Sit straight’, and ‘Don’t do that’. The study uses conversation analysis and discursive psychology to study how family members deliver and respond to directive actions during family mealtime conversations. The primary interest has been in how culturally assumed asymmetries in power and authority between parent and child are actually managed or enacted in real life, sequential conversations. The data used in the study comprise a total corpus of nearly 40 hours of video recordings by families with at least two children under ten years old eating together in their own homes.

The starting point for the analysis was to use participants’ orientations within the talk to help identify potentially directive utterances. This contrasted with more traditional research, which has used researcher-generated categories and classification systems to define the scope of the term directive. The first half of the thesis examined the turn design, sequence organisation, and preference organisation of directives. It considered both highly implicit directives (you’ve still got some beans left haven’t you?) and more strongly explicit and forceful directives (Eat. Now!). It looked at sequences built around a single directive and those in which the directive was repeated several times. The second half of the thesis focused on how participants responded to directives, and the different interactional consequences associated with different response options.

The analysis revealed that participants attend closely to issues of epistemic and deontic rights in talk and work collaboratively to manage multiple preferences that can conflict with each other during directive sequences (a preference for compliance and a preference for autonomy). The thesis concludes by offering a situated account of directive actions during family mealtimes. The concluding chapter discusses the implications of this work for theories of power and authority, understandings of children’s participation rights in interaction, and for conversation analytic theory of talk-in-interaction.

*Key terms:*

conversation analysis, discursive psychology, family interaction, mealtimes, children, directives, requests, authority, autonomy, socialisation

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## Chapter 1 – Introducing the Thesis

### Introduction

A boiled egg makes a great noise when you hit the shell with your spoon. The pieces get progressively smaller the more you hit it and it's fun to see how far you can make them fly across the table. The only problem is you're a six year-old-child at the dinner table and your Mum is more concerned with you eating the contents contained within the eggshell before you're all late for judo training. Mum doesn't see the fascinating shapes the crack lines make as you hit the shell. Nor can she appreciate the careful scientific study you're conducting about the trajectory required to propel eggshell pieces onto your sister's plate.

Parents at every dinner table routinely find themselves in the position of wanting to change their child's behaviour. Whether the child is making a horrific mess with an empty eggshell and distracting a sibling who has yet to finish, or whether they are pushing food round the plate trying to find a way to make it look like some has been eaten when in fact they have barely licked a spoon, the question is the same: how do you get them to do what you want them to do?

Such a question, once one starts to unravel its answer, must bring in elements of sociology, psychology, and linguistics. All are implicated, though none are quite sufficient on their own (as we shall see during a discussion of analytic framework later in the introduction). This thesis is about the practical action of telling someone to do something and how it can be accomplished in everyday family mealtime environments. Drawing on videos recorded by families in their own homes, it uses analyses of talk-in-interaction to consider the actions, practices, and social implications of telling someone what to do. In order to investigate what happens when one party attempts to exert social control over a co-present interlocutor's behaviour, I will examine a class of social actions broadly described as directives, and the responses they receive.

**The aim of the thesis is** to explicate the practices involved in getting someone to do something, to develop an account of directives as a class of situated actions rather than a

single speech act, and to investigate the types of concerns oriented to by participants as relevant to the action of directing. Throughout the thesis I will develop an alternative approach to both conceptualising and recognising speakers' attempts to get someone to do something (directives, for short) in interaction.

### *Navigating the thesis*

The thesis itself is divided into eight substantive chapters (excluding references and appendices). Each of the analytic chapters is designed to present a stand-alone analysis and yet cumulatively support each other to bring about the conclusions raised in the final chapter (Chapter 8). To support the data-oriented approach used for both analysis and writing, I have not separated discussion of the literature from examination of the data. Each chapter refers to the specific literature pertinent to the topic in hand. Thus discussions of some historical approaches to the study of directives are addressed in Chapter 3, which focuses on identifying and recognising directive actions in interaction. The literature dealing with the social control aspect of telling someone to do something is handled in Chapter 5 alongside an attempt to outline an alternative way of conceptualising the action. The most expansive discussion of the literature, and therefore most like a traditional review, relates to authority, compliance, agency and embodied conduct. It can be found in Chapter 6 following a presentation of the possible responses options available after a directive action has been initiated and an argument for the importance of orientations to compliance in determining the sequential consequences of the various responses. This line of work is then expanded in Chapter 7 where I argue that, using both embodied and verbal modalities, participants can challenge traditional notions of authority and compliance and work to retake control of the agency for their own actions.

Literature relating to more technical aspects of the work is also referred to at strategic points throughout the thesis. For example, the particular challenges and considerations involved with using video data are discussed during the methodology section that outlines the procedures used to conduct the study (Chapter 2). Similarly, findings from within the growing body of conversation analytic research are not discussed as a block group but drawn on at specific points in the analysis to highlight key features of the data. This can most prominently be seen in Chapter 4 when I address the sequential organisation of a prototypical directive sequence.

In this, the introductory chapter, I begin with the data site used throughout the thesis: family mealtimes. I offer a very brief gloss of some broad findings from various social research disciplines relating both to the study of families and mealtimes before drawing together the features of the data site that make it an appropriate starting point for the study. I then address the specific phenomenon of interest in the thesis (attempts to get someone to do something) more closely. In this introductory format it is not possible to offer much more than broad brush strokes, indeed the following seven chapters are devoted to trying to more fully explicate the practices that constitute a directive action and how they are accomplished in interaction. Therefore the aim in this introduction is simply to draw the reader’s attention to the practices associated with directing, offer a word of caution about the technical term directive, and outline how directive actions will be treated in the succeeding chapters. Finally, this chapter offers the reader an overview of the analytic framework adopted for the study. This includes a consideration of alternative approaches and a rationale for why conversation analysis was selected as the most appropriate tool for the study.

## Family Mealtimes

Video recordings of family mealtimes provide the data for this thesis. In this section I will outline some of the key features of family mealtimes from the research literature. Through this I hope to demonstrate the suitability of mealtimes as a data site for the study of the practices through which speakers attempt to tell someone to do something and through which recipients respond to that attempt.

“Meals are social events” (DeVault, 1984, p78). More specifically, they are organised social events (Mennell, Murcott et al., 1992). That is, they require that a group of individuals must come together in the same place at a predetermined time to engage in the same activity. As such, mealtimes provide an ideal opportunity for the study of social interaction, and in particular for how interaction is organised. This opportunity has not been neglected. Since the 1970’s, researchers interested in the orderliness of interaction (notably conversation analysts) have treated recordings of mealtime conversations as “a central event in everyday social life: a prototypical context for use of language,” (Mondada, 2009b, p559).

However, Mondada suggests that conversation analysts have predominantly studied dinner conversations “in order to build a general model of social interaction”, rather than to investigate the “peculiar features” of talk during family mealtimes (2009b: 559). Studies of the features peculiar to the mealtime environment have, by and large, been led by other groups of interaction researchers, such as sociologists and anthropologists (though this is beginning to change). Thus, although findings from conversation analysis studies based on mealtime interaction address a broad range of turn taking and sequence organisational phenomena, exactly what makes a family mealtime recognisable as a family mealtime has not been extensively studied within the framework. Throughout this thesis, care will be taken to consider how the family mealtime context might be influencing the interaction. This can be seen most clearly in Chapter 4 when I discuss the balance between the dual projects of dinnertime: eating and talking.

The two main features peculiar to a family meal are broadly made apparent by the name. Firstly, it is composed of a *family* group, with attendant variations in status and relationship between participants. Secondly, it involves the physical action of eating a *meal* at a table at the same time as others. Although conversation analysts have only recently begun to consider family mealtimes as an interactive environment in their own right, there exists a deep and rich literature on both families and mealtimes from within sociology and anthropology. Much of this work, although interesting, does not make use of interactional data and so does not have a direct bearing on the current study. In the sections below I will offer a, necessarily, brief gloss of a few major findings from the sociological and anthropological literature that indicate how the family mealtime environment might be particularly valuable as a data site for the current study.

### Family

“The term *family* implies many different things” and scholars remain divided over exactly what constitutes a family, depending on, for example culture, composition of members, or economic situation (Nock, 1987, p50). However, it is possible to sidestep many of the complications about what constitutes a family by looking instead at the basic functions. In broad terms, the functions of a family have traditionally been agreed upon and conceptualised within sociology as the procreation, socialisation, and social



control of children (Cheal, 2002; Farmer, 1979; Nock, 1987). The families who participated in the current study already had children aged between two and eight years old so it is probably safe to skip past the procreation part of the literature and focus on socialisation and social control.

Social researchers have repeatedly hailed the family environment as “the most important agent of socialisation” (Nock, 1987, p236). Within this body of work, socialisation appears to be used as a gloss for, amongst other things, the processes through which a child learns a) socially appropriate skills and knowledge to function in society, b) to handle different types of personal and group relationship (both authoritarian and egalitarian), and c) interaction processes such as socially appropriate ways of expressing emotions (Farmer, 1979; Nock, 1987). All of these are crucially important abilities in order to function as a social being. Thus families have a vital role to play in turning children into full and competent members of society with appropriate moral perspectives and understandings of the world (Larson, Branscomb et al., 2006; Paugh, 2005).

Such work tends to yield findings relating to changes in cultural patterns over time (e.g., Goldthorpe, 1987) across nationalities (e.g., Aukrust, 2002) or between social classes (e.g., Lareau, 2002). However, exactly how socialisation is practically accomplished remains rather less clear. For example, Nock states that “undoubtedly parents’ behaviours affect their children in numerous ways. But the mechanisms of such influence, and the extent of the transmission across generations, are still topics of considerable debate” (1987: 238). Efforts have been made to offer explanations for how the socialisation of children occurs during family meals. For example, Ochs and Shohet state that sociocultural messages can be conveyed to children through a combination of direct strategies (“such as directives, error corrections, and assessments”) and indirect strategies (like “irony, inference, ... [and] metaphor”) (2006:36). However, on the whole, sociological and anthropological studies of family life tend to be interested in broad cultural patterns and the place of the individual or family unit within wider society (Cheal, 2002). Therefore such work tends not to routinely explicate what a particular strategy (e.g., an ‘inference’) is, what it might look like, or how it could be recognised and responded to by the ‘yet-to-be socialised’ child in real time.

A second strand of research has looked at the family as “an agent of social control”, whereby one of the functions of the family unit is that it “teaches the child the

limits of tolerated behaviour” (Farmer, 1979, p7). Several studies have reported that the family unit was characterised by pervasive power dynamics between members. In particular, the family organisation seemed to privilege husbands over wives and parents over children (Charles & Kerr, 1985; DeVault, 1984; Menell, Murcott et al., 1992). Cheal suggests “the legitimisation of power relationships is one of the most fundamental ideological processes in family life” (2002: 84).

Of specific relevance to the current study are findings that parents wield power over their children. In particular, the family mealtime is often described as being a site of parental authority and childhood rebellion (e.g., Charles & Kerr, 1985; Coveney, 1999; Ochs & Taylor, 1992). Nock suggests that the parents’ ability “to restrict the activities of their children comes from their socially approved authority to do so” (1987: 35). This relates to the finding that “generally speaking, power and authority are reserved for older persons” (Nock, 1987, p35). However, these explanations look outwards to broad social trends and cannot explain *how* parents exert their authority and how children can resist. Lareau notes that “much of the empirical work is descriptive”, yielding generalised impressions rather than clear, repeatable findings (2002: 748). Similarly, Grieshaber (1997) points out that despite the pervasive evidence that parents tried to get their children to eat properly there has been little discussion about exactly how this was done.

For the current study, it is perhaps sufficient at this stage to note that “negotiations involving acts of control are central to the organisation of family life” (M Goodwin, 2006, p516). Family conversations are therefore likely to yield data rich in social control acts that can then be used as a starting point for the current study.

### Mealtimes

There is a line of thought often articulated in sociological studies of food and eating practices that suggests eating is not just a social event, but also that the act of providing a *proper meal* served to produce and reproduce *family* as an ideology and a construct, and to represent family unity (Clayman, 2010; DeVault, 1984; Larson, Branscomb et al., 2006). For example, Charles and Kerr state, “the sharing of meals by families symbolises their existence as a social entity” (1985: 235). Many of the ethnographic studies of family life treated mealtimes as vital sources of data, viewing

them as “densely packed events” where many functions of the family are in evidence simultaneously (Feise, Foley et al., 2006, p77). Thus, for interaction researchers interested in family practices like telling children what to do, the mealtime environment offers a promising site for data collection.

Recent conversation analytic work has begun to unpick specific mealtime practices. For example, Wiggins and Potter (2003) looked at how different evaluative expressions (such as ‘like’ and ‘nice’) were variously related to actions such as accounting, complimenting, and offering food (see also Wiggins, Potter et al., 2001; Wiggins, 2004a; Wiggins, 2004b). Such practices are only relevant in environments where food is being consumed or discussed. For example, speakers are unlikely to be required to account for not liking prunes during a chess match. Therefore at the dinner table, a situation specific and specialized knowledge of communicative practices is likely to be in evidence.

Exactly what happens during a meal varies greatly depending on the particular people involved and where the meal takes place (Mennell, Murcott et al., 1992). For example, on a recent visit to a local nursing home I discovered that lunch was brought to the residents’ rooms and they each ate alone. Furthermore, visitors were encouraged to leave so that the resident could enjoy their meal at their leisure and ‘in peace’. In contrast, Feise, Foley et al gloss a family meal as an event where “much has to happen in approximately twenty minutes: food needs to be served and consumed, roles assigned, past events reviewed, and plans made” (2006: 77). Here a coordinated and complex mix of serving, eating, conversing, and clearing up needs to be accomplished often within a relatively constrained period of time.<sup>1</sup> Some examples of common comments to be heard in my data are shown in Figure 1.1 below.

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<sup>1</sup> See Figure 2.2 for the average meal lengths for the families who participated in the current study.

Figure 1.1: Examples of comments relating to the time constraints surrounding mealtimes

- i. **Mum** Come on Daisy cos you've got Brownies (Forbes\_1\_298)
- ii. **Mum:** On a Wednesday now it's always going to be easy meals from now on. Cause I've got to do it quick. (Crouch\_12\_50-51)
- iii. **Mum:** Right Kath needs to eat now Daddy. Because I don't want her to be full up for swimming. (Crouch\_12\_228-229)
- iv. **Mum:** Bit less chatting and more eating please or you're going to be late for Beavers (Jephcott\_17\_25.40-29.21\_38-40)
- v. **Mum:** Y'gonna be late if you don't sit down an' eat your mea:l. (Jephcott\_17\_25.40-29.21\_108-110)

With so many simultaneous activities going on at the dinner table it is not easy to pinpoint the central purpose of a meal. Although on one level it might be safe to say that the purpose of the meal is to eat food, there is in fact far more than that happening. For example, dinner conversations may include catching up on the day's events, discussing current affairs, storytelling, problem solving, and planning future family activities (Larson, Branscomb et al., 2006; Snow & Beals, 2006). In addition there is the somewhat nebulous activity of socializing children that also seems to happen at the dinner table (Farmer, 1979; Nock, 1987). Similarly, Mondada points out that “during mealtimes, participants in dinner conversations are neither exclusively engaged in eating nor do they always define eating as the ‘main’ activity” (2009b: 560). She uses the literature on mealtime storytelling as evidence for her claim (e.g., C Goodwin, 1984; Ochs, Smith et al., 1989; Ochs & Taylor, 1992). This suggests that mealtimes are a type of social encounter rich with conflicting projects and tasks; an ideal site for the study of *how* the business of interaction gets done.

### The data site

This thesis is based on video recordings of naturally occurring family meals. Previous research has demonstrated that there is a lot going on when a family sits down to eat together. In addition to eating a meal in accordance with relevant etiquette and

social comportment, participants also routinely hold conversations not directly related to the action of eating the meal. Beneath the surface of all these social practices, researchers suggest there is an undercurrent of family business; namely social control and socialization. Thus there exists a veritable melting pot of power relationships to negotiate and manage within the social encounter. Additionally, there is the matter of the still developing linguistic, social, and interactive skills of the child participants, and the active role parents are reported to take in shaping that development, to consider as part of the family mealtime encounter.

With regard to the current study, family mealtimes represent an important form of social interaction for the participants. They are a formative interactional context for children, offering the chance to learn about different personal and group relationships and culturally acceptable modes of expression. For parents, family meals are an occasion to model acceptable mealtime behaviour and to correct their child’s misbehaviour (Nock, 1987). Family meals matter, and as such are worthy of study.

In this thesis I am specifically interested in *how* acts of social control (chiefly telling someone else to do something) are practically accomplished. The family mealtime offers an environment likely to be rich in socially controlling actions due both to the nature of the relationships between the participants and to the task-oriented nature of the social encounter. Pearson states that “‘controlling’ speech acts or directives occur profusely in ordinary situations where people are set on accomplishing tasks” (1989: 289). Therefore family mealtimes represent a sensible starting point for an investigation into social control practices.

Finally, children are not blank slates for their parents to fill with rules and commands. The vast self-help literature into dealing with fussy eaters (e.g., Ford, 2010), managing tantrums (e.g., Mah, 2008), and general parenting advice (e.g., Carroll, Reid et al., 2005) can be taken as evidence of children’s active, often confrontational, and highly involved reactions to being told what to do. M Goodwin states, “negotiations involving acts of control are central to the organisation of family life” (2006: 516). Naturally occurring family mealtime data provides a golden opportunity to examine how social control acts are negotiated for real between family members.

## Directives

The aim of the thesis is to explicate the practices involved in getting someone to do something, to develop an account of directives as a class of situated actions, and to investigate the types of concerns oriented to by participants as relevant to the action of directing. Therefore, the subject of the thesis is not a specific speech act, defined by linguists and applied post hoc to the data collected (see Chapter 3 for a fuller account of the existing research into directives). This thesis is about attempts by one participant to get another participant to do something. In other words, performing an act of social control. My interest is in how a speaker attempt to assert control (to varying degrees) over a co-participant and how that attempt is responded to. Utterances contained within the class of directive actions include, among others, those conventionally described as requests, orders, proposals, and suggestions. I use the term ‘directives’ as an umbrella term, covering all the above, which clues analysts into the territory being dealt with. Most lay people know what it means to tell someone to do something, they don’t necessarily know what a directive is. Throughout the thesis I will develop an alternative approach to both conceptualising and recognising speakers’ attempts to get someone to do something (directives, for short) in interaction.

Justification for using such a broad definition of a directive action can be taken from the difficulties that arise when one tries to specify exactly what a directive is and how it can be recognised when working with real life interaction data (see Chapter 3). For example, if one were to consider the request, “please could you pick me up some toothpaste on your way home” would this count as a directive? Much of the existing research literature into request types has tended to organise them along a spectrum according to how direct they are (Curl & Drew, 2008). Analysts have most commonly judged the directness of a request according to its level of politeness (Aronsson & Thorell, 1999). Such an approach tends to treat requests and directives as versions, of varying politeness, of the same action. In Searle’s terms, the difference between a request and a directive may not involve a difference in illocutionary point; rather it will be a function of a difference in the ‘style of performance of the illocutionary act’ (1979: 8). Thus the interest here, to use Searle’s words, is in the illocutionary act of directing, within which he includes “requests, orders, commands, askings, prayers, pleadings, beggings and entreaties” (1979: 5)

Drew (2011a) suggested that we should not take for granted that an initiating action is what we assume it to be. To that end, in Chapter 3 I propose a wholly data-driven approach to finding and recognising directive utterances in interaction. Simply put, an utterance will be included in the analysis as a directive if both speaker and recipient orient to it as an attempt to get the recipient to do something. In Chapter 4 I outline a prototypical directive sequence, which suggests that directive utterances initiate a systematically recurrent form of sequence progression, to which all parties orient. This offers further evidence that attempts to get someone to do something represent a recognisable class of social action for participants in interaction.

I don't mean to suggest that all attempts to get someone to do something are equivalent actions, far from it. In Chapter 5 I explicitly contrast two directive formulations (modal interrogatives and imperatives) to highlight the difference between telling someone to do something and asking them to do it. This permits an examination of the interactional consequences of choosing either of the formulations. However, in doing so, I demonstrate that both formulations orient (in varying degrees) to the notions of entitlement and contingency. Therefore, I argue that different directive formulations may represent a system of practices in service to the same social action. Different formulations vary in the degree to which they prioritise either displaying a situated entitlement to direct or an acceptance of the contingencies that could prevent compliance.

Within the research literature there has been more interest in indirect or polite forms of requesting than into the more direct or entitled forms. Indeed, M Goodwin has noted that explicit imperatives have been considered “obvious” and not in need of analytic interpretation (1990: 83). She suggests that we should not assume that direct imperatives are immune from the “issues of understanding” that are more evident when requests are built in a less direct manner (M Goodwin, 1990, p84). That is the position that will be adopted throughout the thesis. It will be achieved by considering the whole sequence of talk within which the directive action is located. In particular, the response will be treated as just as important as the directive itself.

The analytic chapters of the thesis are divided into two sections: *directives* and *responses*. Below I present a loose, heuristic account of how the two sections each address the following questions:

- What is the central action of a directive?
- What are some of the practices associated with directing?
- What are the social and sequential implications of directing?

### Directives

The study of getting someone to do something (i.e., directives) begins with simple questions: what is a directive? What is the central action being achieved? This is addressed in Chapter 3, which concludes that any judgement by the analyst can never be as true or as valid as the orientation shown by the actual person who delivered the directive and the actual person who responded to it in real time. Thus, attempts by the analyst to identify and classify any utterance as a directive need to be based on evidence from the interaction showing that the participants oriented to it as such. This chapter adopts an extremely loose definition of a directive, specifically to cast a wide net and include attempts to get someone to do something that are designed to appear less impositional, direct, and explicit (that is, less like an ‘on the record’ directive).

The second interest of the thesis is in the practice of directing: What does it look like and how is it done? This is first addressed sequentially in Chapter 4 where the prototypical progression of the directive sequence is outlined and discussed. Here directive actions are not treated as isolated utterances by a single speaker but as the first move in a sequence that requires collaborative effort between multiple participants to bring to completion. Then different formulation options for directives are investigated in Chapter 5 where successive directive utterances are examined in sequence both for the degree to which they display the speaker’s entitlement to control the recipient’s action, and for the ways in which they restrict the recipient’s scope for responding.

Within these three chapters (Chapter 3 - Chapter 5) the reader should get a sense of how the *practices* through which the *action* of directing is accomplished also bring about *social implications* for the participants that have the potential to threaten intersubjectivity. Namely, whether the recipient will submit to the authority of the directive speaker and ratify the entitlement they have claimed. Chapter 5 shows that by issuing a directive the speaker is claiming the right to control the recipient’s actions. This is a risky social action that essentially demands that the recipient submits to the



authority of the directive speaker and ratifies the entitlement that was claimed. Therefore, it has the potential to reinforce patterns of authority and submission. Additionally, directive sequences carry a potential threat to intersubjectivity should the speaker continue to demand compliance and the recipient continue to refuse to comply.

### Responses

The main focus during the first half of the thesis is on the action and practices of directing. The second half then moves beyond the directive itself to consider the response options demonstrated by the recipients and the social and sequential implications of trying to claim the entitlement to control someone else's actions. Chapter 6 outlines some of the various responses evidenced in the data. It concludes that regardless of the type of response offered by the recipient (e.g., defiance, resistance, compliance) all the turns following a directive shared some kind of orientation towards the notion of compliance. The action of compliance is examined in Chapter 6 both as a practical action-in-interaction, and as a theoretical construct in the research literature. Crucially, the analyses offered in the second half of the thesis reveal that what constitutes compliance and what degree of compliance might be required in any given instance are knotty problems both for participants and analysts alike.

The practice of responding to a directive will be shown to draw typically on embodied rather than solely verbal resources. Consequently, Chapter 6 contains a discussion of the literature relating to the role of embodied conduct in face-to-face interaction. Chapter 7 then exposes one particular practice, combining both verbal and embodied elements, used by recipients to create a balance between resisting and complying. The practice (referred to as incipient compliance) exploits the potential ambiguity surrounding what constitutes compliance and how much is required by the directive.

Chapter 3 - Chapter 5 (Directives chapters) draw attention to the social control aspects of issuing a directive using the related dimensions of entitlement and contingency. Chapter 6 - Chapter 7 (Responses chapters) develop the analysis by considering the recipient's role in managing the sequence. A power asymmetry is created between the participants at the point when the speaker issues the directive and claims an entitlement to control the recipient's actions. The recipient then needs to

manage the asymmetry. They can either choose to ratify the speaker’s entitlement (through compliance) or reject the speaker’s claim (through defiance or resistance). In Chapter 6 I engage with the research literature surrounding notions of authority, asymmetry, and agency, specifically with regard to how they relate to parent and child relationships. In Chapter 7 the notion of agency<sup>2</sup> is shown to be of particular relevance for directive recipients as they strive to retain a sense of autonomy over their own actions without directly defying the directive speaker. Chapter 7 highlights a delicate practice that enables the recipient to perform actions consistent with compliance without ceding control for their behaviour to the directive speaker. For directive recipients, a key determinant in how they respond appears to be how they manage the conflicting preferences made relevant by the directive action: a preference for compliance and a preference for autonomy.

The final chapter of the thesis, Chapter 8, brings together the five analytic chapters and considers how they relate to each other. This concluding chapter simply aims to summarise the conclusions that arise from each piece of analytic work, consider their implications, and suggest some future directions for study.

## Analytic Framework

The main arguments I hope to develop arise from the close examination of specific sequences in interaction during which one participant tells another to do something. These sequences were not approached with preconceived analytic theories of likely patterns of findings. In fact, even the phenomenon of interest itself (directives) was left relatively unspecified prior to analysis (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of how directive actions came to be identified). Therefore, as Wootton suggests, the idea that the conclusions have arisen from the data can “be taken quite literally” as a description of the methodological approach adopted here (1997: 16).

In this section I aim to outline possible other approaches to the study of mealtime directives, then highlight some of the key features of the chosen methodological approach (conversation analysis) that make it a particularly appropriate

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<sup>2</sup> Agency is a murky concept often conceptualised as free will (Ahearn, 2001)

tool for this type of study, and finally offer an overview of some guiding methodological principles for conversation analysis that will be adopted throughout the work.

### Other approaches

The study of interaction has historically been approached from within four main disciplines: Anthropology, Linguistics, Psychology and Sociology. Note that any discussion here of these approaches can be no more than a gross gloss of diverse and varied fields of research. The aim in this section is simply to outline possible alternative approaches to the study of mealtime directives and to identify their limitations for use in the thesis before focussing on the key attributes of conversation analysis that make it the most appropriate tool for the job.

Within anthropology, the interest in talk has predominantly been its relationship to culture, Thus although such research can make significant contributions to a theory of culture, in order to do so it typically operates at level of detail that obscures the details of how conversation itself is structured (Turner, 1974). Such studies tend to “gloss or idealise the specifics of what they depict” (Heritage, 1984, p234).

Research within linguistics has overwhelmingly concentrated its attention on idealised or hypothetical examples of language use. Linguistic theory focuses on an “ideal speaker-listener” arrangement where no problems of production, hearing or understanding interfere (Chomsky, 1965, p3). If real speech is used for a linguistics study the individual utterances tend to be dealt with in isolation rather than with an appreciation for the context in which they were delivered. Thus the ‘mealtime’ element to the study of mealtime directives could not be easily accommodated using linguistic approaches to the study of interaction.

Psychological research on interaction has tended to concentrate on explaining the talk in terms of the speaker’s state of mind. Such work rests on the cognitivist assumption that the internal desires of the actors shape the social encounter. It is an approach that centres on the mental processes of an individual rather than the collective accomplishment of conversation by a group of co-participants. An alternative perspective within psychology is to assume the social world is produced by interactions between actors (the constructionist perspective). Work conducted from this standpoint

falls under the banner of discursive psychology. Discursive psychology involves the reworking of traditional psychological concepts within an interactionalist framework. It rests on the observation that discourse is action; our words do things (Edwards, 1995; Edwards & Potter, 2005). By separating talk and action, as psychology does with distinctions such as those between attitudes and behaviour, we risk overlooking the accomplishments of talk in interaction (Wiggins & Potter, 2007). In relation to the current study, discursive psychology provides an orientation to ‘psychological’ matters such as parents’ knowledge and desires for their children’s behaviour that is closely grounded in the data through the analytic tools of conversation analysis, a combination that is part of a current preferred trend in discursive psychology (Edwards, 2005a).

A final contrasting approach is sociological research. Broadly speaking, the type of research I am describing as ‘sociological’ is one in which “the emphasis is on “external” characteristics of the participants and the world in which they live, for example their social class, gender and race” (Sidnell, 2010, p18). Such work does not offer evidence that the social categories to which a person belongs (e.g., mother, wife, journalist) are actually being drawn on during the conversation. Equally, the researcher may not even know all external characteristics. Schegloff (1992) suggests that if an external characteristic like gender or race is relevant to the interaction then the participants themselves will orient it to. An analysis based on broad social features known to the analyst may neglect to consider any personal characteristics of the participants not disclosed to the researcher or the specific conditions in which the talk is produced.

The approaches outlined here each addresses specific types of research questions but they are not designed to offer an analysis of what is done, how it is done, and what its consequences are (action, practice and implications). Consequently they are not equipped to fully address the research questions of interest here. In contrast, conversation analysis is a form of microanalysis that specifically seeks to explicate the organisation of talk-in-interaction. As an analytical approach, conversation analysis represents a distinctive type of research that bridges psychological, sociological and linguistic traditions. In the following section I will outline the basic principles of conversation analysis, along with some of the key features, which I argue make it uniquely suited to addressing the research interests of the thesis.

*Conversation Analysis as an approach to family mealtime data*

Sidnell describes conversation analysis as “an approach within the social sciences that aims to describe, analyse and understand talk as a basic and constitutive feature of human social life” (2010: 1). This description reveals a key assumption of conversation analysis, namely that social interaction is the primary means through which human social life is constructed (C Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). Conversation is the way in which people socialise, and develop relationships with others (Liddicoat, 2007). Understanding how conversation works offers a key into understanding how the human social world works. Heritage points out that “in the past, social scientists have had little to say about how interaction works, treating it as an invisible or inscrutable ‘black box’ (2001: 47). Conversation analysis was developed from sociological origins in California in the early 1960s to correct that omission. As such it seeks to “describe, analyse and understand” *how* conversation happens. Or, as Sacks puts it, the aim is to subject the fine-grained detail of naturally occurring conversations to an analysis that will “yield the *technology* of conversation” (1984: 413, emphasis added).

Conversation analysis builds on earlier work by Goffman (1983b) who suggested that interaction had an organisation system or order to it: the ‘interaction order’. The orderliness of interaction is a result of “the recognisable achievement of the same outcome through similar methods in similar contexts” (Liddicoat, 2007, p5). That is to say particular actions systematically elicit particular reactions in response. This is true both at the level of action, for example invitations elicit either acceptances or refusals (sequence organisation of adjacency pairs (Schegloff, 2007)), and at a more procedural level, for example, talk by one speaker is characteristically followed immediately but without overlap with talk from a different speaker (turn taking (Sacks et al., 1974)). For conversation analysts, the interest lies “in finding the *machinery*, the *rules*, the *structures* that produce and constitute that orderliness” and enabling the inner workings of conversation to become visible (Psathas, 1995, p2 emphasis in original).

If, as seems to be the case, speakers can make use of a multitude of different linguistic devices to achieve the goal of getting someone to do something (e.g. requests, orders, suggestions, invitations etc...) then what is the basis for claiming that the different devices have systematically different interactional purposes? Wootton (1997) suggests that an obvious way to address such a question is to examine the specific sequences in which the target actions (in the case of the current study, directive type

actions) occur in order to examine the interactional consequences of using directives for the participants in the conversation. That is precisely how the study of mealtime directives shall be approached here, through a detailed consideration of directive sequences using the methodological apparatus of conversation analysis.

When Goffman (1983b) outlined his interaction order, he claimed that human interaction constituted its own social institution, and that face-to-face interaction is the foundation for all other social institutions (e.g., hospitals, courts of law, or households). By studying the organisation of interaction at the dinner table we are not only able to gain insight in how that social environment is produced, but also into what is being produced. Thus the study of mealtime directives using conversation analysis has the potential to inform on, the action of directing (what is done), the practice of directing (how its done), and the social implications of directing (the consequences of doing it).

### *Real life interaction*

Conversation Analysis (CA) insists on the use of recordings of naturally occurring interactions as a source of data. The analysis encompasses both what was said and “*how* the persons were speaking” (Psathas, 1995, p11). Therefore delivery details such as in-breaths, restarts, and prosodic information need to be preserved. Heritage and Atkinson state, “only the smallest fraction of what is used and relied on in interaction is available to unaided intuition” (1984: 4). Contemporaneous or memorised note taking cannot record the required level of detail. Recordings permit repeated hearings of the interaction such that previously unnoticed aspects of the delivery can be made visible and exposed for analysis. This exposition process is the part of the role of transcription (see Chapter 2).

Natural recordings also have an important role to play in helping to establish the empirical robustness of any analysis. They help to ensure that no aspect of the interaction is judged to be irrelevant before it is, at the very least, carefully transcribed. Once transcribed it remains available for analysis where it may not otherwise have been. Thus, as Heritage and Atkinson state, “the use of recorded data serves as a control on the limitations and fallibilities of intuition and recollection” (1984: 4). The recordings are not just available during analysis; they remain present (usually as a transcript, though increasingly in digital audio or video format) in published research. This allows

other researchers unique access to the original data in order to externally validate the analytic conclusions, something not routinely available for other types of research reports (e.g., quantitative and statistical studies).

The alternative to real life recordings is to use made-up, idealised or hypothetical examples derived from the researchers' common-sense knowledge of conversation. This approach is widely accepted within linguistics (e.g., Searle (1969). Noted linguist Chomsky (1965) advocates that:

“Linguistic theory is primarily concerned with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogenous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatical irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distraction, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance” (Chomsky, 1965, p3)

Thus, actual instances of spontaneous communication, with all their grammatical errors and production failures have been treated in linguistic research as somehow defective and unduly corrupted by non-linguistic elements (Liddicoat, 2007). Obviously, for a study interested in *how* directives are produced and responded to during family mealtimes it is precisely the 'actual performance' that is required for analysis. The insistence within conversation analysis to use natural recordings makes possible the type of analysis required here.

### *Participants' understandings*

The most general principle of conversation analysis is that of recipient design (Sacks et al., 1974). Essentially, this is an acceptance that participants design their talk such that it can be understood in that moment by their particular interlocutor. That is, utterances are designed to be appropriate for the chosen recipient (Liddicoat, 2007). In order for a conversation to take place, the participants in that conversation have to understand what the other is saying. All parties to a conversation must share an understanding of both the topic and the process of talking about it. This joint or shared understanding is known as intersubjectivity: During a piece of interaction any given utterance displays the speaker's hearing or understanding of the preceding utterance and sets up how their turn should be understood by the next speaker. This is how

Heritage (1984) understands talk to be “both context-shaped and context-renewing” (1984: 242). For example, Wootton (1997) demonstrated that a two-year-old child routinely constructed her requests in such a way as to take account of agreements and commitments made earlier in the conversation. He argues she therefore took “such understandings into account” when designing her subsequent utterance (Wootton, 1997, p11).

Turns at talk can be seen as a series of public displays of individual understandings that collectively allow shared understandings to be created and ratified in the interaction (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992). Conversation analysis investigates the procedures through which participants are able to generate shared understandings, and therefore make sense of their social world (Liddicoat, 2007). The situated and practical understandings displayed by participants during interaction form the bedrock of any analytic observations made using conversation analysis. They are privileged over any common sense understanding by the analyst or any broad social categories and phenomena that can not be shown to have been oriented to by the participants as the interaction takes place. Thus, successive utterances in talk-in-interaction offer what Sidnell (2010) calls a “unique methodological lever” (2010: 14). That is, if participants can use their interlocutor’s ‘public displays of understanding’ to check their own, so too can analysts.

In terms of the methodology adopted throughout the thesis, participants’ displays of understanding offer the crucial key needed to unlock the analysis: they are the means through which an utterance can be recognised and treated as a directive (see Chapter 3).

### *Social practices*

Arguably the most significant contribution that conversation analysis can make to social science research is to explicate how social practices are accomplished. That is, to set out how normal, everyday people go about ‘giving advice’ (Butler, Potter et al., 2010; Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Pilnick, 1999), ‘showing empathy’ (Hepburn & Potter, 2007; Heritage & Lindstrom, Forthcoming; Pudlinski, 2005), or ‘complaining’ (Dersley & Wootton, 2000; Drew, 1998; Edwards, 2005b; Heinemann & Traverso, 2009). While competent members of speech communities can easily recognise an activity such as ‘confirming an allusion’ (Schegloff, 1996), ‘being called to account’ (Robinson & Bolden,



2010), or even being told what to do (Chapter 3) as they are happening, they may not be able to specify *how* they know what’s happening. Clarke suggests that conversation analysis “explicates the ‘seen but unnoticed’ details of conversation” which participants rely on to produce and recognise social actions (2009: 28). In so doing it exposes the practices required to produce the action (or the mechanics behind the action).

Actions have social implications. For example, one of the activities undertaken during a doctor-patient consultation is for the doctor to elicit from the patient what medical issues they would like to discuss during the consultation. If the medical complaint elicitation process is incomplete then the patient may leave at the end of the consultation without having had all of their concerns addressed. Heritage and Robinson’s (2011) analysis of the practices doctors used to elicit patients’ concerns revealed an easily implementable practice to reduce the number of unmet concerns. Alternatively Kidwell and Zimmerman demonstrate how participants, both adults and very young children treat the action of being shown something as “socially consequential” because it creates a slot for a response from a co-participant (2007: 609). Each action performed during a conversation is consequential, be it simply for how the sequence progresses (such as initiating a ‘showing’ sequence or declining an invitation) or for achieving broader social goals (such as meeting patients’ concerns, passing a viva, or teaching someone to drive).

Heritage and Robinson’s (2011) work shows that by explicating the practices people use to perform social actions, conversation analysis can provide tangible evidence of what abstract interactional phenomena (like issuing directives) might look like, and how they are practically accomplished in talk. By exposing the situated practice of directive type actions, the research has the potential to offer an empirical basis for identifying and recognising directives rather than relying on analysts’ judgements. This approach works to reframe the discussion of directive type actions away from strict definitions of speech acts, like requests and directives, and any differences between them. Instead, the practices used to accomplish actions are made visible and explicated with the emphasis on how participants achieve their interactional goals. Finally, this approach offers a route into understanding the social implications of telling someone to do something. The relationship between directive practices and notions of compliance, authority, and agency over one’s own actions are discussed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

*Children in research*

Conversation analysis was developed through the study of adult conversations. As such it is not specifically designed for the study of children's conversations. However, the basic assumptions of conversation analysis outlined above apply equally appropriately to children as to adults. In fact, as the number of studies involving children grows, it is becoming increasingly clear that even very young children are sensitive to some of the 'seen but unnoticed' aspects of conversation that help to establish intersubjectivity. For example, as previously discussed, Wootton (1997) showed how a two-year-old child was fully capable of making use of the shared understandings produced through talk to design appropriately formatted requests. Similarly, Filipi (2009) suggests that preverbal children are able to mobilise gaze and pointing to indicate engagement and disengagement from interactive activities at appropriate sequential points, and to initiate joint attention (see also Kidwell & Zimmerman, 2007). Thus very young children can be shown to display an understanding of the organisation of interaction even if they have not developed the sophistication of the resources available to adults.

The degree to which a child can be considered a 'competent member' of the speech community at the family dinner table is a difficult question to answer. It is easy to get drawn in to a competencies based argument and propose a specific age or developmental stage at which a child can now be considered 'able to hold a conversation'. However, such an approach is rooted in 'external characteristics' of the individual rather than in collaboratively produced interaction practices. Evidence from studies involving people with aphasia<sup>3</sup> suggest that relatively simple changes to the interaction can make a significant difference to the aphasic person's ability to participate as a competent member (Wilkinson, Bryan et al., 2010). Similarly a growing body of research is demonstrating the delicate and sophisticated forms of interaction that are possible between young children and adults with whom they are familiar and who can scaffold their participation (e.g., Cekaite, 2010; Filipi, 2009; Tarplee, 2010). So, while a child may be able to fully and actively participate in a conversation with close family members they may not be able to defend a bill in the House of Commons.

A telling example of the importance of studying the fine-grained features of children's interactions can be taken from Stivers' (2001) study of children's

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<sup>3</sup> Aphasia is the speech production difficulties typically resulting from a neurological injury such as a stroke.

participation in problem presentation sequences during paediatric consultations, She found that in approximately two thirds of cases parents described the reason for visiting the doctor rather than the child patient. Even when the child was specifically selected as the next speaker, parents still described the problem in nearly 50% of cases (see Figure 1.2 below).

Figure 1.2: Distribution between speaker selected by doctor to present problem and who eventually delivers the problem presentation (taken from Stivers, 2001, p268).

Doctor selects	Problem Presenter			Total
	None	Parent	Child	
Parent	0	30	0	30
Child	2	22	30	54
Ambiguous	0	15	33	18
<b>Total</b>	2	67	33	102

Despite the uneven distribution that seems to favour parents to present the child’s medical problem, Stivers (2001) found that children were nonetheless treated as having primary rights to answer questions about their medical problem when they were selected as next speaker. Her analysis revealed that parents routinely withheld answering on the child’s behalf until “there had been substantial delay, multiple attempts to question the child, or inadequate answers by the child” (Stivers, 2001, p277). The statistical distribution of answers to problem solicitations therefore obscures the careful interactional negotiations conducted between parent and child, which position the child as primarily accountable for describing their problem, and the parent as a (more or less) supportive back up should the child display interactional trouble presenting their problem. She cautions that, “in focusing entirely on the outcome (i.e., who eventually answers questions and provides information) researchers may miss the process that actually includes children and treats them as consequential parties in the interaction” (Stivers, 2001, p277).

It is undeniable that children’s competences and grasps of social encounters are “likely to be different in significant ways from those of the adults” (Wootton, 1997, p17). Leaving aside issues of language acquisition or knowledge of special topics, younger people simply have fewer communicative experiences to draw on than older people and

cannot be expected to have developed familiarity with as many interactive situations. For now I am inclined to support the position of Forrester (2010), who offers evidence that it is not safe to dismiss children’s ability to fully participate in interaction before considering the specific sequences in which they are engaged. In keeping with this approach, Wootton (1997) suggests that a useful tool for handling the potential difficulties in studying children’s interaction is to use a highly inductive methodology such as conversation analysis that is grounded in participants’ understandings. Additionally, he advocates being cautious “as to the weight we place on understandings made of the child’s talk by adults, such as parents”. He provides evidence of several occasions when parental understandings are demonstrably “incommensurate with those of the child” (1997: 17-18). In such cases children work to rectify and repair such lapses in shared understandings.

The issue of children’s status and participation rights within interaction is a complicated and multi-faceted concern, which is far beyond the scope of a single thesis to answer. Forrester points out that even if a child is capable of displaying the “skills of conversation” required for successful performance within interaction this does not always guarantee them full-member status (2010: 56). For example if a husband and wife were arguing about a possible affair or infidelity, then even if their young child waited for an appropriate transition relevant place to ask a question or not, they are unlikely to ratify the child’s participation in the conversation. Any individual’s ratification as a participant in a conversation is made visible in how their contributions are treated by their co-participants as the conversational sequence progresses. Unless it can be shown that the participants themselves are orienting to a child as having reduced participation rights during specific sequences I will treat them as full and active participants in *family* mealtime conversations.

### Conversation Analysis Methodology

“CA is a well-developed tradition with a distinctive set of methods and analytic procedures as well as a large body of established findings” (Sidnell, 2010, p1). There are numerous published volumes that address the practicalities of conducting research using conversation analysis in far more detail than is possible here (e.g., Drew, 2008; Hutchby & Woofitt, 1998; Sidnell, 2010). My aim in this section is to outline some of the key methodological elements that have informed my analysis.

As was hopefully indicated by the previous section, the aim of conversation analytic research is to discover, describe, analyse and ultimately develop an account for the social action under study. Schegloff (1996) notes that analysis may begin with the noticing of an action (such as getting someone to do what you tell them) and then progress to specifying what it is in the talk that serves as a practice for accomplishing that action. Alternatively, analysis may begin with an observed practice (such as an imperative) and go on to ask what the outcome of the practice might be. In either case, the end result should be an account of an action-in-interaction that considers both the manner and the outcome of the undertaking.

Schegloff (1996) lists three methodological elements that he claims should be in evidence when presenting an account of an action. Throughout the thesis I have attempted to provide evidence for each of Schegloff's three elements discussed in turn below.

1. Produce “a formulation of what action or actions are being accomplished, with compelling exemplifications in displays of data and analysis, including ways of “testing” the claim via confrontation of problematic instances” (1996: 172).

Chapter 3 is a detailed consideration of how directives have been formulated, both in previous research, and for the current study. Chapter 4 outlines the prototypical structure of directive sequences. However, this structure is identified as merely a prototype through subsequent consideration of a) when multiple directives are used (Chapter 5), b) when recipients refuse to comply (Chapter 6), and c) when recipient's work to blur compliance with self-motivated behaviour (Chapter 7). In each variation, elements reflecting the prototypical structure remain, offering support for the original analysis whilst developing it to accommodate complexities.

With this thesis I hope highlight the shortcomings of the term directive as a formulation of the action of telling someone to do something. I will describe how utterances formulated as B-event noticings, calls to account, accusations, modal interrogatives, imperatives, and even embodied head nods can all be mobilised to get someone to do something. I will conclude by describing a constellation of practices

evidenced in the data through which participants negotiate a situated entitlement to control what the recipient of a directive does next.

2. The formulation must be shown to be grounded “in the reality of the participants” rather than constructed by the analyst. It should be demonstrated that the participants “have understood the utterances in question to be possibly doing the proposed action(s) or that they are oriented to that possibility” (1996: 172)

A central concern throughout the thesis will be to show how the analysis is grounded in the participants’ understandings of the unfolding action. This is typically achieved through the next turn proof-procedure in which the immediately subsequent turn is demonstrably responsive to its prior (Heritage, 1984; Sacks et al., 1974). Perhaps the clearest example of this can be found the section in Chapter 3 that is dedicated to demonstrating the ways in which participants display their understandings of directive implicative utterances.

3. “An account must be offered of what about the production of the talk/conduct provided for its recognisability as such an action”. That is to say, “what were the methodological, procedural, or “practice-d” grounds of its production” (1996:173)

In Chapter 4 I propose that directive sequences can be recognised by topically disjunctive boundaries both before and after the sequence that serve to treat the directive sequence as a discrete and contained piece of interactional business separate to the mundane activity of ‘having a conversation’. In Chapter 5 I propose that directive actions can be recognised through the design of the utterance such that the speaker’s entitlement to direct is heightened and the recipient’s grounds for non-compliance are reduced (contingencies). Finally, in Chapter 7 I demonstrate how the action of telling someone what to do can impinge on their right to determine their own behaviour and threaten their autonomy. Therefore, I suggest that directive type activities are recognisable as a class of actions in which one participant claims agency over the actions of another.

Schegloff’s (1996) three elements cited above offer a guide for research that emphasizes the methodological rigour of conversation analysis and the importance of

keeping the analysis centred on what is evidenced in the data. A more procedural explanation of the steps taken during the research process is offered in Chapter 2. The aim here was merely to clarify the guiding principles that shepherded the research. One specific procedure relating to conversation analytic research does merit particular mention at this point: Collections

### *Collections*

Each of the analytic chapters presented in the thesis (Chapter 3 – Chapter 7) is based on a different collection of extracts from the main data corpus. A collection, in conversation analytic terms, is a mechanism to gather together a set of single cases that share common attributes (e.g., sequences where more than one successive directive is issued). Critically, a collection can only proceed from a single-case analysis in which the analyst is required to determine what action that particular example is an instance of (Psathas, 1995). A collection is slowly built up following multiple single-case analyses, in which each next case demonstrates the systematic commonalities that exist across participants and contexts. This is an example of the “constant comparative method”, in which each subsequent example ‘tests out’ the hypothesis of the previous one, leading to a continual refinement of the analysis (Silverman, 2001, p238). It therefore offers an ongoing coherence check as the analysis progresses.

It is important to remember that a collection is a gathering of single instances rather than multiple examples of the same thing; each context is unique (Schegloff, 1993). The analytic power of a collection is derived from the fact that it “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” (Liddicoat, 2007, p10-11). Thus each of the collections used for the studies presented in this thesis represent a common practice that has been found across various conversational contexts, family relationships and mealtime environments.

Despite the different extract selection criteria used for each analytic chapter, I hope the reader will be able to see considerable cross-applicability of the findings from one chapter to the data used in the others. This is one of the aspects I argue offers evidence of the robustness of the action of directives as it has been operationalised in the thesis. Each analytic chapter represents a different study, approached on its own terms as an independent exercise. The selection criteria for extracts to be included in

the study-specific collections were varied. Despite this, features characteristic of directives pervade all the extracts making them appear to be from one collection; that of telling someone to do something.



## Chapter 2 – Data Collection and Procedures

### Introduction

This chapter outlines the research process followed in the thesis. The chapter is divided into four sections participants: data collection, transcription and analysis, and ethical considerations. The first section details the two sources used to recruit participants, the composition of the families and the selection criteria that led to their inclusion in the study. The next section outlines the procedure used for collecting data. It details the volume of data that was collected and the distribution of meal types obtained (breakfast, lunch, & dinner). Some of the advantages and limitations of using video data are discussed before I outline of the procedure used to manage and select extracts for study out of the large data corpus. In the third section I describe the transcription conventions used in the analysis and the particular variations used to handle visual and embodied information within the transcript. The chapter concludes with an outline of the formal ethics procedures adopted for the study and a discussion of some of the ethical considerations that arose during the research. This chapter should, by the end, provide the reader with a clearer understanding of the work undertaken during the research process.

### Participants

The participants for the study were family groups who agreed to video record their mealtimes in their normal home environment. The data comes from two corpora; 1) recordings of three families recruited specifically for this project, and 2) the contents of the Discourse And Rhetoric Group (DARG) archives at Loughborough University. The DARG archives are a collection of family mealtime data that has been collected by various researchers within the Loughborough University Social Sciences department and pooled to create a shared resource for research.

The analysis focuses primarily on the data collected by the three families recorded specifically for this project. They represent the core corpus explored during the study. That data is supplemented by extracts of data from a further four families taken from the DARG archives with permission from the original researchers where applicable<sup>4</sup>. Figure 2.1 details the composition of the families used in the study, and the corpus to which they belong.

Figure 2.1: Participants

<b>Family Name</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Age (year, months)</b>	<b>Corpus</b>
Amberton	Father	Chris	Adult	Craven
Amberton	Mother	Tracy	Adult	Craven
Amberton	Daughter	Emily	7, 6	Craven
Amberton	Daughter	Jessica	4, 11	Craven
Benson	Father	Ian	Adult	Craven
Benson	Mother	Julia	Adult	Craven
Benson	Ian's Daughter	Angela	15, 1	Craven
Benson	Ian's Daughter	Hannah	13, 9	Craven
Benson	Ian's Son	Sam	6, 11	Craven
Benson	Julia's Daughter	Carol	5, 5	Craven
Benson	Daughter of both	Jasmine	Baby	Craven
Crouch	Father	Dad	Adult	DARG
Crouch	Mother	Mum	Adult	DARG
Crouch	Daughter	Katherine	5, ?	DARG
Crouch	Daughter	Anna	3, ?	DARG
Edwards	Father	Dad	Adult	DARG
Edwards	Mother	Mum	Adult	DARG
Edwards	Daughter	Lanie	4, ?	DARG
Edwards	Son	Finlay	1, 3	DARG
Forbes	Father	Tim	Adult	Craven
Forbes	Mother	Josie	Adult	Craven
Forbes	Daughter	Daisy	8, 3	Craven
Forbes	Daughter	Lucy	5, 3	Craven
Hawkins	Father	Dad	Adult	DARG
Hawkins	Mother	Mum	Adult	DARG
Hawkins	Son	Jack	9, ?	DARG
Hawkins	Son	Charlie	5, ?	DARG
Jephcott	Father	Dad	Adult	DARG
Jephcott	Mother	Mum	Adult	DARG
Jephcott	Son	Hayden	6, ?	DARG
Jephcott	Daughter	Isabelle	4, ?	DARG

<sup>4</sup> I am particularly grateful to Laura Jenkins (Loughborough University) for allowing me to use extracts of her data from the Edwards, Hawkins and Jephcott families.

### Selection criteria

The selection criteria for inclusion in the study were relatively broad. The families were selected on the basis of the four following criteria:

1. They had two or more pre-teenage children
2. They were all first language English speakers
3. They ate meals around the table together on a regular basis as part of their normal family routine
4. They did not watch television or listen to the radio during their meals

No criteria were placed on the gender of the children or an upper limit to the number of children in the family. No attempt was made to exclude single parent families or families with children from several marriages. The resulting composition of participating families is a result of sampling fortune rather than design beyond the four stated criteria.

A sample of seven families could in no way be considered representative of a general population. Instead they are treated as sites of discursive data rich with talk about food. The focus was on “language use rather than the people generating the language” so little effort was made to control the composition beyond at least two children under ten (Potter & Wetherell, 1987, p161). It is the interaction between individuals rather than the individual themselves that is of interest.

Crucially, the small pool of participants does not impede the validity of the study. In traditional experimental research designs attempts are made to generalise findings to a population, in which case, external validity would be contingent upon a representative sample (Bryman, 2004). However, the Conversation Analytic methodology does not lend itself to such validity checks nor to generalisations out to populations. This type of research seeks findings that can reliably inform a theoretical perspective and be applied by other researchers in different contexts (Heritage, 1984; Silverman, 2001).

## Data collection

The aim for data collection was to have material in which interactions between both parents and children in all combinations occurred, where there were a range of ongoing and coordinated embodied action and where the parties would be static enough to be captured using a single video camera. Using mealtimes as the recording event satisfied these criteria. When data collection began the research focus had not yet crystallised into an interest in the exercise of authority-in-interaction. Ultimately the social action of organising and completing a meal, both in terms of food consumption and rituals of moral behaviour that are practiced, proved an extremely rich site to address the research focus.

The participating families used a digital video recorder to record a target of between 10-15 mealtimes. It was anticipated that it would take families around a fortnight. However, two of the three families found that occasions when the whole family ate at the same time were more rare than anticipated so the collection process was terminated after approximately four months.

Families used self-administered recordings because it is less intrusive than direct recordings by researchers (Barbash & Taylor, 1997; Laurier & Philo, 2006). Self-administered recordings were also intended to facilitate easier acclimatisation to being recorded. The fact that there is virtually no observable difference in behaviours between the first and last hour of recording suggests that this tactic was broadly successful. Participants had full control over what was recorded, and only submitted to the researcher material they were willing to have analysed. Having said this, all families reported relief at having completed the recording period, suggesting it was not entirely unobtrusive. One family has agreed to subsequent recordings of the same fortnight over the next three years to allow any developmental implications that may emerge from this study to be taken up in further work at a later date. The details of the additional recordings are not included here because the data was not transcribed or analysed as part of the study. Figure 2.2 summarises the amount of data collected specifically for this study.

Figure 2.2: Data recorded specifically for the study

<b>Family</b>	<b>No of meals</b>	<b>Average meal length</b>	<b>Total recording time</b>
Amberton	13	31:35	6 hours 50 mins
Benson	8	20:14	3 hours 2 mins
Forbes	8	16:52	2 hours 27 mins
<b>Total</b>	29	22:54	12 hours 19 mins

The meals recorded by the three specifically recruited families made up the core data corpus for the study. The data was then supplemented by the DARG archives. Figure 2.3 summarises the amount of data recorded by four families in the DARG archives that were drawn on in the study.

Figure 2.3: Data from the DARG Archive families

<b>Family</b>	<b>Total recording time</b>
Crouch	2 hours 38 mins
Edwards	7 hours 43 mins
Hawkins	6 hours 41 mins
Jephcott	8 hours 50 mins
<b>Total</b>	25 hours 52 mins

Using four families from the archives in combination with the specifically recruited families generated a data corpus of over 38 hours of family mealtimes for this study.

### Meal types

The meals studied were normal family mealtimes. They did not represent special occasions, formal meals or celebrations. The families were told they could record any and all types of meals they were happy to submit for study. Of the 29 meals recorded specifically for the study, the vast majority (23) were of the family evening meal. There

were 5 lunchtimes recorded and only one breakfast meal. Figure 2.4 outlines the dates and times of each recording for the three families.

Figure 2.4: Recording Dates and Times

<b>Family</b>	<b>Meal No</b>	<b>Meal Type</b>	<b>Date Recorded</b>	<b>Start Time</b>	<b>Meal Duration</b>
Amberton	01	Dinner	18/01/2008	17:37	43:00
Amberton	02	Lunch	19/01/2008	13:15	33:49
Amberton	03	Dinner	19/01/2008	17:55	28:00
Amberton	04	Lunch	20/01/2008	13:14	35:35
Amberton	05	Dinner	21/01/2008	17:19	27:00
Amberton	06	Dinner	22/01/2008	18:12	27:41
Amberton	07	Dinner	25/01/2008	17:33	35:00
Amberton	08	Dinner	26/01/2008	17:40	39:06
Amberton	09	Dinner	27/01/2008	17:48	23:30
Amberton	10	Dinner	28/01/2008	17:24	30:00
Amberton	11	Dinner	29/01/2008	17:50	30:00
Amberton	12	Dinner	30/01/2008	17:43	26:00
Amberton	13	Dinner	31/01/2008	17:27	31:51
Benson	01	Lunch	16/02/2008	13:51	20:00
Benson	02	Dinner	16/02/2008	18:42	33:39
Benson	3A	Dinner	17/02/2008	17:34	08:39
Benson	3B	Dinner	17/02/2008	18:35	11:17
Benson	04	Dinner	22/02/2008	19:02	21:58
Benson	05	Dinner	28/02/2008	17:48	24:10
Benson	06	Dinner	05/03/2008	17:26	18:33
Benson	07	Dinner	05/03/2008	17:45	29:05
Benson	08	Lunch	05/04/2008	12:38	14:45
Forbes	01	Dinner	03/11/2008	18:02	29:05
Forbes	02	Dinner	06/11/2008	18:56	25:05
Forbes	03	Dinner	27/11/2008	18:21	16:00
Forbes	04	Lunch	30/11/2008	13:30	15:00
Forbes	05	Dinner	30/11/2008	19:31	20:00
Forbes	06	Dinner	01/12/2008	18:04	20:00
Forbes	07	Dinner	17/01/2009	18:45	09:00
Forbes	08	Breakfast	18/01/2009	09:24	13:00

### Video Data

This study uses video recordings as data. Video data presents a unique set of challenges for the researcher to overcome. However, it also offers the researcher access into the participants' lives that would not otherwise be possible. In this section I will briefly outline some of the advantages and limitations of using video data in social research. The technical challenges associated with working with video data are

addressed in the section on Transcription and Analysis. Here I would like to briefly take up some of the more common objections raised by the use of video recordings in social research.

First and foremost it is important to consider the interactional environment in which the data were collected. The participants in my study are not standing in a corridor chatting while waiting for something more purposeful to do, nor are they talking to each other on the phone while engaged in different activities at opposite ends of the country, they are sat together around a dinner table participating in ‘a family meal’. Ten Have suggests that there is a special case for using video recordings when studying “settings in which core aspects of the action relate to the physical environment, the use of objects, technological artefacts, and/or the body or bodies of one or more of the participants” (2007: 72). Heath (2004) points out that in face-to-face interaction it is not unusual for aspects of the physical environment to be brought into the conversation and made relevant in interaction. For example, taste evaluations or enquiries about taste can be made after a particular food has been eaten (Wiggins & Potter, 2003; Wiggins, 2004b). For this reason, it is important to have evidence of the non-verbal elements of the interaction.

The video record should do more than just preserve the physical environment for the researcher to refer to during their analysis. The family seated around the table can all see one another. Their various gazes, gestures, and eating practices are available for their co-participants to monitor and comment on. The video camera is able to capture the aspects of the physical environment that the participants orient to. A researcher, present in the room and taking notes would not necessarily have been looking the right way to catch the glance Mum gave Dad just before he offered to help cut up his daughter’s food. As Mondada points out “if the aim is to develop an endogenous analysis of the members perspectives embedded in their practices then the very details attended to and exploited by them have to be recorded, as well as their orientation to them” (2006: 54). In this sense, video recordings offer a data collection method that is in tune with the analytic principles of conversation analysis and ethnomethodology.

The analytic task of the recording is to make the relevant details available for study. Whether the researcher then picks up on those details is a matter for the analysis. At the time of recording what matters is to preserve the interaction so that it can be

studied in micro-detail at a later time. Mondada (2006) suggests that conversation analysts using video recordings should pay particular attention to three main features when collecting their data so as to preserve key dimensions that could be relevant to the analysis:

- Time – The video recording should capture the encounter in its entirety, including the opening and closing of activities. This can pose recognition difficulties (such as identifying the boundaries of activities) and practical problems (such as battery life and space of the recording media).
- Participation framework and interactional space – The camera shot should include all relevant participants even those that are not necessarily speaking. It also relates to objects being used or referred to by the participants. This requires thought when choosing camera angles, movements and focus.
- Multimodal details – Exactly what will be oriented to by participants is locally produced and developed in the moment-to-moment interactions between participants. Therefore the video recording needs to capture how the participants deal with multimodal details like facial expressions, gaze or gesture as they occur rather than producing descriptive glosses.

In this study, the activity being studied began when the family sat down to eat, and concluded when they left the table at the end of the meal. These boundaries are clearly identifiable both for the researcher watching the video and for the families controlling the recording. Parents were asked to set the camera up before the meal and set it running just before the family came to sit down. They turned the camera off as they left the table after the meal. This ensured that the time period of the meal was fully captured. The video camera itself had both a battery and a mains power supply. Families were advised to plug the camera in before each recording session to ensure it had sufficient power to last for the entire meal. The video cameras were also fitted with internal hard disc drives that could record up to 10 hours of video data at the highest quality settings. This ensured that there would be sufficient memory to record all the meals.

To make the recording process as simple and non-invasive as possible only one camera was used to record each meal. Before recording began I visited the families in



their homes to discuss the project and obtain informed consent. During this visit we discussed possible places to site the camera and agreed on a position that was both convenient for the family and able to capture all the family members as they sat at the table. The camera remained static throughout the meal once it had been set up. The families were told that if they needed to relocate the camera it was important to check that everyone was in view before recording started. Having only one camera, inevitably, did require some compromises with regard to what was visible on screen. A wide-angle lens was used to help minimise the affect of having only one camera angle on the analysis (Heath & Hindmarsh, 1997). Having one static camera also had its advantages: the absence of a camera operator helped to minimise the distraction and disruption caused by the recording process. It also meant that there was no risk of missing the start of particular sequence while the camera operator reoriented the camera in response to something they had observed (Laurier & Philo, 2006).

Even researchers who routinely try to incorporate aspects of visual data into their analysis will admit that video is difficult to work with and to study systematically. Heath and Luff (2006) describe video analysis as a “highly intractable and difficult analytic domain” (2006: 37). To date, research interest has focused primarily on pinning down some of the more tangible aspects of embodied conduct such as gaze and gesture (ten Have, 2007). Consequently the analysis of embodied interaction has been somewhat neglected within sociology. The most notable exceptions to this neglect are social interaction studies informed by ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Heath & Luff, 2006). This neglect means that the techniques and procedures for analysing video data are still in the process of being devised and the discipline of videography is arguably still in its infancy. There are no fixed rules for how to approach either filming or analysing real life embodied situations (Schubert, 2006).

Despite the potential problems associated with using video recordings in research there are occasions where only a camera can capture the data required. Duranti (1997) defends the use of video on the grounds that it can record tiny embodied movements or the briefest moments of eye contact. He states that participants have been shown to be sensitive to such tiny cues, but are not able to describe them afterwards as having been a factor in their next action. In order to study the minute features of conversation that participants orient to in the moment-to-moment exchanges that comprise conversation researchers need a video record of the scene and resources that the participants had available to them.

One of the challenges often presented to researchers using video data is a question, so simply asked, that has the power to undermine the entire basis for the research: “Doesn’t filming change how people behave?” For an ethnomethodologist or a conversation analyst seeking to study naturally occurring interaction, the idea that their research procedures might taint the ‘naturalness’ of their data can be a crippling thought. Laurier and Philo (2006) refer to this as the ‘elephant in the kitchen’ effect and it bears consideration by any researcher seeking to use recording materials as data.

### *The elephant in the kitchen*

Within ethnographic research, of which the video recordings for this study form part, the central methodological aim is “to record, on video, *spontaneous* activities, *unsolicited* by the researcher and events *uncontrolled* by any form of lab set-up” (Laurier & Philo, 2006, p181). The assumption behind the ‘elephant in the kitchen’ effect is that the video camera, like the elephant in the kitchen, is unavoidably and very noticeably present in the interaction. As a consequence, data obtained under such conditions should be discarded because of possible contamination (Laurier & Philo, 2006). This presents something of a problem for research, like conversation analysis, which relies on the use of recording devices to enable the researcher to play back sections of the conversation sometimes hundreds of times to capture the micro-levels details of the interaction.

Duranti describes the effect of the camera as a special case of the ‘participant-observer paradox’ in which “to collect information we need to observe interaction, but to observe interaction (in ethically acceptable ways) we need to be in the scene; therefore, any time we observe we affect what we see because others monitor our presence and act accordingly” (1997: 118). He suggests two logical options arise when seeking to avoid the ‘participant-observer paradox’. The researcher can either not study the setting, which abandons hope of furthering knowledge and advancing academic understanding of social action. Alternatively, the researcher could not tell the participants they are being filmed, which is not only unethical but also hugely impractical if one wants to collect data of families eating a meal around the dining room table in their own home. Clearly a middle ground needs to be found in which the disruptive impact of filming is minimised.

Many researchers have suggested that allowing participants to film themselves or leaving the camera unattended can work to limit the disruption caused by the filming (Barbash & Taylor, 1997; Laurier & Philo, 2006). This has the advantage that the researcher's perspective cannot cloud judgements about what is filmed. Instead it is the participants themselves who select what should be recorded, thereby privileging their perspectives, categories and understandings of the setting above those of the researcher (Duranti, 1997). One potential pitfall of participants controlling the recording is that "members may feel entitled to intrude much more than outsiders in the lives of their family" (Duranti, 1997, p117). He suggests that this could create ethical dilemmas for the researcher upon viewing the recordings. Although this did not appear to be a problem for any of the families recorded specifically for the study, some of the DARG meals contained moments where children asked for the camera to be turned off and parents either refused or said the camera was not recording when they knew it was. This issue is addressed further in the discussion of research ethics below.

It is not possible to deny that participants, when aware of the presence of the camera, may alter their behaviour. However, the nature of that behavioural change may mean that the research is in fact enhanced rather than invalidated. It depends on how the researcher deals with the camera in their analysis. For example, Mondada (2006) suggests that the video camera can help researchers to understand the orderliness of conversation by recording the features and structure by which participants orient to the camera in relation to their ongoing interaction. She suggests that the manner in which participants adjust their behaviour for the camera can reveal which aspects of the interaction might be embarrassing, delicate, or troublesome. This can help explicate other features of the analysis and it can also provide useful advice for the researcher to consider when making decisions about ethical issues or how and when to anonymise data.

There are instances where participants orient wholly to the camera in an exaggerated or extreme fashion. For example in Figure 2.5 below Emily waves to the camera as she passes in front of it while taking photos of a gingerbread house on the table. The more unnaturalistic reactions that participants can give to a camera, such as waving, smiling or staring at the camera are relatively rare and are easily identifiable by researchers (Duranti, 1997; Laurier & Philo, 2006). Actions that do not form part of the ongoing interaction, but instead are wholly artefacts of the filming can, as Laurier and Philo put it, be easily "consigned to the digital trash bin for deletion" (2006: 186).

Figure 2.5: Amberton\_3\_9\_195



Participants may also exploit the camera as a resource for their own activities (Mondada, 2006). In such cases to treat orientations to the camera as part of a participant-observer paradox misses the point entirely. When the camera is drawn into the interaction as a resource, it may “reinforce and reveal structural elements of the situation and activity” (2006: 61). How and when participants choose to orient to the camera may be integral to the analysis. To exclude from the analysis any and all instances indexing the camera could risk excluding some of the most illuminating examples of the phenomena under discussion (e.g., Appendix A: Extract B\_2\_18). In order to be used to maximum effect, videotaping needs to be integrated into the analysis rather than separated from it.

Analysis of the ways in which participants exploit the camera highlights a new avenue for research; video practices as topic. The exact nature of how and when participants orient to the presence of a video recorder has not yet been studied in detail (see Laurier & Philo (2006) for notable exceptions). Such research could help to answer the question of how much a camera changes the ‘naturalness’ of a given interaction more definitively.

Studies involving video data have highlighted the importance of not assuming the camera is *always* being oriented to or is *always* being treated as relevant by the participants. There are undeniably going to be moments in which the participants orient to the camera. There is for example, a charming moment in the data where a Mum tells her children that Alex (me) will be showing the video to Father Christmas so they need

to behave<sup>5</sup>. However, most of the video recordings do not contain overt orientations to the camera. Researchers are cautioned to avoid assuming the relevance of broad social categories such as gender or disability where it cannot be shown that participants are directly oriented to that category at that moment in time. I would suggest, as other researchers have done, that the same should hold true for the camera. As Mondada states, “the relevance of the video device for the local action’s organisation has not to be assumed a priori and in general, but has to be demonstrated moment-by-moment through the accountable orientations of the participants” (2006: 61).

The difference between the camera and a social category like race relates to the fact that racial tensions are a ‘natural’ part of social interaction, whereas being filmed for a research project is not. The argument against using video data stems from the idea that the changes introduced in a participant’s behaviour make it impossible to record naturally occurring data (Laurier & Philo, 2006). It is important to remember that natural does not equal objective. Lynch (2002) points out that a legacy of the positivistic research paradigm in the social sciences means that ‘natural’ has often been conflated with objective research measures. He stresses the difference between ‘naturally occurring data’, which would have occurred in exactly that form with or without the researcher’s presence, and ‘naturally organised ordinary activities’.

‘Naturally organised ordinary activities’ are activities that are “spontaneous, local, autochronous, temporal, embodied, endogenously produced and performed as a matter of course” (Lynch, 2002, p533). In this sense natural does not relate to an objective external structure or process but to a “pre-analytical source of order” within the activities the participants engage in. Using a camera need not necessarily make the activity ‘unnatural’. As Duranti (1997) points out people do not usually invent social behaviour out of the blue. Reactions to the camera come from within the person’s independent repertoire of resources for interaction. Therefore, I would argue that the recorded interaction remains naturally organised and consequently is a suitable activity to be treated as data for a study using conversation analysis.

In this section I have tried to outline some of the advantages and limitations of using a video camera to record family mealtimes. I have addressed the main question raised in relation to video use, namely that the act of recording an interaction changes it in some way. I have tried to show that any such changes introduced by the presence of

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<sup>5</sup> Forbes\_03\_01

the camera will not necessarily invalidate the research, and could even enhance it in many ways. Although there are undeniably drawbacks associated with video data it is important not to lose sight of the tremendous research opportunities that were only made available to social scientists following the development of video technology. There is common agreement that a static, unattended video camera is not only much less intrusive than a researcher taking notes, but also that it can capture aspects of the interaction that would otherwise be lost before analysis could even start (Barbash & Taylor, 1997; Duranti, 1997; ten Have, 2007). Sidnell (2010) states that at the moment video recording is as close as we can get to recording what participants had available as resources for producing and understanding the interaction. Until technology develops even further the video camera remains one of the best resources for studying ‘naturally organised ordinary activities’. As such conversation analysts should embrace the media, while remaining mindful of its limitations.

*Data selection: Managing a large corpus*

Conversation Analysis involves the fine-grained study of the micro-details of interaction. A few minutes of talk can generate a wealth of analytic opportunities for researchers. A corpus of over 38 hours represents an extremely large data set, one that could not have been transcribed or analysed to an appropriate level in its entirety within the scope of the study. Therefore, the Amberton, Benson, and Forbes meals became the central focus of the analysis, limiting the primary corpus to just over 12 hours. As the analytic focus was refined specific topics for study began to emerge. I then drew on the larger DARG-based corpus to help build collections of phenomena on which to base the analysis.

Once the data had been collected (and digitised if necessary) the process of selecting an area for study could begin. The first analytic task was to begin to understand the nature of the mealtime environment. Although not institutional talk in the traditional sense, family mealtimes do represent a task-oriented interactive environment where participants have particular activities to accomplish (e.g., eating food, checking others have had sufficient food, recounting the days activities, and organising future collaborative activities). All the meals were viewed by the researcher and a selection of meals, taken from across the corpus, were fully transcribed to a basic

verbatim level. This was to ensure broad familiarity with the type of data. Over the course of the research period 11 meals were transcribed in their entirety.

A small collection of extracts that brought out the task-oriented nature of the mealtime environment were selected and highlighted for analysis. The extract length depended on how much surrounding talk was needed in order for the extract to make sense by itself. A few typical sections of talk were transcribed and submitted to a series of unmotivated data sessions with fellow DARG researchers. It was during this initial stage that an analytic interest in sequences where one participant ‘told another what to do’ emerged as a point of interest for the current study.

Data selection then became more targeted as I began to search through the data for extracts with directive sequences in them. A conscious effort was made not to impose a strict definition of a directive on the data. In fact the concept of a directive was deliberately kept loose, due to the fact that a directive may not actually be a discrete discursive device. Therefore, the selection of data was based on an intuitive sense that directing, instructing, controlling, or ordering type actions were going on in the extract. As early extracts containing instructions or directions were transcribed, a matrix of types of directive sequences was compiled (see Appendix D: Directive Types Matrix). The burgeoning complexity of the matrix confirmed the importance of not selecting extracts for study purely on the basis of lexical or grammatical form<sup>6</sup>. Throughout the research process I continued to return to the video data, watching and transcribing as I went, keeping an open mind about what counted as a directive sequence.

### *Data Management*

The video data was always kept separately from any information that could identify the participants. The data itself was only ever labelled with pseudonyms. The consent forms and contact information only used the participants’ real names and never the pseudonyms. The data itself was stored electronically in three forms; 1) on the computer used for analysis, 2) on DVD’s kept in a locked drawer, and 3) on an external hard drive stored in a locked cupboard. Each meal was a separate video file labelled FamilyX\_MealY. Possible extracts were then identified within these meals and again

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<sup>6</sup> Given the complexity of the design of directives the Directives Types Matrix was abandoned fairly quickly as it was not found to be useful research tool. It therefore only includes directives from a small proportion of the meals studied.

smaller files were created and labelled FamilyX\_MealY\_ExtractZ<sup>7</sup>. The system was logged in a spreadsheet, which stored the details of exactly where in each meal the extract began and ended, a note to describe the extract, and a log of the transcription process (see Figure 2.6). The video file, audio file, and transcript relating to the same extract all had the same name.

Figure 2.6: Extract Plan Screen shot

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Fam	Meal	Ext	File Name	Start	End	Dur	Notes	Basic Transcript	Jefferson Transcript	Video Transcript
208	F	03	01	FamilyF_Meal03_Extract01	11.48	13.33	1.45	Alex and Father Christmas	15/02/2009		
209	F	03	02	FamilyF_Meal03_Extract02	2.46	4.59		Try some apple sauce	24/02/2009	10/05/2010	10/05/2010
210	F	03	03	FamilyF_Meal03_Extract03	6.26	8.27	2.01	Apple sauce part two	24/02/2009	24/02/2009	24/02/2009
211	F	03	04	FamilyF_Meal03_Extract04				I'd like you to try and eat it please	15/02/2009		
212	F	04	01	FamilyF_Meal04_Extract01	0.53		0.33	Don't pick at it	03/03/2009	02/06/2009	21/06/2009
213	F	04	02	FamilyF_Meal04_Extract02				I will do it sit down	03/03/2009		
214	F	04	03	FamilyF_Meal04_Extract03				Eat the skin as well	03/03/2009		
215	F	05	01	FamilyF_Meal05_Extract01	3.55	6.00	2.05	I want some Garlic Bread	11/03/2009	11/03/2009	09/12/2009
216	F	05	02	FamilyF_Meal05_Extract02	10.10		0.48	Don't just play with it	12/05/2009	02/06/2009	21/06/2009
217	F	05	03	FamilyF_Meal05_Extract03				If you want puddin get back to the table	12/05/2009		
218	F	06	01	FamilyF_Meal06_Extract01	6.26	8.44	2.22	No more talking now	26/05/2009	26/05/2009	26/05/2009
219	F	06	02	FamilyF_Meal06_Extract02				Eat what's in your mouth first	01/06/2009		
220	F	06	03	FamilyF_Meal06_Extract03				Don't be nasty	01/06/2009		
221	F	06	04	FamilyF_Meal06_Extract04	0.63	0.75	3.07	Don't look at the pen	01/06/2009	01/06/2009	01/06/2009
222	F	07	01	FamilyF_Meal07_Extract01	0.00	1.03	1.03	Look at what you're doing	26/06/2009	23/03/2010	23/03/2010
223	F	07	02	FamilyF_Meal07_Extract02	1.45	3.56	2.21	Lucy please eat nicely	26/06/2009	08/12/2009	08/12/2009
224	F	07	03	FamilyF_Meal07_Extract03				Can I have some stuffing	26/06/2009		

In most cases, when an extract has been reproduced in a report, it has not been reproduced in its entirety. Instead, only the relevant lines are used. To enable easy reference back to the source material, the line numbers taken from the full extract transcript are added to the extract tag in the report. Thus if lines 15-24 of the file FamilyA\_Meal05\_Extract09 were to be used in a document the extract would be tagged Amberton\_5\_9\_15-24.

## Transcription and Analysis

The initial transcripts were prepared using a basic orthographic transcription system that captures only the words spoken by participants. This form of transcription was used for transcribing entire meals to get a general feel for the data and for the first stage of transcribing an extract that had been selected for further study. Once an extract

<sup>7</sup> X = the first letter of the family's surname pseudonym. Y = the meal number. Z = the number assigned to the extract (typically in the order in which they were selected for analysis).

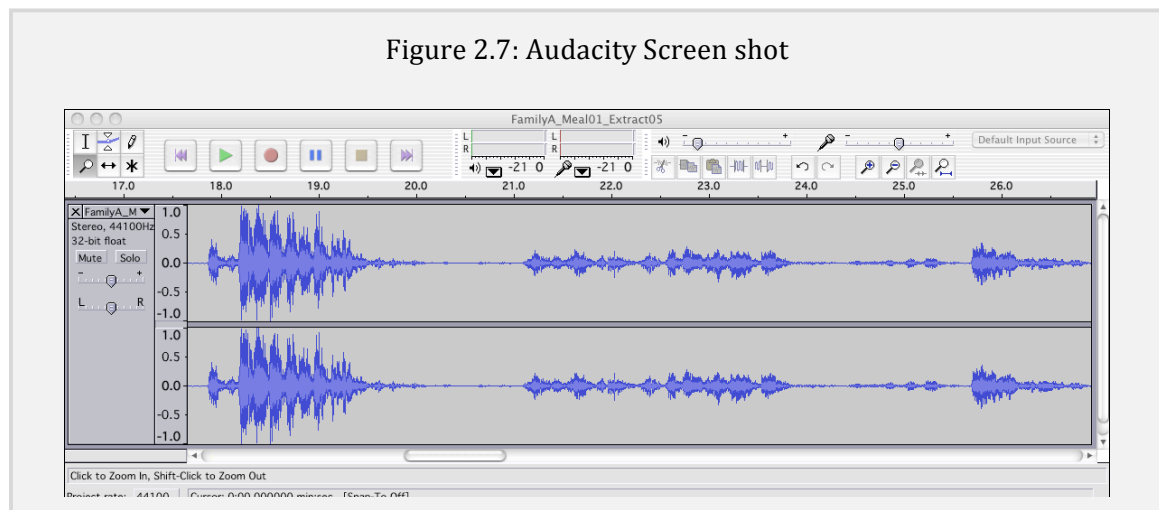


had been selected it was then transcribed to a much higher level of detail using the Jefferson transcription conventions (see ‘Jefferson transcription’ below for discussion and Appendix B: Transcription Conventions).

The two different transcription systems, verbatim and Jefferson’s, enabled the data to be prepared for analysis in an efficient and effective fashion. The verbatim transcripts presented the broad outline of the data in a simple, easily readable and static form. This made searching through the data for directive style utterances much faster than repeatedly watching the video. The uncluttered transcript facilitated rapid scanning of the text for any potentially relevant features at a very broad level. Jefferson transcripts take a long time to prepare, particularly when visual information is added. On average one minute of talk would take about two hours to fully transcribe. Therefore, it was not practical to transcribe the entire data corpus using Jefferson when most of it would only be used during the search for directive extracts. Instead, once potential extracts had been identified more detailed levels of transcription would be used because a far greater depth of analysis was required.

Listening to the video file as it played in a normal digital video programme such as QuickTime or Windows Media Player was usually sufficient to produce the verbatim transcripts. For the Jefferson transcripts the audio track was ripped from the video and played back using Audacity<sup>8</sup>, an audio editing piece of software that allows the user to view the file as a waveform (See Figure 2.7 below). Audacity enables the user to easily highlight small portions of the sound file and loop the play back for close listening. This feature also makes the timing of micro pauses and silences easy and accurate.

Figure 2.7: Audacity Screen shot



<sup>8</sup> Downloadable at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> [accessed 28/09/2010]

Once the audio track had been transcribed using Jefferson transcription, the video details could then be added in to the transcript. QuickTime Pro is a relatively inexpensive piece of video-editing software that, like Audacity does for sound files, enables the selection and looped play back of small sections of video data. This feature made identifying the beginning and end of overlapping actions much easier than less versatile video players would have done.

The process of transcription progressed through various stages, with each new stage adding to the details captured in the previous round. Typically transcription began with the words spoken and then added in timing details like pauses or speed of delivery. Then intonation details were added, focussing on how the words were spoken and non-lexical items like breathing and laughing. Next interactional features such as overlapping speech were included. Finally visual information was incorporated from the video file. This was just a rough guide that worked for most of the transcripts, it represents a guiding structure rather than a firm set of rules for transcription.

### Jefferson Transcription

The purpose of a transcript is to convert raw audio or video data into a form that is both static and easy to use (Liddicoat, 2007). The Jefferson transcript has the additional function of not only fixing the words spoken onto the page, it also makes details about how the words were spoken available for analytic consideration (ten Have, 2007). Gail Jefferson specifically designed her transcription system to pay close attention to “timing, sequence, sound emphasis, pronunciation variation, silence, and non speech sounds”, making it a particularly appropriate tool for fine-grained conversation analysis (Glenn, 2003, p37). Jefferson transcripts have become the largely unchallenged “common language” within CA transcription (ten Have, 2007).

A Jefferson transcript is specifically designed to capture features of both speech production and the relative temporal positioning of utterances (Woofitt, 2005). For conversation analysis the details of how an utterance was delivered are crucial. For example audible breathing can be used and understood by participants as a signal that one is about to begin speaking (Woofitt, 2005). Er’s and erm’s can let a co-participant know that the current turn is ongoing and more talk is forthcoming. Therefore they

function to help establish continued speakership rights (Jefferson, 1984b; Schegloff, 1981). Jefferson transcripts are tailored to expose the sequential organisation and local order of interaction allowing for the analysis of details that would not be picked up by a basic transcript (Hutchby & Woofitt, 1998).

No matter how much detail is included in a transcript, the transcript always remains only a representation of the data, not data in itself. As such it is important to bear in mind that no transcript is ever neutral. It is a selective rendering of the recording that makes some features of the interaction more visible whilst obscuring others (Ochs, 1979; ten Have, 2007). Even the choice of how to set out a transcript can have implications for the analysis (Hutchby & Woofitt, 1998). For example in my transcripts the children are referred to by name but the parents are called Mum and Dad, which, at the time, was not a particularly considered decision. I choose those names to try and match what the participants were most likely to be called by others during the interaction. However, it is possible that specifying the adults' roles as parents may have had some impact on how I viewed the relationships between the participants during my analysis. Though this is something I have tried to guard against.

The inherent and unavoidably selective nature of transcription means that it is important to remember that transcripts are not data. Several researchers have advocated treating transcription as part of the analytic methodological process rather than part of data collection (e.g., Woofitt, 2005). Ten Have (2007) points out that the recordings themselves contain the primary material, whereas transcripts elaborate, clarify, and explicate the data ready for further analysis. The main reason to treat transcripts as a preliminary stage of analysis is because they force the researcher to attend to detail that the casual observer would be more likely to miss (Heath & Luff, 1993). In many respects it is the *doing* rather than the *having* of the transcript that makes it so valuable in analysis (Sidnell, 2010).

A final purpose of a transcript is that it has a crucial role to play in presenting the research to other people. Audio and video files (although increasingly available online) cannot be included in written documents. In order for colleagues and other readers of the research to follow the analysis the data needs to be presented in a transcript as part of the written report.

*Transcribing visual material*

The Jefferson transcription system was originally designed for audio data. Gail Jefferson devised the system while working as a “data recovery technician” for Harvey Sacks’ recordings of telephone calls and other pieces of audio data (Sidnell, 2010, p24). Her system was not initially designed to represent details of the visual field or embodied actions within conversation (Liddicoat, 2007). As video technology has improved researchers have also had to develop ways of adapting the hugely popular Jefferson transcript to include visual details.

Within conversation analysis there is not yet a single established method for transcribing video data. One element that does appear common in most video CA work is that researchers start with the audio data and then add in visual elements later on (ten Have, 2007). This order of transcription gives primacy to the verbal information on the transcript. Perhaps this form of transcript organisation could help partially account for why in most multimodal research verbal modes of communication are given primacy in analysis, supplemented by observations about other modalities by priming the analyst to view the data in that way (See Chapter 6).

Several attempts have been made to develop systems for transcribing video data but by and large they remain specific to individual researchers or programmes of research. The first systematic treatment of non-verbal information in interaction analysis was by Charles Goodwin in his studies of gaze (1981; 1980). In his transcripts eye gaze is marked by a line above or below the transcript (see Extract 2.1 below). The X marks when the gaze reaches the other participant.

Extract 2.1: (8) C Goodwin (1980: 276)

(8)

Clacia:	B't I, uh, (0.9) Ro:n uh:	_____	X	_____	Ron's
Dianne:					
Clacia:	family moved, intuh				
Dianne:	_____				

This form of transcription system allowed Goodwin to provide his readers with access to his participants’ gaze movements on the written pages of his article. In so doing it enabled him to make noteworthy observations about gaze in interaction. However, this transcription system restricts the field of analysis and comments solely

on eye gaze. The wider applications of Goodwin's system are limited to other researchers interested in eye gaze. As a tool it is a useful and valuable one, but it is also very precise and specialised, limiting its use as a general transcription convention.

Schegloff (1984a) proposed a more elaborate coding system for some gestures that used letters to indicate specific gestures. These appeared on lines above or below the concurrent speech in a transcript. Transcripts prepared in this way required individual coding keys to describe the gestures represented by the codes. Therefore, reading a transcript demanded that the reader flick back and forth between the code key and the transcript in order to understand the action. Schegloff's codes were successful in keeping the transcripts themselves relatively uncluttered and made following the verbal transcript easier than had the lengthy descriptions of the gestures been included. Like Goodwin's eye gaze transcription system, Schegloff's codes were also limited in their wider applications. Each transcript needed a new set of codes to reflect the exact gestures it contained. It meant a whole new system had to be learnt in order to read each new transcript rather than a single universal set of codes.

Any attempt to describe a physical action in words requires some degree of glossing and reformulating. To avoid the inherent loss of data that a gloss involves researchers began to include pictorial representations of the visual scene in their transcripts. Whether the picture was a line drawing (e.g., Nishizaka, 2010) or a video still (e.g., Lindstrom & Heinemann, 2009) it had the effect of giving the readers a clearer form of access to the bodily positions of the participants at a single point in time. However, still images cannot convey movement particularly clearly.

When trying to decide how to transcribe my video data I reflected that I was most familiar with the standard Jefferson transcript and so would most easily be able to analyse something that closely resembled it. Any readers of the work were also likely to be familiar with the Jefferson transcript and so able to access that style of transcript with minimal difficulty. Any transcription system therefore needed to be an adaptation of the Jefferson system that preserved the readability of the transcript.

The type of embodied action I needed to represent in the transcript involved a far greater range of actions than simply eye gaze. Therefore a simple line and X system was unlikely to capture the complexity of the actions. Schegloff's coding system kept the transcript readable by moving lengthy descriptions of embodied actions to a separate

page, but in so doing it removed the reader's ability to track through the action as it played out for participants. The use of still images is a powerful way of conveying features of the scene to the reader and definitely has its place in transcription, but lacks the flexibility to convey movement to the reader. In the end I decided to expand the 'transcriber's comments' present in Jefferson's original transcripts to describe the action as it happened preserving the structural and sequential organisation of the transcript. The descriptions were kept as brief and factual as possible, with additional information being added through the use of video stills as necessary.

## Ethics

I met with participants to discuss the research process, obtain written consent and reassure the families that confidential information would be treated as such. Once the recordings were submitted they were stored separately from identifying information. Access to the recordings was restricted to the researcher, supervisor, and data session teams. Ethics clearance was obtained following a submission to the Loughborough University Ethics committee for studies involving children (Appendix C: Example Ethics Forms).

Participants have a right to protection of their anonymity. This is relatively simple to achieve for audio data because spoken names or places can be modified on the tape before public airings. All identifying verbal information has been altered in the transcripts to protect the participants' identities. However, for video data, much of the analytic content can rest on the facial expressions or glances of the participants. All participants in the study gave permission for their video data to be shown in public.

This study, unlike traditional experimental designs, gave participants full control over the data they submitted for analysis. If anything had happened during the data collection phase that the participants might not want publicised they had the opportunity to remove it before it even reached the researcher. Time codes on the recordings showed that in the dedicated corpus for the study only two meals had sections missing, and one of these was definitely due to the tape running out rather than editing. This suggests that participants did not exercise extensive 'after the event' censorship of their interaction.

As a further measure to ensure participants did not submit any data for research that they may not be entirely willing to have studied the data were initially watched through to check for any potentially sensitive or personal information. This was in case participants had not realised their discussion was being filmed or in case it contained any ethical problems. In the data recorded specifically for the study there was a discussion in which the families income tax status was discussed in detail. I contacted the family concerning this meal and received confirmation that they were happy for the data to be used.

In the DARG data there are examples of potentially more problematic issues arising from the data. In one instance the camera had been left running for several hours after the meal and had captured incidental family activity in the same room throughout the evening. This data was discarded from the corpus and has not been included in any analysis. There are also a couple of instances where a child expresses very clearly that they do not want to be filmed. In response, their parent tells them the camera is switched off when it is in fact recording. In such cases the researcher returned to the family and asked the child in question if they were now willing for the data to be included in the study. The child agreed and so the data has been made available for analysis.

There were several occasions in the data where the children believed they were not being recorded. This raises an interesting ethical problem for research. Officially, children are not considered able to consent to research participation. For the ethics forms that accompanied this research the parents signed a consent form on their child's behalf and the child just signed a willingness to participate form that had a simplified version of the consent agreements. In such cases it was deemed appropriate to treat the child's desire not to be recorded as a refusal of consent. As such additional consent was sought before the data could be used.

## Chapter 3 – Directives I: Identifying and recognising directives<sup>9</sup>

### Introduction

This thesis is about the basic practice of how one party tells another to do something: an action that has traditionally been called a directive. For example ‘Finish your fish’<sup>10</sup>, ‘Sit straight’<sup>11</sup>, and ‘Don’t do that’<sup>12</sup>. But also less overtly directing utterances like ‘You’ve still got some beans left haven’t you’<sup>13</sup>, ‘What did she [school teacher] say about talking with your mouthful?’<sup>14</sup> and ‘Do you want to go and get the pudding for them?’<sup>15</sup>. As M Goodwin states, “rather than being simply a speech act designed to get something done, directives constitute a complex speech genre, one that is capable of encompassing a wide variety of speech forms and action (imperatives, assessments, descriptions, etc) and turning them to its own purposes” (1990: 108). The thesis will explore the territory of ‘telling someone to do something’ during family mealtimes. One aim here is to avoid colouring the analysis with definitions at the outset, and instead to have a focus for study that allows us to work towards an account of these actions. Hence the end result will not be a single class of actions so much as some dimensions through which ‘directive actions’ are affected.

This chapter introduces the reader to directives both from within the research literature and from the data corpus on which the subsequent chapters will be based. It begins with an overview of the relevant literature covering the study of directive actions from across various research disciplines and then considers the type of directives evidenced in the data corpus collected for this study. It will showcase both the variety

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<sup>9</sup> Materials and analysis on which this chapter is based have been presented at a workshop; “Social Action Formats: Conversational Patterns in Embodied Face-to-Face Interaction” University of Oulu, Finland, 17-19<sup>th</sup> May 2011. I am grateful to all the participants at the workshop for their helpful comments and suggestions.

<sup>10</sup>

Extract 6.5

<sup>11</sup> Amberton\_2\_1\_116

<sup>12</sup> Amberton\_2\_957

<sup>13</sup> Extract 3.2

<sup>14</sup> Extract 7.2

<sup>15</sup> Amberton\_9\_7\_46-47



and frequency of directive actions within the data and begin to clarify the types of utterances with which the study is concerned. In particular the analysis in this chapter will address directive implicative utterances. That is, utterances that are treated by the participants as projecting an implicit directive regardless of their grammatical form. Leading on from the analysis of directive implicative utterances there is an explanation of the strategy used to identify directive actions based on participant orientations rather than preconceived analytic categories. The chapter is intended as an introduction into the analytic field of directives both as an object of research and a resource for speakers.

## Directives in the Research Literature

The function of different types of speech has been studied from within a variety of research disciplines including linguistics (Halliday, 1973), sociolinguistics (Hymes, 1974), linguistic philosophy (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), and conversation analysis (Sacks et al., 1974). Consequently there is a large array of different labels for actions in discourse that vary, overlap, and differ in their level of generality and abstraction (Holmes, 1983). This is especially true for directive actions because of the wide range of syntactic forms available to speakers. Numerous researchers have attempted to devise systems to recognise and classify directives in terms of their function in interaction. Many of these systems distinguish between different types of directive action on the basis of how explicitly the intention to direct is made.

### Taxonomies

One of the most comprehensive and influential studies of directing is Ervin-Tripp's (1976) paper in which she analysed data and findings from several years of unpublished term papers by her students using a wide range of interaction environments. She proposed a typology of different types of directive actions:

- *Need statements*, such as 'I need a match'.
- *Imperatives*, such as 'Gimme a match' and elliptical forms like 'a match'
- *Imbedded imperatives*, such as 'Could you gimme a match?' In these cases, agent, action, object, and often beneficiary are as explicit as in direct imperatives, though they are embedded in a frame with other syntactic and semantic properties

- *Permission directives*, such as ‘May I have match?’ Bringing about the condition stated requires an action by the hearing other than merely granting permission.
- *Question directives*, such as ‘Gotta match?’, which do not specify the desired act.
- *Hints*, such as ‘The matches are all gone’ (1976: 29).

Other attempts to classify directives include work by House and Kasper (1981) who suggested eight different levels of directness for requesting actions. Similarly, Liebling (1988) grouped directives into three groups: explicit, embedded, and inexplicit on the basis of how clearly the intent is expressed. As a final example, Blum-Kulka (1997) suggested directives could be delivered in three different modes of speech:

- *The direct mode*: “explicit naming of the act to be performed”
- *The conventionally indirect mode*: “expressed via questions in regard to the preparatory conditions needed to perform the act”
- *The nonconventionally indirect mode*: “expressed by hints” (Blum-Kulka, 1997, p146)

The reader might have noticed that the different classification systems tend to provide names for various points or stages along a continuum of directness or explicitness. The fact that directives can be coherently organised in this way (at least according to analysts’ categories) is perhaps the more fundamental finding and harks back Searle’s work on Speech Act Theory in which he states that “along the same dimension of illocutionary point or purpose there may be varying degrees of strength of commitment” (1979: 5). That is to say that directives “may be very modest “attempts” as when I invite you to do it or suggest that you do it, or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist that you do it” (Searle, 1979, p13). The notion of dimensions of directing will be taken up further in Chapter 5. Here the critical point is to recognise that common-sense glosses such as suggestions, requests, and orders may not necessarily represent discrete social actions. Instead they might refer to different constellations of practices in service to the same action: getting someone to do something.

### Politeness

One explanation for the variety of directive forms can be found using Goffman’s (1967) notion of face and Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of politeness. The more

polite directives show a greater concern for the face-saving needs of the recipient and therefore are less direct and imposing. In most early work on directives, analysts seem to have most commonly judged the directness of a request or directive according to its level of politeness (Aronsson & Thorell, 1999). Thus explicit directives are the most impolite and most face threatening, whereas more implicit or embedded forms are more polite and face-saving.

More recent work has refined the notion of politeness in directives to account for the high proportion of directives that syntactically fit into the more direct or explicit forms according to the classification systems (such as imperatives) and yet contain several features that appear to mitigate or downplay the imposing nature of the directive without being conventionally polite formulations. A slight variant on the directness / politeness continuum organises directives according to the degree to which they are aggravated or mitigated. For example, Blum-Kulka (1997) suggests the following index of politeness that includes the effects of mitigation:

- *Impolite*: directives with aggravated prosody and/or lexical choices (e.g., Stop that it's horrible)
- *Neutral*: straight imperatives (e.g., Stop it)
- *Solidarity politeness (Mitigated directness)*: imperatives modified with endearments, appeals to reason, pre-sequences, and/or the politeness marker please (e.g., Stop it please darling) (See also, Jones, 1992)
- *Nonconventional indirectness*: hints or suggestions (e.g., We don't usually sing at the table)
- *Conventional indirectness*: requests (e.g., Can you wait until your sister's finished?). These are described as the most socially normative and therefore the most polite.

The shift from politeness to mitigation when considering the continuum of directive force was developed within the sociolinguistic research tradition. It highlights more clearly that directives are an act of social control over another person and that speakers can vary the degree to which they make that control exposed and explicit through their choice of directive form. The degree to which the directive speaker claims the right to exert control of the recipient's behaviour is explored more thoroughly in Chapter 5. For now the interest is in how directive actions can be recognised in the data both as a resource for speakers during conversation and as an object of research for analysts.

*Beyond classification systems*

The research evidence suggests that directives cannot be identified on the basis of a clear and consistent grammatical formulation, but that researchers can use their pre-established classification systems to distinguish between different types of directives once they have been identified. Stubbs states that “there is no one-to-one correspondence between what is said and what is meant or what is done, and that no analysis of linguistic forms alone will permit an analysis of underlying acts and moves” (1983: 177). Therefore one needs to look beyond the bald syntax of the utterance in order to identify a participant’s speech as ‘doing directing’.

Spectrums, such as those of directness and politeness, have great explanatory power and as such can be attractive for researchers. However, they are not without their flaws. For example, Ervin-Tripp commented that politeness, when used out of context such as “to tell a younger sibling ‘Could I trouble you to take your feet off my face?’”, can actually make an utterance more forceful by virtue of its disjunction with expected formats of interaction (1976: 62). Similarly, Wootton (2007) demonstrated that ‘please’ could be used sequentially by children to make their demands more insistent rather than more mediated. Finally Curl and Drew (2008) make the point that lining requests up in terms of relative politeness is nothing more than applying “a label drawn from past judgements made about similar constructions” (2008: 149).

It is also worth bearing in mind that neither Searle’s, nor Ervin-Tripp’s classic approaches to the study of directives take account of the turns preceding or following the directive. In her recent interaction-based study of workplace directives, Vine (2009) found that context, both social and local interactional, played a crucial role in helping to account for why one directive form was chosen over the other. Additionally, role-play based work with children suggests that embodied actions in face-to-face interaction can complicate traditional understandings of directive usage (Aronsson & Thorell, 1999). Research using real-life recording interaction may offer insights into why and when speakers select one form of directive over another that cannot be gleaned from an analysis of directive utterances (either real or hypothetical) in isolation from the talk that produced them.

In her important overview, which builds on Austin (1962), Blum-Kulka (1997), Ervin-Tripp (1976) and Labov and Fanshell (1977), M Goodwin glosses directives as “utterances designed to get someone to do something” (2006: 517). This description fits with Searle's (1979) sense of the 'illocutionary point' of directives in his discussion of Speech Act Theory. Over time it has also become an accepted way of characterising directives by subsequent researchers (e.g., Kidwell, 2006; Vine, 2009). Directives might be tentatively described as an act in which one participant *tells* another to do something.

Such a description leaves the boundaries of what should be counted as a directive relatively open. For example, it does not clearly distinguish a directive from a request. Indeed, Searle includes “requests, orders, commands, askings, prayers, pleadings, beggings and entreaties” within his category of directives (1979: 5). For the purposes of the thesis I proceed from the standpoint that an exact definition of a directive is hard to produce. It is worth bearing in mind that a precise definition may not in fact be helpful for the analysis. What I, as a researcher, might classify as a directive may bear no relation to what the participants might treat as a directive. Instead I will approach the data with an interest in actions through which one participant attempts to control the actions of another. This interest will provide a territorial focus for an investigation into the practices through which control of one's interlocutors can be affected. That is, practices traditionally and commonsensically described as being directive in character.

## Directives in the Data

The focus now moves away from the research literature to consider the family mealtime data on which the analysis will be based. This section offers the reader an introduction to the frequency and types of directive action that were found within the data. Directive actions appear to be a prevalent and diverse phenomenon. However, as was suggested by the evidence from the research literature, the diversity of directives made counting and classifying them a particularly problematic task. I will discuss some of the difficulties for the analyst associated with recognising directives in real-life multiparty interaction, and propose an alternative approach to the study of directives based on how participants orient to actions in interaction.

*Finding and recognising directives*

The mealtime environment proved a rich site for the collection of directive actions between family members. Choosing extracts for study was more often a case of discriminating between multiple possibilities than of desperately searching for anything that could fit the bill. In an attempt to demonstrate the frequency of directives for the reader, Figure 3.1 displays the results of a brief counting exercise carried out using the rough, first-pass transcripts of 6 hours of video data from the Amberton, Crouch and Forbes families.

Figure 3.1: Directives Frequency Count and distribution between speakers and recipients<sup>16</sup>

Recipient	Speaker			Total
	Parent	Child	Both Parents <sup>17</sup>	
Parent	3	31	0	34
Child	165	8	21	194
<b>Total</b>	168	39	21	228

In just 6 hours of data (20% of the data corpus) over 200 directive actions were identified from the transcripts. This demonstrates to some extent just how large the pool of directives available for study was. Assuming the distribution is similar across the whole corpus, there would have been over 1100 instances available for study. The counting exercise also revealed an uneven distribution of directive use between the participants in the interaction. Directives issued to children by parents (either signally or collaboratively) accounted for 81% of the directives counted in the exercise. This finding is supported by similar findings by Blum-Kulka (1997). Such findings also support arguments that family interaction is characterised by status asymmetries between parents and children (e.g., Lareau, 2002). The family mealtime environment therefore represents an invaluable site to study status inequalities between participants as they occur in live interaction.

However, it is vital to caution the reader against reading too deeply into the empirical findings of the counting exercise because it was never intended to be a

<sup>16</sup> Sampled from 6 hours of video data selected from three families.

<sup>17</sup> During sequences involving multiple directives.

rigorous tool for quantifying directive use at the dinner table, and because the notion of counting the frequency of interaction phenomena presupposes much about talk-in-interaction that cannot yet be definitively demonstrated (c.f., Schegloff, 1993).

The actual numbers reported in the counting exercise are very likely to under represent the frequency of directives within the data. Directives were only included in the count where they were new commands rather than repeats or reissues of earlier, unheeded utterances. For example each of the sequences of multiple directives discussed in Chapter 5 would only be included once in the counting exercise despite containing several directive utterances. This is because it is not clear whether repeated or reissued directives are new actions or another attempt at the same action (Craven & Potter, 2010; Schegloff, 2004). This helps account for the column in Figure 3.1 headed 'both parents', which relates to sequences in which both parents issue directives working collaboratively to bring about the same change in the recipient's conduct.

Does it matter that sequences of multiple directives were only included once in the counting exercise? Undoubtedly there is a difference between 6 hours of data that have roughly 200 directives in them and 6 hours that have over 500 directives. But it is difficult to articulate what that difference *means*. This relates to the particular complexities of counting occurrences of specific phenomena in interaction. Schegloff points out that "parties in interaction do not laugh [or in this case direct co-participants] per minute" (1993: 103). They only laugh at sequentially relevant points in interaction, and laughter is only missing or absent in such places as it would be treated by participants as having been relevant. To attempt to count phenomena like laughing or directive actions in terms of occurrences per hour of interaction does give an impression of exactitude and standardisation. However, doing so ignores the importance of what Schegloff terms "environments of possible relevant occurrence" (1993: 105). Time framed counting is, he suggests, "a meaningless measure of conduct in interaction" (Schegloff, 1993, p105). A more relevant measure of the frequency of directive use would involve something along the lines of the number of directives used per possibly relevant site for a directive to be used during the interaction. Therefore whether the resulting count for 6 hours is 200 or 500 directives is arguably of minimal analytic value for interaction researchers without an indication of the number of possible directive sites that were not acted on.

The corpus as a whole has not been coded for directive actions or counted in any systematic way. For example, no data has been collected on differences between families or genders. The small counting exercise reported in Figure 3.1 is only intended to illustrate the frequency of directives within the data and to highlight the uneven distribution of directive use between the participants. In attempting to count the directives an unanticipated problem rose to attention. That is, how to recognise an utterance as being directive. A difficulty in confidently classifying utterances found in live interaction data as directives is also reported by Jones (1992). Through conducting the counting exercise it became clear that although some utterances very clearly conveyed their directive intent, others were more borderline and appeared to embed an implicit or potential directive within some other action. Schegloff points out that quantitative analysis rests on a clear understanding of “*what* counts as an occurrence of whatever it is we are counting” (1993: 107, emphasis in original).

For studies of interaction, determining the set of types of utterances that constitute examples to be counted is a more complicated task than it first appears. For example, Schegloff discusses how, in addition to the multitude of person reference forms that could be selected to refer to someone, speakers can also choose to formulate their turn such that the ‘slot’ for person reference is removed (e.g., “When does X get off today?” but “And when does the business day end today?” (Schegloff, 1993, p108)). Thus trying to count the number of times a participant directs another would require not only a precise definition of a directive but also a clear understanding of the sorts of practices that participants use as alternatives to directives.

Some utterances do seem to be very clearly doing directive work. These typically take the form of imperative formulations, as can be seen from the examples shown below:

Figure 3.2: Examples of imperative directives

i)	<b>Mum</b>	No put it over here.	(C_7_0_21)
ii)	<b>Mum</b>	[Ea:t]	(A_2_1_39)
iii)	<b>Dad</b>	Go an' <u>si:t</u> down Em	(A_3_9_4)
iv)	<b>Mum</b>	U:se your kni:fe plea:se	(F_1_2_16)





Figure 3.4: Examples of directives formulated in various different ways

vi)	<b>Mum</b>	Whot do we sa:y when someone gi:ves us something?	(C_2_1_55)
vii)	<b>Dad</b>	look. (0.2) wh:y >are you< [shpreading it all ou:t over he:re. ]	(A_1_10_21-23)
viii)	<b>Dad</b>	Can you sit round properly please and stop being silly	(A_3_0_676)
ix)	<b>Mum</b>	↑WILL ↑YOU ↑EA:T ↑UP ↑I ↑WANNA ↑HAVE ↑MY ↑PU:D↓DI:NG plea::se	(A_7_6_212)
x)	<b>Mum</b>	=could you please not [put your fingers in] your food	(A_4_3_27-29)
xi)	<b>Mum</b>	no you use- you need to use yours	(B_1_6_22)
xii)	<b>Mum</b>	[No darling you need] to eat a lot [more than that please=	(C_12_1_28-29)
xiii)	<b>Mum</b>	I want half of that potato eaten please that's not enough	(A_2_0_430)
xiv)	<b>Mum</b>	Right.=No: we don't sit like that.=Do we.=	(C_4_1_31)
xv)	<b>Mum</b>	I want you to eat your fruit in your lunchbox toda:y	(C_7_1_51)
xvi)	<b>Dad</b>	sssSitti:ng. Plea'e. Not [[si:in:	(F_1_6_52-53)

The data show that there are many different formulations for directives in interaction. Therefore speakers can, and do, select which form to use over all possible alternative forms in any given instance. Whether the different forms lead to different interactional consequences is a concern for later chapters (see Chapter 5 and Chapter 7). The concern here is to demonstrate, not only that there is variety in directive form, but to highlight the problem for analysts when trying to develop a system for recognising and studying directives in interaction. Any system for recognising directives must be able to accommodate the extreme variability in how directives can be presented in interaction. This problem was also highlighted by Dalton-Puffer (2005) who encountered difficulties integrating directives like “let’s have a look at the economy

first” or “can we get started now” into her categorisation system developed from Blum-Kulka et al (1989) and Trosberg (1995).

In addition to variations in formulations there is also great variety in the purpose to which speakers employ directives. For example, future plans (xv), teaching or instruction pedagogy, advice giving, speech correction (xvi), and behaviour correction would all be included within such a definition. This represents an extremely large field of study, encompassing many different actions. However, remembering the original research interest of ‘getting someone to do something’ enables us to focus more tightly on actions that are concerned with bringing about an immediate (or sequentially relevant) change in the recipient’s behaviour. Evidence from the speech and language research literature suggests that the majority of directives in fact address changes in conduct or behaviour modification. For example Blum-Kulka (1997) found that 83% of parents’ requests to children were concerned with bringing about a change in action. Attempts to bring about an immediate change in a co-participant’s behaviour offers a starting point for the research but the issue of how to recognise a directive still requires further attention. As shall be seen in the next section, speakers and listeners seem to be able to recognise and respond appropriately to directive actions relatively unproblematically. They appear able to do this regardless of the form in which the directive is presented.

### *Participants’ orientations to directives*

In just the few isolated examples presented above it is clear that directives come in many forms other than the straight imperative. Research from both linguistic and sociolinguistic backgrounds supports this finding and has made many attempts to develop taxonomies and classification systems to map the various possibilities of directive form (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; House & Kasper, 1981; Liebling, 1988). Such systems are based on the understanding of the analyst, external to the interaction itself, as to just where any given utterance fits into their model.

Research from a linguistics and pragmatics background typically examines directives as single, isolated utterances, separated from the conversation in which they were spoken. This contrasts with more action-oriented research, which looks at talk, not as solely the property of the speaker, but as an integral part of the interaction stream,

both shaped by what came before and vital for shaping what follows. Thus, instead of isolated sentences or utterances being the primary unit of analysis, for Conversation Analysts, analysis begins with sequences and turns within sequences (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984). Consequently, it is the participants' orientations to the action being done by an utterance, rather than the analyst's interpretation of its meaning, that guides the analysis here.

With the following extracts I hope to demonstrate the importance of being guided by participants' orientations to directives. The extracts contain utterances where the overt form is not an explicit directive but the recipient's response nonetheless displays their orientation towards the utterance as being directive. According to the literature such utterances might be termed 'indirect' or 'mitigated directives' (Blum-Kulka, 1997; M Goodwin, 1980). However, the analysis here attempts to move beyond analyst imposed descriptions of speech and focuses instead on how live participants deal with utterances that could have implicit directives embedded within them. This approach aims to overcome the analyst's problem identified by Jones whereby "the more indirect or veiled the attempt to influence the addressee, the harder it is to prove a directive was intended" (1992: 433). By focusing on participants' orientations 'proving a directive was intended' is sidestepped as an analytic concern and the interest is instead on whether the participants treat an utterance as a directive. Simply put, an utterance is a directive if it is treated as one.

At the start of Extract 3.1 (below), four-year-old Jessica is using both hands to grip the handle of her fork and try to stab a piece of food on her plate. The utterance of interest is Mum's turn on line 6 where she asks Jessica what she's doing.

Extract 3.1: Amberton\_7\_7\_100-113

1	<b>Jess</b>	[[((uses both hands to control her fork to stab
2		food))
3	<b>Emily</b>	↑Ooh they [look (.) sqwu[m shwass] (0.9) wash]
4	<b>Emily</b>	[[((sits back up)) ]
5	<b>Mum</b>	[[((looks at Jessica))]
6	<b>Mum</b> →	What are you doing [[young la:dy?
7	<b>Jess</b> →	[[((changes to one hand))
8		(0.9)
9	<b>Emily</b>	ghh huh
10		(0.7)
11	<b>Emily</b>	heh heh (0.6) hhe
12	<b>Jess</b>	[[((lifts fork to her mouth))]



with (however obliquely) Jessica's behaviour, the address term may work to emphasize the 'not ladylike' and therefore non-normative nature of Jessica's behaviour. At the very least it references a ladylike, polite mode of conduct and makes that reference available to Jessica when she is assessing her own behaviour.

Third, mealtimes are, by their very nature, extremely active settings. In addition to talking, participants are also variously engaged in serving food, eating, drinking, managing cutlery, and sitting at the table. For most of the meal these concurrent activities are completed without verbal comment or discussion. Overwhelmingly throughout the data, actions that are a 'normal' part of the mealtime are not discussed. In contrast, behaviour that is problematic, deviant, or socially incorrect is treated as a cause of most of the directives with which the thesis is concerned. The very fact that Mum chose to question Jessica about the specific action she was engaged in at that moment makes relevant the implication that Mum was treating something about Jessica's behaviour as 'wrong'. These features may help to explain why Mum's utterance can be heard as calling Jessica to account for her behaviour, embedding within it both a moral judgement about the behaviour and a prescription to change it (see also Robinson & Bolden (2010).

Note that Jessica does not respond verbally to Mum's question with either a description or an account of her actions. Instead, even before Mum has finished speaking, she changes her grip on the fork to a singlehanded hold (line 7). This action displays that Jessica is aware of the 'correct' way to hold cutlery. It treats Mum's utterance, not as a general information solicit, or even as a request for a justification or defence of her actions, but as an action directing an immediate change in Jessica's behaviour. Through her embodied conduct Jessica displays her awareness that there is a 'correct' way to hold cutlery, and that she had not previously been performing it. Without uttering a word Jessica displays her reciprocity, understanding, and stance (i.e., compliance) towards Mum's utterance. In fact in the space available for a verbal response (directly after Mum has completed her turn) no verbal response is now required because Jessica has changed her behaviour such that there is now no longer anything to be held to account for.

Finally, note how Mum treats Jessica's embodied response as wholly appropriate and satisfactory. She does not pursue a verbal response consistent with answering a question or even being called to account for behaviour. Instead the

sequence is allowed to close without further comment and the two children return to their previous game of making nonsense noises. “What are you doing [[young la:dy?” can be identified as a directive based on the orientations displayed by both speaker and recipient in the interaction.

Extract 3.2 offers another example of a directive that can be identified by the orientations of the participants rather than its grammatical form. In Extract 3.2 Mum says to three-year-old Anna “You still got some ↑bea:ns left ↑‘aven’t you:” (line 2).

Extract 3.2: Crouch\_8\_1\_63-74

1		(0.3)
2	<b>Mum</b> →	pt <u>Y</u> ou still got some ↑ <u>b</u> ea:ns left ↑‘aven’t you:.
3		(2.7)
4	<b>Anna</b> →	Don’ <u>w</u> an::ta <u>b</u> ea::ns:
5		(0.5)
6	<b>Mum</b>	You’ve to <u>e</u> at some <u>b</u> ea:ns.
7		(1.2)
8	<b>Anna</b>	°↓*Mm: ,
9		(2.3)
10	<b>Anna</b>	((eats a spoonful then drops spoon on plate,
11		lifts arms over head))
12		(1.7)

Mum’s utterance on line 2 is a statement that notices Anna still has beans left on her plate. Specifically it references the beans that belong to Anna as opposed to Mum or anyone else (“You still got ...”). It is therefore an example of what Heritage and Roth (1995), following Labov and Fanshell (1977), describe as a b-event statement. That is, an utterance that formulates some matter, in this case beans, “as one to which the recipient has primary access” (Heritage & Roth, 1995, p10). It is formulated as Mum telling her side of the state of affairs on the basis of her third party observation. In this sense it is also an example of a ‘my side’ telling, as described by Pomerantz, in which Mum’s telling is warrantable “by virtue of an occasioning”, something that is a more limited form of access than is available to Anna, to whom the beans belong (1980: 189). By formulating her utterance as a report of what she can observe about Anna’s beans, and adding a negative interrogative at turn-ending to downgrade her own epistemic priority (Heritage & Raymond, 2005), Mum orients to the fact that notionally at least, Anna’s beans are her own business, not Mum’s.

“pt You still got some ↑bea:ns left ↑‘aven’t you:.” is also a noticing. As such it draws some aspect of the environment into the conversation, which, prior to that point, had not been treated as noteworthy by either participant. In his discussion of noticings, Schegloff (1988) remarks that there is an indefinitely expandable set of things that did not happen (or in this case that can be noticed about Anna). Therefore, he suggests, there must be some relevance rule or procedure that underlies the formulated noticing and serves to make it remarkable in the interaction.

A noticing makes relevant a particular type of response from the participant that differs from the more neutral “confirmation or denial” made relevant by the B-event statements in Heritage and Roth’s interview data (1995:10). Schegloff (1995) notes that the speaker’s formulation of a failure by the recipient (i.e., Anna’s failure to have eaten her beans and thus to have removed them from her plate) makes relevant an account for that failure. Similarly, Pomerantz (1980) suggests that a ‘my side’ telling calls on the recipient to deliver an alternative telling that fits with, and accounts for, the occasioned noticing of the speaker. In the case of Extract 3.2, this suggests that Mum is calling Anna to account for why she still has beans left. Mum’s turn indexes the ‘still left’ beans as being an unexpected state of affairs that is in some way in need of explanation or account. Thus in both of the extracts above, it can be shown that the target lines draw attention to some aspect of the recipient’s business and in some way call the recipient to account for their action (or lack of action).

Anna’s response on line 4 does not confirm or reject the accuracy of Mum’s noticing. Instead Anna asserts that she does not want to eat her beans. Note that Mum’s utterance made no mention of beans as something to be eaten. That inference is only made explicit through Anna’s response, which is formulated as an expression of her desire to not eat her beans. Anna therefore treats Mum’s utterance as calling her to account for not having eaten her beans. It resists any proposal that she should now eat her beans by unequivocally marking her stance as being counter to any such course of action. In this sense it can be argued that Anna treats Mum’s utterance as being directive implicative.

Note that the format of Mum’s turn does allow for the production of a valid explanation for why there are still beans on Anna’s plate (for example “I’m saving them for last because they are my favourite”, “they’re not cooked properly and are inedible” or “I am saving them to feed to the rabbit later”). However all such ‘explanations’ would



still orient to the implicit directive that the beans need to be eaten. The key point here is that by formulating her directive as a B-event statement Mum acknowledges, at least formally, that Anna may have a good reason for not complying with the directive. The utterance orients to contingencies that could affect compliance and does not presume an entitlement to override such contingencies. Notions of entitlement and contingency in relation to directive turn design are considered further in Chapter 5.

In Extract 3.1 Jessica’s treatment of Mum’s utterance as a directive was ratified by Mum’s lack of pursuit of an informative answer to her question. In Extract 3.2 Mum also confirms Anna’s treatment of the utterance as a directive. However, here Mum’s action is not to drop the subject but to reformulate her turn as more of an imperative; “You’ve to eat some bea:ns” (line 6). This reissues and makes more explicit the directive action of Mum’s initial turn<sup>20</sup>. In this turn Mum lays bare the action that was veiled in her first utterance on line 2. It confirms, both for Anna and the analyst, that Mum had indeed been attempting to direct Anna to eat her beans. Note that the directive is still not as forceful as it could be. The turn is formulated as indexing a general rule about eating beans to which everyone must adhere, rather than an isolated command coming just from Mum. A more strongly entitled directive might look like “Eat your beans now” or “Do as I tell you, Eat your beans”<sup>21</sup>. Within the sequence there is scope for Mum to reissue the directive in a more entitled fashion should Anna continue to resist.

Following Mum’s directive on line 6 Anna then goes on to eat a spoonful of her beans (lines 10-11). Note how Anna’s response is embodied rather than verbal. Despite its embodied nature Mum treats Anna’s response as sufficient and does not pursue the sequence further. This response pattern is one of the issues explored further in Chapter 6. There are two directive utterances in Extract 3.2, line 2 and line 6. There is a marked difference in Anna’s response to the two different directives; she hears line 2 as resistible, but complies with line 6. As will be explored more closely in Extract 3.3 below, the less exposed directive forms are perhaps designed to allow the recipient more control over their own conduct.

In both of the above extracts it can be shown that the speaker and the recipient orient to the target utterance as a directive despite its embedded and implicit nature. The participants do not appear to have any difficulty in identifying and dealing with the

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<sup>20</sup> This is an example of the upgrade pattern outlined in Chapter 5.

<sup>21</sup> For example of such a strongly entitled directive see Extract 6.8.

target utterances as directives regardless of their surface form. Thus far I have attempted to show how aspects of the turn design and sequential organisation of directive implicative utterances can be more important for participants’ understandings of the action being performed than their grammatical form. This study therefore began by searching the data for ‘utterances designed to get someone to do something’ rather than grammatical directives as such.

The research literature has identified that the local context is particularly important for establishing whether an utterance can be heard as a directive or not. In her classic study, Ervin-Tripp (1976) stated, “The set or priming of the hearer can be so great that a nod is a directive. But if the form is inappropriate to the context, it may not be heard as a directive at all” (1976: 59). An example of an entirely non-verbal directive can be seen in Extract 3.3 below. In this extract Anna asks to be allowed to leave the table (line 1). In response Mum looks at her and purses her lips (line 4).

Extract 3.3: Crouch\_2\_5\_71-77

1	<b>Anna</b>	Ta:n I get dow::n	
2		[ (1.6)	]
3	<b>Anna</b>	[ ((edges further off her chair))	
4	<b>Mum</b> →	((looks at Anna and purses lips))	
5	<b>Kath</b>	((looks at Anna))	]
6	<b>Anna</b>	Plea::[se.]	
7	<b>Mum</b>	[Yes] you can darling	
8		(2.3)	

On line 4 Mum withholds her answer to Anna’s question and simultaneously displays that she has heard it by turning to look at Anna. Mum’s facial expression indexes a problem replying to the question but does not specify what the problem may be, instead leaving Anna to work it out for herself. Like the previous extracts, Mum’s action seems to call on the recipient to analyse their own conduct against a normative moral standard and correct any discrepancy they encounter. Verbal alternatives to Mum’s look on line 4 might sound like one of the following:

1. “Say please”
2. “Ask nicely”
3. “What do you say?”
4. “‘Can I get down’ What?”

All four of these possible verbal alternatives would perform the same action as Mum’s look on line 4. However, note the different formulations between them. Options 1 and 2 are imperatives that claim a full entitlement to tell Anna to do something and project no contingencies that could prevent compliance. They offer no scope for Anna to display her knowledge of conventional politeness or to self-correct. Although note that option 2 does presume that Anna should already know the conventional forms packaged by ‘nicely’. Option 3 is formulated as an information solicit that has a prescription to use a conventionally polite form embedded within it. It treats Anna as already knowing the appropriate form to use when requesting and ostensibly issues a cued elicitation question to produce that knowledge (Edwards & Mercer, 1987). By providing the information solicited by the question Anna would be complying with the implicit directive. Finally, option 4 is an open-class repair initiator that is pre-framed by a partial repeat of the trouble source turn. It is an other-initiated repair that seeks a self-repair solution (Schegloff, Sacks et al., 1977).

The possibility that Mum’s look could have been a repair initiator rather than a directive merits further consideration here. Anna’s request (“Ta:n I get dow::n”) on line 1 is an initiating action making relevant a second pair part that would either grant or refuse the request. Its second pair part arrives on line 7 when Mum grants the request. Lines 4 and 6 represent the first and second pair parts respectively of a post-first insert sequence addressing a problem of some kind with the preceding talk (Schegloff, 2007). However, note that the problem is not one of “speaking, hearing, or understanding” for which a repair mechanism would be required in order to enable the recipient to produce an appropriate second pair part (Sidnell, 2010, p110). By line 2 Mum would be completely capable of granting or refusing Anna’s request. Instead, through her embodied action, she calls Anna to account for her lack of ritual politeness by not including a turn-final ‘please’ with her request to leave the table. The action of Mum’s nod is not to seek a repair solution that would clarify Anna’s turn and enable Mum to respond; it is a directive for Anna to change something about her utterance.

By using just an embodied action that indexes some problem with Anna’s preceding talk Mum leaves the issue of what needs to be corrected unspecified. In comparison to a directive formulated as an imperative, question, or verbal repair initiator, the embodied action does not restrict the response options for the recipient. By selecting a form that does not tightly specify the response required more scope is

offered to recipients to exercise control over their own actions. The notions of autonomy and agency for recipients are addressed further in Chapter 7.

On line 6 Anna says “Plea::[se.]”. This response to Mum’s embodied action displays Anna’s awareness that Mum is treating some element of her request as ‘wrong’ and in need of correction. She offers that correction. In so doing, she treats Mum’s action as a directive for her to use an appropriate and conventional request form when asking to leave the table. Note that Anna delivers line 6 as a kind of increment to her original request on line 1 rather than a correction or redoing of the request in light of Mum’s directive. This is made possible by the embodied nature of Mum’s action and by virtue of the fact that the directive was not an explicit propositional telling that specified the action to be performed.

Mum’s partially overlapping response on line 7, in which she grants Anna’s request, displays an instant acceptance of Anna’s action to correct the problem. Just as in the previous extracts both participants have displayed their understanding of the target utterance as a directive through their subsequent actions. It is hard to conceive of a situation in which eye contact and pursed lips could so readily evoke “Plea::[se.]” as an appropriate next action without strong contextual cues and a shared understanding of the normative conventions underpinning saying please when requesting to leave the table. It is because of the local sequential context that Mum’s actions on line 4 can be considered a directive.

## Discussion

In this chapter I went looking for directives in my data. As the counting exercise reported in Figure 3.1 shows, I found lots of directives. However, I ran into the same problem as many previous researchers. Namely that it’s very hard to robustly use preconceived categorisation systems to define what counts as a directive when faced with live interactional data and the huge range of formulations that can be used to direct. I therefore proposed an alternative approach in the hunt for directives. Instead of relying on my own judgement of an utterance I would use the participant’s actions within the conversation as a signal for whether they were treating a given utterance as a directive in the moment in which it was spoken. This approach is consistent with the

epistemological position of conversation analytic research. It places participants' orientations at the centre of the analysis and uses those orientations to reveal features of the practices that can help us to understand how the interaction is accomplished.

As an example of how participants' orientations can be used to help with the research problem of how to recognise a directive in the data, the second half of the chapter focused on some less clear-cut or obviously directive formulations evidenced in the data; such as information solicits, 'my side' tellings, and non-verbal embodied actions. Specifically, it looked at types of directives that researchers conventionally find hard to recognise and categorise (Dalton-Puffer, 2005; Jones, 1992). That is, utterances in which the directive implication is veiled behind a different surface formulation. Traditionally researchers might refer to these as indirect or mediated directives (Blum-Kulka, 1997; M Goodwin, 1980). Alternatively, they might overlook them altogether. For example, a study examining grammatical formulations of directives would not even begin to examine Mum's nod in Extract 3.3. The analysis revealed that participants can and do orient to utterances as being directive implicative regardless of the surface form of the utterance. This supports the suggestion by Ervin-Tripp that "directives do not require inference from a prior literal interpretation to be understood" (1976: 25).

### *Features of directive implicative utterances*

By grounding the analysis in participants' orientations it becomes possible to examine the class of actions I'm calling directive implicative utterances in detail and to consider how they differ from more explicit directives. The analysis enables us to consider what resources directive implicative utterances offer participants for managing how to go about telling someone to do something. Broadly speaking, the analysis suggests three features that characterise directive implicative utterances:

1. Offer a checking facility to screen for valid reasons for non compliance
2. Give the directive recipient the maximum possible agency for their own actions
3. Provide for the possibility of subsequent upgraded repeats.

First, directive implicative utterances, although hearable as directives, do not have to be responded to with compliance. This allows for the possibility that the recipient has a good reason for their behaviour that was not known to the speaker at the time. For example in Extract 3.2 Anna’s beans may have been cold and in need of reheating before she could eat them. By using a ‘my side’ telling (“You still got some ↑bea:ns left ↑‘aven’t you:”) Mum leaves open the possibility, prior to ordering Anna to eat her beans, that Anna could volunteer new information that would make a forceful directive an inappropriate next action. For example Extract 3.2 could have gone:

**Mum** You still got some beans left haven’t you?

**Anna** They’re not cooked. They’re cold

**Mum** Sorry sweetie, I’ll pop them in the microwave for you now.

The directive implicative utterance therefore signals that a directive might be forthcoming if a substantial and valid reason for the behaviour is not offered as a response to the more implicit version. Valid reasons to refuse to comply are discussed further in Chapter 6. Directive implicative utterances afford recipients an opportunity to head off looming directives and afford speakers the opportunity to back away from directive sequences before they are fully committed. In this sense they act as a way of checking whether a directive needs to be issued or not.

Second, directive implicative utterances impose on the recipient’s business in a minimal fashion in comparison to more forceful imperatives. For example, in Extract 3.1 the epistemic gradient of Mum’s question positions Jessica as more knowledgeable about her own actions than Mum could be. Similarly in Extract 3.3 Mum’s embodied head movement positions Anna as already knowing exactly what was missing from her request and offers her the opportunity to correct it rather than be corrected. In this sense Mum orients to a preference for self-correction identified in the repair literature (Schegloff, Sacks et al., 1977). Thus the issue of behaviour modification is approached in a manner that foregrounds the recipient’s role in the sequence rather than the speaker’s entitlement to tell them what to do.

The extracts discussed above share a common orientation to normative or conventionally acceptable forms of behaviour. To varying degrees, the speakers of directive implicative utterances treated the recipients as already knowing the ‘right’ way to behave. In each case there is no explicit propositional telling. Instead it is up to

the recipient to pick the appropriate next action. This contrasts with more imperative formulations that spell out exactly what remedial action the recipient is being directed to perform (i.e., “What are you doing young lady?” versus “hold it with one hand”). By leaving the remedial action unspecified the directive speaker gives control over choosing the responsive action to the recipient. This positions them as a more active agent in the directive sequence than would occur following a tightly prescribed imperative<sup>22</sup>.

Third, if the recipient chooses not to comply with the embedded directive and not to offer a valid account for the prior behaviour then the speaker has the option of choosing a more entitled formulation for a second attempt. For example in Extract 3.2 “You still got some ↑bea:ns left ↑‘aven’t you:” (line 2) results in Anna stating she doesn’t want her beans. Mum then comes back with “You’ve to eat some bea:ns” (line 6). Her second utterance makes explicit the directive implication behind the first and now overtly tells Anna what she has to do. This time there is no possibility that Mum is just wondering what the reason for Anna not eating her beans might be. This time Mum is telling her to eat her beans<sup>23</sup>. Directive implicative utterances buy the speaker the option of a second attempt if needed because they can claim to have been checking out the need for a directive.

### *Directing a young child*

Recognising utterances as implicitly doing directing work represents a not insignificant interactional accomplishment on the part of the participants. Anna is three years old. Despite her tender years and limited interactional experience she shows that she knows exactly what her Mum was getting at by ‘just’ noticing that she still had beans on her plate (Extract 3.2). She displays her awareness of and sensitivity to the implications of such a noticing and takes steps to head off the suggestion that she should

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<sup>22</sup> In Chapter 7 agency and control over one’s actions will be shown to be live concerns for recipients of directives. Recipients actively work to regain control over their actions before they comply with a directive. Directive implicative utterances position the recipient as already being an active participant in the directive sequence. By not specifying what compliance would be, and by treating the recipient as having primary epistemic access to their own business, directive implicative utterances are constructed in such a manner as to build up the recipient’s agency rather than to erode it or take control through a more forceful directive formulation.

<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion on entitlement in repeat directives.

eat her remaining beans. Similarly, in Extract 3.1 and Extract 3.3 both the recipients recognise the implicit directive lurking within their respective Mum's actions and respond to the directive rather than the overt form of the initiating action.

The analysis points towards the suggestion that the ability to recognise directive implicative utterances is a fairly basic interactional accomplishment that can be mastered early on in a child's interactional development. This supports experimental work by Liebling (1988) who found that children in Grade 1 could comprehend the intent behind inexplicit directives. One does not need to have formal training in linguistic pragmatics to recognise different directive formulations. By the age of three Anna knows that the look Mum gave her in Extract 3.3 was not a nod to say she could leave the table but a directive to ask properly.

The analysis also reveals that parents are aware of the ability of their young children to recognise embedded or implicit directives; arguably they would not select implicit forms when directing young children otherwise. When delivering the directive implicative utterances, none of the Mums designed their turns so as to manage or support the child in recognising its directive implicative nature. The analysis shows both how the directive is buried beneath an alternative surface action, and how the remedial action to be performed is left unspecified and treated as the child's business to identify and correct. In each of the extracts, after the child has displayed an orientation to the target utterance as a directive, Mum then ratifies the child's treatment of the target utterance by allowing the sequence to progress.

While leaving the exact nature of the directive and the required remedial response unspecified the target utterances were nevertheless designed with recognisable clues to signal their directive implications. For example, in each of the extracts studied, the target turn worked to draw the recipient's attention to some aspect of their immediately prior conduct. This limits the scope of what needs to be assessed or dealt with in the response solely to events relevant to the identified behaviour (Schegloff, 1988). The very act of drawing attention to otherwise routine behaviour makes relevant the implication that something was amiss, non-routine, or 'wrong'. Thus the recipient's behaviour is constructed as out of the ordinary and in need of explanation. The target turns all worked in some way to call for an account for the indexed behaviour. These clues appear to be sufficient for a young child to recognise a directive implicative utterance.



### Conclusion

The analysis shows that participants can choose to use directive implicative utterances when seeking to change the behaviour of their interlocutor. That is, utterances that convey a directive in an implicit form embedded within another action. Directive implicative utterances orient closely to issues of autonomy and agency in interaction. They enable the speaker to display a concern for the recipient's sense of agency and active participation in the interaction. Additionally, issuing a directive implicative utterance does not preclude the speaker from reissuing their directive in a more entitled form should the recipient fail to comply with the more implicit version. Selecting a more implicit directive form enables the speaker to test the water prior to issuing a more explicit directive. It enables them to root out potential reasons for not complying before they overtly demand compliance. Issuing directives and demanding compliance is an invasive social action. The opportunity to bring about behaviour change is not lost by using an implicit form. What is gained is a chance to change behaviour without threatening intersubjectivity. Crucially, when it comes to identifying directives, analysts need look no further than the orientations of their participants (even very young participants) to get an expert opinion on whether something is or isn't a directive.

In this chapter the choice of extracts was selected to demonstrate the very broad range of utterances I am treating as directives for the purposes of this study. My interest is in explicating the range of practices used to get someone to do something rather than developing a tight definition of a directive. I am not seeking to definitively distinguish between imperatives, requests, suggestions, proposals, challenges, or accusations as intrinsically different social actions in interaction. Choosing to use the term directive reflects my analytic interest in displays of authority-in-interaction. In more entitled utterances (see Chapter 5) speakers make their social control move explicit, exposed and consequently more easily available for analysis.

## Chapter 4 - Directives II: Sequences

### Introduction

In Chapter 3 I presented several single-turn utterances without context to make the case that directives can be variably formulated. By zeroing in on the directive utterance without its surrounding context I hoped to familiarise the reader with the kinds of actions that I'm calling directives. The intention was to use straightforward single utterances to introduce the reader to the fields and develop the seeds of analysis that will germinate in later chapters. The reader has no doubt suspected that matters are not quite so simple and that single utterances are not the whole story. I then went on to consider participants' orientations to directive implicative utterances. This work revealed that many of the features that enabled an utterance to be heard and responded to as a directive came, not from the utterance itself, but from the local sequential context in which it was delivered. In order to develop a more complete account of directives they now need to be considered in their full and often complex sequences.

Sequences, according to Schegloff, are "the vehicle for getting some activity accomplished" (2007: 2). This thesis is primarily concerned with explicating the action, practices, and implications of telling someone to do something. Therefore, it is perhaps no surprise that much of the thesis deals with the sequential organisation of directives. For example, Chapter 5 considers how multiple directives are delivered within the same sequence of talk. In Chapter 6 the issue of response options following directives is addressed in relation to how different responses lead to different forms of sequence progression. Finally, in Chapter 7, the analysis will touch on how the relationship between directive sequences and the ongoing mealtime talk can be exploited by recipients as they attempt to avoid compliance. At this point I would like simply to draw the reader's attention to some of the recurrent features of a typical directive sequence and, in so doing, begin to draw attention to some of the themes that will be addressed further in later chapters.

I do not want to suggest that all directive sequences necessarily follow the pattern that will be outlined here. Instead, the aim is merely to highlight some of recurrent features that constitute a prototypical directive sequence. They are as follows:

1. A **directive** that is sequentially disjunctive to the prior talk and cuts across the ongoing topic without orienting to it
2. An **embodied response** that typically complies with the directive
3. A **gap** in the verbal conversation that provides sequential time and space proportionate to the time reasonably required to demonstrate compliance
4. A **next utterance** that is topically disjunctive with the directive sequences and does not comment on or evaluate either the directive or the response

These features will be discussed in relation to the literature on sequence and preference organisation to show how the directives and their responses are structured within the conversation to contribute to the social action of *getting someone to do something*.

## Data

The data for this chapter is taken from the main corpus used throughout the thesis and outlined in Chapter 2. During the initial data searching stage chunks of the data that contained directives were isolated and transcribed. The length of sequence to be transcribed was determined on the basis that the action of *telling someone to do something* should be included in its entirety and that some unrelated talk both before and after the directive action should be included to demonstrate a clear start and end point to the section of interest. In practice it proved relatively simple to identify the boundaries of the directive activity within the interaction. Directive actions tended to occur within discrete and bounded sections of talk. Thus, there was no need to develop a dedicated sequences collection in order to examine the sequential organisation of directives in interaction. The analysis presented below is based on general observations made about all the sequences studied. The examples used here are some of the clearest examples of the structure of a directive sequence found within the data.



In Extract 4.1 the directive begins on line 13 when Dad calls Lucy's name. His call is stretched and emphatic with a somewhat admonishing tone to it. Although Dad's utterance is formulated as a summons, Lucy does not respond to it as such. On line 15, immediately after Dad's summons, Lucy begins to pick up the food that she had dropped and return it to her bowl<sup>24</sup>. From her response it is clear that she treats the use of just her name as sufficient information to indicate the directive implications of Dad's turn. The actual directed action does not need to be made explicit in order for Lucy to correctly identify the problem behaviour (dropping food) and to initiate remedial actions (picking it up again).

Although Lucy has already begun to change her behaviour following Dad's summons, he continues into a second turn-constructural-unit (TCU) to deliver the imperative "LOO:k at what you're do:ing:." (line 17). This is an example of a prescription rather than an injunction. That is, it tells the recipient to do something (prescribes a course of action) rather than not to do something (prohibiting a course of action). One directive practice identified in the data is for injunctions to be followed by a prescription that specifies a positive action, which would constitute compliance. For example<sup>25</sup>:

Figure 4.1: Examples of directives containing injunctions followed by prescriptions

- |        |            |                                                 |                |
|--------|------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| xvii)  | <b>Mum</b> | [Stop] chatting Haydn an' eat your tea.         | (J_17_1_59-60) |
| xviii) | <b>Mum</b> | No don't! Stay sitting down.                    | (C_1_0_112)    |
| xix)   | <b>Mum</b> | N[o:. Us]e your spoon or for:k Anna.            | (C_4_0_561)    |
| xx)    | <b>Mum</b> | Don't get it out now [Fini:sh ] your break[fast | (C_7_4_16)     |
| iv)    | <b>Mum</b> | U:se your kni:fe plea:se                        | (F_1_2_16)     |

<sup>24</sup> Note the use of the double square left brackets ( [ [ ] ) on lines 14 and 15 of Extract 4.1. This is used to indicate the beginning of an overlapping embodied action where the end is not marked on the transcript. Typically it refers to actions that continue over several turns of talk. To mark an end point would clutter the transcript and impair readability. They are used in places where the beginning of an action needs to be definitively recorded but the end is of less analytic interest. In the case of lines 14-15 of Extract 4.1 the act of picking up the dropped food is concluded by the time Lucy begins the next transcribed embodied action on line 19.

<sup>25</sup> In such cases the utterances are delivered in a single turn at talk (despite often being composed of multiple TCU's). This suggests that the prescription is not added on as an increment or after thought but that the utterance was always intended to be delivered as two directives; one to stop and one to go. However, it is beyond the scope of this analysis to consider this phenomenon further.

In the case of Extract 4.1, Dad's second TCU spells out precisely the action required to comply with the directive. This contrasts with the more implicit directives examined in Chapter 3, which left the nature of compliance rather ambiguous and thus allowed the recipient to decide how to correct their behaviour. "LOO:k at what you're do:ing::" does not allow Lucy any scope to self-correct her behaviour. It specifies exactly what she should do to demonstrate compliance. The directive is also formulated as a general or abstract rule that could be applied to multiple situations beyond the current directive sequence.

Extract 4.1 is an example of a directive for a specific offence that is formulated as a more general or scripted rule that could apply after many different occasions where the recipient fails to pay attention ("Look at what you're doing" rather than "Look at your fork when you move it"). This also contrasts with the examples in Chapter 3 where the parents formulated directives that presumed the recipient already possessed the knowledge and understanding to correctly interpret an implicit directive and select an appropriate response option. Although this study's scope does not extend to considering the practices through which children can be expected to know how to behave, it is possible that the use of scripted directives might contribute to the development of knowledge about behavioural expectations among family members.

By the time Dad has finished his turn, Lucy has finished picking up the fallen food. She then exaggerates a slow, deep nod and keeps her gaze directed at her bowl for 3.9 seconds. This is a performance of compliance with Dad's directive that over-emphasizes the action to ensure it cannot fail to be observed and treated as compliance (see Chapter 7 for more on exaggerated displays of compliance). Note that Dad continues to watch Lucy during the 3.9 second pause. Mum then launches a new topic about Dad's motorbike and the directive sequence is over.

### Starting the Sequence

In order to illustrate the transitions in and out of a directive sequence, Extract 4.1 includes several turns from the talk on either side of the directive sequence. The extract starts when Daisy begins to recount her earlier conversation with Lucy about beer in grape juice. This story selects Dad as the main recipient through the use of the

second person pronoun “you” on line 4 and through Daisy’s gaze. Daisy’s multi-turn utterance (lines 1-9) can be characterised as a story telling because it contains both “relevant background information” (lines 1-6) and a move towards the “climax of the story” (line 9) (C Goodwin, 1984, p226). Incidentally, it does lack a “preface offering to tell the story” that, according to C Goodwin, is also typically included in such tellings (1984: 226).

Analysts typically refer to storytelling sequences as deviations from normal turn taking practices (Schegloff, 2007). Nevertheless, stories tend to elicit at least some display of reciprocity or “tokens of appreciation/understanding” from recipients (Jefferson, 1978, p227). This does not happen in the case of Daisy’s story in Extract 4.1. Instead of displaying an orientation towards Daisy’s project of beer in grapes Dad initiates a new, disjunctive, sequence of talk through a directive targeting Lucy. His directive does not orient to his role as story-recipient or progress the project initiated by Daisy. Also, at the point at which Dad begins his turn on line 13, Daisy has hearably not finished telling her story. Dad’s summons competes for the floor in overlap with Daisy’s “gra:pes” (line 9). Dad does not wait for a transition relevant place (TRP) to begin to speak. He just jumps in to launch his own project, overriding the one already in progress. Daisy then cedes the floor to Dad and drops out without pursuing a response to her story or elaborating it further.

Although Dad’s directive is abruptly and unapologetically disjunctive to the prior talk is it not entirely without an antecedent in the interaction. During Daisy’s storytelling the participants had continued with concurrent mealtime practices. Mum is pottering about getting Dad a drink, Lucy is eating, and Dad is supervising the girls at the table. Throughout Daisy’s storytelling there are two interactional projects; ‘having a conversation’ and ‘eating a meal together’. During lines 1-12 the two projects occupy completely separate modalities (verbal and embodied respectively). It is only when something goes wrong with the background business of eating the meal that the project gets verbally brought to the attention of the participants. Just as Daisy says “[there’s] BEE:r” a piece of pasta falls from Lucy’s fork into her lap. This is the embodied action that is retrospectively treated as having prompted Dad to issue his directive calling for Lucy to attend more closely to her dining habits. A similar pattern can be seen in Extract 4.2.





Mum's directive does not orient to the fact that it violates the normal turn-taking conventions. Mum begins the directive after Lucy has begun to produce her "M[mm]" sound. Like Dad's directive in Extract 4.1 it is issued mid-TCU rather than at a TRP. Mum's talk is also in overlap with Daisy's candidate answer but shows no signs of ceding the floor, despite Daisy's utterance being more sequentially relevant at that point. Mum, just like Dad in the previous extract, does not treat herself (nor do others treat her) as accountable for not adhering to turn taking conventions or for failing to progress the current topic of talk. The directive utterances are competitive actions that mark a disjunction with the prior talk.

Again, as in Extract 4.1, Mum's directive does not come from nowhere. While searching for an answer to Dad's question Lucy picks at the food in her bowl using her fingers. This is an action that would form part of the physical actions required for consuming food, a key mealtime activity. However, Mum treats picking at food with fingers as an unacceptable type of mealtime action and so immediately issues a directive to change Lucy's behaviour. The relationship between the embodied action and the directive it prompts is not a straightforward one. The decision to treat an action as needing a directive to change it is a decision made by the speaker of the directive after the embodied action has happened, rather than by the performer of the embodied action before they did it. This relates to a comment made by Drew, in his study of complaint sequences that an individual's conduct is not "intrinsically or automatically to be regarded as a violation, a transgression, or as reprehensible" but is constituted as such through events in discourse (e.g., accounts) (1998: 312). Embodied conduct (and arguably verbal conduct too) can be seized on retrospectively by the directive speaker and treated as grounds for a directive. Thus although directives can be shown to react to an immediate sequentially prior action they are not responsive actions in the traditional sense.

Directive sequences are examples of what Schegloff (2007) termed retro-sequences. He suggests that unlike adjacency-pair sequences, which operate prospectively, retro-sequences operate retrospectively. He states, "the first recognisable sign that such a sequence is in progress generally displays that there was "a source" for it in what preceded, and often locates what the source was" (Schegloff, 2007, p217). In the case of directive actions they retrospectively cast some aspect of a co-participants conduct as having prompted the directive utterance, provoking a source/outcome

relationship between the prior conduct and the directive utterance. This retrospective link is achieved through the general formatting of directive utterances as a variant of a noticing (e.g., Extract 3.2) so as to make relevant some feature of the prior conduct that “may not have previously been taken as relevant” (Schegloff, 2007, p218).

The directive itself is issued using the modal interrogative form “°C’n you°”. This, at least notionally, orients to Lucy’s right to refuse to perform the specified action rather than simply bypassing her desires and outright telling her what to do (Craven & Potter, 2010). “[°C’n you° use] your kni:fe and [for-]” specifies the action to be performed very precisely. For example it could have been phrased ‘Can you eat properly please?’ or ‘Can you behave?’. Such formulations do not explicitly state what ‘eating properly’ or ‘behaving’ would entail. As was discussed in the previous section, directives that do not precisely define compliance leave it up to the recipient to decide what action they will perform. The specific directive issued here does not offer Lucy that freedom and constrains in advance what an appropriate responsive action would look like.

In her next turn, Lucy does not respond to the directive at all. Instead she continues to respond to Dad’s question, as part of her ongoing project to tell Dad about the incident at school. Lucy’s “[Mo:v]e up!” uses the voice of the teacher in direct reported speech to answer Dad’s question about what the teacher said. Lucy’s turn is issued in overlap with the final word of Mum’s directive. It’s delivery is strident and assertive, both mimicking the teacher’s command to a naughty pupil, and, for Lucy, working to secure her right to begin a turn somewhere other than at a TRP. Mum then abandons her directive before finishing the last word and cedes the floor to Lucy.

When it is clear that Lucy has finished her turn Mum then reissues the directive in the clear (line 9). The use of the same turn beginning as was used on the first attempt marks the utterance on line 9 as a redoing or a repeat of the previously unheeded directive (Schegloff, 2004). However, Mum quickly breaks off and then repairs her modal formulation to a more forceful imperative (line 11). This is an example of the typical upgrade pattern for repeat directives that is discussed in Chapter 5.

In both of the extracts examined so far, the directive has been issued in overlap with the prior talk, marking it as a disjunctive action that initiates a competing sequence of talk addressing a different type of project (eating rather than talking). Not all

directives are issued in overlap. In Extract 4.3 below Lucy finishes her turn and then Dad issues his directive.

## Extract 4.3: Forbes\_1\_7\_31-41

1     **Daisy**           Mmm [w' ll Be:n's] younger th'n you:.

2     **Dad**             [Why: not? ]

3                     (2.4)

4     **Dad**             .ghh Bet [ya ] co:u:ld.

5     **Lucy**             [Di-]

6                     (.)

7     **Lucy**             <sup>26</sup> ↑Ki- (0.3) um, (.) ↑Ben can't (0.4) um (.)

8                     >does<n't (.) swim wivou:' armbands=An' (0.3)

9                     An\*' (0.7) um He [[c'n <even,> (0.5) um (0.3)=

10    **Dad**             [[((turns to look at Lucy))

11    **Lucy**             =<sz:::wi::m wivou' ar:mbands.>

12                     [(1.6) ]

13    **Dad**     →     [[((finishes his mouthful and swallows))] C'n >you

14                     ea:'< withou:t ta:lki:ng.

15                     [(1.0) ]

16    **Lucy**             [[((moves right hand to her fork and picks it up

17                     while gazing at the ceiling))]

The family have been talking about an upcoming swimming party that the girls have been invited to. The discussion then moved on to talking about who was able to swim. Lucy has stated that Ben can swim and that she can't. From here the extract then starts with Daisy drawing the comparison between Lucy and Ben's ages. Consequently, at the start of the extract Lucy is in a difficult situation in terms of defending her prior assertions that Ben can swim and that she can't, whilst managing the implication that because she is older than Ben she should be able to swim. Additionally, by line 7 all the family members have now had their food served and they are ready to start eating. Lucy's turn on lines 7-11 takes place as the other participants begin to eat their food.

Lucy's turn beginning on line 7 is not particularly coherent. She is having difficulty responding to Dad and Daisy's utterances (on lines 1 and 4 respectively) without retracting her two previous claims that a) she can't swim, and b) that Ben can. This may account for her broken and hesitant delivery. Nevertheless, Lucy's turn does further the topic in progress (who can swim) by offering new information (armbands). As such it positions itself as part of a sequence, responsive to the prior turn and projecting a next action. Lucy resists Dad's bet that she could swim by qualifying her

<sup>26</sup> Up till now Mum and Dad have been seasoning their food or serving themselves, Daisy has been waiting to start eating. During Lucy's turn on lines 31-33 Mum, Dad and Daisy all start eating.

claim about how well Ben could swim; At least that may be what she was trying to do. It is rather difficult to tell.

An appropriate next action to Lucy's turn might have been an appreciation or acknowledgement token that registered the new information, or a further pursuit by Dad to get Lucy to take his bet. Alternatively, given Lucy's obvious delivery issues, a repair initiator would be a highly relevant next action to clarify the content of Lucy's turn and help indicate what an appropriate response might be. Instead, Dad finishes his mouthful and then, without orienting to Lucy's prior turn, he issues a directive for her to eat (lines 13-14). This launches a new course of action without orienting to the sequence that was already in progress when the directive was issued. Just as in previous extracts the directive contains no account or apology to mark or explain its deviation from the ongoing talk.

Dad's directive is formulated using the modal 'Can you ...' interrogative beginning. "C'n >you ea:'< withou:t ta:lki:ng" is an intriguing choice of formulation considering the directive specifically mentions *not* talking. Interrogatives make relevant answers but Dad's question clearly marks a preference for the next action to be a non-verbal display of compliance. This example offers evidence of an argument to be developed in Chapter 5 regarding the entitlements and contingencies mobilised by various directive formulations. For now it is sufficient to draw the reader's attention once more to the mismatch between the surface form and the action of the utterance.

Dad's directive tells Lucy to do something (to eat), but it also specifies something that is not to be done (talking). Immediately prior to the directive Lucy had been talking, so to issue an injunction prohibiting talking treats the immediately prior talk as inappropriate in some way. Rather than Lucy's prior turn being treated as a sequential utterance in an ongoing multi-party conversation, the directive treats it as inappropriate, non-sequentially dependent talk lacking in any reciprocal obligations for interlocutors. This is different from other extracts where some concurrent embodied action rather than the talk itself was retrospectively treated as grounds for the directive being issued.

In fact it is not Lucy' talk per se that is the problem in Extract 4.3. Rather it is her concurrent lack of embodied action that prompts the directive. During Lucy's turn on lines 7-11 all the other participants variously signalled their readiness to begin eating

and had begun to focus on their food. At this time Lucy did not display her awareness of the change in collective embodied activity from serving to eating. Instead she continued with her turn as an appropriate next action based solely on the verbal elements of the conversation. It seems to be just bad luck that Lucy's turn takes place at a specific point in the meal where 'starting eating' was required. As the actions of the other participants show, such an orientation could be embodied rather than verbal and did not need to impinge on the verbal conversation or disrupt its progressivity at all. However, by not displaying awareness that eating had become a relevant concurrent activity during the course of her turn Lucy was failing to sufficiently engage with the mealtime project of eating. It is the lack of an appropriate embodied display that Dad targets, not her talk itself. This is another example of the dual projects that are present during mealtimes (talking and eating) and of the way in which directives can bring the mechanics of mealtimes to the surface and make them the focus of the interaction.

The extract reveals features of the structure of the mealtime environment. Dad issues his directive because Lucy has not shown she recognises the meal has progressed from serving to eating. This suggests that there may be discrete stages to a meal that participants are required to monitor such that all parties can progress to the next stage of the meal at the same time. For example there may be a general rule that 'everyone's food needs to be served before people start eating and all parties should begin to eat their food as soon as serving is finished'. Such rules are not explicitly stated at the start of each meal and are likely to differ between families or types of meal. The boundaries between the phases don't typically appear to be marked other than in places where one participant fails to transition correctly such as in Extract 4.3. It is beyond the scope of the study to address the progressive stages of the meal in any substantive detail, but it is worth noting that directives may offer one route into studying the management of the mechanics of mealtimes.

In the extracts presented so far, the launching of directive sequences has been shown to be disjunctive both in terms of topic and in terms of their sequential relevance to the surrounding talk. However, when one considers the embodied environment in which the talk takes place, an embodied action (or lack of action) by the recipient in each extract is retrospectively treated as provoking the directive in each case:

- Extract 4.1 – Lucy drops some food in her lap (lines 10-12)
- Extract 4.2 – Lucy picks at her food with her fingers (line 2)

- Extract 4.3 – Lucy did not start eating (lines 7-11)

The same pattern can be seen in the next extract. In Extract 4.4 Katherine and Mum are talking about whether Anna, Katherine's younger sister, made poster paint by combining powdered paint with water during her craft lessons at a toddler group called Come and Play. While this talk occurs Katherine is playing with a cream cracker and trying to pop the bubbles in it (see Figure 4.2). On line 8 Mum cuts across the ongoing talk to issue a directive for Katherine to hold her cracker over her plate.

Figure 4.2: Example of a cream cracker style biscuit



#### Extract 4.4: Crouch\_7\_3

```

1    Kath      But she didn't ma:ke i:t ((holds cracker over her
2                               lap))
3    Mum      No. ((shrug)) does- sh- [[doesn't need to make=
4    Kath      [[((starts to pop the
5                               bubbles in the cracker with the finger))
6    Mum      =the paint [[(0.3) not at come and pla:y.=>She's=
7    Mum      [[((turns to look at Kath))
8    Mum      → =not< old enough is she. .hh [[Kath if you kee:p=
9    Mum      [[((pats K's leg))
10   Mum      → =it [o:hver the †ta:ble †st-(0.2)] [Don't †pla:y=
11   Mum      [[(points at Kath's plate)) ]
12   Kath      [[(leans
13   forward and takes a bite))]
14   Mum      → =with it lo::ve. ]
15   (0.8)
16   Mum      ((looks at Anna))
17   Anna      [I jus pai:n' it like dat an' nat .hh (0.5) I
18   di::d lellow.= a:nd ]
19   Anna      [[(mimes painting with her spoon)) ]
20   (2.0)
21   Anna      An'
22   (2.3)
23   Mum      What else did [you do]
24   Anna      [Oweng.]

```

On line 8 Mum says “She’s not < old enough is she”. This statement and tag-question selects Katherine as the recipient. Mum’s use of the third person pronoun ‘she’ positions Anna as the subject of the talk, thereby eliminating her as a potential next speaker (Lerner, 2003). The tag-question makes relevant a response that confirms or refutes the content of the statement to which it is appended. However, Mum does not give Katherine space to respond. Mum’s in-breath immediately following the tag-question seizes the floor and indicates that further talk is coming. Mum then says “Kath if you kee:p it [o:hver the †ta:ble †st-(0.2)] [Don’t †pla:y with it lo::ve” (lines 8-14). This utterance is delivered in the space where a response from Katherine to Mum’s question would be relevant. Mum cuts across her own talk to issue the directive. This offers evidence that directive speakers do not just usurp other participants’ interactive projects, but will also break into their own topic-relevant talk to issue a directive.

In the previous extracts directives have been shown to retrospectively treat some aspect of the recipient’s immediately prior embodied conduct as a direct ‘cause’ for the directive being issued. The same can also be said for Extract 4.4. Throughout the earlier turns Katherine has been holding her cracker over her lap and casually popping the bubbles on its surface. On line 7 Mum turns to look at Katherine and unmistakably observes her actions. Mum’s look is an example of ‘parental monitoring’; more specifically it offers children a chance to self-correct prior to the directive being issued.

The preference in conversation for participants to self-correct rather than being corrected by a co-participant has been well documented in the research literature (e.g., Laakso & Soininen, 2010; McHoul, 1990; Robinson & Bolden, 2010; Schegloff et al., 1977). Extract 4.4 is an example of one of the ways in which parents can offer an opportunity for self-correction of the behaviour before issuing a directive to demand behavioural change (other correction). This offers some evidence to suggest that directives might be a dispreferred action in interaction (i.e., disaffiliative, non-contiguous, and withheld in the conversation relative to points they might have initially been performed (Pomerantz, 1987)). I will return to a consideration of the preference organisation of directives in the discussion at the end of this chapter, paying particular reference to work by Robinson and Bolden (2010) on account solicitations as dispreferred FPPs.

At this point in the extract Mum is midway through explaining why Anna doesn’t have to make the paint at Come and Play. There are two projects at work in the

interaction: the verbal project talking about paint, and the more mechanical project of managing the meal that is occupying an embodied modality at this point. As soon as the paint explanation is complete Mum breaks into the sequence with the start of her first attempt at the directive addressing the cracker crumbs on line 8.

Although the directive is sequentially disjunctive with the prior talk, it does relate to an immediately prior embodied action. As such it claims an entitlement to be uttered *at that moment* on the grounds that it indexes a locally occasioned action that needs to be rectified there and then rather than waiting for the sequence to close. This may help to account for why directives can break into an ongoing sequence. Waiting for the ongoing talk to come a close would mean losing the ability to index an embodied action and retrospectively treat it as the ‘cause’ of the directive. Some support for this can be taken from Waltereit (2002) who suggests that prefacing a turn with ‘look’ can be one way of claiming an entitlement to interrupt on the grounds that ‘look’ indexes some sort of immediate need for the conversational floor. Similarly, Sidnell notes that in second position ‘look’ prefaced turns “served to mark a disjunction and redirection of the talk away from the conditionally relevant next action and towards some alternative” (2007: 387). There is an argument to be made that Waltereit (2002) and Sidnell (2007) are both describing a phenomenon whereby speakers are using a directive to claim the entitlement to launch a disjunctive topic mid-sequence.

Mum’s first attempt at the directive is formulated as the first half of an ‘if ... then’ construction. Within my data, ‘If ... then’ formulations are rarely used for directives; they are more commonly used for threats (Hepburn & Potter, 2011a). In this case Mum abandons her first formulation and redoes the directive as a straight imperative injunction with a turn-final term of endearment (“Don’t †pla:y with it lo::ve” lines 10-14). This simplifies the turn and focuses more tightly on the problem behaviour itself rather than the consequences.

Note that by the time Mum restarts her turn to issue the imperative Katherine has heard enough to be able to understand what Mum is telling her to do and begins to comply (line 12). Therefore, Mum’s second attempt at the directive is delivered at the same time as Katherine responds to it through her embodied action. This is an example of the way in which embodied actions can confuse the turn-taking structure of verbal talk (See also Chapter 7). In the 0.8-second gap that follows on line 15 there is no further



action required by Katherine to respond to the directive. What happens next is the exit from the directive and a return to normal conversation.

### *Moving on from directing*

In this section the focus is on the transition of talk out of a directive sequence and back into a topic of conversation. As a caveat it is important to note that the practice outlined below is the simplest and least problematic type of exit from a directive sequence evidenced in the data. There are many instances of more tangled extrications, of multiple and contradictory directives in the same sequence, or where the directive itself becomes topicalised in the conversation. However, for the time being, the aim is simply to show one recurrent practice through which the participants in the study execute a smooth, successful and unproblematic directive sequence.

Extract 4.4 is an example of a typical directive sequence. I have already discussed the beginning of the directive sequence in the section above and have noted the abrupt and disjunctive manner in which the directive cut across the ongoing talk violating normal turn-taking conventions. Although the directive action did not fit with the ongoing verbal conversation, it was nonetheless precisely timed to index an immediately prior embodied action (or lack thereof) and retrospectively treat that as a justification for issuing the directive. Thus, despite not orienting to the organisation of talk into sequences, the directive utterance can be shown to relate to a sequentially prior event and consequently can be treated as an interactionally relevant action.

Following a directive utterance, compliance is projected as a relevant next action (Craven & Potter, 2010). In Extract 4.4 compliance is delivered at the same time as Mum delivers her second go at the directive. Despite the overlap there is still a short pause following the directive before talk resumes. During the gap none of the other participants rush to take the floor. A pause (of varying lengths) is an extremely common event following a directive. This makes sense considering the highly embodied nature of most responses to directives (Chapter 6). As such the response needs sequential space and time, but not necessarily words, hence the gap.

The next action is then a resumption of the topic that had been in progress prior to the directive being issued, namely Anna's painting at Come and Play. Note how Anna's

talk does not offer any comment on the directive sequence or otherwise refer to it at all. Her talk is topically disjunctive with the directive and instead relaunches the earlier topic of painting. Her disattention to the directive sequence marks it as in some way outside of 'normal' conversation and not subject to the same rule of prospective relevance and retrospective understanding that typically govern the relationship between adjacent utterances (Schegloff, 2007). Anna is not subsequently sanctioned for pursuing talk at an inappropriate time as Lucy was in Extract 4.3. In fact Mum engages with Anna in talk about her activities at Come and Play and there is no further reference to the directive.

Kidwell notes that "typically when the other demonstrates – satisfactorily – that he or she is indeed acting or going to act, in the sought after manner, the directives actions are terminated" (2006: 748). This also appeared to overwhelmingly hold true for the directives in the family mealtime data. A second example of the transition pattern away from a directive can be seen in Extract 4.1, which was analysed earlier for how the directive sequence was launched. The portion of the extract relevant to the present discussion is reproduced below for clarity.

Extract 4.1 partially repeated: Forbes\_7\_1\_48-73

```

13   Dad   →                                     [Lu:   ]cy:::.
14                                     [[(.)]
15   Lucy   [((picks up the dropped food and puts it back in
16         her bowl))
17   Dad   LOO:k at what you're do:ing::.
18         [(3.9)                               ]
19   Lucy   [((does a deep nod and then keeps her head down
20         looking at her bowl))]
21   Dad   [((watches Lucy))
22   Mum   → So wuz your bi:ke [alri:ght?, did Rupert sa:y?]
23   Lucy                                     [((eats a mouthful of food))]
24         (0.7)
25   Dad   ((looks at Mum)) Dunno. 'E en't come ba:ck
26         #wivit#.

```

After Dad's directive on lines 13-17 there is a 3.9-second gap in the conversation. During the gap on line 18 Lucy provides a display of embodied compliance with the directive and Dad watches her. Note that no other party, not even Daisy whose story telling sequence was abandoned when Dad issued the directive, rushes to take the floor. By the start of line 22 an initiating action (the directive) and a responsive action (embodied compliance) have been delivered. The base adjacency pair has been

completed and the next action would relevantly be some form of post expansion or a move to initiate a new topic.

Note what is absent from the sequence. There is no verbal acknowledgement by Dad that Lucy's embodied turn constituted an acceptable demonstration of compliance. There are no appreciation or confirmation tokens to signal the successful completion of the sequence. For example Dad could have said something like 'well done', 'that's better', or 'good girl' after the pause on line 18. Dad could have expanded the sequence into a pedagogic discussion about the importance of paying attention whilst eating, but he does not. Nor is there any attempt by Lucy to elicit appreciation or confirmation tokens from Dad through a checking question such as 'like this?', or 'is this right?'. There is also no apology from Lucy for having dropped her food in the first place. In fact there is nothing: no sequence closing third of any sort (e.g., 'okay' or 'thank you'). Instead what happens is that Mum launches a completely new topic with her question "So wuz your bi:ke [alri:ght?, did Rupert sa:y?" on line 22.

Mum's turn on line 22 launches a new topic of conversation; namely the state of Dad's motorbike following his recent crash. The key aspect of the turn is its relationship to the prior talk. Schegloff describes adjacency or 'nextness' between turns as "central to the ways in which talk-in-interaction is organised and understood" (Schegloff, 2007, p16). In a conversation each turn can be understood as displaying both a retrospective understanding of the prior turn and prospectively constructing the terms on which the next utterance will be understood. However, Mum's question does not appear to relate in any way to the talk that preceded it. Instead, line 22 can be characterised as "topically disjunctive" in relation to the directive sequence (Jefferson, 1984a, p194). That is, the new topic does not emerge from the directive sequence and is not topically coherent with it (watching what you eat versus assessing motorbike repairs). It creates a break from the prior talk and introduces a different topic of conversation.

The abrupt change in topic is not only signalled by the new subject matter introduced in Mum's question, it is also flagged up by the use of a "So" preface to her turn. Bolden found that discourse markers such as *so* and *oh* often occur in environments "where one chunk of talk has been brought to a possible completion and nothing else has yet been launched" (2006: 681). Bolden mentions in particular the use of discourse markers like 'so' as devices for "moving on with the conversation that has been temporarily stalled" (2006: 618). In the case of Extract 4.1 the 'so' preface seems

to mark the action of moving on with the conversation or of moving past the directive sequence. There is a sense in which the directive needs to be 'got away from' with talk that is markedly different and free from any association of being related to or built from the directive sequence.

In the two exits from directive sequences that have been studied so far, both contain a gap following the directive during which time embodied compliance can be both performed and monitored. Therefore the gap has a demonstrably interactional role because an action, albeit nonverbal, is being performed during that time. The clear, interaction-based reason for the gap in verbal conversation may account for why all participants in the conversation collaboratively create the gap by not speaking at that point despite the normative preference in conversation for speakers' turns to follow each other immediately with no gap or overlap (Sacks et al., 1974). When talk does then resume it is formulated in such a way as to be markedly different from and topically disjunctive with, the directive sequence. In Extract 4.5 there is a gap of 8.3 seconds between the last directive on line 25 and the new topic talk initiated by Dad on line 28.

Extract 4.5: Forbes\_5\_1\_4-33

1     **Lucy**           It's yu:m yu:m in my tu:m.=eh hhuh  
 2                    [(0.8)]  
 3     **Lucy**           [*((moves her arm out to her side with bread it*  
 4                    *in))* ]  
 5     **Dad**           mm  
 6                    [(1.1) ]  
 7     **Dad**           [*((points at Lucy's bread with his knife))*]  
 8     **Dad**     →   Put your bre:ad (.) [o:ver your pla'e. ]  
 9     **Dad**                                   [*((points at Lucy's plate))* ]  
 10                   [(3.6)]  
 11    **Lucy**           [*((bounces her bread over her plate in different*  
 12                    *places as though trying to decide where to put*  
 13                    *it))*]  
 14    **Lucy**           >I 'ant a< dri:nk. (*((puts bread on her side*  
 15                    *plate))*)  
 16                    [(0.3) ]  
 17    **Lucy**           [*((reaches for her mug))* ]  
 18    **Dad**           [*((looks at floor around Lucy's chair))*]  
 19    **Dad**           [Lucy. c'n you si' o:n the >middle of your<]  
 20                    cha:ir,  
 21                    [1.5) ]  
 22    **Dad**           [*((moves Lucy's chair a tiny bit))*]  
 23    **Lucy**           [*((holds her seat and wiggles into the middle of*  
 24                    *her chair))* ]  
 25    **Dad**           A:n' eat ni:cely. (*((Straightens Lucy's plate))*)



Like the topic launches of the previous two extracts, Dad's turn on line 28 is topically disjunctive with the directive sequence. It does not relate to the directive or offer a comment or evaluation of the response in any way. In fact there is no sequence closing action to round up the directive. The lack of minimal post expansion turns in directive sequences is an overwhelming trend in the data. Typically, a response is either treated as acceptable and the speaker allows the conversation to jump to another topic (such as in the extracts examined here), or the response is treated as unacceptable and the directive is upgraded or reissued (see Chapter 5). Examples of directive sequences with minimal post expansions are few and far between in the data.

The lack of sequence closing thirds may relate to the issues of agency and autonomy that are made relevant by the social action of a directive, which seeks to control the actions of a co-participant. Extract 4.5 and the extracts in Chapter 7 show that recipients can work to blur the degree to which their response appears to be compliant. A sequence closing third would explicitly link back to the directive after the response had been given and tie them together. Such an act would expose the embodied response as having been compliance (i.e., under the agency of the directive speaker) rather than self-motivated behaviour by the recipient that just happened to match actions proposed by the prior directive (i.e., under the agency of the recipient). When trying to enact a departure away from a directive sequence and back into normal topic talk, it is perhaps unhelpful to retrospectively make explicit the link between an embodied action and the directive. To do so reinforces the imposition of authority by the speaker, exacerbating asymmetries rather than smoothing them. In any event there appears to be a demonstrable orientation by participants within the data to avoid either appreciatively commenting on compliance or positively evaluating a directive response in third position. A topically disjunctive initiating action is a more common next turn to follow the response gap after a directive.

In the three extracts considered thus far the length of the gap after the directive and before the next topic launch has varied considerably:

- Extract 4.4: 0.8 seconds
- Extract 4.1: 3.9 seconds
- Extract 4.5: 8.3 seconds

Therefore it is difficult to speculate about how long it is appropriate to wait following a directive before launching a new topic of conversation. I would speculate that the length of gap is in some way contingent upon the action being performed at the time. For example in Extract 4.4 all Katherine needed to do was lift her cracker over her plate: something that would not take very long at all. In Extract 4.1 Lucy was required to demonstrate that she was paying attention as she ate her food: attention implies a time element that needs to be demonstrated in addition to gaze and so may take longer than the time needed for a physical reorientation. Finally in Extract 4.5 it is not clear what would count as compliance with eating nicely, but certainly rushing to gulp down a drink would not. So a measured and sedate 8.3 seconds to take a drink of water may be an appropriate length of time. I suggest that in each case the time for compliance is in some sense related to how long it might reasonably take to comply<sup>27</sup>. An appropriate timescale for compliance is important, both in terms of not rushing into talk before compliance has taken place, but also in terms of not dragging the silence on for too long after compliance has occurred. Extract 4.6 below shows that a gap that goes on too long may be an accountable event for the participants. In the extract Mum and Dad both direct Emily to eat her dinner rather than repeatedly playing a sort of word game around bon appétit.

## Extract 4.6: Amberton\_2\_1\_28-66

1	<b>Dad</b>	(\Chly that / Table) is wobbly
2	<b>Emily</b>	[Bon appertee]
3	<b>Mum</b>	[Mm hmm ]
4		(0.7)
5	<b>Dad</b>	Mm:
6		(0.6)
7	<b>Emily</b>	U:m (0.2) °Jus' me°
8		(0.5)
9	<b>Emily</b>	[((leans towards Mum with her nearest palm
10		upwards)) ]
11	<b>Emily</b>	[°↑bon [appé]tit°]
12	<b>Mum</b>	[Ea:t]
13		(.)
14	<b>Emily</b>	[((leans towards Dad with her nearest palm
15		upwards)) ]
16	<b>Emily</b>	[°b:on [appé ]tit°]
17	<b>Mum</b>	[Ea:t.]
18		[(1.1) ]
19	<b>Emily</b>	[((picks up her cutlery))]

<sup>27</sup> I am grateful to Mardi Kidwell for her helpful comments about how long speakers are prepared to wait for compliance during a discussion at ICCA10.

```

20  Dad      [((turns to watch Emily))
21  Emily    E::a:t*. [ (.) E]::a:t*
22  Emily    [((stabs piece of food with her fork))
23  Dad      [Ple:ase.]
24          [(6.3) ]
25  Emily    [((puts food to her mouth, moves it away, looks
26          at it, then puts it in her mouth, [[exaggerates
27          chewing [[ and swallowing]])]
28  Jess          [((turns to
29          look at Dad))
30  Dad      [((turns to look at Jessica))
31  Emily    [S'quiet
32  Jess     [Goh:]
33          (0.3)
34  Dad      Wha' yuh lookin' at:]
35  Mum      ((glances into the kitchen)) Pe:g.
36          [(0.6) ]
37  Dad      [((glances at Mum then puts his cutlery down))]
38  Mum      Pe- [(h)hu:m ]
39  Dad      [Is: sshe] up on [that ginger bread? ]
40  Dad      [((looks into the kitchen))]

```

On lines 25-28 Emily spends 6.3 seconds complying with the directive by eating some food<sup>28</sup>. During the 6.3 seconds Dad's gaze leaves Emily and focuses on Jessica who has turned to face him. Through his change of gaze Dad signals that he is no longer attending to Emily's display of compliance. This may be one way of signalling that the directive sequence has concluded to Dad's satisfaction but it is less marked than a new topic launch would be. On line 31 Emily comments on the silence, drawing the other participants' attention to the lapse in the conversation following the directive. Her observation marks the silence as being non-normative and accountable. In contrast to the other extracts, Extract 4.6 feels uncomfortable, as though some form of guilt or condemnation remains following the directive sequence. The work of getting back into normal conversation quickly and without referring to the completion of the directive sequence may help to minimise the potential negative consequences of correcting someone's behaviour

Shortly after Emily's comment Dad does then launch a new topic that has many of the characteristics noted in reference to other topic launches following directives. It does not refer back to the directive or comment on the performance of compliance. It is topically disjunctive to the directive. One of the parties to the directive sequence is

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<sup>28</sup> Note how the compliance is partly exaggerated and delivered as a performance or display of compliance. See Chapter 7 for further discussion.



heavily involved in the new topic and so is fully disengaged from the directive (In this case it is the directive speaker who launches the new topic). The new topic becomes established and there is no further reference to the directive.

## Discussion

I do not mean to claim a general pattern about the boundaries of all directive sequences. There are at least as many examples that deviate from the pattern outlined here as there are that follow it. The aim is to sketch out some of the recurrent features of typical directive sequences found in the data, suggest some of the implications of this pattern of features, and invite the reader to recognise a similar pattern among some of the extracts analysed in the later chapters.

When studying the sequence organisation of directives it quickly becomes apparent that there are such things as readily identifiable bounded sequences of talk in which 'directing' actions get done. This echoes findings by Kidwell (2006) that the directive and response together constituted a sequence of talk. These sequences have a recurrent structure that typically contains some or all of the following features:

- A **directive** that is sequentially disjunctive and cuts across the ongoing topic to launch the directive sequence without orienting to the talk already in progress.
- An **embodied response** that typically displays compliance with the directive
- A **gap** in the verbal talk that provides sequential time and space commensurate with the time reasonably required to demonstrate compliance
- No sequence closing third or third turn positioned token to acknowledge or comment on the response
- An **initiating action** to launch a topically disjunctive sequence of talk

In the extracts examined above the directive sequence begins with the directive. It launches straight into the main business of the sequence rather than starting with a pre-sequence. This is not the case for all directives in the data but it does ring true for the majority of them. The two major exceptions to this finding are cases in which a) attention is drawn to the target behaviour using gaze rather than a disjunctive verbal turn (something I have loosely termed parental monitoring), or b) where an open ended

account soliciting question regarding the target behaviour is issued (e.g. “Wha’ ya [do:ing sam”<sup>29</sup>). Whether utterances such as these are full directives, directive implicative utterances, or account soliciting initiating actions of the type discussed by Robinson and Bolden (2010) is beyond the scope of the study. Nevertheless they have aspects of the character of both and appear to offer recipients more scope to design their response than a more entitled directive would (Craven & Potter, 2010). The degree to which directives restrict the response options available to recipients is taken up in more detail in Chapter 5. The finding here is simply that directives are sequentially disjunctive with the prior turn.

In several of the extracts above, the directive was launched in the sequential space for a second pair part to an initiating action. If they were sequences inserted in order to clarify some element of the prior turn necessary in order for a second pair part to be provided they could be described as insert expansion sequences (Schegloff, 2007). However, although they occur in a sequential space where insert expansions would be relevant they do not match the action of such expansions because they do not progress the ongoing topic and are not uniformly initiated by the recipient of the preceding first-pair-part.

Similarly an argument could be made to describe directive sequences as side sequences (Jefferson, 1972). However, there are also several problems with this description. Jefferson states that a side sequence “constitutes a break in the activity”, as opposed to a termination, and that the previous topic resumes following the conclusion of the relevant but separate business dealt with by the side sequence (1972: 295). In contrast, the types of directive sequences considered here do not tend to deal with problems arising from the talk itself, but from the separate project of managing the mealtime. Although the directives do constitute a break in the talk they do not necessarily deal with a relevant topic that needs to be resolved before the prior conversation can resume. The data demonstrate that the topic launched following the directive sequence is often something completely unrelated to the topic that was in progress when the directive was issued. The sequential disjunction caused by the directive is not in service to progressing the ongoing talk by resolving a minor or side issue before returning to the larger topic. Directives are a more catastrophic form of sequential disjunction because they launch a competing topic unrelated to the prior talk.

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<sup>29</sup> Benson\_2\_18\_32

The grounds on which speakers can justify breaking into an ongoing sequence with an unrelated directive are sequentially rooted in an action (normally embodied) by a co-participant that is retrospectively treated as unacceptable behaviour within the framework of a shared family meal. The directives break into the ongoing talk shortly after instances of potentially unacceptable behaviour, claiming an immediate and locally occasioned warrant on the back of the behaviour. Although this can account for the sequential positioning of the directive it cannot be used to account for how speakers treat themselves as entitled to direct the actions of another person.

As an initiating action, a directive is a highly invasive social act. Breaking into an ongoing conversation, halting it, and issuing a command for someone else to do something could threaten their “public self image”, or face (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p62). Using Brown and Levinson’s theoretical conceptualisation of face, directives can be seen as a face-threatening act that promotes disaffiliation between the two participants. Goffman (1967; 1983b) suggested that a key feature of the organisation of human interaction was the promotion of social affiliation over disaffiliation. Work on preference organisation within conversation analysis has provided empirical support for Goffman’s initial claim (e.g., Heritage, 1984; Lerner, 1996; Sacks, 1987; Schegloff, 2007). Thus, face threatening, or disaffiliative actions have been systematically shown to be dispreferred in interaction (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Examples of dispreferred first-pair-parts (taken from Robinson & Bolden, 2010, p503).

<b>Preferred Action</b>	<b>Dispreferred Action</b>	<b>References</b>
Self Correction	Other correction	(Schegloff, Sacks et al., 1977)
Offering an object of value	Requesting an object of value	(Lerner, 1996; Schegloff, 2007; Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006)
Having positively valenced aspects of oneself noticed by others (e.g. ‘Nice haircut’)	Announcing positively valenced aspects of oneself (e.g. ‘I got a new haircut’)	(Schegloff, 2007)
Being recognized in the context of telephone conversation openings when it is relevant for the speakers to recognize each other	Self-identifying	(Schegloff, 1979; Schegloff, 2007)
	Giving unsolicited advice	(Heritage & Sefi, 1992)
	Disaffiliative explicit account solicitations	(Robinson & Bolden, 2010)

Robinson and Bolden (2010) review the literature on dispreferred initiating actions (of which I would like to suggest directives are an example) and conclude that, “a systematic feature of dispreferred FPPs, and evidence for their dispreferred status, is that they are withheld relative to points in interaction where they might otherwise have been initially relevantly performed” (2010: 503). However, in the prototypical directives sequences outlined above I have argued that directive speakers in fact break into ongoing talk in order to deliver the directive as close as possible to the embodied action that the directive retrospectively casts as the ‘cause’, often not waiting for the conclusion of the ongoing business or even a transition relevant place for speaker change. This leads to the question, if directives are dispreferred actions, then why do typical markers of dispreference not preface them in these prototypical directive sequences?

With regard to their work on the preference organisation of explicit account solicitations in Russian and English conversations, Robinson and Bolden state that, “when explicit solicitations of accounts are *not* withheld, they embody an aggravated stance of challenge/disaffiliation” (2010: 527). By issuing a directive without any traditional markers of dispreference, such as withholding beyond the initial point of relevance, the directive speaker signals that, at that moment, they are not concerned with potentially threatening the face of the recipient. Therefore I suggest using a dispreferred format to deliver the directive is one way to heighten the speaker’s claim of entitlement to control the recipient’s actions. This idea will be returned to in Chapter 5 following a more detailed examination of the notion of entitlement in directives.

Following the directive, the response most commonly evidenced in the data is embodied compliance. This is not the only response option, but in terms of mapping out a typical directive sequence it is important to note that most directive sequences gain compliance (See Chapter 6 for a discussion of other response options). Equally note that directives tend to receive an embodied rather than a verbal response, even though many of them are formulated as information solicits (See Chapter 7 for a discussion the consequences of an embodied response for turn taking and sequence organisation).

One immediate consequence of an embodied response to a directive is that there is often then a gap in the verbal conversation. The length of the gap after a directive appears to relate to the length of time one might reasonably expect compliance to take.

It can be extremely short (barely more than a micro pause) or a considerable silence (e.g. 8.3 seconds in Extract 4.5). At this stage, the relationship between the gap and a commonsense understanding of how long compliance might take is a rather speculative observation that would be difficult to track through the data. Participants appear to orient to the need for sufficient time to comply. However they are also sensitive to a gap stretching into an uncomfortable silence or awkward pause in the conversation (see Extract 4.6) and take steps to avoid this happening.

A device used recurrently by various participants (not just those actively involved in the directive sequence) to move on from the directive sequences was to break the silence caused by the gap for embodied compliance with a topically disjunctive initiating action to launch a new sequence of talk. This practice is similar to the one described by Jefferson (1984a) as an alternative to stepwise transition away from trouble talk. Jefferson notes that following troubles tellings there is often “nowhere else to go” and that getting out of a troubles telling is “tantamount to getting out of the conversation itself” (1984a: 193). Building on from an early lecture by Sacks (April 9, 1976, p9), Jefferson suggests that to move on from problematic talk participants have to specifically “do getting off of them”. This strikes a chord with the topically disjunctive actions that tend to follow directive sequences. They have an element of doing ‘starting a new topic, any new topic, as long as it’s not the directive topic’. There are several points of comparison between Jefferson’s study on exit strategies from troubles telling and the exits from directive sequences shown in the data.

In addition to the topically disjunctive nature of the next action, Jefferson notes that the topic launches also typically displayed other-attentiveness rather than self-attentiveness. That is, the topic is about a co-participant rather than the speaker. The same can be said, to varying degrees, about the topics launched following directives in the data. “So wuz your bi:ke [alri:ght?, did Rupert sa:y?]” (Extract 4.1) and “Wha’ yuh lookin’ at?” (Extract 4.6) are both explicitly other attentive through the use of ‘you’. The topic launches in Extract 4.4 and Extract 4.5 are less obviously other-attentive. However in both cases the next action is a turn designed to give a co-present participant new information about a topic they have previously expressed an interest in (Anna’s activities at Come and Play and the performance of Rupert’s motorbike respectively).

Jefferson (1984a) suggests that other-attentive topic elicitors work to preserve the interactional reciprocity of the talk and to enhance interactional cohesiveness

following the difficulties of the prior talk. This may be a particularly relevant next action following a directive sequence because of the discomfort that can be caused when one party seeks to control the actions of another (Chapter 7 shows that having agency for one's actions is a live concern for all participants).

Jefferson suggests that a recurrent way of getting away from problematic talk is to "do something that specifically marks that a new topic is going to be done" (1984: 193). She suggests that items like 'so what have you been doing?' do more than just propose a new topic but in fact propose to start the conversation afresh. In the environment following a directive, actions that start a new conversation would help to accentuate the difference between the new topic and directive sequence and would minimise the degree to which the directive continued to be live and relevant to the conversation after its completion. Again, this speaks to an orientation by the participants to move away from the directive and treat it as a closed, distinct sequence that is not part of the conversation proper.

### Directive sequences

As a separate piece of interactional business, the directive sequence performs a specific social action, namely telling someone to do something. Telling someone what to do is related to several actions already described in the research literature such as calling someone to account (Robinson & Bolden, 2010), complaining (Drew, 1998), asserting authority over others (Macbeth, 1991), and socialising children into 'correct' behaviour patterns (He, 2000) and doubtless many others. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that similarities can be found between the structure of, for example, complaint sequences and directive sequences.

Drew noted that the complaints about transgressions or misconduct could be "characterised as *complaint sequences* insofar as they are clearly bounded sequences: in each case the complaint is a quite distinct topic, the beginning and ending of which is relatively easily identifiable" (1998: 304). The same can be said for the directives examined here. He also reports that complaint sequences make use of a "specific sort of topic initial turn" to separate them from what came before, and "end in a topically disjunctive fashion through the introduction of a quite different topic rather than being

gradually disengaged” (Drew, 1998, p304). Again this chimes with the structure of directive sequences outlined above. Drew (1998) suggests that the clear boundedness of complaint sequences is evidence that participants treat complaints (or directives in the present instance) as distinct topics that have sensitivities associated with them that can hinder the production of connections to other topics. Complaints about the misconduct of an absent other and directives that work to rectify a co-present party’s misconduct are both examples of uncomfortable or potentially problematic actions. Separating them, both sequentially and topically, from the surrounding conversation enables the incipient threat to intersubjectivity to be contained within the bounded sequence that addresses the problem behaviour without colouring the rest of the interaction.

Enclosing directives within a purpose built sequence of talk explicitly marks them out as a distinct social action. In so doing the act of directing is brought to the surface of the interaction and exposed for all participants to see. For this reason directive sequences could be considered examples of what Jefferson (1987) termed exposed correction. When a corrective action is exposed, Jefferson notes that “whatever has been going on prior to the correcting is discontinued” and that correction becomes the interactional business of the interchange (1987: 88). This contrasts with more embedded correction in which the utterances “are not occupied by the doing of correcting, but by whatever talk is in progress” (1987: 88). Embedded correction enables the corrective action to hide beneath the surface of the interaction. Jefferson (1987) suggests that a key feature of exposed correction is that it calls on the recipient to account for their ‘lapse’. Bounded directive sequences allow for a transgression to be brought to the surface of the interaction, for the recipient to be called to account for and to correct their conduct, and for the entire process to take place *outside* normal conversation thereby limiting and containing the problematic or troublesome character of telling someone to do something.

### Dual projects of dinnertime

It has been shown that directive sequences are different from normal topic talk both in terms of the action performed within the sequence and the transitions into and out of the directive sequence. Throughout the analysis I tentatively raised the suggestion that mealtime interaction might be characterised as a type of interaction where there are at least two identifiable projects running concurrently: namely ‘having

a conversation' and 'managing to eat a meal'. Both of these activities need to take place while the family is sitting round the table, and all participants can be held accountable for failing to progress both interactional projects. I suggest that, for the most part, the mechanical project of managing the meal takes place below the surface of the interaction in a primarily embodied modality. This seems a natural organisation for the projects because drinking, eating, serving, and clearing food are all predominantly physical actions whereas as 'having a conversation' is largely verbal. During the directive sequences studied here the mealtime project is exposed and brought to the surface of the conversation in order for a perceived transgression or instance of misconduct to be corrected. Once the correction has taken place the mealtime project slips back beneath the surface and the mundane conversation restarts as though the intrusion had not taken place (Jefferson, 1984a).

There are some intriguing similarities between my characterisation of mealtime interaction as 'dual-project' and work by Koole (2007) on classroom activities. Koole (2007) observes that there are many parallel activities taking place during a school lesson involving various combinations of students and/or the teacher. Within the many parallel activities, Koole states that "the unifying activity to which all students and the teacher orient ... is the activity in which the teacher is involved" (Koole, 2007, p497). He therefore characterizes the teaching activity as "the *central activity* of classroom interaction". However, Koole warns that researchers "must not treat the teacher's activity as default and any other student activity as non-participation" Instead he emphasizes the importance of understanding all of the activities that participants are engaged in during the interaction. This caution applies equally well to mealtime conversations. Researchers need to be aware of the parallel activities of eating and conversing at the table and the occasionally conflicting goals of both activities.

Finally, I suggest that the family mealtime is not a wholly institutional form of interaction. In classically institutional settings, such as a courtroom, all talk and action is organised around conducting the trial (Atkinson & Drew, 1979). In contrast, although there are institutional actions to be performed at the dinner table, these actions are conducted beneath the surface of a mundane conversation not overtly concerned with progressing the topic of 'eating a meal'. In fact 'having a conversation' can sometimes run counter to the mealtime project. For example one can't (very successfully) eat while talking, so actions like storytelling, which are a prevalent activity during family meals



(Aukrust & Snow, 1998; Aukrust, 2002; Martini, 1996), cause a halt in the mealtime project while they are delivered.

## Conclusion

The directives studied above are sequentially disjunctive with the immediately prior talk. The directives claimed an entitlement to violate normal turn taking convention by seizing on a co-participant's immediately prior embodied action and retrospectively treating that action (or lack of action) as a transgression or misconduct in need of locally occasioned correction through a directive. Following a directive a typical response was embodied compliance without a verbal comment. This often occurred in overlap with the second half of the directive. All participants in the conversation appeared to orient to the need for time and sequential space in which compliance can take place. Therefore directives were typically followed by a short gap where no one rushed to take the floor. Directive sequences overwhelmingly do not contain third positioned utterances that acknowledge the compliance. Where directive sequences do continue in post-expansion it is typically following refusal to comply with the directive (See Chapter 5 on multiple directives in sequence and Chapter 6 on response options). In the type of sequences studied here the next action was most commonly a topically disjunctive initiating action that launched a new topic of talk markedly different from the directive. Through the break in talk the participants oriented to a need to get away from the directive and restart normal conversation. Thus the directive sequence was treated as having been *outside* the normal conversation rather than a part of it. This relates to the dual interactional projects of 'having a conversation' and 'eating a meal' present during mealtimes.

This chapter has focused on the prototypical directive sequence. I have outlined the smoothest and simplest form of progression through the sequence. However, events at the dinner table are not always smooth or simple. In the next chapter I will look at an alternative sequence, in which multiple directives are issued targeting the same behaviour in the same sequence of talk.

## Chapter 5 – Directives III: Entitlement and Contingency in Action<sup>30</sup>

### Introduction

In Chapter 3 I demonstrated the subtle work being done by both speakers and recipients of directive actions to keep the directing character of the utterance beneath the surface of the interaction. Thus utterances conveying implicit directives were formulated as, for example, information solicits or noticings and the remedial action to be performed was left unspecified and treated as the recipient's business to identify and correct. The analysis showed participants working to head off an overt, forceful directive in favour of a more finessed exchange that managed 'getting the recipient to do something' without having to go on the record as telling them to do it.

The subtle and veiled nature of the directive implicative utterances examined in Chapter 3 supports my decision to resist the constraints that both Speech Act Theory and grammatical formulations necessarily impose on descriptions of social action. I argue that any account of directive actions (i.e., attempts to get someone to do something) needs to accommodate the careful work done by participants to position themselves according to how strongly and overtly they make the controlling aspect of getting someone to do something. The fact that an utterance can, for example, sound like a noticing of an aberrant vegetable and yet be shown through its treatment in the interaction to be directive (Extract 3.2) is an intrinsic aspect of the social action of 'getting someone to do something'. Traditional conceptualisations of directives and requests as distinct speech acts ignore the interactional preferences at work that

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<sup>30</sup> The materials for this chapter have been previously published in part as: Craven A. & Potter J. (2010) Directives: Entitlement and Contingency in Action, *Discourse Studies*, 12(4), pp419-442. I would like to thank the following people for their input into the earlier incarnation of this chapter: The members of the Discourse and Rhetoric Group at Loughborough University, particularly Alexa Hepburn, Charles Antaki and Laura Jenkins for helpful discussions in data sessions. Kobin Kendrick for his insightful notes on a draft of the article, and Candy Goodwin for her helpful comments. Paul Drew, Traci Walker (nee Curl) and an anonymous reviewer for their important critical and constructive contributions. Finally, I am particularly grateful to Jonathan Potter for his extensive role in developing the analysis presented here.

influence how speakers choose to formulate their directive attempts. Being able to downgrade or heighten the directive or impositional nature of an utterance is a powerful resource for participants in interaction.

This chapter now examines the core social action of the directive more closely. It considers directive actions in terms of the rights the speaker claims over the recipient and the degree to which they make explicit the attempt to control the subsequent events in the interaction. Therefore, I will now briefly discuss the relevant literature on social control acts from interaction-based studies.

### Social control

Directives are examples of actions often labelled by analysts as social control acts (Pearson, 1989). This includes actions such as “offers, requests, orders, prohibitions, and other verbal moves that solicit goods or attempts to effect changes in the activities of others” (Ervin-Tripp, O’Connor et al., 1984, p116). Blum-Kulka (1997) points out that all forms of social control acts impinge on the recipient’s freedom of action to some degree. This has also been expressed as a threat to the recipient’s face (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967). Directives are actions through which the speaker can assert control or authority over the recipient. This is a highly relevant aspect to keep in mind when trying to understand directive use *in interaction*. Kidwell (2006) points out that one of the central research themes running through work on directives has been with how directives constitute and point up power differentials between participants (e.g., Ervin-Tripp, 1976; West, 1990).

Several researchers have suggested that social distance and power might be a key predictor for more forceful directive formulations (e.g., Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Jones, 1992; Pufahl-Bax, 1986); and that directives may be a practice through which to display social control and authority (M Goodwin, 1990; 2006). For example, Fasulo et al. (2007) showed that parents who wanted to restrict their children’s agency during cleaning duties drew more heavily on directives than when they were encouraging children’s independent action. Similarly, Wingard demonstrated that parents retained privileged access to directives as a discursive resource in order to mobilise their “role as the authority ... in the discussion of time and activity to prioritise the parent’s activity” (2007: 80).

The relative social status of participants cannot fully account for variations in directive usage. There are undeniably links between the shape of the directive and the amount of social control that the speaker is proposing to exert over the addressee (M Goodwin, 1990). However, even in cases where the speakers' institutional roles are clearly defined to position one speaker as able to direct another (such as the chair of a meeting), participants nonetheless work dynamically throughout the interaction to justify their right to initiate directive actions (Pearson, 1989). Similarly, in her study of Morris team meetings, Jones (1992) found that "status variations within the group, although more important than gender, still fail to show the primary factors influencing the use of directives" (1992: 427). Sealey (1999) studied directives in interactions between children aged 8-9 and their relatives and friends. She found that some directive actions were distinctive because of the children's social status as children, but also that, "since 'being a child' is a relational and socially negotiated role, its significance varies across different interactions" (1999: 24). Thus institutionally defined social relationships are not the whole story when it comes to directive choice and other aspects of the interaction need to be considered.

The choice of how to formulate a directive utterance has been shown to demonstrate sensitivity to the local interactional order. For example, in his study of his two-year-old daughter's use of imperatives for requesting, Wootton (1997) found that she showed a consideration of "local sequential understanding" and used distinct forms in "particular kind[s] of interactional scenario[s]" (1997: 83-84). However, his study also showed that the relationship between request type and interactional scenario was not a clear "one-to-one mapping" that could be used in a deterministic fashion to predict request type choices (Wootton, 1997, p83). This shows that the link between context and utterance formulation is a complex one, with multiple contributory factors. When choosing how to formulate an utterance designed to get someone to do something, local interactional constraints may matter more than social relations. The interactional goal of the speakers also needs to be considered to at least the same degree as the social relationship between the speakers.

More recent interaction based work on actions designed to get someone to do something has developed the notion of entitlement as an alternative to more static concepts of power and authority between participants (see Curl & Drew, 2008; Heinemann, 2006). Such work suggests that the formulation of the social control act

varies depending on the degree to which the speaker treats himself or herself as entitled to expect compliance with their request/directive. For example, Heinemann (2006) examined interactions between home-help care assistants and their elderly care recipients. She showed that the care recipient could display different “degrees of stance towards whether she is entitled to make a request or not, depending on whether she formats her request as a positive or negative interrogative” (Heinemann, 2006, p1081). Examining directive actions in terms of how entitled a speaker is to control the action of another person permits greater sensitivity to the local and sequential context in which the interaction takes place than is possible using more overarching explanations of social roles and power asymmetries to inform the analysis. Crucially, the notion of entitlement does not necessarily contradict findings that suggest social roles do matter. A local claim to entitlement often does reflect the social statuses of speakers (e.g., teacher versus student (Macbeth, 1991)) but not always (e.g., Maple Street children (M Goodwin, 1980; 1990)).

Interaction based work can also help to explain trajectories of directive sequences rather than just looking at directives in isolation from the talk that produced them. Heinemann (2006) found that positive and negative interrogative formats (e.g., ‘Could you pass the salt?’ and ‘Couldn’t you pass the salt?’) “are not used interchangeably, and that they have different impacts on the interaction” (2006: 1081). An analysis of the broader sequences reveals that participants are sensitive to the sequential implications of particular directive formulations and can design their utterance so as to produce a specific interactional effect. M Goodwin (2006) states that “by focusing on trajectories of directive/response sequences, we can examine the practices through which child and parent(s) construct local identities for children, either as parties who are accountable to their parents for their actions or dismissive of their parents’ directives” (2006: 516-517). Thus by starting with the sequence we can show how social role relations can be built up and developed through the collaborative directive/response exchange. If a speaker formulates a directive to display that they have a strong entitlement to tell the recipient what to do (e.g., ‘Pass me the salt right now!’) then it sets up a sequence that has to be negotiated from that start point rather than from a more deferential start point of a highly mitigated request (e.g., ‘If you don’t mind would you possibly be able to pass me the salt when you’ve got a free hand?’).

This chapter takes the notion of entitlement as applied to request sequences by Heinemann (2006) and Curl and Drew (2008) and extends it to sequences involving

multiple directive actions found in the mealtime data. By studying the trajectories of these extended sequences I aim to explore the nature of a directive action as an act of control over a co-participant and to develop a more nuanced understanding of how various directive formulations (most notably modal interrogatives and imperatives) differ in terms of how they manage the speaker’s entitlement to direct and the recipient’s autonomy over their own conduct. By contrasting these different formulations and examining their relative positioning within extended sequences I hope to begin to move away from a tight definition of a directive as distinct from a request and instead suggest a range of practices available to participants to manage the authority of the speaker and the autonomy of the recipient whilst ensuring the specified action gets done.

## Data

The data used in the analysis is taken from the main corpus used throughout the thesis and outlined in Chapter 2. In order to examine the nature of directive utterances I began simply with a collection of utterances that appeared to be doing directing. This collection formed the basis of the previous chapters which aimed to establish the importance both considering directives *in situ* within an actual recorded conversation and of centring the analysis on participants’ orientations to utterances as doing directing work. The focus of the work now shifts to more closely consider the directive utterance as a social action between participants. Key considerations for this chapter include the relative social rights that a directive proposes between two interlocutors and how those rights are variously exercised in different interactional situations. “Does the speaker have the *right* to expect co-operation? Is the hearer *obligated* to cooperate?” (Gordon & Ervin-Tripp, 1987, p297).

The analysis presented here is based on a collection of sequences containing multiple directive utterances addressing the same behavioural change. Multiple directive utterances were a very common feature of the dataset. Of the 228 directive sequences identified in the counting exercise<sup>31</sup>, nearly 100 were sequences that included multiple directive utterances. This supports the finding by M Goodwin that “directives do not stand as isolated speech acts; rather they are frequently repeated

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<sup>31</sup> See Figure 3.1: Directives Frequency Count and distribution between speakers and recipients.

until they are agreed with” (2006: 524). This collection is particularly suited to addressing the rights claimed by the directive speaker because those rights are reasserted in different forms on each subsequent attempt to direct the recipient’s actions.

## Analysis

The analysis that follows draws heavily on Curl and Drew’s (2008) work that examined different types of requests based on the entitlement they displayed over the actions of the recipient and their orientation to the contingencies that could affect acceptance. A central feature of their approach was to highlight the way requests could be built differently, and understood differently, in varying environments. In particular, they suggested that the form of request type was chosen according to (a) the entitlement of the request issuer to what the request demands and (b) to the range of contingencies for the request recipient in delivering what is requested. Request forms become more presumptuous when the person requesting claims high entitlement and treats the recipient as likely to be able to comply with the request (low contingency).

They focused on two request forms; modal verbs (e.g., can, will, could, would) and requests prefaced with ‘I wonder if...’. They found some broad association of these forms with institutional environments. For example modals were more common among family members, whereas the wonderings were more common in calls to a doctor’s surgery. However, they also found the key determinant in the choice of which form was used was whether the person issuing the request treated her or himself as having a strong entitlement to what was requested and whether the recipient was believed to be straightforwardly able to satisfy the request (entitlement and contingency).

Curl and Drew argue that the modal form displays more entitlement than requests prefaced with ‘I wonder if...’ and therefore tends to be used where “the requester has (and can show) good reason for thinking his or her request reasonable and easily granted and therefore more common among family members” (2008: 148). They conclude by emphasising the value of considering requests on a continuum of contingency and expectation/entitlement where the two dimensions are inversely linked such that high entitlement requests contain few (if any) contingency markers.

Similarly, strongly contingent requests show minimal expectation of acceptance or entitlement to make the request in the first place.

It is worth noting that it is not a simple matter of using a modal versus a wondering. The wonderings appear as prefaces to requests which themselves typically use modals. For example (from Curl and Drew, 2008, p138):

- 1 Doc Hello,
- 2 Clr mt! Hello, I wonder if you could give me some advice,

More schematically the form is wondering + modal ('I wonder if' + 'you *could* give me some advice'). The wondering form has the effect of changing the grammar so the recipient is not being asked about their capacity. Instead, the speaker's 'wondering' about their capacity is 'simply' reported. These formulations take the form, then, of my-side tellings (Pomerantz, 1980). These classically operate by the speaker reporting 'their side' of some relevant matter where the recipient has their 'own side'. This works as a practice for fishing for a response rather than directly asking for one. Such formats, according to Pomerantz (1980), display a careful orientation to the recipient's 'own side' as being 'their business'. Wonderings contrast with imperative utterances, of course, even more starkly. In a wondering the recipient is neither being told what to do, as is the case with strongly entitled directives (e.g., imperatives), nor being asked if they can do something, as is the case with modal interrogatives; rather the wondering generates an environment where a wondering may be satisfied (or not).

A notable feature of Curl and Drew's (2008) 'Entitlement and Contingency' approach to studying requests is that it is not dependent on prior judgements of politeness or authority, something that has typified much research into directive actions (Aronsson & Thorell, 1999). Curl and Drew's approach offers a way of making sense of the relationship between turn design and features of local context. The two concepts have, in recent years begun to gather increasing empirical support from a range of interaction-based studies into acts of social control. For example Hepburn and Potter, in their study of threats during family mealtimes looked at contingency in terms of "how the threat builds its outcome as dependent on the action of the recipient (2011: 104). Similarly, the idea of an entitlement to make certain types of requests is a key feature in Heinemann and Lindstrom's work on interactions between senior citizens and their home-care providers (Heinemann, 2006; Lindstrom, 2005; Lindstrom & Heinemann,



2009). The two concepts have been shown to be both analytically tractable within the interaction, and to offer a useful handle for conceptualising the actions being done.

Like previous research, the data presented in Chapter 3 revealed a wide variety of different ways of formulating directive actions. I suggested this was due to the inexact relationship between grammatical form and social action. Part of the aim of using entitlement and contingency to approach the directive actions found in the mealtime data is to clarify the complex organization of directive formulation and action. Therefore, Curl and Drew’s work offers an extremely valuable model to draw on as I consider different features of the design of a range of directive type utterances formulated in situ as a sequence progresses.

### Directives

Extrapolating from Curl and Drew’s (2008) analysis of entitlement and contingency in request sequences to imperative directive sequences, one would expect to find strong markers of entitlement and little or no acknowledgement of contingencies that could thwart compliance. The imperative is built as a telling rather than asking. As such it displays strong entitlement by “pointedly not orient[ing] to any possibility of the request not being granted” (Curl & Drew, 2008, p145). Extract 5.1 - Extract 5.4 are some examples of directive actions built using an imperative.

#### Extract 5.1: Benson\_2\_6\_35-40

```

1          [(3.6) ]
2   Angela  [((watches Carol struggle with her tortilla] and
3             then visibly swallows her mouthful))
4   Angela  → [H0:ld it wi' two >ha:nds.< ]
5   Angela  [((raises her hands in Carol's direction))]
6             (1.9)

```

#### Extract 5.2: Amberton\_12\_10\_17-24

```

1          [(1.8) ]
2   Jess    [((starts mashing leftover egg on kitchen towel with
3             her spoon)) ]
4   Dad     ((reaches towards Jessica and taps her hand))
5   →      Do:n't pla:y.
6   Jess    [((puts the spoon back on her plate))]
7   Jess    [Q:o:h (.) ] W:e:nts to
8             (1.7)

```



The data highlight the point that any modal form treats compliance with the request, at least formally, as contingent on the recipient’s ability or willingness to comply (Vine, 2009). Utterances built in such a way can be refused, just as Mum refuses Daisy’s request for more cheese in Extract 5.5 below.

## Extract 5.5: Forbes\_1\_4\_28-38

```

1    Mum          C' you [eat you:r brocc'li plea:::se]
2    Mum          [((points to Daisy's plate))]
3    Daisy        [((starts cutting up her broccoli)) ]
4                [(1.5) ]
5    Daisy →      C'n I: ha:ve some more che:::::ese]
6    Mum →        [No:]::::
7    Daisy        [((glances at Dad's plate))]
8                [(1.7) ]
9    Daisy        Mm::::: mm::::: ((grumbly))
10               (11.9)

```

Here Mum’s refusal is delivered unproblematically (line 6) and Daisy accepts the refusal, offering no further attempts to have her request granted. Her only response is a quiet grumble as an aside rather than a turn built to require a response (line 9).

Note that refusing a request would typically be considered a dispreferred response. As such one might expect to see markers such as delay, hesitation or elaboration (Pomerantz, 1987; Schegloff, 2007). In this case, Mum’s response is immediate, even slightly pre-emptive, unequivocal, and unelaborated. She displays no trouble refusing Daisy’s request. Her stretched out no::::: sound mimics Daisy’s exaggerated intonation on che:::::ese. This may help to moderate the abrupt nature of the refusal lending it a slightly playful tone.

While modal interrogatives are in some way contingent on the recipient’s willingness or ability to comply, what is striking about the collection of imperative formulations is that they embody *no* orientation to the recipient’s ability to perform the stated activity. Thus “HQ:ld it wi’ two >ha:nds<” does not orient to Carol’s ability or willingness to hold the tortilla in this way. Beyond embodying no verbal orientation to ability or willingness, imperative directives can be further designed to restrict and manage the possible contingencies that could prevent compliance. For example, in Extract 5.1, Angela’s directive to Carol that she “HQ:ld it wi’ two >ha:nds<” is synchronised with a physical demonstration of two hands raised. This specifies the

required action and provides an example of how to act in order to comply with the directive. By providing the example, rather than asking if one is needed, Angela restricts Carol's ability to refuse to comply on the grounds of misunderstanding or lack of ability. Similarly, in Extract 5.4, Mum's directive to Jessica to put down the large piece of food she is nibbling from her fork is accompanied by a move to cut up the food. This removes Jessica's ability to account for her eating style by claiming the mouthful is too big to eat in one go. The embodied conduct is built to further constrain what the recipient does.

In contrast to the modal requests, in these examples of imperative directives, contingencies are not alluded to or acknowledged. Instead they are removed or managed in conjunction with issuing the directive. Put another way, the design of the imperative directive does not orient to non-compliance as an available response option. Modal requests orient (at least formally) to the recipient's willingness or capacity to comply.

In addition to restricting the contingencies available to the recipients, the imperative formulation enables speakers to display *entitlement* to direct the recipient's actions. During imperative directives one person involves him or herself with another's business without asking, or even reporting a wondering, about their willingness or capacity (with a modal construction or 'I wonder if...' preface). The imperative formulation tells, it does not ask. This means that, unlike a question or a modal request, it does not make *acceptance* relevant as a next action; as M Goodwin (2006) shows, the next action it makes relevant is *compliance*.

Put another way, the imperative construction does not treat the recipient's *acceptance* as a relevant issue. By not requiring acceptance, the speaker positions herself or himself as fully entitled to direct the recipient. It literally treats the recipient as not having a say in his or her own conduct. Although Curl and Drew (2008) note that modal forms of requests display high entitlement to what is requested, by virtue of their lack of concern with acceptance, imperative directives display an *even more* heightened entitlement.

The basic suggestion then, is that imperatives show high entitlement to direct the other speaker and little or no orientation to the contingencies on which the compliance with the directive may rest. Accordingly, this type of directive can be understood as both projecting only compliance and fully restricting the optionality of



19 **Kath** [↑↑Aah:::o[w ((dur 2.8)) ]  
 20 **Mum** → [Y'need t'be ki:nd to][your si:s]te:r.  
 21 **Kath** [OW:: ]  
 22 **Kath** ~↑A:[:~:~:~:~:h~ ]  
 23 **Mum** → [Now mo:ve your le:g] round the front]  
 24 **Mum** [((moves Kath's leg round)) ]  
 25 (0.4)

In Extract 5.6 Katherine is sitting on her chair somewhat askew. In line 1 Mum's turn takes the form of a modal interrogative: "Kath'rine >c'you move< a[long] a little bit ple[ase]." If we break this up into elements, it comprises: (a) a turn initial address term; (b) a modal construction that formulates the recipient's capacity (can/could you); (c) a description of the requested action with a downgrade element (move along a *little* bit) that minimises the imposition; and (d) a terminal politeness item that also helps to mark this as a request for action rather than an interrogative.

For simplicity I will use the term modal request to describe utterances like ">c'you move< a[long] a little bit ple[ase]" that are formulated using a modal interrogative. However, in doing so I do not mean to claim that requesting is a wholly separate action from directing. I consider modal requests to be a type of directive action. Crucially for the current analysis, a modal request makes relevant acceptance before compliance (at least notionally) in a way that an imperative formulation steps over to just demand compliance.

Note that between co-present parties a request of this kind can simply and visibly be granted by the recipient performing the requested action in the slot directly after the request, where the action would be most relevant. However, in this case Katherine swings her legs round to where Mum wants to place the chair. She moves her legs into the path of the chair in the slot directly after the request. This means that her movements display the opposite of compliance. In addition to this, Katherine provides an account that starts to specify her wants: "I'wn- I wanna sit[on my oh<sup>o</sup>:::" (line 6). Katherine's account specifies precisely the kind of personal capacity or desire that Curl and Drew (2008) show is typically referenced in modal request forms.

Katherine's move on line 5-6 is uncooperative in that it does the opposite of compliance. Mum breaks into it before it is complete with a turn that now has more the character of an overt directive than a request, which would be contingent on acceptance. Note that there are two differences of environment for the new directive:

(a) it follows a display of non-compliance with the previous request and (b) Katherine’s legs are now in even more of a problematic position for placing the chair.

Mum’s new directive action (lines 7, 9, and 11) is comprised of a number of different elements and is repeated below for clarity:

```

7   Mum   →           [KATH'rine           ], [Katherine don't]=
8   Mum           [(shakes head)]
9   Mum   =[don't] be:- (.) do:n' be horrible.
10  Kath   [°uh! ]
11  Mum   → [↑Come on. Mo:ve back ple:[ase.] ]
12  Mum   [((restarts pushing chair towards Kath))]

```

This utterance contains the following components: (a) the repeated summons/address term, (b) the formulation of what Katherine is doing as ‘horrible’, (c) a directive not to be horrible, (d) what can be called a cajoling token or a prompt for compliance - ‘come on’, which may also serve to reference Mum’s earlier request as ‘not done and still in need of doing’, (e) the imperative construction ‘move back’, and finally (f) a terminal politeness marker, and action marker, ‘please’. Incidentally, Searle (1979) suggests that when ‘please’ is added to an utterance, “it explicitly and literally marks the primary illocutionary point as a directive” (1979: 40). This may be one of the ways in which please can upgrade the sense of entitlement in a directive even though it is conventionally thought of as a politeness marker, therefore synonymous with mitigation and downgraded entitlement (Blum-Kulka, 1997; Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Note that some elements of the initial request on line 1 no longer appear in this construction. Relevantly, the modal form is now not used. Thus Mum says ‘do:n’ be horrible.’ rather than using a modal such as ‘can you not be horrible’; and she says ‘Mo:ve back’ rather than using a modal such as ‘will you move back’. In addition, the moderating element ‘a little bit’ has been dropped. By dropping the modal form from the construction Mum removes the contingency of the ‘can/could you’ modal interrogative in the earlier utterance. In showing less concern with contingent elements such as the recipient’s capacity or willingness Mum heightens her display of entitlement to direct her daughter’s actions.

Mum’s turn in lines 7, 9, and 11 provides several opportunities for compliance. Katherine could move her legs around during or after the naming, the formulation of her non-compliance as horrible, the ‘come on’, the directive, or the politeness marker.

Billig (1998) has shown with respect to parent-child interaction, admonishments, moral condemnations and instructions can provide both a guide to what is bad and an indication of how to accomplish being bad. They set up a new matrix of constitutive possibilities. Katherine's leg position becomes more than a comfortable way of sitting. By line 12 it is something actively 'bad', in defiance of two directive attempts. Furthermore, the upgraded expression of entitlement shown in Mum's switch from modal request to imperative directive provides the possibility for what comes after not to be refusing a request but defying a directive. Indeed, in this case Katherine takes none of the opportunities to comply, thus leaving herself in the position of having defied the imperative directive.

At this point Mum moves from verbally directing Katherine to physically moving her. This is accompanied with Katherine's extended indignant sounding cries on lines 16 and 19. This is perhaps a limit case of minimizing contingency and maximizing the display of entitlement. By physically moving Katherine into position she is given (almost) no possibility to avoid compliance. No contingency is open here. Moreover by physically moving Katherine, Mum completely takes over the agency for the relevant action. The asymmetry in entitlement is thus maximized. It is hard to think of a stronger display of entitlement over the actions of the other than to physically move them into place. Mum does issue a further verbal directive on lines 20 and 23. This has no modal construction; it combines an imperative – *mo:ve your le:g round the front*. – with a curt sounding 'now' (which perhaps upgrades the cajoling but nonetheless encouraging ↑come on). However, given the coordination with the physical movement of Katherine by Mum it is hard to see how any further compliance could be given. At this point Mum leaves no space for Katherine to comply independently.

Extract 5.6 is an example of how directives can be both verbal and embodied, and how both modalities can be drawn on in the same stretch of talk. Line 24, when Mum moves Katherine's legs out of the way, is an example of the kind of embodied directive discussed by Cekaite (2010). She states that 'shepherding actions' or tactile interventions to physically move the child "were recurrently deployed responsively to numerous unsuccessful verbal directives" (2010: 21). In this sense they are consistent with the upgrade pattern observed in the extracts here by progressively restricting the child's autonomy over their response as the sequence progresses.





Again, consider what is absent from this turn. There is no modal construction (e.g., would/could/will you put your sock on). Nor is there a wondering: I am wondering if you would put your sock on. As before then, there is nothing that makes compliance with the directive contingent on the recipient's capacities or desires. There is no projection of refusal as an appropriate responsive action to Mum's initiating action.

In line 5-6 (the space for complying or refusing the directive) Katherine decisively rejects it. Not only does she preface the rejection with the hard and early N::↑ur: (partly overlapping the mother's term of endearment) but she explicitly describes a course of action that she is going to take that is contrary to the directed one – "I'm [gonna put it on when ] I walk to (places)".

This rejection provides the environment for Mum's next directive on line 8, which, like Katherine's rejection, is prefaced by a turn-initial 'no'. Mum's "No" on line 8 explicitly disagrees with Katherine's justification on lines 5-6. Like the "↑come on" in Extract 5.6, it rejects Katherine's turn as an acceptable response and reissues the original directive. Mum's turn initial 'no' on line 8 is followed by two directives: The first is 'script formulated' (Edwards, 1994; 1997); that is, the tense and plural produce the directive as a general injunction about socks and tables. The second directive follows immediately after the first. There is, then, no sense that Mum is waiting to see if the first has been effective. Indeed, the scriptedness of the first directive may be more focused on the future oriented lesson than the immediate problem of this sock. The second directive moves back from the plural to singular and thereby from the scripted to the immediate and specific. It is more focussed than the first and projects the action more strongly. There is also a considerable increase in volume of 'OFF' which makes this directive sound more insistent than the first one.<sup>33</sup>

As in Extract 5.6, this extract shows that the subsequent directive actions do not orient to further or heightened contingency: if anything they become more insistent. At the same time there is no lowering of the expressed entitlement to have the directive acted on. Mum treats herself as able to appropriately direct Katherine's actions. Finally,

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<sup>33</sup> The use of scripted directives, and the difference between immediate and future oriented directives is clearly a significant issue for families. It relates to the local sequential organisation of what would traditionally be called socialisation. It is however, beyond the scope of the chapter to address this here.

after Katherine has removed her sock, Mum provides a strongly assessing account for the requirement that socks should not go on the table – placing a sock on the table is formulated as both ‘↑ho:rrible’ and ‘unhygie:nic.’. However, her accounts come after the directive has been acted upon. Therefore, they are not produced as a persuasive case that will eventuate in sock removal.

A general observation is that in the directive sequences found in the mealtime data, non-compliance with directives recurrently leads to upgraded (more entitled and less contingent) repeat directives<sup>34</sup>. Whereas the second requests in Curl and Drew’s (2008) paper can orient to a new trajectory brought about by the recipient’s choice to refuse the request, the second directive actions in my data tended not to acknowledge the recipient’s right not to comply and so upgraded the directive to further restrict the optionality of response solely to compliance. For example in Extract 5.6 Katherine begins to express a desire (“I’wn- I wanna sit[on my oh<sup>o</sup>::]” line 6), but is cut off by Mum’s second directive on lines 8-10. By preventing Katherine from delivering a response, Mum can reissue the directive without orienting to the contingencies that may have been expressed in Katherine’s response. In Extract 5.7, Katherine is able to fully formulate a turn resisting the directive (line 6). Here Mum explicitly rejects that turn (“No”) and then upgrades her directive. In both cases the potential for a contingency to change the trajectory of the talk is prevented from doing so.

Extract 5.8 below further illustrates the effect of not allowing non-compliant responses to shift the trajectory of the ongoing sequence. Prior to the extract all four family members have been discussing an upcoming school nativity play.

Extract 5.8: Forbes\_6\_1\_2-25

1	<b>Mum</b>	A	=This’ll be the <u>fi:rst</u> time that Mrs <u>Mo:ffett</u> ’s
2			not organi:sin’ it=
3	<b>Dad</b>		=Nah thuz (.) <u>sta:rs</u> and <u>clo:uds</u> or summint li’e
4			tha’. Coz there was like a <u>fi:ght</u> between,
5			(1.1)
6	<b>Lucy</b>		Noh. You c’n [ either be::::: uh]
7	<b>Mum</b>	→	[C’n you ea: your <u>di:nner</u> ] <u>no::w</u> .
8			[>°Pleas°<]

<sup>34</sup> The increase in entitlement of successive directives bears an intriguing similarity to Pomerantz’ observation that ‘early attempts display the participant’s orientation to propriety (‘fishing’), whereas successive attempts may have that orientation relaxed and take the form of [more] direct requests’ (Pomerantz, 1980: 198). Much like Pomerantz (1980) did, we note this trend as a preliminary observation; it will require further work to fully unpick the mechanics of upgraded repeated action.

9	<b>Lucy</b>	B	[ Ah ] Shep↑par (0.5) d
10			(0.4)
11	<b>Daisy</b>		A ssta:r or an a:ngelɿ
12			(0.2)
13	<b>Lucy</b>		Yeah
14			(0.8)
15	<b>Daisy</b>		Erp (.) <ye:ah I: wos a:n>gel<.=Cos I: remember
16			standing [on my dre:ss ((inaudible))]
17	<b>Lucy</b>		[.hh No:: wrece:ption are] do:in' that.
18			.hh (.) Bu' (.) um you c'n either be: a
19			sshe:p°pard°.
20			(.)
21	<b>Mum</b>	→	Ri:gh'. Ea:' ya te:a now.
22		C	(0.2)
23	<b>Lucy</b>	D	myeuhh ((Stabs her food with her fork))
24			(1.4)

On line 7 Mum breaks into Lucy's turn to deliver a directive action built using a modal formulation. Lucy continues to speak and both utterances are delivered in overlap. Mum's directive can be clearly heard despite the overlap because, for the most part it lies on top of Lucy's extended "be:....." sound (line 6).

Mum uses the modal form "[C'n you ea: your di:nner] no::w. [>°Pleas°<]" (line 7-8). The modal form orients to potential contingencies affecting Lucy's ability / willingness to eat her dinner. However, the "no::w." treats such contingencies (including perhaps the ongoing conversation about Lucy's Nativity play) as no longer an appropriate reason not to be eating. The closing intonation on the "no::w." makes the turn-final ">°Pleas°<" into something of an increment; spoken more quietly and quite quickly it is hearable as a later addition. Despite the modal construction, elements like the "no::w." and ">°Pleas°<", in conjunction with the specific features of their delivery in this context, mark Mum's utterance as projecting compliance rather than acceptance or refusal. As such I would struggle to call it a request despite the modal formulation. The lack of a clear one-to-one mapping between grammatical form and social action is one of the reasons I am resisting the constraints of speech act terms like request and directive. Instead I am focusing on the practises and actions displayed and oriented to by participants as attempts to get someone to do something.

Lucy's talk on line 9 is built as non-responsive to the first directive. The position of Lucy's fork, hand in a limp wrist pointing over her shoulder away from the table, does not change following the first directive (see Figure 5.1 below). Instead, it remains in a posture that displays no orientation to eating.

Figure 5.1: Forbes\_6\_1\_2-25 - Images A and B of Lucy's arm position before and after Mum's directive on line 7



Image A - Line 1 (Extract 5.8)



Image B - Line 9 (Extract 5.8)

If Lucy was in any doubt about the appropriate response to Mum's utterance in line 7, Mum's second utterance is upgraded to an imperative form, leaving less room for confusion or evasion – "Ri:gh'. Ea:' ya te:a now" (line 21). Mum's directive on line 7 was delivered in overlap with Lucy's talk. Mum waits until the sequence that Lucy's turn had initiated comes to a close before reissuing the directive. The second directive is prefaced with the discourse marker "Ri:gh'." which is indicative of a shift in topic (Jefferson, 1993). This specifically separates the upcoming talk from that which precedes it. The modal formulation has been replaced by the imperative "Ea:", which projects solely compliance rather than acceptance or refusal as possible response options. It thereby heightens the sense of Mum's entitlement to direct Lucy by bypassing her right to refuse. The second directive shortens "your di:nner" to "ya te:a", making the second directive quicker and curter to utter. The shorter utterance may carry an increased sense of urgency.<sup>35</sup>

Although Mum's second directive (line 21) is delayed, it does not orient to the business of Lucy and Daisy's talk. Mum's "Ri:gh'" boundary marker dislocates her turn from the talk that has taken place in the position where a response to her first directive should have been. Lucy's response to the second directive is to immediately fling her arm round so her fork is in a position to pick up food and comply with the directive (see Figure 5.2 below).

<sup>35</sup> It's worth mentioning here that the word change from 'dinner' to 'tea' could manage the potential contingency (albeit perhaps remote) that Lucy did not understand 'dinner'. If so, the change fits into the identified upgrade pattern by managing or removing contingencies without orienting to them or giving them voice.

Figure 5.2: Forbes\_6\_1\_2-25 - Images C and D showing Lucy's arm movement after Mum's directive on line 21



Image C - Line 22 (Extract 5.8)



Image D - Line 23 (Extract 5.8)

In the next extract the directive speaker also works to avoid orientations to responses to her directives that do not display compliance. In Extract 5.9 below Emily and Jessica are eating chocolate and Mum is waiting for them to finish. Jessica has a handful of foil wrapped chocolate balls and Emily has a train shaped chocolate lollipop. Prior to the extract Emily has been making her chocolate lollipop dance across the table imitating a train (see Figure 5.3 below).

Figure 5.3: Amberton\_10\_5\_48-88 - Image E - Line 5



## Extract 5.9: Amberton\_10\_5\_48-88

1 [(1.6) ]  
2 **Emily** [(puts chocolate in her mouth briefly then  
3 takes it out and stretches back to towards  
4 Jessica)]  
5 **Jess** E ((stretches over to meet Emily in the middle))  
6 **Emily** °'n'° O:N ABo[a::rd ] [chh ] [chh]  
7 **Mum** → [Can we:] ea:[t it] [ple]a::se  
8 **Emily** chh chh [chh chugh ]  
9 **Mum** [else I shall ]  
10 **Emily** [(bang bang)] ((bang))  
11 [(0.6) ]  
12 **Jess** [(promptly eats her chocolate in one go)]  
13 **Emily** [(moves her chocolate to her mouth but doesn't  
14 take a bite)]  
15 **Emily** [((nod))] [((nod))]  
16 **Emily** [Ea:', ] (0.4) [t'i:t. ] (0.3) [you:r] (0.2) [se:lf ]  
17 **Mum** → [ >Now< ] [plea:se]  
18 (0.8)  
19 **Jess** M(h)m::m  
20 (4.4)  
21 **Emily** °Hmmm°  
22 (2.1)  
23 **Emily** Whu:ll (0.6) I li:ke this >beca:use< (0.5) when i-  
24 (.) you: get in d- dis †li:ttle ma:n it goe- gets  
25 (0.3) thi:cke:r  
26 **Mum** Mm †hmm.  
27 **Emily** Thick (0.3) thick (0.3) thi(.)ck (0.2) ck e:r er  
28 e:r  
29 [(1.1) ]  
30 **Jess** [(looks down)]  
31 **Mum** ((looks at Jessica))  
32 **Emily** Oh ka::y?  
33 (1.9)  
34 **Jess** °Muh°  
35 **Mum** ((turns to look at Emily))  
36 **Emily** M:u:  
37 **Mum** Uh hu:h  
38 **Emily** No- not >ma< mu:mmy.  
39 (1.1)  
40 **Mum** → Ea:t plea::se  
41 (0.7)

At the start of this extract Emily and Jessica are playing trains with their respective chocolates. It's a relatively physical activity for the dinner table and involves stretching across Mum, who is sitting between them (Figure 5.3). On line 7 Mum initiates a directive action with “Can we:] ea:[t it] [ple]a::se”, which is delivered in

overlap with Emily’s train noises. This utterance is composed of a) a modal request form that orients at least notionally to Emily’s ability to comply, b) “we:ɪ”, an inclusive plural person of the verb that includes all parties at the table and minimises the ‘I’m telling *you* what to do’ sense of the turn, c) an indexical referent to the lollipop as “it” and finally d) a please in turn final position, referencing politeness conventions, the reasonableness of Mum’s request, and the moral obligation to behave politely.

In response to Mum’s utterance Emily continues to play trains with her food, even through and beyond Mum’s increment, which starts to build a threat “else I shall” (line 9) (c.f. Hepburn & Potter, 2011a). Jessica then swiftly complies (line 12), but Emily only partially complies by moving the chocolate towards her mouth (line 13) before defying the directive and telling Mum to “[Ea:’] (0.4) [t’i:t.] (0.3) [you:r] (0.2) [se:lf]” (line 16).

Mum’s second directive “[>Now<] [plea:se]” is delivered on line 17 in overlap with Emily’s response. The overlap itself embodies Mum’s entitlement by showing a lack of orientation to Emily’s talk. This directive also drops the modal formulation and the inclusive “we” construction. The new time element “now” references the ‘not done’ nature of the earlier directive action. It increases the urgency of the directive. Finally the turn-ending “please” is retained, possibly highlighting the normative moral and politeness conventions that Emily’s defiance is flouting.<sup>36</sup>

The second directive upgrades the speaker’s entitlement by no longer using a modal construction to orient (even notionally) to Emily’s ability or willingness to comply. It also reduces the available contingencies by specifying a time frame rather than leaving that to the discretion of the recipient. This extract can be seen to also follow the upgrade pattern identified for directives because it reduces the orientation to contingencies and heightens the entitlement claimed.

On line 23, instead of complying with Mum’s second directive Emily announces that she likes the chocolate lollipop. Her turn begins with “Whu:ll”, which typically signals a dispreferred second pair part (Pomerantz, 1987). Her explanation for liking

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<sup>36</sup> The turn-final “plea:se” is the only element retained across all three directives. This might serve to reinforce the aberrant, inappropriate nature of Emily’s behaviour by working up the reasonableness and politeness of Mum’s turns without restricting her ability to upgrade her entitlement to direct. It is hard to pin down exactly how ‘please’ fits into the dimensions of entitlement and contingency. It would be worthwhile as a topic of further study to investigate the use of please in directive sequences in terms of its impact on entitlement and contingency.



the lollipop does not orient to its status as ‘to be eaten’ or food related in any way. Emily is hearably doing non-compliance. She continues to not comply by engaging in rhythmic word play until line 39 when Mum delivers a third directive. This directive is just as pared down as the second, but this time exchanging the time element (which Emily has demonstrably been defying since it was issued) with the imperative verb “Ea:t”.

The third directive restricts the possible contingencies one step further. Emily’s wordplay is a potential contingency affecting compliance. That is, if Mum is endorsing the play activity through the beat of her words and compliance would interrupt that word play, then it can be used as a contingency. The third directive no longer follows the rhythmic pattern of Emily’s speech, marking Mum’s now total disengagement with the play frame that she had, at least tokenly, oriented to through mirroring Emily’s beat in her earlier directive. Just as the second directive did not orient to Emily’s challenge, the third does not orient to either the ‘reasons for liking chocolate lollipop’ topic or the word sound games. By not orienting to the wordplay, Mum systematically ignores these contingencies in her sequential building of the directives.

Extract 5.8 and Extract 5.9 have demonstrated how second directives do not orient to responsive actions other than compliance. This provides some evidence that while requests may project acceptance or refusal, directives project solely compliance and fully restrict ‘refusal’ response options by not allowing them space to progress the interaction along a new trajectory. By not accommodating recipient’s non-compliant responses, repeated directives display the speaker’s ongoing lack of concern with contingencies affecting compliance – never mind that Emily was playing a word game, she had been told to eat her chocolate. Throughout the extracts shown, the speaker’s lack of accommodation for new trajectories in the talk was accomplished through a number of devices:

- a) Reject the responsive action outright (“No” - Line 8 Extract 7),
- b) Reference the ‘not yet done’ nature of the first directive, thereby making the second directive a reissued version of the first rather than a new turn following simple sequential relevance (“Come on” - Line 10 Extract 6, and “Now” - Line 17 Extract 9), or

- c) Mark the conversation as having reaching a boundary thereby making clear that what comes next is not built on what immediately precedes it (“Right” in Extract 8 Line 21).

What can be seen here is that subsequent directive actions do not acknowledge the recipient’s right not to comply. Instead, they upgrade the directive to further restrict the optionality of response. They pursue compliance and suppress other alternatives. The features of the imperative directives outlined here (high entitlement, low contingency, and movement to polarise both dimensions in any subsequent repeats) are the basis for the suggestion that, when imposing on another participant’s behaviour, bald, unmitigated directives claim the right to *tell*, not just to ask.

## Discussion

This analysis aimed to explicate some of the basic features of directive actions in terms of the management of contingencies and the level of entitlement they claim. The first analytic section considered some of the features of simple directives such as:

- HO:ld it wi’ two >ha:nds<.
- Do:n’t pla:y.
- Put that do::wn
- Si:t an’ a::sk.

Each of these examples directs the recipient’s conduct by telling them what to do or not to do. In each case the recipient is directly *told* to do something rather than *asked* using a modal construction (can you...) or addressed with a wondering (I wonder if you can...) as in Curl and Drew’s (2008) analysis of requests. The imperative directives also differ from the directive implicative utterances looked at in Chapter 3. There the social control element was veiled by other, ostensibly innocent, surface actions.

Throughout the three analytic chapters so far, a picture has begun to emerge of the many different directive formulations available to speakers, and the significant differences between them in terms of how overtly the speaker claims an entitlement to control the recipient’s actions. In the strongly entitled directives examined here,

performing the stated action is not treated as contingent on the capacity or desires of the recipient at all. In contrast, less overt directive formulations (e.g., modal requests, noticings etc.) hold off making the social control attempt explicit. They represent a more finessed form of directive action in which the speaker’s entitlement is downplayed and the recipient’s scope to design their own responsive action is foregrounded and enhanced.

Strongly entitled directives actively reduce or manage contingencies during their delivery. Unlike modal formulations, they are not structurally designed to project non-compliance on the basis of being unwilling or unable to comply. By treating contingencies as under their control, rather than as a resource of the recipient, the speaker further enhances his or her display of entitlement.

By virtue of their interrogative form, modal requests such as “Kath’rine >c’you move< a[long] a little bit ple[ase]” (Extract 5.6) have the relevance of acceptance built into them - although explicit acceptance can be replaced by actual conduct in line with the request. Similarly, directive implicative utterances like “You still got some ↑bea:ns left ↑‘aven’t you:.” (Extract 3.2) can make relevant responses containing accounts of conduct or descriptions of circumstances. In contrast, strongly entitled directives do not make actions like accepting or accounting relevant as next actions. This is part of what makes their display of entitlement so strong. The talk of the speaker who issues a strongly entitled directive is not oriented to acceptance; their talk focuses entirely on compliance. Not only is the speaker displaying their right to impose on the recipient, they are also claiming the right to bypass the recipient’s right to refuse that imposition. The entitlement claimed is ‘to tell’ not just ‘to ask’.

Imperative directives are clearly different from modal requests. However, conceptualising social actions through the rigid lens of speech acts or grammatical forms struggles to capture exactly what that difference is and the spectrum of different things that can be displayed and oriented to by manipulating small features of these formulations. After all, the above analysis has shown how different directive formulations can be mobilised sequentially in pursuit of the same change in behaviour. Therefore, I would like to propose a more nuanced set of practices in which displays of entitlement, orientations to contingencies, and concerns with agency (to be discussed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7) are seen as factors implicated in getting someone to do something that can be modified or ramped up as necessary.

Entitlement and contingency

Given the centrality of the notions of contingency and entitlement to the analysis it is worth considering what is involved in these notions. The central idea of contingency is based on the fact that granting a request is dependent on factors outside the direct control of the person who issued the request. Modal requests strongly orient to these factors being the domain of the recipient by using interrogative and modal forms that typically foreground the capacities (*can* forms) or desires (*want* forms) of the recipient. In contrast, the more strongly entitled directives in the collection presented here do not attend to the capacities or desires of the recipient. Following the directed course of action is not built as something that is contingent on the recipient's acceptance.

A lack of attention to a recipient's capacities or desires is highlighted in sequences such as Extract 5.7 above where a reissued directive follows explicit expressions of desires that run counter to the directive's thrust. When the sequence starts with an entitled directive there is no move to back down to more request patterned forms even after the recipient shows resistance or defiance. Instead, the directive is upgraded (lower contingency and higher entitlement) using a variety of means (e.g. volume, lexical choice and intonation).

Curl and Drew (2008) argue that the difference between modals and wondering + modal forms displays a difference of entitlement. Where entitlement is low, such as phoning an out of hours medical service about a minor ailment, then a wondering is more likely to be used. Where the entitlement is high, such as when asking a family member to bring a letter to a prearranged meeting, then the modal form is more likely to be used. I suggest that in both of these cases, through the modal (whether interrogative or not) there is an orientation to the recipient's capacities or desires. What is striking about the imperative directives discussed here is that they orient to neither capacity nor desire. In the extreme case this does not just involve verbally directing, but also issuing threats, or physically moving the recipient to the required position.

*Trajectories of directive sequences*

In addition to the pattern of upgraded entitlement and downgraded contingency in repeat directives, it is worth noting the associated lack of orientation to potential new trajectories in the talk following non-compliance with the first directive action. By blocking new trajectories and referencing the first saying of the directive, second directives in a sequence have more the character of a repeated utterance rather than a new, successive turn at talk. Schegloff (2004) looked at dispensability in repeated utterances. He suggested, “by retaining a turn-initial marker, the speaker reclaims the sequential position the first saying occupied and marked by that turn-initial marker” (2004: 142). His data was primarily related to repair sequences, where the conversation could be ‘dialled back’ to the point where confusion occurred and redone from that point onwards. On the basis of the examples above I suggest that in second directives the *addition* of tokens like ‘right’, or ‘come on’ could also work towards reclaiming the sequential position of the first directive, with the associated effect of deleting the recipient’s non-compliant response. Similarly the lack of orientation in second directives to actions following the first directive contributes to the sense that the intervening action is discarded and the directive is re-done as the same thing in different words (Schegloff, 2004).

It is important to note that, although hearable as re-doings of the same utterance, second sayings take place in a different environment to first sayings (Schegloff, 2004). Many of the features that showed heightened entitlement of second directives do so precisely because they draw on the ‘not done’ nature of the directive. This makes producing a second directive hearable as a repeat a useful resource for speakers. In terms of entitlement to direct another person’s actions, the very fact of asserting that right for a second time when it has already been refused could be taken as a heightened sense of entitlement: To tell someone to do something once is presumptuous enough, but to tell someone to do something when they have just refused to comply raises the implied sense of entitlement still further.

A second consideration with regard to trajectories of directive sequences relates to work by Robinson and Bolden (2010) on explicit account solicitations. As previously stated in Chapter 4, directives, by virtue of being a disaffiliative, face-threatening action, might be considered examples of dispreferred FPPs. In my analysis of multiple directives I have demonstrated how successive directives become progressively more

entitled as the recipient continues to refuse to comply. I suggest this is evidence of the dispreferred nature of strongly entitled directives, in that the more entitled formulations are withheld, relative to points in interaction where they might otherwise be relevantly performed, in favour of less entitled forms. Several alternatives to an outright full imperative directive have already been evidenced in the data. Figure 5.4 outlines a few of the different directive formulations looked at so far.

Figure 5.4: Ranked from low -> high entitlement: A few different ways of ‘getting someone to do something’.

1. **Parental monitoring** (Mum turns to look at Kath on line 7 in Extract 4.4)
2. **Account soliciting question** (“What are you doing [[young la:dy?” On line 6 in Extract 3.1)
3. **Modal request** (“C’n >you ea:< withou:t ta:lki:ng.” on line 13-14 in Extract 4.3)
4. **Imperative directive** (“HO:ld it wi’ two >ha:nds<” on line 4 in Extract 5.1)

One reason for withholding dispreferred actions is to provide scope for “pre-emptive responses” that negate the need for the dispreferred FPP (in this case a strongly entitled directive) to be delivered, thereby removing the risk of disaffiliation (Schegloff, 2007, p90). For example a display of parental monitoring offers the recipient a heads-up that some aspect of their conduct has attracted attention and may be about to be commented on. It offers the recipient a chance to self-correct prior to a verbal noticing of their behaviour or a directive to change. In contrast, the disaffiliative nature of directives can be made starker, and the entitlement to direct can be heightened by issuing a directive without the characteristic markers of a dispreferred action (as shown in Chapter 4).

## Conclusion

The analysis presented above suggests that while modal formulations make acceptance relevant as a next action, imperative formulations make relevant

compliance. That is to say whereas modal requests claim an entitlement to *ask* for something to be done, imperative directives claim an entitlement to *tell* the recipient to do something. Although I have partially framed imperative directives (tellings) as a contrast to requests (askings), I do not by any means intend to suggest that the two actions are unconnected. Both are examples of social control acts, and all social control acts impinge on the recipient's freedom of action to varying degrees (Blum-Kulka, 1997). Both share the same core social action of trying to get someone to do something. Pufahl-Bax concluded, "orders and requests are closely related and can overlap". Consequently he suggested "that directives can be arranged along a continuum according to the degree of their order- and request- properties, the extreme points being pure orders and pure requests" (Pufahl-Bax, 1986, p690). I argue that both imperative orders and modal requests are examples of directive actions. They vary in the degree to which they display the speaker's entitlement to control the recipient and orient to potential contingencies preventing compliance. The dimensions of entitlement and contingency put forward by Curl and Drew (2008) provide a way of conceptualising directive actions that can begin to capture the interactional 'value' for participants of being able to position themselves as disguising or accentuating the social control aspect of an attempt to get someone to do something.<sup>37</sup>

The initial identification of directive actions within the data was conducted on a heuristic level (Chapter 3). The examples collected were found to occur in bounded sequences designed to bracket off the action of directing from the rest of the conversation (Chapter 4). Analysis of the directive sequences helped to reveal latent features of directive utterances, such as a social entitlement to control the actions of another individual. This chapter focused on the notion of entitlement and began to reveal how an entitlement to perform the social action of directing related to and influenced the turn design of directive utterances. Entitlement offers a link between the social recognisably action of directing and the turn design of the utterance in a way that pragmatics research has struggled to do. It provides both an empirically grounded and theoretically useful construct for understanding the action, practices and social implications of telling someone to do something. The next section of the thesis is devoted to considering in more detail the response options available following a directive action and their different consequences for the interaction.

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<sup>37</sup> I am grateful to Paul Drew for his useful talks about the micro-politics of social action and the relative value placed on different social actions (e.g., resigning versus being fired, offering versus requesting, and being invited versus asking to join), which were presented at both ICCA (2010) and IPrA (2011b).

## Chapter 6 – Responses I: Response Options - Reflections on Compliance, Children and Embodied Conduct

### Introduction

Recent studies of directives have focused not only on the form of the directive itself but also on the sequence of talk in which it occurs. Interestingly very little attention has been paid to the work of the recipient of a directive, or the types of response that can be offered. M Goodwin states, “most studies of directives consider only initial moves in a social control sequence and omit consideration of their sequential organisation, and in particular the responses which follow them” (1990: 103). In her discussion of trajectories in directive / response sequences, M Goodwin suggested that “in response to a directive, next moves may be compliance or rejection of the proposal. A recipient may provide a flat refusal or an accounting” (2006: 518). However, analytic evidence supporting her suggestion has yet to be developed. A closer analysis of the discursive resources available for responding to participants may offer further insights into what a directive does. This is particularly important given that the success of a directive / response sequence “requires the collaborative action of multiple parties to the encounter” (M Goodwin, 2006, p520).

This chapter begins the second half of the thesis and is concerned with the responses offered to directives. It will consider what can be learnt about the action and management of directive sequences from the ways in which participants respond to their interlocutors’ attempts to tell them what to do. In this chapter I will outline some of the various response options evidenced in the data. This chapter is not intended to be a fine-grained account of how directive responses are organised. Instead the aim is to familiarise the reader with the territory of responsive actions found in the data, point up some of the questions raised by the examples presented and to reflect on these questions with reference to broader theories and findings from the research literature. Accordingly, the chapter is divided into two substantive parts:



- 1) **Response Options** - Here I will outline several ways of responding to directive actions found in the data.
  
- 2) **Reflections on Compliance, Children and Embodied Conduct** – Here I will address themes arising from my analysis of the response options in the data. I will consider the closely related notions of compliance and authority in interaction. I will then address the specific case of children’s compliance and participation rights in interaction. Finally I will discuss how the embodied nature of most directive responses impacts on the action and interaction.

## Part 1: Response Options

### Introduction

A very common response type found in the data was immediate embodied compliance. This is the first response type that will be presented (Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4). In light of the normative nature of compliance I then consider instances of resistance, highlighting both how the design of the directive can set up and make provision for resistance (Extract 6.5), and how resistance can raise new contingencies preventing compliance that were not managed by the original directive and now need to be dealt with before the directive can be reissued (Extract 6.6). Through my discussion of these examples I hope to demonstrate that it is not possible to understand the action of a directive without looking at the response it receives in situ.

In Chapter 5 I suggested that immediate compliance was the preferred (and indeed sometimes the only) response projected by a directive. Therefore the notion of compliance is key to understanding the action of a directive. In my discussion I will discuss the history of compliance research within psychology and its relation to notions of power and authority, how it manifests in interaction, and the importance of distinguishing between interactionally relevant and more general social roles when seeking to understand asymmetries between participants in interaction.

There exists a cultural assumption that parents should be able to expect compliance from their children in a way they would not from other adults (Dix, Stewart et al., 2007). The peculiar case of children’s compliance and participation in interaction will be examined separately and in more detail than the concept of compliance more broadly.

A directive typically calls on the recipient to do something rather than say something. As will hopefully be clear from the examples presented, embodied conduct represents a crucial resource for participants in directive sequences, particularly when responding to a directive. Therefore I will address the body of research that deals with embodied actions in interaction and discuss their implications for my work. Specifically I will look at how embodied actions relate to the turn taking structure of conversation and how they can be used to either scaffold or undermine an individual’s participation rights. This chapter has the dual aims of both outlining some of the response options available to recipients, and of examining the existing research relating to compliance and embodied conduct.

### Data

The examples presented here are taken from the same corpora used throughout the thesis and outlined in Chapter 2. Each of the extracts was selected in order to demonstrate a particular response type evidenced in the data. My aim for this chapter is to present a snapshot of some possible response options and to discuss their implications for theory and research rather than offer a detailed exposition of a specific phenomenon. Thus the collection was put together in order to highlight that not all responses are equivalent and that there is considerable heterogeneity within the data. I will present examples of compliance and resistance, and contrast these with occasions when there are acknowledged barriers to compliance that need to be resolved through interaction before compliance can be either provided or refused.

Analysis

*Embodied compliance*

The responses to directives in the data collected for this study have not been counted or coded in terms of compliance or noncompliance, as the focus has not been on making distributional claims about directives. Nevertheless one of the most common and straightforward responses to a verbal directive is an embodied response that displays compliance without the need for a verbal comment. Examples of this can be seen in Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4 below.

Extract 6.1: Amberton\_7\_8\_53-62

```

1    Emily      Urh huh huh chocolate up[my nouth urh urrrrgh ]
2    Emily      [((contorts face)) ]
3    Emily      ((cough)) ut[ ur t ur uhht ]
4    Emily      [((points repeatedly at her mouth
5    while raising arms and grimacing)) ]
6    Mum →      ((turns to look at Emily)) ENou::gh
7    [ (0.3) ]
8    Emily →      [(( puts her arms down and sits normally))]
9    Jess      Hh hh HAh

```

In Extract 6.1 Mum issues the directive “ENou::gh” on line 6. In response, Emily immediately stops waving her arms about, pointing at her mouth and making noises. She lowers her arms and sits still and upright in her chair. She makes no verbal acknowledgement that Mum has directed her to stop her ongoing activity, but her embodied conduct displays both her receipt of, and compliance with, Mum’s directive. Extract 6.2 and Extract 6.3 are examples of the same phenomenon - the child is directed to change her behaviour and does so without verbally responding to the directive.

Extract 6.2: Forbes\_5\_1\_68-75

```

1    Lucy F      [((takes mouthful and hangs her elbow over back
2    of chair with fork in her hand))]
3    [ (1.8) ]
4    Dad →      >Now< DO:N’t fli:ck ya- (.) kni:-[ >fo:rk o:ver=
5    Lucy      [((unhooks elbow))
6    Dad      =the::re. Kee:p it over your pla:te ple:ase.
7    G      [ (1.9) ]
8    Lucy →      [((begins to eat again))]

```

Figure 6.1: Forbes\_5\_1\_68-75 – Images F and G of Lucy’s arm position before and after Dad’s directive on line 4



Image F – Line 1 (Extract 6.2)



Image G – Line 7 (Extract 6.2)

At the start of Extract 6.2 Lucy has hooked her elbow over the back of her chair and is dangling her fork over her shoulder in a somewhat cavalier fashion. On Line 4 Dad begins a directive with “>Now< DO:N’t fli:ck ya- (.) kni:-[ >fo:rk o:ver=”. As Dad repairs kni- to fork Lucy begins to unhook her elbow. Dad continues the directive on line 6, and in the space for a response Lucy begins to eat again using her fork correctly (line 8). Through her embodied actions Lucy displays an orientation to Dad’s incomplete TCU as a directive and delivers a change in conduct as a response. That conduct is in line with the prescription delivered in the directive. Her change in conduct is swiftly and neatly provided without elaboration or performance. Like Emily in Extract 6.1, Lucy does not offer any verbal acknowledgement of the directive or her stance towards it.

In Extract 6.3 (below) Lucy ostentatiously pauses mid way to putting food in her mouth. Dad issues a directive on line 6 for her to “plea:se eat ni:cely.” In response Lucy sharply and swiftly closes her mouth around the fork and pulls it out before swallowing the food.

Extract 6.3: Forbes\_7\_2\_63-70

1		[ (1.0) ]
2	<b>Lucy</b>	[ ((opens mouth wide and holds fork with food on it in her open mouth, looking at Dad)) ]
3		
4	<b>Daisy</b>	°Oh yeah.°
5		(0.8)
6	<b>Dad</b> →	Lu:c°y° <u>plea</u> :se eat <u>ni</u> :cely.
7		[ (1.4) ]
8	<b>Lucy</b> →	[ ((closes mouth sharply around fork then pulls it out and swallows)) ]
9		

10 **Mum** [Wi:l y-]  
 11 **Lucy** ((turns to look at Mum)) [Is it ] schoo:l tomorrow=

Lucy’s immediate response to the directive is embodied compliance (lines 8-9). Once Lucy has demonstrated compliance, her next action is to initiate a new sequence of talk unrelated to the directive (line 11). It is interesting to note that Mum and Lucy both initiate new talk simultaneously, and that Mum gives up the floor to Lucy, allowing her to progress the conversation. Here we can see an example of how directives, once responded to, drop quickly from conversation, typically without a sequence closing third or other acknowledgment of compliance (see Chapter 4).

As a final example of the straightforward embodied compliance we can turn to Extract 6.4. Here Mum uses a modal form request to ask Dad to pull Lucy’s chair in. This receives no uptake and Mum reformulates her interrogative into an imperative. Just as in the three extracts above, Dad does not respond verbally to Mum’s directive but complies through his embodied conduct.

Extract 6.4: Forbes\_5\_2\_C

1 **Mum** → [°C’n you pu:l her side in°] ((points at Lucy’s  
 2 chair)  
 3 **Daisy** At school,=  
 4 **Mum** → =Tim. [(.) Pull her si:de in ]  
 5 **Daisy** [When M:rs Wi:l:liamson,] .hh (0.3) wri:tes  
 6 [somethink w(h)rong on the board=an’ we all]=  
 7 **Dad** → [((pulls Lucy’s chair into the table)) ]  
 8 **Daisy** =shou:’ (0.4) ↑Tha:’s Wro:ng, (0.2)

Mum asks Dad to pull his side of Lucy’s chair into the table (line 1). Following no uptake from Dad, Mum reformulates her interrogative into an imperative: “Pull her si:de in” (line 4). This extract provides another example of the upgrade pattern for repeat directives (Craven & Potter, 2010). The shift from interrogative to imperative removes any orientation to Dad’s capacity or desires to comply. In so doing Mum is not just claiming the right to *ask* Dad to do something, she is claiming the entitlement to *tell* him. By upgrading the directive to a more entitled / less contingent form, Mum removes refusal as an available response option, leaving only compliance.

Note that although Dad does not resist Mum's first directive it is nonetheless upgraded when it is repeated on line 4. It is likely that Dad simply didn't hear Mum's first utterance. It is delivered very softly and does not occur after any immediately obvious action that might have prompted the directive. The upgrade is noteworthy because it offers further evidence that any response other than full, immediate compliance is vulnerable to a more strongly entitled repeat directive. This may account for why participants seem to monitor the talk so carefully for potentially directive implicative utterances (Chapter 3).

Dad offers no verbal response to either the interrogative or the imperative. However, following the second delivery of the directive, his embodied conduct acknowledges Mum's turn and complies with its prescription. Just as in the other extracts Dad offers compliance with a directive without responding to it verbally. This extract provides the clearest evidence that an embodied response can be an acceptable second pair part to a directive. Dad offers no verbal acknowledgement to either version of Mum's directive, but once he has demonstrated compliance through his embodied conduct Mum does not repeat the directive or draw further attention to it.

In Chapter 5 I demonstrated that directives could be designed to restrict the scope of the recipient's available next action and project compliance as the only relevant next action. Evidence from empirical studies within Developmental Psychology offers support for this conclusion by suggesting that immediate compliance is the most common response option observed (Braine, Pomerantz et al., 1991; Brumark, 2010; Kuczynski & Kochanska, 1990). Additionally, although not counted or coded specifically, immediate, embodied compliance was a relatively common response option in my data and represented the smoothest and shortest directive sequence. These findings suggest that compliance is both the standard response projected by speakers and the standard response given by recipients. Any interpretation of noncompliance or resistance as a response to a directive needs to be done in the context of immediate compliance as the norm.

### *Resistance*

In Chapter 5 I demonstrated that recipients can and do sometimes refuse to comply with attempts to get them to do something. The focus of Chapter 5 was primarily

centred on the directive rather than the response. It is therefore worth simply noting here that recipients in the data did resist some directives and that this resistance had consequences for the progression of the sequence. In fact, as Laforest (2009) notes, the type of response offered by the recipient can be instrumental in determining whether the initiating utterance is treated as a directive or a complaint. He states that imperative forms (such as those used to order a change in behaviour) can be treated as a complaint “by refusing to admit any responsibility for the “violation” pointed out”. This, he suggests, enables the imperative to be “recognized as a complaint and distinguished from an imperative form aimed merely at getting the speaker to do something” (2009: 2454). How a directive is responded to is just as important for the progression of the interaction as how the directive was formulated in the first place.

Chapter 5 highlighted entitlement and contingency as key dimensions to consider when studying directives. Entitlement relates to the rights displayed by a speaker to tell someone else to do something and to control their behaviour. In Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4 the recipient’s immediate compliance fully ratified the entitlement claimed and offered no challenge towards the speaker’s right to issue the directive, and so to control the actions of the recipient. However, this is not always something recipients are willing to concede.

Contingency relates to the provision the speaker makes within the directive to acknowledge that the recipient’s capacities and desires might interfere with compliance. The more contingent an attempt to get someone to do something is, the more scope is offered for resistance. For example, modal request forms (can/could/will/would) allow for the answer being no. In contrast, more entitled formulations (such as imperatives) project compliance as the sole response option (Craven & Potter, 2010). Recipients often take advantage of the scope for resistance offered by modal formulations to do just that. For example, in Extract 6.5 below Dad says “C’n yuh] finish your fi:sh” (line 1), and in response Jessica delivers a turn that directly opposes the directive (line 4).

Extract 6.5: Amberton\_1\_12\_51-62

1       **Dad**                [Er: (.) C'n yuh] finish your fi:sh (.)  
2                            plea:se.  
3                            (0.2)  
4       **Jess** →        I: don' want  
5                            (0.4)  
6       **Dad**                Don't ca:re,  
7                            (0.5)  
8       **Dad**                Finish yuh fish.  
9                            (0.7)  
10      **Mum**                I::'m jus' g[unna get (uh) p]iece of fish=  
11      **Emily**                            [ ((cough))        ]  
12      **Mum**                =between these two:.

In this extract, Dad issues a directive to Jessica using a modal form, “C'n yuh] finish your fi:sh (.)” (line 1). Note that the modal form orients, at least notionally, to Jessica’s ability or willingness to perform the projected action (Craven & Potter, 2010). Jessica’s response (having had her willingness invoked) is to explicitly state that she does not want to comply with the directive (line 4). With his next utterance Dad treats Jessica’s desires as no longer consequential for the ongoing directive sequence. He explicitly tells her he doesn’t care what she wants (line 6) and then reissues his directive this time as an upgraded imperative formulation (line 8). This highlights his entitlement to direct her actions and prevents compliance being contingent upon her ability or willingness to finish her fish.

From Extract 6.5 and the examples offered in Chapter 5 we can see that responses other than full compliance did not lead to the same swift, unmarked resolution of the directive sequence that the embodied compliance responses did in the first four extracts. Instead, when recipients did not offer compliance, parents tended to reissue the directive in an upgraded form. In Extract 6.5 and the extracts in Chapter 5 where directive actions index the recipient’s willingness or ability to comply, the recipients initially exert that wilfulness. Only when the directive is reissued without that contingency do they comply. The post expansion of the sequence eventually ratifies the speaker’s claim of entitlement to direct the actions of the recipient.

In Extract 6.5 the examples given in Chapter 5, the scope for resistance is first acknowledged during the directive itself through an orientation to compliance as being contingent on the recipient’s capacity and/or desire to perform the action. This is



typically achieved using a modal formulation. I do not want to claim that resistance only happens following modal formulations, or that all imperatives are immediately complied with. Instead, my intention here is to show that resistance is provided for following a modal formulation in a way that is not done with a more strongly entitled directive. Thus there exists a specific environment in which the conditions projecting compliance are relaxed and alternative responses are more likely to occur. This offers support for the conclusions reached above that compliance is the default response to a directive and that other responses need to be qualified in relation to straightforward embodied compliance.

The recipients did eventually comply with the directives in Extract 6.5 and the Chapter 5 extracts. Thus, in the end, they ratified the speakers' entitlement to tell them what to do. Without the recipient's ratification of the speaker's claim, the directive itself could hardly be taken to be an exercise in the imposition of one person's authority over another. It is the dual process of displaying and ratifying an entitlement to direct that give the directive-compliance exchange the sense of being an exercise in the imposition of authority or power.

### *Legitimate non-compliance*

Evidence from within my own data suggests that, when issuing directives parents need to remain alert to the possibility that unforeseen contingencies might impact on the recipient's ability or willingness to comply. Possible reasons for noncompliance can sometimes be reduced or controlled through the turn design and delivery of the directive (e.g., Extract 5.1). However, there is always the possibility that a recipient may refuse to comply and be able to offer grounds for doing so that undermine the speaker's entitlement to demand compliance. In such cases the grounds for refusal then need to be dealt with and responded to rather than disregarded through a reissued directive.

There were a few cases in the data where non-compliant responses are treated as legitimate answers and responded to progressively rather than with an upgraded restatement of the earlier directive. One example of this type of response can be seen in Extract 6.6 where Jack's objections to Mum's directive are responded to as a legitimate



to ask “hhh where shall I do it to avoid all the bruises:”. Like most pre-second inserts Jack’s utterance looks forwards, ostensibly to establish or clarify the conditions or resources necessary for providing a second pair part – in this case where a suitable place to inject his insulin would be (Schegloff, 2007). Instead of disregarding Jack’s objection to compliance (as Dad did to Jessica in Extract 6.5) Mum engages with Jack’s question about bruises and offers a relevant response on line 15 “So:mewhere away from the bruises”. In this extract, Mum’s subsequent turn at talk is not an upgraded directive as we might expect, but is a second pair part to an insert expansion sequence initiated by the recipient.

Note the limits of Mum’s willingness to progress an expansion sequence that is delaying compliance. When Jack directs Mum’s attention to his bruises in a more direct fashion “Look at tha:]t” (line 16) Mum disengages from the bruises sequence and returns to the directive sequence with an encouraging or cajoling token “Come on” (line 19). Again note how this is not an upgraded directive in the sense that entitlement is increased and the concern with contingencies is downgraded. Mum does not dismiss Jack’s problem with bruises, she just encourages him to progress. This is markedly different from Dad’s “Don’t ca::re,(0.5) Finish yuh fish” response in Extract 6.5. In the current extract, Mum does not disregard Jack’s concerns about his bruises. She does not treat them as irrelevant or inconsequential in the face of her demand for him to inject insulin. Instead she treats the bruises as a legitimate problem, just not an insurmountable one that would prevent eventual compliance.

Jack continues to resist compliance following Mum’s encouragement on lines 21-22. He announces a possible cause for the bruises - “I think the pe:n’s doing it”. If the pen is to blame for the bruises then using it to inject today will make the problem worse. Mum resists Jack’s proposed explanation by suggesting an alternative explanation for the bruises: that he is injecting too close to previous sites (lines 24-25). This explanation situates the cause of bruises as being in Jack’s technique, something that practice will improve rather than an inherent feature of injecting. Mum takes Jack’s evident concern about his bruises seriously. She even stands up and leans over the table in order to gain a better view and assess for herself how bad they are (see Figure 6.2 below)

Figure 6.2: Hawkins\_3\_2.12-4.22\_3-27 – Images H and J of Mum’s movement to examine Jack’s bruises more closely



Image H: Line 27 (Extract 6.6)



Image J: Line 30 (Extract 6.6)

Mum’s movement shows she is treating Jack’s announcement as new information, prompting her to assess the bruises for herself. By line 31, having seen Jack’s bruises, Mum reasserts her earlier solution of injecting elsewhere and proposes an alternative injection site “more on the side”. Thus Mum has engaged with Jack’s announcement but has resisted accepting a formulation of the problem that could lead to a refusal to comply. Although she treats his complaints as valid she does not allow him to refuse her directive to inject. In fact, as the sequence progresses she does eventually reissue the directive rather than continue to engage with Jack’s objections (line 37). The crucial point I wish to make here is that Mum’s entitlement to tell Jack what to do is not all encompassing. Despite the directive’s projection of solely compliance as a response option, the new information (bruises) introduced by Jack placed a limit on Mum’s entitlement. He was objecting to doing something that hurt and Mum needed to modify the directive such that it no longer commanded him to perform a painful action (inject further away from the sites of earlier injections).

### Discussion

The directive responses in my data were not counted or coded specifically for frequency and type. Nevertheless, immediate, embodied compliance was a very common response. The general impression within my data of the prevalence of compliance as a response mirrors findings from developmental psychology suggesting there is a relatively high rate of compliance from children in response to parental control moves

(Braine, Pomerantz et al., 1991). For example, Brumark (2010) reports that children aged 6-11 years “complied in about 70% of cases with direct as well as indirect parental regulation” (2010: 1083). Similarly, Kuczynski and Kochanska (1990) reported that “children’s most frequent response to the requests of their parents was immediate compliance” (1990: 404).

The analysis offers evidence that in addition to being the most common response, embodied compliance was also the default or standard (and therefore interactionally preferred) response. Embodied compliance was an immediate response, wholly contiguous with the directive with no intervening elements. This has been described as a central and recurrent feature of preferred responses (Pomerantz, 1987; Sacks, 1987; Schegloff, 2007). Additional evidence for compliance being the preferred response can be taken from Schegloff’s (2007) account of preference organisation in which he describes dispreferred responses as mitigated, elaborated, and delayed. Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4 offer examples of embodied actions were clearly performed so as to be viewed as compliance (without mitigation), swiftly and unelaborately performed as soon as the directive speaker had finished their turn. Schegloff also states that “what amount in the end to dispreferred responses may be shaped as preferred ones”, displaying an orientation to the default pattern of responding (2007: 66). In Chapter 7 I will show how resistance can be made to look like compliance through a combination of incipient compliance and a verbal reformulation of the ongoing action as self-motivated. This, I suggest, is evidence to support the default nature of embodied compliance and thus its status as a preferred response to directive actions.

The analysis revealed that recipients’ do not have to comply with directives (Extract 6.5) and may respond with legitimate barriers to compliance (Extract 6.6). These types of responses revealed that recipients in interaction must ratify claims of entitlement to direct in order for them to be treated as evidence of the speaker’s right to control the recipient’s actions. However, it also showed how difficult it can be to try and avoid upgraded or repeat directives that fully restrict response options to solely compliance. It therefore becomes important to understand any differences between the nature and scope of the participation by parties to the interaction that could impact on their ability to resist control attempts. This is particularly relevant for children who have traditionally been conceived of as having “less-than-full membership” in interactions with adults (Shakespeare, 1998, p23).

## Part 2: Reflections on Compliance, Children and Embodied Conduct

If compliance is the default response to directive actions, then it becomes important to understand what constitutes compliance and how it has been conceptualised within the research literature. Equally, the finding that compliance was typically delivered through embodied actions rather than verbal comment necessitates a consideration of the existing literature relating to embodied conduct in interaction. One of the key aims of this chapter is to take some of the key issues that have a bearing on my analysis and explore how they have been conceptualised in the existing literature. With that in mind I would now like to take some time to explore the literatures relating to compliance, children's participation in interaction, and embodied conduct.

### Compliance

If compliance is the default response to directive actions (the back drop to which all other responses should be considered), then it becomes important to understand the notion of compliance. I will now consider how compliance has been conceptualised within the research literature, how it relates to the concept of authority, and how well the concepts of authority and compliance map on to actual interaction. I conclude by outlining an alternative approach to the topic: through the notion of agency.

### *Conceptualising compliance*

Within Social Psychology, compliance has traditionally been closely linked to work on notions of conformity and social influence and the terms have sometimes been used interchangeably. For the purposes of the current study there are three key characteristics of compliance that help to differentiate it from conformity (groups/individuals), social persuasion or influence (private attitudes/public behaviours), and planning future activities (immediate / deferred action).

Classically, public compliance has been defined as “social influence that leads to changes in the recipient's overt behaviour in the direction intended by the source (but may not lead to private attitude change)” (Manstead & Hewstone, 1995, p116). With compliance, the key feature is the observable behavioural change rather than any shift

in attitudes or internal beliefs. It is seen as a “superficial, public, and transitory change in behaviour”, not reflecting any internalisation or change in beliefs and attitudes (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002, p237). Whether the recipient fundamentally changes their opinion about a given action (e.g., burping at the table being a good idea) is beyond the scope of the current study. What is of relevance is how ‘getting them to stop burping’ was achieved in that moment of interaction. Therefore the classic term of compliance more accurately fits the phenomenon of interest here than either persuasion or social influence

Hogg and Vaughan (1995) describe compliance as “a *behavioural* response to a *request by another individual*”, as opposed to conformity, which they define as “the influence of a group upon an individual” (1995: 160 emphasis in original). Seminal studies of conformity (e.g., Asch, 1956; Zimbardo, 2011) have highlighted how the behaviour of a group can induce sometimes dramatic changes in an individual’s behaviour. The process of conformity, brought about through group norms and pressures, is very different from the concerted action by one person to tell another to do something. Thus, for the current study, compliance can be differentiated from social conformity because it relates to one individual bringing about a change in one other person’s behaviour.

Finally, the act of compliance needs to be separated from the expression of a future commitment to comply (Keisanen & Rauniomaa, 2011; Stevanovic & Perakyla, Under editorial consideration). Saying you’ll do something is very different from actually doing it. Consequently commitments to future compliance, however laudable they may be, are insufficient for our needs here and the focus is on actual acts of compliance.

Having defined some of the parameters for compliance there remains a great variety of approaches and findings within the research literature. Compliance has been called many things throughout the years; including obedience (Milgram, 1963; 1974), passivity (Heath, 1992a), submission (Moscovici, 1976), acquiescence (Maynard, 1991) or adherence (Frankel & Beckman, 1989). It has been studied from such widely differing perspectives as philosophy, behavioural sciences, medicine, linguistic and interaction studies. Significant early work within psychology explored techniques that could be used to enhance compliance. However, such work remained consistently confounded by

an element of ‘mindlessness’ that sometimes influenced the likelihood of compliance and other ostensibly thoughtful actions (Langer, Blank et al., 1978). This ‘mindlessness’ may be an area where more interaction based forms of research, of which this study forms part, could offer new insight.

### *Compliance and authority*

An intriguing feature of compliance as a concept within the literature is its dependence on the concept of authority. Compliance is often expressed in terms of its relationship to authority (similarly acquiescence, submission or adherence to authority). In fact, when studying compliance it is almost impossible not to also study authority. Moscovici (1976) suggested that power is the basis of compliance. This seems to be a feature of traditional psychological approaches to compliance, which looked predominantly at persuasion strategies such as ingratiation (Smith, Pruitt et al., 1982), the reciprocity principle (Regan, 1971), guilt arousal (Carlsmith & Gross, 1969), and foot-in-the-door (Freedman & Fraser, 1966).

Studying compliance often seems to automatically involve studying authority and vice versa (e.g., Bacharach & Lawler, 1981; Butler, 2008; Gordon & Ervin-Tripp, 1987). However, there is a developing body of interaction-based research that seeks to understand the nature of asymmetrical power distributions within a stretch of interaction. Such work considers how authority is produced and sustained within interaction using understandings of epistemic priority and institutional knowledge rather than assumptions about static social or personal characteristics of the participants (e.g., Buzzelli & Johnston, 2001; Heath, 1992a; Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Heritage, 2005; Macbeth, 1991; Perakyla, 1998; Raymond, 2000; Sanders, 1987).

Much of the interaction-based research into authority and compliance has made use of the medical environment and the perceived asymmetries of knowledge and power between doctors and patients. For the purposes of the current study, the key finding to emerge from work on medical interactions is that “a large body of research has demonstrated that actual medical interaction does not consistently embody, and sometimes contradicts, theoretical, social-structural relationships as they relate to asymmetrical distributions of communication practices” (Robinson, 2001, p23). Researchers have consistently found that institutional roles alone cannot account for



situated displays of authority in interaction (Perakyla, 1998; Perakyla, 2002; Robinson, 1998; Stivers, 2001; e.g., ten Have, 1991).

Similar findings have emerged in studies examining asymmetries and power dynamics in interactions between children as they play. The environments and types of play varied between the studies; including school and preschool crèche settings (Butler, 2008; M Goodwin, 2002; Kyratzis & Marx, 2001), home settings (Griswold, 2007), pretend play or acting games (Kyratzis, 2007), and game based play (M Goodwin, 1990). Across the different settings, authority figures did, on occasions, appear to emerge based on social roles such as the relative ages of the children (Griswold, 2007) or the status of the character being played during pretend play; such as a teacher (Butler, 2008; Kyratzis, 2007). However, these factors did not universally prevent younger peers from refusing to submit (M Goodwin, 2002) or submissive characters in pretend play from 'misbehaving' or walking out of the game (Butler, 2008; Kyratzis, 2007). Factors such as expertise and competence emerged as useful predictors for authority figures within groups (Kyratzis & Marx, 2001). As the experience levels of the groups members changed so to did the balance between authoritative and compliant members (M Goodwin, 2002).

Across all of the studies examined here it was interesting that although social roles were often used to scaffold or legitimise displays of authority, in fact each move to take authority or to acknowledge the authority of a co-participant was built out of the moment-to-moment interactions and subject to continual reassessment and swift changes as the play progressed (M Goodwin, 2002). These findings reflect the conclusions reached from studying my own data: that authority and compliance were worked up collaboratively between participants as talk progressed rather than being features of static power relationships that endured across time and context.

The practical accomplishment of authority in action requires a collaborative effort from both parties. Authority is not a feature of an individual, but is a potential outcome of interactional negotiations regarding future courses of action if one participant acquiesces to the other's vision (Allsopp, 1996; DeGeorge, 1976). The interest for the current study is in the negotiations themselves. As such the concept of *agency* may offer a more useful key for unlocking the process through which one speaker gains the right to control another's actions.

### *Agency*

As a concept, agency is often used by researchers as a “synonym for free will” (Ahearn, 2001, p224). It is strongly intertwined with concepts such as voluntary and involuntary action (Wertsch, Tulviste et al., 1993). This makes agency a highly relevant issue when considering how authority and compliance become live in interaction. In contrast to the concepts of authority and compliance, which are often conceived of as qualities of an isolated speaker, the notion of *agency* relates more closely to actions in interaction. Key to this is Goffman’s (1981) notion of ‘production format’ or ‘distributed agency’ in which the animator, author, and principal behind an idea or action need not necessarily be the same person but work collaboratively to bring about a social action, sharing the agency behind it. In its respecification of the psychological thesaurus, Discursive Psychology’s explorations of ‘fact and accountability’ (Edwards & Potter, 1992), has suggested ways in which factual descriptions can be used to imply agency, intentions and attributes of individuals.

As a concept, agency is more action-oriented than authority and compliance. Rather than emphasising differences between participants, a focus on agency may enable researchers to examine more closely how participants in multiparty conversations use interactional resources to progress or stall a course of action (e.g., eating with a knife and fork in the correct hands). For example, Hepburn and Potter (2011a) have examined threats within family mealtime interactions, using in fact the same data from the DARG Archives that has been included in the current study. They noted that when designing threats, speakers could choose to formulate the unpleasant consequences for the recipient as either something the speaker will do directly to them, or a more agentless something that will happen should the recipient fail to comply (See Figure 6.3 below).

Figure 6.3: Two ways of formulating the negative consequences of a threat

With Agency - Hepburn & Potter {{524/a}}: Extract 1 p105

**IF** You carry on whingeing and whining

**THEN** I'll send you to the bottom step

Without Agency - Hepburn & Potter {{524/a}}: Extract 3 p109

**IF** You don't eat your dinner

**THEN** There will be no pudding

When a speaker proposes a course of action in interaction (either through a threat or a directive) they have a choice in how they position themselves in relation to that proposed course of action. They can either be an active instigator and proponent, forcing the action into being (e.g., Hepburn & Potter (2011a) Extract 1) or they can be a bystander, separate to the action and its momentum and merely following mealtime conventions or adhering to normative standards of behaviour (e.g., Hepburn & Potter (2011a) Extract 3). Both represent a stance towards the ongoing action rather than an individual characteristic or trait.

Agency is by no means just a resource for speakers in first position (such as those issuing threats and/or directives). Heritage and Raymond (Forthcoming) studied responses to polar questions (yes/no interrogatives such as 'Have your guests left yet?'). They examined the difference between a type conforming response (yes or no) and a repetition response (e.g., 'They've left'). They suggest that the type conforming responses accept the terms of the question, acquiesce to it, and exert no agency over the action being discussed. In contrast, repetitional responses assert the respondent's primary epistemic right to know about or to assess the topic and so 'confirm' rather than 'affirm' the proposition raised by the questioner. Like Stivers' (2005) modified repeats, the repetitional response in Heritage and Raymond's (Forthcoming) work allows speakers in second position to challenge the epistemic primacy typically held by a first position speaker.

Heritage and Raymond (Forthcoming) argue that what is being displayed with a repetitional response is an epistemic agency towards the action. Take for example the question ‘Do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?’ This would be an occasion where a type conforming ‘yes’ would be “too acquiescent, and imply insufficient agency and commitment to a course of action being assented to” (Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming, p11). The more commonly heard response of, ‘I do’, enables the speaker (in this case the groom) to insist on epistemic primacy (over the vicar) in relation to the course of action (getting married).

Heritage and Raymond (Forthcoming) describe the two response options (turn-conforming and repetition based) as acquiescent and agentive respectively rather than compliant and authoritative. By describing them in such terms the analytic focus remains on the respondent’s stance towards the action (getting married) rather than any perceived imposition of power from the questioner (the vicar). The action orientation of agency as an analytic focus may help avoid person-centred essentialist explanations and could shed new light on potentially asymmetric interactions such as adult-child.

### *Children in interaction*

Children’s status in interaction is a complicated affair that has important implications for how research is conducted (e.g., Forrester, 2010). In this section I will explore the role identities of children in interaction and the implications they have for research. I will then focus specifically on the common sense assumption that children should comply when an adult tells them what to do.

Interaction researchers are often scrupulous about avoiding abstract explanations for asymmetry that cannot be tied to participants’ orientations. Interestingly however, even interaction researchers, so unwilling to accept exogenous accounts for power differences between doctors and patients, do refer to static ‘status differences’ between adults and children. For example, ten Have (1991) alongside his appeal not to view doctor-patient interaction as an artefact of the participants’ relative statuses, comments that adults adopt certain styles of speaking when addressing children. He briefly describes elements that he suggests form part of “a wider

“conversational” approach taken especially with persons with non-adult status” (1991: 157). His ‘non-adult status’ group includes children and the elderly.

Assumptions about the relevance of social roles (particularly relationship roles) between adults and children can sneak unnoticed into even the most rigorous of studies. For example, Stivers (2005) showed that repeated utterances can provide second position speakers an opportunity to claim primary epistemic rights to the object under discussion. She goes on to claim that the basis on which the epistemic right can be claimed is either a social or interactional role. I support her analysis in cases where the social role can clearly be shown to have been topicalised in the talk. For example in Extract 17 Stivers argues that mum indexes her social role “as the mother and the money provider” as a basis for asserting primary epistemic right to judge \$5 as a substantial weekly allowance for her teenage daughter (2005: 152). In a discussion about money, mum’s social role as a ‘money provider’ is indeed made salient in the interaction and can be shown to be the basis for asserting a primary epistemic right to assess allowances, but I struggle to see how her status as ‘mother’ is topicalised.

Perhaps a more telling example of the ease with which social roles can be drawn into analyses of adult-child interaction can be taken from Extract 13 of the same paper (reproduced as Extract 6.7 below).

Extract 6.7: (13) Schegloff (1996a, p. 176) (Stivers 2005: 146)

1	<b>TEA</b>		Check and see if there’s any down on the
2			bottom that people forgot to hang up.
3	<b>GIR</b>	→	That was Alison’s job.
4	<b>TEA</b>	→	Oh that’s right. It is Alison’s job
5	<b>GIR</b>		A:lison! ((Calling out for her))

Here the teacher delivers a modified repeat of “That was Alison’s job” (line 3) in second position on line 4. In her analysis, Stivers claims “Her social roles—teacher versus student; adult versus child—appear to be indexed in the teacher’s claim of authority” (2005: 146)<sup>40</sup>. I would argue that this extract can be more fully explained on the basis of the participants’ interactional roles as directive speaker and recipient with

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<sup>40</sup> Incidentally, the difference between full and partial modified repeats has some parallels with Thompson and Fox’s (2010) work on clausal and phrasal responses to Wh- questions, whereby phrasal (partial) responses did “simple answering” and clausal responses (full repeats) are less interactionally fitted, thereby signalling some problem or trouble with the action of the question.

the attendant claims to entitlement and restricted response options that go with such an exchange in interaction (Craven & Potter, 2010). The quasi-explanatory work done by invoking the participants' statuses as adult and child runs the risk of perpetuating assumptions about relative role identities that are not as grounded in empirical study as they could be.

The difference between adults' and children's statuses is not simply a case of them occupying different but equivalent groups; one is often treated as superior to the other. In their study of videotapes of children following written instructions for school science experiments, Amerine and Bilmes (1988) explain their findings that the children did not 'successfully' follow instructions as being a feature of childhood incompleteness and incompetence in comparison to a hypothetical adult completing the same task. They suggest that social scientists can safely treat all children as "incompetent in the ordinary, taken-for-granted skills of daily life" (1988: 329).

The idea that children are 'incomplete adults' may stem from a focus within developmental psychology on the acquisition of skills as the child ages (Forrester, 2010). Classical studies of children's language have tended to focus on 'what the child can do at what age and how long it takes to learn' (Cook-Gumperz, 1977; Dore, 1985; Karmiloff-Smith, 1986; Sachs, 1983). This established and extensive focus on children's competencies at various points in their individual development glosses over an implicit presupposition that children's experiences are incomplete or missing some of the aspects required in order to be treated as a participant member in society or interaction (Livingston, 1987). Ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts have identified that children seem to have shaky or restricted membership rights to categories such as 'competent speaker' and 'participant in a conversation' and have begun to reframe arguments about competencies into discussions about membership, status, and access to resources (Forrester, 2002; Forrester & Reason, 2006; Forrester, 2010; James & Prout, 1997; Watson, 1992). This may be of particular relevance when looking at notions of authority and compliance within interaction. Are children forced into positions of submission and compliance by virtue of their quasi-member status in interaction?

There are studies supporting the ability of children to exert themselves within interaction and to expect parental compliance. Burman (1994) suggests that when children draw on discourses of parental duty and responsibility for children they can

exercise control. This is very similar to a finding by Ervin Tripp (1984) that children could exert the power to secure compliance when making requests related to parental obligations to care for them.

On one level, experimental and lab based work has clearly shown that language skills develop as the child matures. Therefore an adult when conversing with a child clearly has a greater range of linguistic resources at their disposal for engineering power, authority, and control within the interaction. This is not to say that children are completely without such skills. Sacks (1972) discusses one practice recurrently used by children to gain a turn at talk (You know what?). He suggests that by eliciting a go-ahead in the form of ‘what?’ from parents, children are then able to speak again through the obligation to reply made relevant by the ‘what?’. Here we can see children drawing on (and thereby showing their mastery of) the rules and features of sequence organisation (specifically pre-sequences where checking for reciprocity is a common function) in order to accomplish a specific interactional goal (Schegloff, 2007). Sacks (1972) postulated that ‘you know what?’ was a device used by children as a means to overcome the restricted speakership rights associated with childhood. Filipi (2009) has gone even further to demonstrate how pre verbal infants can effect a form of an other-initiated repair initiator through the direction and duration of their eye-gaze when interacting with their parents. Children may therefore have specific resources and skills with which to bring their own agenda and authority to bear in interaction.

Just because adults are better practiced at, and have more extensive resources available for, exercising control in an interaction, does that mean that children should be expected to comply with their parents’ demands?

### *Children’s Compliance*

Should adults be able to tell children what to do? The research literature points to an assumption held by both researchers and laypeople that parents have an inalienable or culturally enshrined right to seek to control their children and to expect compliance from them (Dix, Stewart et al., 2007). This is not just an assumption on the part of researchers. On occasions it is even possible to see it at work in the data collected for the current study. For example, in Extract 6.8 below Mum calls Katherine to account for her persistent non-compliance with an earlier directive to stop pretending to burp





(2009: 2455). This seems to fit with its usage here in the context of a series of directive actions attempting to get Katherine to stop burping.

The information seeking question (“<↑ what did I SAY: ↑>”) treats Katherine as already knowing what Mum had said and therefore able to answer. It makes relevant a verbal response as a next action, in which Katherine can demonstrate that she was aware of Mum’s earlier directives.<sup>41</sup> By answering the question Katherine would be admitting that at the point at which she burped on line 22, she was aware of Mum’s prohibition against burping and was actively defying it.

Katherine responds promptly on line 23 by saying “N:o(hh)o burp(hh)ing”. This is not a direct quote of Mum’s earlier speech but it does convey that Katherine was fully aware that she was acting in violation of Mum’s directive. Hepburn and Potter describe one function of interpolated laughter, such as Katherine’s laughter through her turn, as being to “display trouble with the action at the same time as doing it. ... There is perhaps a sense of softening the action or showing understanding of problems that may indicate sensitivity to how the recipient will understand the action” (2010: 1552). Thus Katherine admits both to knowing she was defying Mum’s directive and displays sensitivity to the precarious position this puts her in.

My specific reason for including Extract 6.8 can be found in Mum’s next action, “So ↑WHY’re you still doing it[:\*]” (line 25). This explicitly calls Katherine to account for her continued burping in defiance of Mum’s directive. Crucially, the only grounds offered for calling her to account is that Mum told her not to burp. The implication is that because Mum is the one who did the telling, Katherine should have complied. Mum does not offer an external account for why one shouldn’t fake burp, such as “it’s rude”, “it’ll encourage your sister to be naughty”, or “you’ll hurt your throat”, variations of which are commonly given as accounts for directives<sup>42</sup>. The only reason given not to burp is because Mum told her not to.

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<sup>41</sup> Mum’s question seems to have a similar character to some of the questions asked by police when trying to establish an intention to commit a crime (Edwards, 2008; Stokoe & Edwards, 2008).

<sup>42</sup> See Extract 5.6, Extract 5.7, and Extract 7.5.

Katherine's response to line 25 is a 'don't know' shrug of the shoulders with a slight vocalisation of "N" (line 27). She has no answer to offer for why she defied Mum. What's relevant here is that Katherine doesn't dispute Mum's grounds for pulling her up for bad behaviour, even though Mum has offered no grounds other than her own desire for the burping to stop. Katherine's response therefore ratifies Mum's entitlement at this moment in the interaction to tell her what to do without recourse to any external justification, just because she's *Mum*. It is important to remember that this is an unusual instance in the data and I have highlighted it as example of how participants in interaction *can* orient to an individual's status relative to their interlocutor. It offers further evidence that children sometimes occupy a *different* status in interaction to adults and that this needs to be accounted for during any analysis. However, rather than assuming in advance that children are unable to participate fully, it is important to allow the participants' orientations towards a child's contributions to a conversation to determine how those contributions are treated during any analysis.

### *Embodied conduct*

Directives project compliance. The analysis showed that compliance could be purely an embodied action without any verbal comment. It is therefore relevant to consider the existing work relating to embodied conduct in interaction. Embodied conduct is a vast and diverse research area and much of the work is not directly related to this study. The embodied actions found in my data occur as responses to verbal turns (directives). This raises interesting questions about the role of embodied action inside and outside the turn-taking structure of verbal conversation (Sacks et al., 1974). Additionally, when issuing a directive, speakers display an entitlement to control the actions of the recipient. When responding, the recipient's response options (and therefore their participation rights) are restricted, as is their agency to control their own actions. Therefore this literature review will discuss embodied conduct findings that are based on data from real-life interactions as they relate to verbal turns, particularly as responsive actions within the turn taking system and in contexts involving asymmetrical interactions.

For those studying embodied conduct in data from real-life interactions, a few basic premises have become broadly accepted. First, embodied conduct is a 'public practice' rather than a private event in the cognitive life of the individual (Hayashi,

2003). Second, because embodied conduct is publicly visible it is also publically monitored and can be evaluated or held to account in much the same manner as verbal actions. Thus students (on an archaeological dig site) can be expected to demonstrate the practical skills they are being taught (C Goodwin, 2002b) (see also Streek (1984) on corrective actions following breaches of embodied frames). Third, when embodied conduct and verbal talk co-occur, the two modalities “mutually elaborate” each other (C Goodwin, 2000, p1499). That is to say that talk and gesture operate in concert to convey additional meaning within face-to-face interaction. Finally, because embodied conduct and verbal communication can complement each other’s meaning, interaction-based research can focus on the situated occasion of the interaction and view talk and embodied actions as “repertoires of behavioural practices” that are used by participants to create and sustain interaction (Hayashi, 2003, p110). These premises bring interaction research to the point where the importance of considering embodied conduct in any analysis of face-to-face interaction is almost taken for granted.

### *Embodied Conduct in Analysis*

Despite broad acceptance of the importance of embodied conduct in interaction, the degree to which researchers integrate embodied actions into their analyses varies dramatically across the field. Some argue that the sheer “heterogeneity” of the practices and phenomena involved in embodied interaction causes significant “methodological and theoretical problems” (C Goodwin, 2002b, p238). Schegloff (2007) for example, openly acknowledges the complex relationship between talk and embodied conduct and, as a consequence, states that “physically realised actions ... will, therefore, not have a place on our agenda” (2007: 11). Note that most of his examples were based on phone calls where the participants themselves did not have access to the embodied actions of their interlocutor. The trade off for studying verbal utterances in isolation from their embodied environment, is, C Goodwin (1996) argues, that it reduces the scope of what such a study can say about the interaction as action and activity in real life.

An alternative approach to the study of multimodal interaction is to try and set up a framework within which some embodied actions (e.g., those that organise the ongoing actions) are treated as relevant but not others (C Goodwin, 2000). This is one approach to trying to handle the question of ‘how much context is enough?’, which has long been a bone of contention for conversation analysts (See Billig, 1999a; Billig,

1999b; Schegloff, 1997; Schegloff, 1998; Schegloff, 1999a; Schegloff, 1999b; Stokoe & Smithson, 2001; Wetherell, 1998). Arguably there is a risk in establishing loose and subjective criteria for the inclusion of some embodied actions in the analysis. Just because you may have decided on a set of inclusion criteria does not mean there exists a systematic method for dealing with such items in the analysis.

Within the CA literature, a number of studies focus on how embodied conduct facilitates or contributes to the management of a primarily verbal conversation in various ways. Mori and Hayashi (2006) briefly list 17 studies they feel demonstrate how embodied actions “are coordinated with, and situated in, the development of talk in talk-in-interaction” (2006: 195). In this type of work, verbal interaction is, often implicitly, afforded the status of the primary modality and embodied conduct is viewed in terms of how it supplements or facilitates the flow of verbal interaction. For example, Heath (1992b) and C Goodwin (1986) showed how gestures can be used to regulate the attention and gaze of a co-participant during ongoing talk.

Whether the researcher chooses to (a) split the modalities and exclude embodied action from the analysis entirely, (b) concentrate on how the participants manage their embodied actions as the central focus of the analysis, or (c) look at the role of embodied conduct in sustaining a primarily verbal conversation is in some senses missing the point. The question is not ‘do we include embodied conduct in analysis’, or even ‘how do we do this’, the question is whether or not there is a systematic, reliable method that can be applied across research interests, participant groups, and situations for rigorous analysis of embodied conduct in interaction.

### *Embodied Conduct within Turn-taking*

Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) in identifying the turn-taking system within verbal conversation, paved the way for the adoption of a systematic methodology for analysts to use when seeking to understand talk-in-interaction. As regards the place of embodied conduct within this system, well it’s a bit of blurred story...

In some cases fitting embodied conduct into established analytic framework can be quite straightforward. Schegloff (2007) identifies some fairly clear-cut examples of

the substitution of a verbal turn for an embodied one or vice versa. As he says, “sometimes an action done in talk gets as its response one not done in talk” (2007: 11).

Extract 6.9: (1.04) Chicken Dinner, 3:15-32 (Schegloff, 2007: 10)

1	<b>Viv</b>	↑.hu:hh	
2		(0.3)	
3	<b>Sha</b>	°Goo[d.°	
4	<b>Mic</b>	→ [Butter please,	
5		(0.2)	
6	<b>Sha</b>	Good.	
7	<b>Viv</b>	Sha:ne,	
8	<b>Mic</b>	↑ (Oh ey adda way)	
9	<b>Sha</b>	eh hu[h huh hih hih hih-]he-yee hee-ee ] [aah=	
10	<b>Nan</b>	[eh-heh-hih-hih-hnh-hnh]h n h-h n h huh]-hn[h	
12	<b>Sha</b>	=aah aah	
13		(0,5)	Shane
14	<b>Sh?</b>	°.hhh°	passes
14		(.)	butter
15	<b>Sha</b>	(Hih ) .	to
16	<b>Mic</b>	ha-ha.	Michael
17	<b>Sha</b>	(Hih ) .	
18		(2.3)	

In this extract Michael delivers a verbal turn on line 4 issuing a request for Shane to pass him the butter. This request receives no verbal uptake but on lines 13-16 Shane fulfils the request nonverbally by passing the butter to Michael. In terms of adjacency pairs both the first pair part (a request) and a second pair part (granting the request) are satisfied. There has just been a straight swap from a verbal response to an embodied one. Note that for now I am not getting into the issue of whether a verbal response to “butter please” would be treated as adequate by the requestor, I simply want to illustrate the ability of embodied conduct to act as a responsive action to a verbal turn. Interestingly however, note how in this example the second pair part does not occupy the space of a turn at talk but happens simultaneously with the ongoing verbal activity.

In a similar vein, C Goodwin (1980) showed how mid-TCU restarts can act as requests for recipient gaze or acknowledge its commencement. Here the verbal TCU-restart would request (FPP) recipient attention, and receive it through a change in embodied orientation (SPP). In this sense “the actions of speaker and hearer together would constitute a particular type of summons-answer sequence” (C Goodwin, 1980, p280). However, such a sequence does not map onto the traditional “two successive

turns” template for adjacency pairs. So in one sense embodied conduct fits into the notion of adjacency pairs, but at the same time it doesn’t fit in other ways. C Goodwin (1980) suggests that when embodied conduct is included in the analysis, talk produced within one turn by one speaker can be revealed as “the emergent product of a process of interaction between speaker and hearer” (C Goodwin, 1980, p294). This blurs the lines of distinction between the roles of speaker and hearer (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004). It can have consequences for our understanding of the ownership of talk and for how we conceptualise responsive actions that can overlap with talk without competing for the floor.

The analytic problems encountered when trying to make embodied conduct fit into verbal turn taking and sequence organisation rules may be a methodological issue. Certainly, introducing a close examination of participants’ embodied conduct into the already fine-grained methodological mechanics of conversation analysis is not a simple process. Schegloff (2007) points out that researchers have yet to produce a framework for how embodied conduct of one person alone, “let alone the co-ordinated conduct of several”, could be captured “in participants’ terms” as part of the sequential organisation of the interaction. He argues that without such a framework there is “no reliable empirical basis for treating physically realised actions as being in principle organised in adjacency pair terms” (Schegloff, 2007, p11). This presents a significant problem for researchers trying to claim just such an organisation.

The lack of an established framework for conceptualising embodied conduct stems from the fact that embodied actions need not always relate to the ongoing conversation - the difference between movement and gesture (Ekam & Freisen, 1969; Kendon, 1994; Mehrabian, 1972; Sanders, 1987). For both analysts and participants, the decision to treat an embodied action as an interactionally relevant gesture is based on personal inference and judgement rather than objective measures - precisely because such objective measures do not robustly exist (Bavelas, 1994). The simple act of representing an action in words on a transcript involves judgements; did a hypothetical actor ‘place’, ‘put’, ‘bang’, ‘slam’, ‘drop’, or ‘lower’ her empty glass onto the table top? One only needs to look at the delicate work done to handle verbal formulations of embodied actions by police and suspects during interrogations to see how fraught with meaning conflicting formulations can be (Edwards, 2006; Edwards, 2008; Stokoe & Edwards, 2008).

While speech can be fairly clearly represented in a transcript because of its sequential organisation, trying to present non-turn based embodied actions in a meaningful fashion on paper is a “far from easy” task (Kendon, 1994, p192). Again, this speaks to the lack of an established framework within the research community for dealing with embodied conduct in interaction. Problems with the theory and implementation of multi-modal interaction research can offer some explanation for why the study of embodied conduct is not further advanced (Kendon, 1994).

But could there be more to this issue than simply a lack of a methodological framework for dealing with concurrent embodied and verbal actions? Many of the studies I examined that highlighted the difficulty of fitting embodied conduct into a turn-by-turn transcript and analysis also showed how embodied conduct, used outside the turn-taking structure, could accomplish interactional goals that could not have been accomplished verbally without threatening progressivity. For example, Robinson and Stivers (2001) identified a preference for the transition from history taking to examination in doctor-patient consultations to be marked by embodied rather than verbal references. They note that verbal references to the change in activity were “produced as last resorts in response to patients’ lack of cooperation with nonverbal resources” (Robinson & Stivers, 2001, p289). Embodied conduct could manage the transition between phases of the interaction more effectively than turn-bound verbal utterances could.

In its present state the research literature contains many examples and situation-specific findings that hint to an ‘interaction-management’ role played by embodied conduct by virtue of its ability to act outside the turn-taking structure of talk, whilst remaining relevant to it. These separate findings, one could speculate, may speak to a role for embodied conduct to be drawn on by participants to perform actions that exploit precisely that aspect of its nature that makes it so hard for conversation analysts to incorporate it into their analyses; namely the ‘not-quite-in, not-quite-out’ nature of embodied conduct’s relationship to sequence organisation.

### *Embodied Conduct and Participation Rights*

Verbal resources can be used to restrict the ability of co-participants to fully contribute to the interaction (Maynard, 1991; Robinson, 1998; ten Have, 1991). The same can also be said for embodied actions. For example, M Goodwin (2007) found that girls' "posturing of the body relative to other participants affords differentiated types of participation with respect to the activity at hand" and could be used to exclude a co-present participant from the conversation (M Goodwin, 2007, p370). Similarly, Griswold (2007) found that bodily orientation played a significant role in both gaining authority and displaying subordination in interactions between young girls. In particular she notes how participants made use of multiple modalities in order to disambiguate displays of inferior status that may not have been clear within a solely verbal mode. As a final example, Robinson and Stivers' (2001) work on doctor-patient interaction showed that it was the embodied conduct of the doctor rather than of the patient that signalled the transition from history taking to physical examination. The doctor had privileged access to resources that determined how the embodied frame was constituted and adapted within the interaction. Such examples suggest that embodied conduct can be used to control an interlocutor's participation.

In addition to blocking and inhibiting participation, embodied conduct can also be used to great effect to facilitate, encourage, or support participation in conversations. Embodied conduct can offer additional communicative resources to those in less powerful positions within interactions and can be used to demonstrate the interactional competence of speakers. Consider the case of Chil, a severely aphasic man able to speak only three words (C Goodwin, 2002a; C Goodwin, 2002b; Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004; C Goodwin, 2004; Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000). Chil's ability to participate in verbal interaction is therefore extremely limited. Despite this, his family and friends are able to treat him as a cognitively alert and active participant in the conversation (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004; 2000). In a repeatedly analysed example of an assessment sequence responding to a bird calendar, Chil's verbal responses did little more than position him as a hearer and ratified participant in the conversation, revealing nothing about the nature or scope of his participation (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004). However, through their close analysis of the embodied conduct within the scene, Goodwin and Goodwin show that Chil not only correctly interpreted the verbal activities of other participants (as response cries not bids for attention), he then moved his gaze to the object that elicited the response cry before producing his own response to it. This conduct



distinguished Chil's participation from that of his wife who suffers from Parkinson's disease and "frequently produces sequentially appropriate assessments of events she hasn't actually witnessed" (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2000, p249).

I do not intend to suggest that children and impaired adults are equivalent social groups. Arguably children have far more discursive resources at their disposal than someone like Chil. The point I wish to make is that for participants who are disadvantaged or disenfranchised in verbal communication in some way (such as people with speech impairments or children who often struggle to gain the floor in conversations with adults (Sacks, 1972)), embodied conduct may offer an alternative participation framework in which they can become ratified and full-status participants. It therefore becomes crucial to consider how recipients to directives may make use of an embodied response when their verbal options for responding have been so strictly curtailed by the turn-design of the directive they find themselves in second position to.

## Conclusion

In this chapter I aimed to present a snapshot of the various response options evidenced in the data and draw some preliminary conclusions about the character of directive responses. I then wanted to spend some time reflecting on the key issues raised by the analysis, drawing on findings from the research literature. In so doing I hoped to flag up some of the issues involved with responding to a directive that need to be accounted for and managed both in situ by participants and during analysis by researchers.

The analysis suggested that embodied compliance was the most common response option within the data. I have argued that compliance exhibits many characteristics of an interactionally preferred response (Pomerantz, 1987; Schegloff, 2007). It therefore represents the default response to directives, in light of which all other responses should be evaluated.

As a concept, compliance has traditionally been studied in conjunction with the notion of authority (Griswold, 2007). Interaction-based studies have worked to reframe

the study of authority to focus on situated displays of knowledge (epistemic) or power (deontic) asymmetries (Drew, 1991; Heritage, 2005; Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Raymond, 2000; Stevanovic, 2011; Stevanovic & Perakyla, Under editorial consideration). Within this framework, considering the interaction in terms of how the agency for a given action is distributed between participants offers a more action-oriented approach to the study of asymmetries in action and helps to guard against unwarranted assumptions of status differences between participants.

The fact that directive recipients in my data are often children cannot be ignored, but it remains unclear as to how their childhood status should be handled in the analysis. A wealth of studies have commented on the restricted participation rights of children in interaction (Forrester, 2002; Forrester & Reason, 2006; Forrester, 2010; James & Prout, 1997; Watson, 1992). However, such work also suggests that children can and do develop their own set of resources to overcome their participation difficulties (e.g., Filipi, 2009; Sacks, 1972) and that membership rights vary across different domains (Forrester, 2010). This makes it hard (for either parents or analysts) to develop any universal guidelines for dealing with children's interactional contributions.

Extract 6.8 demonstrated that parents sometimes treated themselves as entitled to control their children without referencing any external justification. This paralleled assumptions within the literature that parents are entitled to expect compliance from their children (Dix, Stewart et al., 2007). Clearly this is a feature of adult-child conversation that will have implications for how I conceptualise the social action of directing (see Chapter 8 for a discussion of conceptualising directives to children). However, the analysis demonstrated that any claim of entitlement displayed by a directive speaker needs to be ratified by the recipient in interaction in order to be considered successful (see also M Goodwin, 2002). Thus, the management of a directive sequence requires collaborative work from both speaker and recipient. Neither party on their own is sufficient to create and sustain a given interlocutor as entitled to control the actions of another.<sup>43</sup> Understanding how all parties to the directive sequence contribute

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<sup>43</sup> Even prison inmates could technically refuse to obey their guards' commands. An extreme case of this would be a prison riot. The guards may have the full backing of the law to uphold their entitlement to tell a prisoner what to do. But during every interaction between guard and prisoner that entitlement has to be displayed and ratified between the parties. Granted the compliance rate is likely to be high, but then I'd be very inclined to comply when the consequence of not doing so was a week in solitary confinement rather than just a bit of an argument at the dinner table.

to the production of situated authority will be key to understanding the action of a directive.

The analysis also revealed the highly embodied nature of compliance displayed within the data. Existing research into embodied actions has highlighted that embodied conduct sits uneasily alongside the turn taking structure of verbal conversation. The ‘not-quite-in not-quite-out’ status of embodied conduct allows it to be used for actions that would not be possible verbally. In so doing it presents an alternative set of interactive resources to participants disenfranchised from verbal interaction. Recipients of directives facing restricted response options, and children, with their shaky participant membership status in interaction, and are two groups that might be particularly likely to make use of embodied conduct within interaction. Therefore, any analysis of the action of directing / responding needs to include a consideration of the embodied features of interaction and remain alert to the role they may play in managing issues of independent social action (autonomy) and participation rights. This issue features heavily in Chapter 7, in which I explicate a specific response option (incipient compliance and verbal reformulations) and examine what it reveals about the nature of entitlement, compliance, agency and autonomy in interaction.

## Chapter 7 - Responses II: Incipient Compliance

### Introduction

Chapter 6 demonstrated that directive actions could receive a variety of responses from recipients in the data. One type of response (non-compliance) has already been touched on during the analysis of multiple directives Chapter 5. The analysis demonstrated that if recipients did not display compliance then directive speakers tended to pursue it with repeated and upgraded directives. Subsequent directives displayed heightened entitlement to direct and decreased accommodation of potential contingencies that might prevent compliance. In Chapter 6 I presented some of the other response types evidenced in the data. Among these, a very common response was full-embodied compliance. Here the recipient offered no verbal acknowledgement of the directive but effected a change in their embodied behaviour in line with the directive's prescription (e.g., Extract 6.1- Extract 6.4). Full-embodied compliance represents the most direct and total form of compliance found in the data. It tended to occur in the smoothest and swiftest directive sequences, just a first and second pair part, ostensibly designed to avoid major disruption to the ongoing conversation.

The findings so far suggest that the type of response offered to a directive has a direct bearing on the progression of the sequence. Full, embodied compliance tended to lead to the swift, unmarked resolution of the sequence, allowing the conversation to progress to new topics. In contrast resistance typically resulted in an upgraded and repeated directive that stalled progressivity and risked escalating the sequence into conflict. This chapter, in addition to looking at the negotiation of agency in directive sequences, will also shed new light on the sequence organisation of directives by considering a specific type of directive response, one that combines both verbal and embodied elements over a series of turns in the interaction.

## Data

The data used in the analysis are taken from the main corpus used throughout this thesis and outlined in Chapter 2. In order to study the features of directive responses that could influence sequence progression I began with a collection of single directive actions. That is, directive utterances that are *not* repeated or upgraded but are only issued once in a given sequence. On the face of it the difference between these directive actions and those in the multiple directives collection (Chapter 5) appeared self-evident; directives that were only issued once were usually complied with. However, as the analysis progressed, it became clear that not all compliance is the same. Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4 showed that directives can be fully responded to, and complied with, entirely non-verbally. The analysis presented here is based on a subset of the single directive actions collection, which contains responses with both verbal and embodied elements. It is therefore worth considering what additional action is accomplished by the multimodal responses. In this chapter I will consider carefully both the verbal and embodied resources that recipients can draw on to respond to directive actions.

## Analysis

This analysis will look at examples of embodied and verbal responses to single directive actions. The analysis is structured so as to answer questions as they are raised, using different extracts to illustrate each point and then relate back to earlier extracts that share the same characteristics. I would like to begin by outlining exactly what is meant by a verbal and embodied response to a single directive.

### *What does a verbal and embodied response look like?*

First of all it is important to distinguish the response type under analysis here from the full-embodied compliance shown in Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4. The first example (Extract 7.1) is an example of the combined verbal and embodied response. Note how it differs from the short, smooth sequences in the examples of full compliance. In Extract 7.1 Mum issues a directive to Daisy; “c’ you [eat you:r brocc’li plea:;se]” (line 5). Daisy’s



recognisable pre-condition to eating. As a responsive action, Daisy's embodied conduct therefore 1) displays an understanding of Mum's utterance as directive in character rather than an information solicit or other action, and 2) adopts a stance that suggests compliance will be forthcoming.

Note how the projection of upcoming compliance in Extract 7.1 is different from the earlier examples of full embodied compliance, where the immediate action of the recipient was to comply rather than just project its imminence:

- Extract 6.1: Emily doesn't just stop waving her arms whilst continuing to wiggle in her chair, she "puts her arms down and sits properly" in response to Mum's "ENou::gh".
- Extract 6.2: Lucy doesn't just unhook her elbow and then put the fork on the table, she "unhooks elbow" and "begins to eat again" in response to Dad's "Now< DO:N't fli:ck ya- (.) kni:-[ >fo:rk o:ver= the::re. Kee:p it over your pla:te ple:ase
- Extract 6.3: In response to Dad's "Lu:c°y° plea:se eat ni:cely", Lucy completes the full action of eating a bite of food as she "closes mouth sharply around fork then pulls it out and swallows". She doesn't hold the food in her mouth or remove the food with the fork.
- Extract 6.4: In response to Mum's "Tim. [(.) Pull her si:de in", Dad "pulls Lucy's chair into the table". He doesn't just look at Lucy's chair or ask Lucy to do it herself.

Once full compliance had been delivered in Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4 the normal conversation resumes. However, in this case (Extract 7.1), Daisy halts her cutting and asks Mum "c'n ↑I ha:ve some more che:::::[ese]" (line 9). At this point Daisy's move towards compliance is stalled while she reissues her earlier request, this time in a clearer and more formal fashion. Given that her first request for cheese (line 3) was ignored when Mum issued the directive, a second attempt makes sense. However, on line 9 Daisy's request is uttered in the space where a response to the directive is still relevant, making any utterance hearable as being responsive to that directive by virtue of "its *position*, not just its *composition*" (Schegloff, 2007, p20). By using the second pair part's sequential space to make a request Daisy is not attending to the directive. In so doing she resists the prescription contained within it – if she's talking then she isn't eating broccoli. Furthermore, requesting more cheese is not a precondition to eating

broccoli. It cannot be treated as moving towards compliance in the way cutting up the broccoli could. Therefore, through her verbal turn Daisy displays an orientation to resistance of the directive rather than compliance.

Daisy's verbal response also manages a potential ambiguity within the directive; that by eating her broccoli Daisy may be eligible for more cheese. This ambiguity arose because Mum's initial directive (line 5) was delivered in the sequential space for a response to Daisy's first request (line 3). Mum's directive could be heard as responsive to Daisy's request and therefore either as refusing the request or directing Daisy to eat broccoli *before* she can have cheese. Schegloff suggests that alternatives to an SPP in next turn position can be understood as "deferring the doing of an SPP until a bit later and are done in service of a later SPP" (2007: 16). Mum's directive (line 5) was delivered in the slot where an SPP to Daisy's initial request (line 3) was due. However, given the inarticulate, and potentially rude, nature of the request (a grunt while pointing at the cheese) one cannot rule out the option that Mum may have been ignoring it and initiating a new course of action in her next turn to avoid replying altogether.

Mum moves swiftly to firmly refuse Daisy's second request. Her "[no:]:::" on line 10 is delivered in overlap with the end of Daisy's "che::::[ese]"; it is a dispreferred response without any of the typical markers such as prevarication, or hedging; and it provides only very minimal engagement with Daisy's request. The promptness and brusqueness of her "[no:]:::" may support an analysis that she had been attempting to avoid answering the first request. Daisy's attempt to clarify whether or not she can have cheese by repeating the request may suggest that she is orienting to the ambiguity caused by a directive being issued in response to a request. In any event, Mum quashes all notion of cheese being forthcoming with her stark refusal to grant the second request on line 10.

With the cheese ambiguity resolved by line 10, the still missing compliance is once more a relevant next action. Despite this, it takes Daisy a further 12 or so seconds and some grumbling before any broccoli finds its way into her mouth, and even then it is surreptitiously from a fallen piece (lines 20-21) rather than straight from fork to mouth. It's also worth mentioning briefly that during those 12 seconds she exaggerates the actions of biting food from a fork, she plays up to the camera, and she waits until Mum has launched a new topic before she actually eats anything. I will return to this extract



later on in the analysis. For now I would like the reader to note the following key features of Extract 7.1 that will be explored in the analysis

- Embodied compliance and verbal resistance both occurring as responses to the same directive.
- Exaggerated embodied actions with a sense of a performance about them.
- Embodied actions that project compliance and move towards it without actually offering it.

### Resisting directives without provoking repeats

In Extract 7.2 Mum issues an interrogative “What did she say about ta:lk<sub>ɪ</sub>ng with y'mou:t<sub>ɪ</sub>h full<sub>ɪ</sub>” on line 11. This utterance can be treated as directive implicative because it is issued at a point when Daisy is talking with her mouthful. Following the directive utterance Daisy then stops talking and performs finishing her mouthful, thereby displaying her orientation to Mum’s utterance as a directive (lines 14-17). The important thing to note from the extract is how Daisy both performs the action of finishing her mouthful and also offers a verbal comment on her actions even though they are clearly visible (even exaggerated) for her co-participants.

#### Extract 7.2: Forbes\_5\_2\_A

1	<b>Daisy</b>	=N(h)o, (0.4) .hh you mi:sta:yke.
2		(0.2)
4	<b>Daisy</b>	S'not a j <u>o</u> :ke. .hh Guess [↑wha' ↑ha:ppe:ns in]=
5	<b>Mum</b>	[(clears throat)]
6	<b>Daisy</b>	=schoo'hh .hh
7		(0.6)
8	<b>Daisy</b>	((takes a mouthful of food)) When Mrs Willamson
9		ge's it <u>r</u> ong, (0.5) Sh'goes=
10	<b>Mum</b>	((puts her glass down, slight lean and gaze towards
11		Daisy until line 23))
12	<b>Daisy</b>	(((lifts chin high, turns right and left)))
13	<b>Mum</b> →	=[ What did she say about ]ta:lk <sub>ɪ</sub> ng
14		with y' <u>mou</u> :t <sub>ɪ</sub> h full <sub>ɪ</sub>
15		[(1.3) ]
16	<b>Daisy</b> →	(((straightens back, holds chin high, chews once)))
17	<b>Daisy</b> →	I've ↓fi:n <u>i</u> :shed
18		[(1.7) ]
19	<b>Daisy</b> →	(((cranes her head back and swallows)) ]

20     **Lucy**            [((starts smushing her food with her fork))]  
 21     **Dad**            tuhhh! (('dismissive' laugh at Daisy))  
 22                      [(1.6) ]  
 23     **Mum**            [((shakes head at Daisy, gazes down at table))]  
 24     **Dad**            [((turns to look at Lucy smushing her food)) ]

Mum's utterance on lines 13-14 is plainly different from, for example, 'Don't speak with your mouthful'. It's done more indirectly, but the delivery does similar things; namely it highlights a problem behaviour and leaves the recipient with the clear understanding that some form of corrective conduct is required. Daisy's first response (line 16) not only orients to Mum's utterance as a directive, it also displays Daisy's stance towards that directive – namely compliance. However, just as in Extract 7.1, Daisy does not just quietly and quickly comply with the directive and then continue speaking. Her compliance is energetically demonstrated with a crafted over-exaggeration. She holds herself ramrod straight and chews energetically (line 16).

Next, Daisy states "I've fi:nɪ:shed" (line 17). When she says "I've fi:nɪ:shed" she hearably and visibly still has food in her mouth. As a verbal response to a directive not to talk with your mouthful, saying 'I've finished' through a mouthful of food is a highly defiant move. The fact that she has not finished is publicly available to all participants. Therefore, her utterance is unlikely to actually have been designed to convince anyone of the emptiness of her mouth. Rather, it serves to defy the directive action by claiming to have complied when she very clearly has not. Defiance with a directive is a dispreferred response. In so doing it rejects the rights asserted by the directive speaker. Directives display an entitlement to tell a recipient what to do, thereby controlling the agency for their actions following the directive. When a recipient resists a directive they refuse to hand over the agency for their actions to the directive speaker.

In Extract 7.2 Daisy's verbal resistance turn offers an alternative (albeit visibly inaccurate) assessment of the state of her mouth. Raymond and Heritage (2006) point out that assessment sequences "constitute one main environment in which managing epistemic authority and subordination becomes relevant" (p683). Mum's question directive has the first assessment of the state of Daisy's mouth embedded within it. As such it carries (Raymond & Heritage (2006) argue) an implicit claim of primary rights to the object being assessed (Daisy's mouth). When Daisy then offers a contradictory second assessment she asserts the primacy of her epistemic access to her own mouth

and so challenges the grounds on which Mum's directive was issued and resists Mum's entitlement to tell her what to do.

Typically, if the recipient resists or defies the directive, it tends to lead to the directive being reissued in an upgraded form (Craven & Potter, 2010). In this case no second directive is forthcoming. Following her defiant verbal turn Daisy “((cranes her head back and swallows))” in the same over-egged style of performance with which she first responded to the directive. Her performance provides compliance with the directive (line 19). Dad responds with a dismissive sounding laugh token (line 21), Mum shakes her head once with her chin down while gazing to Daisy (line 23). Mum and Dad then both refocus their attention away from Daisy signalling that the sequence is at a close.

### *It's all in the delivery*

I would suggest that the key to how this response avoids an upgraded or repeated directive lies in the precise order of the three stages to Daisy's response:

1. Perform chewing (line 16).
2. Verbally resist the directive (line 17).
3. Actually deliver compliance (line 19).

Daisy's first action, and therefore sequentially the most contingently relevant as a responsive action, was to display a stance of compliance towards the directive and to perform an action on which full compliance would be contingent; namely chewing before swallowing. After this first stance has been displayed Daisy then challenged the grounds on which the directive was issued. Note that she does not challenge Mum's generic right to issue directives, just her epistemic basis for issuing this one. Finally, after Daisy has delivered her verbal resistance she then goes on to comply. The defiant, and potentially risky, stage in Daisy's response is sandwiched in between the two displays of compliance, thereby moderating its tone and significance.

Note also that the displays of compliance are not just 'doing compliance' they are 'doing a performance of compliance'. The embodied displays of compliance can only mitigate the defiant nature of Daisy's verbal turn if her interlocutors treat it as

sequentially relevant. By making her show of compliance so exuberant and unmistakably compliant, Daisy works hard to maximise the chance it will be noticed and therefore mitigates her defiant verbal turn. She makes it clear that she is complying, despite challenging Mum's entitlement to have issued the directive.

In summary, the embodied and verbal response is not just the multimodal delivery of one response. It is in fact a series of different and contrastive responses utilising different modalities. The sequential ordering of the embodied and verbal responses enables the recipient to resist the directive action and challenge the speaker's right to control their agency without provoking an upgraded repeat directive. Ultimately resistance occurs during a response that goes on to comply.

### Why complicate compliance with resistance?

This prompts the question, if Daisy was always going to go on to comply, then what was the purpose of the first two stages of her response? Why not just offer full-embodied compliance? I will now look more closely at the action being done by the first and second responses to the directives in terms of what they accomplish sequentially. In Extract 7.3 Mum directs Jessica to "phlea:se <finish your ↑soup>". Jessica responds with a mixture of embodied and verbal turns. Prior to the extract Jessica has been taking a long drink from her glass. This extract begins with Jessica finishing her drink in one long downing motion.

#### Extract 7.3: Amberton\_10\_3

1	<b>Emily</b>	[Egger yolmk (.) °ump° ]
2	<b>Emily</b>	[((picks egg up to display it))]
3	<b>Mum</b>	hhh
4		(1.2)
5	<b>Mum</b>	Tis ra::ther ni:ce ((turns to watch Jessica))
6		(6.2)
7	<b>Jess</b>	((Puts glass down with a bang and turns to stare
8		at mum))
9		(1.2)
10	<b>Mum</b> →	No::w, would you phlea:se <finish your ↑soup>
11		(0.8)
12	<b>Jess</b> →	°Soup°
13	<b>Jess</b> →	[((pulls up sleeve))]
14		[(0.9) ]
15	<b>Jess</b> →	I: am (.) si:rsty::



Secondly, Jessica resists Mum's claim of entitlement to control her actions. Directives can claim an entitlement for the speaker not just to comment on the recipient's actions, but also to tell them what to do and to exert the speaker's agency over the recipient's actions. By challenging the legitimacy of the directive Jessica resists the entitlement claimed by Mum and the directive's projection of compliance.

Finally, Jessica's verbal turn also accounts for the delay in compliance thus far. This continues the work of the earlier responses in delaying the production of actual compliance. Note also that Jessica says 'I am thirsty' not 'I was thirsty'. The use of the present tense brings Jessica's earlier, self-motivated drinking back into relevance in the new sequential environment where a directive response is required.

Following her verbal resistance Jessica then spends 6.4 seconds with more 'getting ready to comply' as she blows on the soup, and eventually offers a demonstration of actual compliance when she sips a small spoonful of soup (lines 17 – 18). Like the extracts above, the recipient, 1) performs action that can be taken as a preliminary to compliance, but does not in itself constitute compliance, 2) verbally challenges the speaker's entitlement to have issued the directive, and then 3) goes on to offer compliance. Note that Jessica takes about the smallest mouthful of soup possible. She then stops eating and puts her spoon down (line 20). This is about the most minimal display of compliance with a directive to "Finish your soup" as one can think of.

Jessica then launches a new topic of conversation about the writing on her bowl, which Mum engages in without further reference to finishing the soup (lines 21 – 24). This exchange has the characteristics of the unmarked return to normal conversation that typifies directive sequences concluded to the satisfaction of the speaker (see Chapter 4), suggesting that Jessica succeeded in having to do no more than take a miniscule sip of her soup.

What would constitute full compliance with a directive such as 'finish your soup?' It seems unlikely that the family would sit in silence, deferring all other conversations, until Jessica has finished her bowl. What might constitute an acceptable demonstration of compliance with a directive like 'finish your soup' is rather ambiguous and is open to negotiation between the participants. This ambiguity is something that

can be exploited by recipients during their response, such as Jessica taking only a tiny sip of soup.

The directive is also ambiguous in terms of action. “Now, would you please <finish your ↑soup>” carries an embedded accusation or admonishment that Jessica’s prior conduct was inappropriate or unacceptable<sup>44</sup>. The hidden message is ‘you weren’t finishing your soup beforehand and you should have been’. Jessica must attempt to respond to the directive in a manner that won’t prompt her mother to reissue or upgrade it, whilst simultaneously dealing with the accusation of inappropriate behaviour. This necessitates maintaining a balance between compliance and resistance, and taking care to manage the live issues of agency and morality.

### *Reclaiming Agency*

The combination of the first (embodied) and second (verbal) responses means that when full-embodied compliance occurs in Extract 7.2 and Extract 7.3 it is in a different sequential environment to the compliance offered in Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4. The first stance Jessica offers towards the directive to “<finish your ↑soup>” projects compliance (she pulls her sleeves up), but it does not itself constitute compliance. Her verbal utterance then challenges the grounds of the directive, resists its projection of compliance and announces a current state of being. When full-embodied compliance is finally delivered it is after Jessica’s verbal turn, not her mother’s directive. Consider the following actions: (They are a gloss of Jessica’s part of the interaction)

1. Jessica finishes her drink and puts the empty glass back on the table.
2. She announces she is thirsty, despite having just finished a drink.
3. She then takes a drink of the soup in front of her.

This sequence makes sense even without the directive having been issued. This brings us to a crucial finding of the analysis: that directive recipients can reclaim the agency for their actions. Through her verbal turn Jessica reformulates the ongoing action. After announcing she is thirsty, going on to drink a spoonful of soup appears to

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<sup>44</sup> I’m particularly grateful to Jeff Robinson for spotting the accusatory / admonishing element in the directives and encouraging my analysis of them at ICCA10.

be self-motivated behaviour rather than responsive to the directive. The act of verbally resisting the directive prior to compliance being displayed allows the recipient to reformulate the ongoing action. The next action is then under their own agency rather than because of the speaker's assumed entitlement to control their actions.

A similar reformulating takes place in Extract 7.2 where Daisy formulates her mouthful as finished, claiming compliance. Subsequent swallowing is projected as self-motivated, not part of the response to the directive. Although Extract 7.1 does not use the verbal turn to reformulate the ongoing action in quite the same fashion, a related process can be observed in the embodied conduct during the 11.6 second gap after the verbal turn. Daisy eats broccoli that fell on the table because she was waving her fork about, not because Mum told her to eat her broccoli.

My findings appear to suggest a potential equivalence to findings by Heritage and Raymond (Forthcoming) regarding responses to polar questions. They suggested that type conforming yes/no responses:

“are indexically tied to the question to which they respond. They accept the terms of the question unconditionally, exerting no agency with respect to those terms, and thus acquiescing in them. Finally they tend to maximise the progressivity of the question-answer sequence towards sequence closure (Raymond, 2003)” (Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming, p6).

This is loosely equivalent to the type of response the full-embodied compliance (such as that shown in Extract 6.1 – Extract 6.4) displays to a directive. Most embodied actions (such as picking up a fork or taking a drink) that occur during the mealtime are not treated as interactionally relevant. They form part of the individual physical actions involved in ‘eating a meal’. A change in embodied conduct, such as stopping wiggling in one's chair (Extract 6.1), is only interactionally meaningful as a responsive action to the directive that preceded it. In this sense full-embodied compliance could be considered indexically tied to the directive just as yes/no responses gain their interactional meaning from the question that prompts them. Full-embodied compliance certainly accepts the terms of the directive (i.e., the entitlement of the speaker to tell them what to do). It also does not challenge any aspect of the directive or exert any agency over the action, fully acquiescing to the agency of the directive speaker. Finally, full-embodied



compliance typifies the swiftest and smoothest directive sequences, maximising progression towards sequence closure.

Heritage and Raymond (Forthcoming) do not discuss dispreferred type-conforming responses in terms of the epistemic landscape they inhabit. These would be 'no' answers to questions seeking a 'yes'. For directives a dispreferred response would be all out resistance such as that evidenced in Chapter 5. I would like to suggest that the verbal and embodied responses featured in this analysis are roughly equivalent to the non-type conforming repetitional responses Heritage and Raymond (Forthcoming) discuss. Repetitional responses are not dispreferred responses or wholly disconnected utterances. They further the course of action projected in the question. Where they differ from the preferred type conforming responses is that they resist the field of constraint exerted by the question and claim primary rights over the action. This analysis has shown how a combination of the first embodied response and the verbal resistance / reformulating turn can work to reclaim the recipient's agency for the ongoing action without provoking an upgraded repeat directive. Crucially it resists the terms of the directive and reformulates the action such that compliance is now on the recipient's terms and under their agency. In this respect the embodied and verbal directive response appears to perform an equivalent action in responding to a directive as the repetitional response performed in replying to a polar question.

The careful balance between complying, resisting, and acting under one's own agency displayed in these three extracts is made possible by the nature of the first embodied response. It holds off an upgraded repeat directive by showing a compliant orientation. In so doing it creates the sequential space for the verbal turn. The verbal turn resists the directive and casts any subsequent embodied action as not solely due to the directive, but also responsive to the ongoing action the recipient was engaged in.

The key points to take from this analysis are:

- There may be some ambiguity in this type of directive regarding what constitutes compliance.
- The first embodied response buys time, pushing actual compliance away from the directive.

- The verbal response reformulates the ongoing action and works to reclaim the recipient's agency for her own actions.

### Incipient compliance

Now the analysis will shift to focus more closely on the first embodied response offered to the directive. I will suggest that these extracts are examples of a phenomenon Schegloff termed “incipient compliance” when he noticed it somewhat anecdotally during an analysis of a directive sequence (1989: 146). Schegloff (1989) suggests that the preferred response following a directive is either a compliant action, or some behavioural indication that such an action or course of action is being launched. He describes actions that indicate future compliance (such as transferring a fork from one's right to left hand following a directive to use a knife) as incipient compliance. That is, an action that moves towards compliance without actually getting there (although the right hand is now free to pick up a knife, the knife itself has not yet been used). Schegloff (1989) distinguishes incipient compliance from full compliance on the grounds that the recipient “does not actually go on to comply at this point” despite performing preparatory actions (1989: 146). Incipient compliance takes the form of actions that can be completed as a precursor to compliance or as part of getting ready to comply.

Extract 7.4 helps to illustrate the concept of incipient compliance more clearly. It is different from the extracts we have already seen in that Emily offers no verbal resistance to Dad's directive that she “Ea:t ni:cely °please-°” on line 4. However, approximately 30 seconds elapses before she takes a mouthful. The question to consider for this extract is whether Emily complies with the directive straight away or not. Prior to this extract Mum and Dad have been talking while Emily eats her dinner. Emily has recently taken a large forkful into her mouth and is having difficulty chewing. When the extract starts she is looking at Dad, struggling to chew.

#### Extract 7.4: Amberton\_6\_6

1		[ (2.2)	]
2	<b>Dad</b>	[ ((looks at Emily))	]
3	<b>Emily</b>	[ ((continues to look at dad)) ]	
4	<b>Dad</b>	→ <u>Ea:t ni:cely</u> °please-°	
5		[ (2.8)	]
6	<b>Emily</b>	[ ((continues to look at dad)) ]	
7	<b>Dad</b>	[ ((purses lips and tilts head)) ]	

8      **Emily**      ((puts her cutlery down with a bang))  
9                    [(9.2) ]  
10     **Emily**      [((reaches for her glass and has a drink))]  
11     **Emily**      M:mm  
12                    [(4.9) ]  
13     **Emily**      [((finishes drinking and puts her glass back  
14                    down))]  
15     **Emily**      ((small burp)) (0.3) Pa:rdon me:  
16                    [(8.0) ]  
17     **Emily**      [((straightens plate and licks food off her  
18                    thumb))]  
19     **Emily**      ((chinks of crockery while she picks up cutlery))  
20                    [(0.9) ]  
21     **Emily** →    [((begins to eat again))]  
22     **Mum**        ((leans over to look at Jessica's plate))  
23                    Not going to (want/eat) that when she comes out°  
24                    [(0.7) ]  
25     **Dad**        [((shakes head)) ]

Dad's directive on line 4 is followed by a 2.8 second pause during which time Emily freezes, stopping her ongoing action (line 6), and Dad purses his lips as a display of something perhaps akin to disappointment or disapproval (line 7). Emily's initial embodied response receipts the directive by halting the prior behaviour, suggesting a stance of compliance, but stops short of actually displaying that compliance. Between lines 8 – 20 Emily then engages in an extensive series of actions, none of which constitute eating (nicely or otherwise), but all of which could be taken as a precondition to eating nicely: At the time of the directive being issued Emily has a full mouth. She puts her cutlery down on line 8; it would be impolite to place more food in an already full mouth. She takes a drink to clear her mouth (lines 9-10). Her gustatory mm on line 11 signals that the problem of an overfull mouth is now being resolved and she is one step closer to compliance. Her "↓Pardon me:" on line 15 shows an orientation to politeness, which is inherent in 'eating nicely'. She straightens her place and cleans the mess of her large mouthful from her fingers on lines 17-18. This tidies up her eating area and sets her up to now eat nicely without being inhibited by her previous mess. She picks up her cutlery on line 19 and finally begins to eat on line 21; around 30 seconds after she was first directed to eat.

Throughout all of Emily's embodied actions Mum and Dad sit silently watching her. As soon as Emily has actually eaten a mouthful of food Mum displays a change in her attention by leaning over to look at her other daughter's plate - Jessica is currently

away from the table. Mum then comments to Dad; “She’s not going to want/eat that when she comes out” (lines 22 – 23). Dad agrees with Mum by shaking his head on line 25. In doing so he, as the directive speaker, displays his willingness to engage with Mum in a new sequence of talk that is unrelated to the directive sequence. This clear cut refocusing, without acknowledging the recipient’s compliance, is a recurrent means of signalling the end of a directive sequence (see Chapter 4). This exchange provides us with evidence that the parents treat the directive sequence as complete only once Emily has eaten. All the embodied actions that took place in the intervening 30 seconds were not treated as sufficient compliance for the sequence to be signalled as complete by a new topic launch. In other words full compliance here means ‘eat’.

Extract 7.4 offers further insight into the issue of what constitutes compliance. Arguably, directives containing adjectives such as “ea:t ni:cely °please-°” can be ambiguous with regards to what constitutes compliance - is it a) a display of appropriate moral behaviour or b) food in the mouth that is the sought after response? Emily’s actions between lines 8-20 are displays of ‘nice’ behaviour, but it is only when she definitively eats on line 21 that her parents treat her as having complied with the directive. To ‘eat’ is a demonstrable, visible act that has a fixed point both in time and in the conversation. ‘Nice’ is a more qualitative descriptor of action over time. In Extract 7.4, the participants appear to treat the event of ‘eating’ as constituting compliance rather than the less fixed adjective ‘nicely’. This could be because the fixed event status of ‘eat’ may more easily occupy a single turn in interaction than a display of ‘niceness’. The embodied act of ‘eating’ can more easily be treated as part of the turn taking structure, relevant and consequential for the interaction than ‘nicely’. When dealing with embodied actions as responsive turns in conversation their ability to slot into a turn-at-talk could be an important factor in whether they are treated as interactionally meaningful. Compliance in these cases might therefore be negotiable to a certain extent in terms of defining which part of the directive the participants will treat as evidence of full compliance.

The ambiguity of “ea:t ni:cely °please-°” (line 4) is not limited to the difficulty in ascertaining what would constitute full or sufficient compliance. The directive also contains within it an admonishment or accusation that Emily was not eating nicely prior to the directive being issued. This embedded action means that any response must manage both the directive’s action-oriented move to control the recipient’s agency and the admonishment’s threat to the recipient’s social face by accusing her of violating the

moral order. It could be that the technique of incipient compliance and verbal resistance is particularly suited to managing both issues epistemic agency and of multiple embedded actions in ambiguous directives.

Emily's actions between lines 8 – 20 are an extended example of what I would call incipient compliance; they are actions that move towards compliance without actually getting there. We can see incipient compliance in earlier extracts as well:

- Extract 7.1: Daisy cuts up her broccoli (line 6).
- Extract 7.2: Daisy straightens her back and chews a bit (line 14)
- Extract 7.3: Jessica pulls up her sleeves and blows on the soup (lines 13 & 17)

Incipient compliance treats the prior utterance as a directive action. It receipts the speaker's turn and its intended recipient, acknowledges the action embedded within that turn and projects a preferred response (compliance). In so doing it attends to potential problems with speech, hearing or understanding that could prompt a repair initiator or a repeat directive. It also manages threats to intersubjectivity and progressivity. Crucially however, it does not perform full compliance. By withholding full compliance at this stage the recipient does not accept the directive speaker's right to control the agency of their actions.

### *Interactive impact of incipient compliance*

Preventing a repeated or upgraded directive appears to be a vital feature of incipient compliance. Repeat directives display more entitlement, orient less to contingencies, and further restrict the response options for recipients (Craven & Potter, 2010). In so doing, repeat directives progressively reduce the recipient's ability to reclaim the agency for their own actions with each successive upgrade. In order to have the interactive freedom to reclaim their agency, recipients must first ensure that a repeat directive will not be forthcoming and stymie their attempts. This makes incipient compliance a crucial instrument in their response toolkit.

Incipient compliance works to forestall or prevent upgraded directives by projecting full compliance as being ‘in the offing’. It displays a stance towards the directive and projects a preferred response. By projecting an upcoming preferred response, the recipient buys themselves time and space in the conversation without immediate sanction. This may be similar to ‘buying’ a second turn at talk by indicating that further talk is forthcoming. I do not think it is too much of an interpretive stretch to suggest that had Emily performed actions that did not project full compliance, Mum and Dad would not have sat silently, watching her for 30 seconds without reissuing the directive.

In addition to avoiding an escalation of the directive sequence, the time ‘bought’ for the recipient through incipient compliance serves to shift full compliance away from direct sequential adjacency to the directive. This makes it less clear whether the embodied compliance is a responsive action or just individual physical movement unrelated to the conversation. It buys the recipient time to respond; the more time they can delay, the less sequentially relevant full compliance becomes and the more likely the sequence is to be dropped in favour of other topics of conversation.

The interactional implications of blurring the responsive nature of an embodied response can be seen more clearly in Extract 7.5 below. This extract begins with Lucy eating cereal with her fingers. Dad initiates a directive action in two parts: 1) “Da:on’ [pick at i’] plea::se” and 2) “Y’need to eat it ni:cely”. Although it takes place over two TCU’s, Dad’s utterance appears to be delivered as a single directive rather than an original and a repeat or upgrade. After a 0.4 second gap (line 14), Lucy responds by saying “↑I ah(h) [a:(h)m” and, in overlap, letting her food fall from her fingers back into the bowl (lines 15-17).

#### Extract 7.5: Forbes\_4\_1

1		[(2.1) ]
2	<b>Lucy</b>	[((nods slowly))]
3	<b>Daisy</b>	[((brings Lucy’s mug to the table and puts it
4		down)) ]
5	<b>Dad</b>	[((leans towards Lucy and straightens out her
6		bowl and mug))]
7	<b>Mum</b>	°Well at least #she #doesn’t# ((inaudible))°
8	<b>Dad</b>	Too:th <sub>h</sub> hur:ty
9		[(4.1) ]
10	<b>Lucy</b>	[((puts her fingers in her bowl))]



the trouble with her turn that were not required in other extracts where embodied incipient compliance preceded the verbal resistance.

Note that embodied incipient compliance is not absent from this turn, but just a little delayed. The second half of Lucy's verbal turn is overlapped with her embodied action of dropping bits of cereal from her fingers back into the bowl (lines 16 – 17). Although Lucy's initial response did display a resisting stance to the directive, it was accompanied by the embodied projection of upcoming compliance in short order.

Just like other analysed extracts there is some ambiguity in the directive in Extract 7.5. First, the directive is issued in two parts; 1) "Da:on' [pick at i'] plea::se" and 2) "Y'need to eat it ni:cely". This makes two separate complying actions relevant; 1) stop picking at the food, and 2) eat the food. It is not clear from the directive which complying action would be treated as full compliance. Lucy's action on lines 16 – 17 (dropping the cereal from her fingers back to the bowl) does offer full compliance to the first injunction, but only incipient compliance to the second directive. Note here the work that Lucy does to clarify the ambiguity in Dad's directive about what might constitute compliance. She herself signals which directive she is orienting to, and therefore what she is treating as displaying full compliance when she says "↑I ah(h)[a:(h)m.=" (line 15). This only makes sense as a response to the second half of Dad's turn, suggesting Lucy is treating his second directive as the one to which she will respond. By responding to the second directive rather than the first Lucy is also conforming to the preference for contiguity noted by Sacks whereby if two questions are asked in a single turn, the respondent deals with the second question first (Sacks, 1987). On these terms her embodied conduct on lines 16 – 17 can be classified as incipient compliance; removing food from one's fingers and returning it to the bowl can be taken as a precursor to eating nicely.

She uses her verbal resistance to specify, on her terms, what should be treated as full compliance (namely eating) before she begins her embodied response. The change in order of the different elements of the response, although non-typical and potentially more risky, enables Lucy to define exactly what she is responding to before she displays her stance to the directive. Here we can begin to see how Lucy asserts her own agency for her actions from the very start of her response while simultaneously managing the risks of repeated and upgraded directives associated with unmitigated verbal resistance.



At the end of line 17 a directive has been issued and it has received verbal resistance and embodied incipient compliance in response. Typically, we might anticipate the conversation to be essentially put on hold while the recipient moves from incipient to full compliance. This is what happened in earlier extracts:

- Extract 7.2: Mum waits until after Daisy has swallowed before she changes her gaze and focuses on her other daughter (line 21)
- Extract 7.3: It is only after Jessica has eaten a spoonful of soup that Mum engages with her in conversation (line 24)
- Extract 7.4: Dad and Mum both wait over 30 seconds for Emily to eat before they begin a new topic of conversation (line 23)

In Extract 7.5 the waiting does not happen. Dad launches a new topic immediately following Lucy's verbal resistance. Just as Lucy finishes saying "↑I ah(h)a:(h)m" Dad initiates a new topic about the temperature (line 18); in fact his talk is latched on to the end of Lucy's utterance. It is not clear to whom he is addressing his talk, as initially there is no uptake (line 19). Lucy continues to demonstrate embodied incipient compliance (line 20) and Dad's pursues a response to his new topic, this time with humorous intonation (line 21). It may be that Dad was attempting to initiate talk with Daisy while Lucy complied with his directive. At the time he was the only parent at the table, so that may have contributed to the unusual pattern. However, such an assertion is merely speculation at this stage. By line 21 Dad's initial topicalisation of the temperature on line 18 has been confirmed as an initiating action in a new sequence of talk that requires a response rather than an aside or throw away comment not intended for interactional pick-up.

Once Dad has shown he is pursuing the new topic Lucy immediately *undoes* her recent incipient compliance by removing her spoon from the bowl without loading food onto it (lines 22 – 23). She does not progress from incipient compliance to full compliance. Lucy then offers a second assessment to Dad's first assessment on lines 18 and 21. In so doing she engages with the new sequence of talk allowing it to replace her abandoned moves towards compliance. Lucy is able, admittedly through Dad's uncharacteristically early topic launch, to make actual compliance redundant once her incipient compliance had continued past a topic boundary in the verbal conversation.

Lucy does in fact go on to eat a mouthful at line 30 but it would be hard to show this as a responsive action to the directive on lines 12-13 in terms of sequence organisation. At this point her eating has more the character of the individual physical actions that take place during mealtimes outside of the turn taking structure of interaction. Delaying the response beyond the topic shift means it is no longer a responsive action to the directive. If the recipient now chooses to do what they had been directed to do then it appears to be self-motivated behaviour enacted under their own agency rather than because of the will of the directive speaker.

The key points from this analysis are:

- Verbal responses work to reclaim the recipient' agency and resist the directive
- Incipient compliance moderates the resistance of the verbal turn and helps avoid a repeated or upgraded directive.
- Incipient compliance buys time. This can make full-embodied compliance unnecessary if it continues beyond a topic shift.

### Back to the beginning

In the light of the analysis above, let us return briefly to the first extract we looked at: Extract 7.1 (reproduced again below for clarity). In this extract Mum directed Daisy to eat her broccoli (line 5). The sequential positioning of the directive was slightly ambiguous as it was delivered in a slot when a response to Daisy's request (grunt and point for cheese on line 3) was relevant.

Extract 7.1 repeated: Forbes\_1\_4\_25-62

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1          [(1.1)                ]
2  Mum      [((puts the cheese pot down)) ]
3  Daisy    ((stretches arm out towards Mum)) hhh:e::ungh
4          (0.3)
5  Mum      → c' you [eat you:r brocc'li plea::se]
6  Mum      [((points to Daisy's plate))]
7  Daisy    [((starts cutting up her broccoli)) ]
8          [(1.5)                ]
9  Daisy    c'n ↑I ha:ve some more che::::[ese]
```

10 **Mum** [no:]:::

11 **Daisy** [((glances at Dad's plate))]  
 12 [(1.7) ]

13 **Daisy** mm::: mm::: ((grumbly racing car  
 14 noises))  
 15 [(11.9)]

16 **Daisy** [((swings her legs, bites at the broccoli on her  
 17 fork, but doesn't separate it. With the fork  
 18 still in her mouth she turns to look at the  
 19 camera, she takes the fork out of her mouth and  
 20 waves it slightly at the camera. A small piece  
 21 falls of her fork))]

22 **Mum** → [Did you hear the Jeremy Vi:ne programme abou', ]

23 **Daisy** → [((glances at Mum then puts the fallen broccoli  
 24 in her mouth)) ]  
 25 [(0.8) ]

26 **Dad** [((shakes his head))]

27 **Mum** Louis Hamilton tuhda::y.  
 28 [(1.2) ]

29 **Daisy** → [((slumps in her seat away from the table, a bit  
 30 more broccoli falls off her fork))] [((she puts  
 31 the broccoli on her plate))]

32 **Mum** [[An' some  
 33 bumpy on there said dourn't kner whot all the  
 34 fuss\* is abou'=ee only drives a car::.  
 35 [(1.4) ]

36 **Daisy** → [((eats a piece of broccoli straight from fork))]

37 **Daisy** ↑Really?

Daisy's first response to Mum's directive is to begin cutting up her broccoli. This is an example of incipient compliance as it is a preparatory action towards eating broccoli. It receipts the directive and projects future compliance. It is not an example of full-embodied compliance because she hasn't actually eaten anything at this point.

Daisy's verbal turn on line 9 deals with the ambiguity of the directive brought about by it's sequential positioning in second position to the request. It resists replying to the directive in much the same way as Mum's directive disregarded Daisy's first request. With this turn Daisy may either be attempting to delete the directive and return to her earlier topic or to clarify that eating broccoli is a condition to be fulfilled before getting cheese. This would downgrade the place of the directive to a component within Daisy's larger project of getting cheese. This would enable Daisy to reclaim agency over

the sequence as a whole. However, in this case it does not work. Mum quashes any notion that eating broccoli is a condition of getting cheese with her “[no:]::” on line 10.<sup>45</sup>

Daisy then grumbles quietly to herself (line 13) before engaging in 11.9 seconds of incipient compliance that displays her considerable disinterest in the task of eating broccoli. This is an example of getting about as close to compliance as possible without actually doing it. Daisy nibbles at the broccoli on her fork without actually separating any of it or allowing any to enter her mouth. This is evidence of the difference between incipient compliance and full compliance. Daisy isn’t eating; she is doing something close to eating that, to an observer would look a lot like eating, but by not eating she is avoiding full compliance with the directive.

Towards the end of the 11.9 seconds silence a small piece of broccoli falls off Daisy’s fork. However, Daisy does not move to eat the fallen broccoli until after Mum has begun her new topic launch on line 22. The act of eating broccoli (and therefore complying with the directive) is delayed until just after Mum has launched a new topic about the Jeremy Vine radio programme. At this point Daisy’s performance of surreptitious eating has far more of the character of hiding the fact that she dropped food on the table while waving her fork about than it does of full compliance.

Before she picks up the fallen broccoli, Daisy glances at Mum to check she is not being observed. Compliance needs to be observed by an interlocutor in order for it to be treated as a responsive action<sup>46</sup>. We saw in Extract 7.2 and Extract 7.3 the over-exaggerated performances that the children gave to make certain their compliance was witnessed. In contrast, here Daisy appears to disguise her eating and tries to make it appear not part of the interactive order. It’s possible that, rather than compliance, the eating has more to do with avoiding a potential admonishment or accusation about playing with her food than displaying compliance to the directive.

Dad engages with Mum’s new topic, giving it a go-ahead with his headshake on line 26. Mum then begins her explanation of the show (line 27). On lines 29 – 31 Daisy

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<sup>45</sup> Note that although Daisy’s attempts to resist the directive have been quashed by Mum this does not lead to a repeat or upgraded directive. I would suggest that one reason for this is the legitimate basis for confusion about whether eating broccoli will mean cheese is forthcoming. Extract 6.6 showed that legitimate reasons for delaying compliance can be treated as insert sequences rather than grounds for upgrade by the directive speaker but that eventual full compliance remains relevant.

<sup>46</sup> When defining compliance for psychologists, Hewstone & Manstead (1995) state “compliance results when the source [directive speaker] controls the desired outcomes and can monitor the recipient’s behaviour”. Thus embodied conduct needs to be observed in order to be considered compliance.

slumps away from the table, physically distancing herself from her plate. When more broccoli falls off her fork she just picks it up and puts it down on her plate instead of eating it. With this, Daisy engages in actions that move away from compliance in much the same manner as Lucy removing the empty spoon from her bowl did in Extract 7.5. Mum continues to elaborate on the radio programme on lines 32 – 34. After it becomes clear that Mum is fully engaged in the new topic of talk, Daisy finally stabs a piece of broccoli with her fork and eats it properly (line 36). Just like Lucy in Extract 7.5, Daisy is able to delay compliance beyond the launch of a new topic. Although Daisy does go on to comply it would be difficult, if not impossible, to show that her action of eating the broccoli on line 36 is directly responsive to the directive on line 5.

## Discussion

In this chapter I outlined one response type used by the recipients of directives in my data. The responses involved a carefully timed balance between incipient compliance, verbal resistance, and sometimes then full embodied compliance. This approach to responding to directives represented a middle ground between immediate full compliance and outright resistance or defiance. It walked the line between full acquiescence and subordination to the control of the directive speaker, and total conflict with the directive rights of the speaker. The combination of responses seemed to enable recipients to display a stance of both compliance and resistance towards the directive without prompting a second directive.

Central to the success of the dual response is what Schegloff (1989) anecdotally noted and termed incipient compliance; that is, embodied conduct that moves towards full compliance without actually providing it. The key features of incipient compliance are that it:

- Receipts the prior utterance nonverbally, treats it as a directive and displays an orientation to comply with the directive.
- Projects compliance as being ‘in the offing’, thereby forestalling a repeated or upgraded directive.
- Shifts full compliance away from direct sequential adjacency to the directive, making it less clear whether it is a responsive action.

I suggested that the interactional purpose of incipient compliance seems to be to delay actual compliance away from adjacency with directive action, sometimes even to the point of rendering it unnecessary. However, it does so in such a way as to not overtly hinder the progressivity of the mealtime activity, and without threatening intersubjectivity, and, crucially, the recipient's agency.

Incipient compliance manages the immediate risks of non-progressivity and breakdowns in intersubjectivity by projecting future alignment with the directive speaker's project (i.e., getting their directive complied with). This buys the recipient space to interject a verbal turn that does not go along with the projected compliance. Verbal resistance delivered as an initial response to a directive action tended to lead to reissued and upgraded directives (Craven & Potter, 2010). However, when preceded by embodied incipient compliance, verbal resistance turns did not seem to prompt an upgrade. The difference in the sequential consequences supports my argument that incipient compliance buffers the resistance in the verbal turn and buys the recipient time and space to insert a non-compliant element into their response.

The responses in this chapter also contained a verbal component. The verbal turns evidenced in the data tended to resist the directive and challenge the epistemic grounds on which it was issued. The resistance often exploited the principle observed by Sacks (1984) and Goffman (1983a) that all participants have primary rights to know and describe their own thoughts and experiences (in Heritage & Raymond, 2005). For example, in Extract 7.2 Daisy says 'I've finished' in response to a directive to finish her mouthful. As a third party observer, what Mum can know and describe about the state of Daisy's mouth should be secondary to how Daisy describes her own bodily experiences. Similarly in Extract 7.3 Jessica uses her announcement that she is thirsty to account for not eating prior to Mum's directive that she finish her soup. Jessica displays her privileged access to her own bodily state using information not accessible to Mum to challenge Mum's grounds for directing her to eat.

The verbal resistance turns not only challenged the grounds on which the directive actions were issued (thereby defying the speaker's entitlement to have issued the directive), they also appeared designed to reformulate the ongoing action as self motivated rather than subject to the will of the directive speaker. For example:

- Extract 7.1: Daisy wasn't refusing to eat her broccoli, she was asking if she could have some more cheese.
- Extract 7.2: Daisy wasn't speaking with her mouthful, she had finished.
- Extract 7.3: Jessica wasn't avoiding eating, she was quenching her thirst.
- Extract 7.5: Lucy wasn't picking at her food, she was eating nicely.

This is a crucial aspect of the response work done by the recipients. The embodied incipient compliance and the verbal reformulations / resistance turns created a new sequential environment for compliance to the one that existed immediately after the directive actions had been initiated. If the recipient were now to go on to perform embodied actions consistent with those prescribed by the directive, they would do so under their own agency rather than as an actor of the directive speaker's agency. Through embodied incipient compliance and verbal resistance/ reformulation turns, directive recipients are able to exploit the turn-taking organization of the conversation, and reconstitute the ongoing embodied frame in such a way as to reclaim the agency of their own actions.

### Embodied Incipient Compliance + Verbal Reformulation = Reclaim agency for own actions

By reclaiming control over their own behaviour, recipients can successfully avoid having to comply with the speaker's will without provoking sanctions or an upgraded repeat directive (Extract 7.1 and Extract 7.5). Even if, as in most cases (such as Extract 7.2, Extract 7.3, and Extract 7.4), full compliance still remains relevant, it now takes place sequentially adjacent to the recipient's formulation of the action rather than the speaker's directive. That is to say, any action is done on the recipient's terms rather than on the speaker's; recipients therefore retain agency for their own embodied actions.

The analysis has raised several issues for consideration such as agency and authority, children's membership status in interaction, and the nature of directives. I will now consider each of these areas separately.

Agency

Agency is the driving force behind action. Ahearn (2001) describes it as the “capacity to act” (2001: 112). It is closely related to concepts of voluntariness or willingness to act (Wertsch, Tulviste et al., 1993). The position being asserted by the directive speaker is that they have the right to control the actions of the recipient, to impose their moral judgements and choices of action onto another being (Bergmann, 1998). By aligning with that position, the directive recipient gives up their own right to assert choices over their actions and take moral responsibility for their behaviour. Therefore they exert no agency over the course of action. Compliance is to merely animate an action, the agency for which lies with a co-present participant (Goffman, 1981).

In interaction, agency is a very live concern for participants. Not displaying agency can, in fact, be treated as non-normative behaviour (Kurri & Wahlstrom, 2007). Agency is implicated in fact construction and personal responsibility, both of which are frequently at stake in conversations (Edwards & Potter, 1992). Bergmann (1998) suggests that displaying active agency draws attention to the possibility of choice over one’s personal conduct, something that is a forerunner to the attribution of responsibility. However, agency is implicated in virtually all social actions. For example, initiating actions such as summons, invitations, or first assessments display the speaker’s ‘will’ and ‘capacity’ to initiate such an action.

Participants in first position initiate actions. This affords them the first opportunity to assess, define or describe the action or object. As such it is widely accepted that speakers who take first position have primacy in terms of both agency and epistemic rights (Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming; Stivers, 2005). This sets up an asymmetry between the participants. This is relevant when talking about typical, mundane, non-institutional interactions in which there are no cultural or role-related assumptions of asymmetries between participants. Even in this even-handed, egalitarian environment every initiating action sets up a slight imbalance or asymmetry between the participants.

First position speakers can downgrade their epistemic entitlement to the object being assessed. For example, Raymond and Heritage (2006) showed how speakers can use evidentials (e.g., looks, sounds, seems) or tag questions to mark their own epistemic



access to the referent as less than their co-participant's access. This marks in advance that they did not want to claim epistemic primacy or agentive control of the sequence. This finding supports the argument that first position carries an inherent primacy because speakers must do extra work if they want to *not* display primary access.

As a consequence of the primacy of being in first position, second position speakers need to respond to the asymmetry created by the initiating action. Several researchers have documented the subtle and delicate work that can be done by second position speakers to reclaim epistemic primacy in relation to an object or action they feel rightly belongs under their purview (Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Mondada, 2009a; Raymond & Heritage, 2006; Stivers, 2005). This is what the recipients in my data are also doing: reclaiming the agency for their own actions.

There is however a crucial difference between being in second position to an assessment or a question and being in second position to a directive. Directive speakers do not just claim rights to know about or to assess the subject of the directive as first assessments do. The rights exerted by a directive go beyond the epistemic right to know and describe objects (Goffman, 1983a; Sacks, 1984). They relate to the right to control actions and make decisions about actions; rights referred to in the literature as *deontic rights* (Allsopp, 1996; Lukes, 1979). The right to tell someone what to do is a far greater imposition than describing his or her actions. For example telling your friend that their grandchild is a brat is very different from ordering their grandchild to leave the room.

Directives put recipients in a position of either choosing to act wholly under the speaker's agency and thereby accepting and ratifying the deontic rights claimed by the speaker (comply), or choosing to refuse to perform the action thereby rejecting the speaker's deontic rights (resist). The consequences for resisting a directive have been described elsewhere (Craven & Potter, 2010) and risk a breach of normal conversational progressivity. To choose to resist is therefore an action that threatens intersubjectivity. There is a third option, which is to reformulate the ostensibly compliant ongoing action so as to reclaim primary deontic rights to make decisions about and control the course of action. In so doing the recipient can reclaim the agency for their conduct without prompting an upgraded repeat directive. That is the middle ground that the recipients choose when they use incipient compliance and verbal reformulations as a combined response.

Children in Interaction

In relation to the data presented in this chapter it bears consideration that all the directive speakers are parents, and all the recipients are children under 9 years old. Given traditional assumptions, both lay and in sociology and psychology, about the relative power asymmetries between parents and children and children's linguistic incompetence, it is hard to avoid viewing parent-child interaction through the lens of parental control and childhood submission. It could be argued that we see compliance and resistance in the children's responses because we project a subordinate role identity onto the child rather than because it is actually oriented to by the participants.

To return briefly to the data, I would like to show that issues surrounding the agency of complying with a directive are live concerns for adults as well as children, and that adults can make use of the same pragmatic resources used by children to manage their agency when placed in second position in a directive sequence. In Extract 7.6 Mum issues a directive that targets Dad on line 1. The directive elicits Dad's embodied incipient compliance, a verbal turn that reformulates the action, and finally embodied compliance.

## Extract 7.6: Forbes\_1\_4\_7-21

1	<b>Mum</b>	→	Come >on ea:t< [another bi:t of broccoli ]da:r'n.
2	<b>Mum</b>		[((taps the broccoli pan))]
3			[(2.9) ]
4	<b>Dad</b>		[((looks at Mum)) ]
5	<b>Mum</b>		[((looks at Dad)) ]
6	<b>Dad</b>		°wh' Me:°
7	<b>Mum</b>		[((nods)) ]
8	<b>Dad</b>	→	[((reaches fork into broccoli pan and searches
9			till he spots an acceptable piece)) ]
10			[(3.2) ]
11	<b>Dad</b>	→	°oo:::h ((stabs that piece of broccoli with his
12			fork)) ch hhah hah° hah
13	<b>Mum</b>		((picks up cheese pot)) [[>°Bi' o'°< chee:::se on it
14	<b>Mum</b>		[[((puts cheese on Dad's
15			plate))]
16	<b>Dad</b>		Bit o' chee:::se.

Mum directs Dad to eat another bit of broccoli on line 1; "Come >on ea:t< [another bi:t of broccoli ]da:r'n". There is then a short repair insert sequence where they

clarify that Dad actually was the recipient of the directive (lines 3-7). It is easy to see potential ambiguity in the design of the directive that could account for the repair. However, it is also worth bearing in mind that by inserting a repair sequence Dad introduces a delay that distances the eventual response from the directive, thereby diluting its conditional relevance. As soon as reciprocity has been established by Mum's nod on line 7, Dad uses embodied conduct to display incipient compliance with the directive; he searches through the broccoli in the pan with his fork on lines 8-9. Note that Dad doesn't just stab the nearest piece and comply as quickly as he can. He engages in a thorough search for broccoli, offering a performance of incipient compliance just as the girls did in the other extracts. The search itself takes time and delays full compliance still further away from proximity to the directive.

On line 11 Dad exclaims "oo: :h" and does a noticing of an ostensibly acceptable piece of broccoli that has caught his eye. His exclamation has the character of an announcement prompted by his search for broccoli rather than by Mum's directive. The verbal turn reformulates the taking of broccoli as a pleasurable activity for Dad on his own terms – because he found a nice piece – rather than just what Mum has told him to do. Dad then takes a piece of broccoli and complies with the directive (lines 11-12).

I'm not suggesting that this extract is exactly the same as those involving the children. For example, Dad's verbal turn does not challenge Mum's right to have issued the directive; it is just an announcement of pleasant noticing. However, it does still carry the sense of an utterance that pre-frames the next action as a consequence of the announcement rather than of the earlier directive. In this sense it performs the core work of the verbal resistance turn highlighted in the analysis: to reformulate the ongoing action as self-motivated behaviour rather than as subjugation to the will of the directive speaker. I would suggest that Dad is in fact displaying a greater level of subtlety in managing agency over one's own actions than was shown by the children. He is able to regain agency while defying Mum's authority even less than the children were able to manage. What this extract does demonstrate is that issues of control for one's embodied conduct are live concerns for all participants, not just those who may occupy traditionally subordinated statuses in interaction.

Directives

This chapter is about responses to directive actions rather than directives themselves. However, during the analysis, a couple of features of directives emerged that merit commenting on briefly. Firstly the directives appear to have admonishments or accusations of improper behaviour embedded within them. It is perhaps not surprising that directive actions, which aim to effect a change in a co-participant's behaviour, might contain or imply negative assessments of the behaviour that prompted them. It is however, worth recognising the multiple actions being done in a single TCU such as 'eat nicely please'. The same actions could have been achieved by two separate TCUs, (e.g., 'That is disgusting. Eat your dinner'). By combining the two actions into a single imperative formulation it means that the directive becomes the primary action, emphasizing the need for behavioural modification in a way a solitary assessment could not. It also minimises the admonishing tone of the utterance (without removing it altogether). This downgrades the attack on the recipient's moral integrity, focusing on practical behavioural change over esoteric discussions of manners. The trade off for condensing the two actions into one TCU is that it opens up a certain amount of wiggle room for the recipient when deciding how to respond. An utterance with an admonishment and a directive as two separate TCUs would not offer that room for manoeuvre.

This brings me to my second point. Several of the directives were ambiguous in some way, either because of their sequential placement (Extract 7.1) or because it was not exactly clear what would constitute compliance (Extract 7.3, Extract 7.4, and Extract 7.5). Essentially the preferred response was not tightly specified in the design or placement of the directive. For example "finish your soup" (Extract 7.3) is too large a demand to be accomplished before conversation resumes, but the directive does not specify exactly how much eating would be enough to constitute compliance. If the exact nature of compliance is not set out in the directive then it becomes something that can be negotiated in the interaction. As we saw in Extract 7.5, recipients can specify what they plan to treat as a demonstration of compliance and exploit that in such a way as to avoid having to do more than offer incipient compliance before a topic shift. Interestingly a recurrent feature of repeat directives was that were simplified formulations of the first directives, specifying more precisely what compliance meant in each case (Craven & Potter, 2010). It is likely that those directives that are ambiguous in

terms of what constitutes compliance may be particularly suited to enabling recipients to reclaim their agency.

The incipient compliance and verbal reformulation response combination is an example of one practice that speakers in second position can use for regaining agency. In addition to the features of the directive discussed above, the successful use of incipient compliance and verbal reformulation also relies on certain contextual conditions such as:

- The directive is responsive to a preceding action by the recipient
- The directive is immediate rather than future oriented
- Compliance is something that will take time to produce and can have preparatory steps
- Speaker must be willing to wait for compliance before upgrading or repeating the directive

## Conclusion

In this chapter I analysed directive sequences that did not lead to upgraded repeat directives or extended conflict and a breakdown of intersubjectivity. In the analysis I focused on one practice for responding to directives. The response involved a carefully timed combination of embodied and verbal elements. Embodied incipient compliance immediately displayed an orientation towards compliance as a soon-to-be-performed action. This bought sequential space for the recipient to deliver a verbal turn that challenged the epistemic entitlement of the directive speaker and reformulated the ongoing action as self-motivated rather than compliant. The combination of the two responses enabled recipients to reclaim the agency for their actions.

Incipient compliance and verbal reformulations form part of a toolkit of response options. They are particularly useful to participants who find themselves in second position to initiating actions that generate an asymmetry between participants by claiming unequal rights (either epistemic or deontic). In this respect incipient compliance and verbal reformulations appear to perform an equivalent action when responding to directives that repetitional responses perform when responding to polar questions (Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming). That is, they go along with the course of

action projected by the first pair part, but seize primary rights to assess, describe, and control that course of action. When responding to a directive it means that the action performed is not actually compliance, but is an arguably identical physical movement that forms part of the recipient's normal, self-motivated individual mealtime behaviour.

In the situation where a parent told their child to stop waving their knife around the difference between compliance and self-motivated behaviour is arguably negligible. The result in both cases is that a sharp implement is no longer in danger of hitting them or their child in the head. For the child who seeks to attain full membership status in interaction with the same participation rights as their adult interlocutors the difference is vast. If they comply they are no more than a mere vehicle for their parent's agency, whereas self-directed action gives them responsibility for their conduct. Heritage and Raymond (2005) state that regulating and sanctioning our epistemic rights in relation to our interlocutors is part of Goffman's (1983a) 'interactional housekeeping' that is a "condition of personhood and even sanity" (2005: 36). To that I would add the management of our deontic rights.

## Chapter 8 – Summary and Discussion

With this thesis I set out to explore the discursive practice of telling someone what to do (i.e., issuing a directive). Using video recordings of family mealtimes conversations and the analytic framework of Conversation Analysis, I aimed to outline what a directive action looked like, how it was practically accomplished, and what the social and interactional consequences were of telling someone what to do. In this final chapter I will bring together the various findings from my analytic work to present an account of directives as a situated action in interaction. I will then consider some of the implications of the findings and the fields of research to which they can contribute. Finally I will highlight some of the limitations of the current study and suggest areas that would benefit from further study or that could be used as a springboard for future work.

### Summary of Findings

In this section I summarise the findings of each individual chapter and then bring the work together to present an account of directives as a situated action in interaction.

#### *Chapter 3 – Directives I: Identifying and recognising directives*

My first analytic chapter addressed the problem of how to recognise a directive when spoken in real-life interaction. As a possible solution to the difficulties reported by previous researchers in the field (e.g., Dalton-Puffer, 2005) I proposed using the reactions of the participants in situ as they responded to possible directive type utterances to determine whether any given utterance should be included in the collection. This approach was consistent with the epistemological traditions of CA to “remain faithful to the members’ perspective” (Psathas, 1995, p49). It enabled me to base any analysis on what was observable to the participants in a conversation at the moment it actually happened. It also, and most importantly for the current study, offered a key to unlock the nature of a directive as a social action rather than a speech

act. In contrast to much of the early work in the field, one crucial aspect for identifying directives was whether the participants treated a given utterance as an attempt to get a co-participant to do something.

What emerged from the analysis presented in Chapter 3 was the finding that even very young participants demonstrated highly nuanced and sophisticated understandings with regard to recognising attempts to change their behaviour. The analysis showed that participants in mealtime conversations were sensitive to, and monitoring for, potentially directive utterances in their interlocutors' speech. Consequently they were able to detect and respond appropriately to utterances in which directives were alluded to or projected rather than explicitly asserted (e.g., 'You've still got some beans left haven't you' Extract 3.2).

Several of the very implicit directives examined in Chapter 3 highlighted features and concerns common across the spectrum of directive type actions that were picked up in later chapters. For example, directive implicative utterances tended to include a check for any valid reasons for non-compliance before going on the record with a more forceful directive action. This relates to findings in Chapter 5 suggesting that the turn design of directives can work to manage, limit, or remove potential contingencies that might interfere with compliance once the directive has been issued. Checking for contingencies before delivering forceful directive utterances is an alternative resource for accomplishing the goal of removing barriers to compliance.

Directive implicative utterances also afford the recipient some autonomy over their actions by allowing them to self-correct rather than outright ordering them to change their behaviour. Designing the utterance to maximise the degree to which the recipient retains autonomy over their own actions is one approach to dealing with the central conflict created by a directive; getting the job done versus maintaining each participant's status as an independent actor in the interaction. Managing these conflicting concerns is a delicate matter that requires the collaboration of all parties involved in the directive sequence. Directive actions vary widely in the extent to which they impinge on the recipient's autonomy.

The design of the implicit directive utterances considered in Chapter 3 also provided for the possibility of reissuing the directive later if compliance was not forthcoming. This highlights an often exercised feature of directive turn design that, if



not complied with, the directive can be reissued in a more entitled, less contingent form providing the first attempt has not maximised both dimensions.

In this early analytic chapter we can begin to see the indications of the types of concerns that need to be managed when launching a directive action (potential contingencies, the recipient's autonomy in the interaction, and the speaker's entitlement to direct). Each of these facets to directive actions can be tracked through the other analytic chapters, bolstering claims for a family of related activities making use of different resources to accomplish the same interactional goal of getting someone to do what you tell them.

#### *Chapter 4 - Directives II: Sequences*

In the next analytic chapter, the research interest shifted from the directive utterance itself to the broader sequence of interaction in which the directive turn was located. The aim was to outline the typical pattern for directive actions and suggest some of the ways in which the local organisation of both sequence and preference contributed to the performance of the action. In summary, the prototypical directive sequence consisted of:

1. A **directive utterance** that is sequentially disjunctive to the prior talk and cuts across the ongoing topic without orienting to it
2. An **embodied response** that typically complies with the directive action
3. A **gap** in the verbal conversation that provides sequential time and space proportionate to the time reasonably required to demonstrate compliance
4. A **next utterance** that is topically disjunctive with the directive sequences and does not comment on or evaluate either the directive or the response

The prototypical sequence began with a topically and sequentially disjunctive directive utterance. Some explanation for the disruptive start to directive sequences can be found in the fact that a verbal directive, although disjunctive with the verbal interaction, was positioned just after instances of potentially unacceptable embodied behaviour, thereby claiming an immediate and locally occasioned warrant to break into the ongoing talk outside of a transition relevant place (TRP) (Sacks et al., 1974). This

created a sense in which the target behaviour required immediate remedial action, thus boosting the entitlement of the directive speaker to control the recipient's actions by answering an urgent and immediate need.

The work on preference organisation suggests that face threatening or disaffiliative actions (of which directives can be considered an example) are normally considered dispreferred actions and are consequently withheld in interaction relative to points they might otherwise be delivered (Heritage, 1984; Lerner, 1996; Pomerantz, 1987; Robinson & Bolden, 2010; Schegloff, 2007). By initiating a directive action in an upfront, interruptive fashion, rather than withholding or delaying it, the directive speaker signals that, at that moment, they are not concerned with potentially threatening the recipient's face, and are more concerned with getting the directed action performed. Violating the preference structure is another example of the resources available to participants for displaying their entitlement to override the recipient's participation rights and tell them what to do.

Directive actions typically gained embodied compliance as a response from the recipient. The embodied character of the second-pair-part helps to account for the gap in the verbal conversation that also typically followed a directive utterance. This gap provided sequential time and space for the performance of compliance within the turn taking structure but was policed by the participants to ensure it was of an acceptable length, commensurate with the time reasonably required to perform the relevant act of compliance. The occasional uneasiness of managing the length of the gap reflects the difficulties encountered by participants, as well as analysts, when trying to incorporate embodied actions into the verbal turn taking structure. That is, although an embodied action can fulfil one part of an adjacency pair, it is often far harder to identify when the turn is complete for an embodied action than for a verbal utterance where grammar, action, and prosody all contribute to recognising points of possible completion (Sacks et al., 1974).

Typically the silence caused by the participants was broken by a topically disjunctive next utterance that launched a new topic of conversation without referencing any aspect of the directive sequence. In so doing it served to get away from the troubles associated with trying to control someone else's actions and to start the conversation afresh (Jefferson, 1984a). The fact that directive sequences need to be got away from with a clean break offers some evidence that directives are a problematic

social action in interaction. The work done by participants to bracket off the directive sequence as a self-contained pocket, different from normal topic talk, points towards the inherent threat to intersubjectivity involved in overriding and revoking an interlocutor's status as an independent, autonomous agent in the interaction by claiming the right to tell them what to do. The distinct boundaries of the directive sequence are organised to limit and contain the intersubjectively risky character of telling someone what to do within the sequence itself rather than letting it colour the conversation as a whole.

### Chapter 5 – Directives III: Entitlement and Contingency in Action

In Chapter 5 I picked up the notion of entitlement that had emerged during the preceding analyses and considered it in more detail through multiple repeat directives delivered in the same sequence of talk. This chapter examined what resources the turn design of a directive utterance offers the speaker for managing the social action of directing. The analysis presented in Chapter 5 found that imperative directives project compliance rather than acceptance as the preferred response option. In fact, in strongly entitled directives, compliance was typically projected as the only relevant responsive action because the design of the directive worked to remove or manage any contingencies that the recipient might have drawn on to avoid complying. By not requiring acceptance, the directive speaker can position himself or herself as fully entitled to direct the recipient. A maximally entitled directive literally treats the recipient as having no say in his or her own conduct.

The study of multiple successive attempts to bring about a change in behaviour offered clear evidence that the same behaviour change can be signalled using several different formulations that vary in the degree to which they polarise the two dimensions of entitlement and contingency. The various formulations of directives evidenced in the multiple repeats collection highlight the rich and finely tuned set of resources available within the turn design of a directive for speakers to vary how strongly their utterance asserts control over the recipient's right to be in charge of their own behaviour.

I found that successive directives in a sequence tended to contain heightened claims of entitlement and reduced or minimised orientation to contingencies that might prevent compliance. This offers evidence to support my suggestion that strongly entitled directives are a dispreferred first-pair-part. If the desired change in behaviour can be

effected with a less or non-face threatening action (e.g., a noticing or suggesting that has the implication of a directive embedded within it) then it would be a preferred action format and is more likely to occur earlier in the interaction. The data showed that more entitled formulations were withheld in interaction in favour of less entitled formulations relative to points where they might otherwise be relevantly performed. Thus the more strongly disaffiliative, and therefore more dispreferred, directives were held back in sequences until it became clear that less forceful attempts at behaviour modification had failed.

The above finding appears to somewhat contradict the finding in Chapter 4 that directives break into ongoing talk, giving no indication of having been withheld in favour of a less entitled action. Both breaking into the conversation in an aggravated fashion (Chapter 4) and prefacing more entitled attempts with less entitled ones (Chapter 5) were evidenced in the data, so both clearly occur. I suggest that the contrast exposes the toolkit nature of many of the features of the directive actions under discussion here. Aspects of sequence organisation, preference organisation and turn design, can all be used to tailor the delivery of a directive action to strike different balances on individual occasions between the speaker's goal of getting the required action performed, and their concern for the recipient's goal of maintaining full participation rights in the conversation.

The notion of entitlement was a crucial key to understanding the nature of directive actions. In this chapter it was used to reveal how an entitlement to perform the social action of directing related to and influenced the turn design of directives. Entitlement offers a link between the socially recognisable action of directing and the turn design of the utterance in a way that pragmatics research has struggled to do. It provides both an empirically grounded and theoretically useful construct for understanding the action, practices and social implications of telling someone to do something.

### *Chapter 6 – Responses I: Response Options - Reflections on Compliance, Children and Embodied Conduct*

Chapter 6 was the first of the analytic chapters that dealt with the response rather than the directive utterance itself. In the first half of the chapter I showcased a range of response options found in the data and outlined some basic features of

responding. For example, embodied compliance was the most common response option evidenced in the data. Additionally, compliance was revealed to be the interactionally preferred response to a directive utterance and the backdrop against which other responses can be evaluated. Finally, authority was revealed to be the end product of collaborative effort between the participants in a directive sequence rather than an inherent feature of an isolated speaker. Claims of entitlement needed to be ratified by the recipient in order for them to constitute evidence of deontic authority in interaction.

In the second half of Chapter 6 I considered in more detail, with reference to the wider literature, some of the issues that were shown to have a bearing on directive actions in family interaction: namely who controls the agency for an action, the scope and peculiarities of children’s participation in interaction, and the role of embodied conduct for the performance of actions in interaction. The principal aim of the chapter was to familiarise the reader with the territory of responses and highlight some of the key concerns for participants when responding to directive actions. Chapter 6 served to point out and contextualise for the reader some of the major issues that would then be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 7.

### *Chapter 7 - Responses II: Incipient Compliance*

Chapter 7 is the culmination of all the findings gleaned from the earlier chapters and applied to the analysis of a specific response format (incipient compliance and verbal reformulation). In this chapter I aimed to explicate the actions and practices observed in the data and to describe how these local activities worked to accomplish the more abstract social action of retaining autonomy over one’s own behaviour.

One of the key findings from Chapter 7 was the systematic observation of incipient compliance in action. Schegloff (1989) anecdotally recorded one example of the phenomenon during his discussion of language development through interaction. I have found it to be systematically deployed as a directive response. By the term incipient compliance I mean to describe (typically embodied) actions that:

- Receipt the prior utterance nonverbally, treat it as a directive action and display an orientation to comply with the directive.

- Project compliance as being ‘in the offing’, thereby forestalling a repeated or upgraded directive.
- Shift full compliance away from direct sequential adjacency to the directive utterance, making it less clear whether it is a responsive action.

Embodied incipient compliance immediately displayed an orientation towards compliance as a soon-to-be-performed action. This bought sequential space for the recipient to deliver a verbal turn that challenged the epistemic and/or deontic entitlement of the directive speaker and reformulated the ongoing action as self-motivated rather than compliant. The combination of the two responses enabled recipients to reclaim the agency for their actions.

I hope to have shown that retaining control of the agency for one’s actions is an ongoing concern for all participants in interaction and a particularly relevant concern for directive recipients. Directives generate an asymmetry between participants by claiming primary epistemic and deontic rights in relation to the ongoing action. Incipient compliance and verbal reformulations ostensibly go along with the course of action projected by the directive, but seize primary rights in relation to the ongoing behaviour both epistemically (to assess and describe the action) and deontically (to make decisions about and control the action). This means that, when responding to a directive, the action performed is not actually compliance, but is an arguably identical physical movement that forms part of the recipient’s normal, self-motivated individual mealtime behaviour.

Incipient compliance and verbal reformulations form part of the toolkit of response options available to recipients. However, as a combined practice, they make a complicated pair and require precise timing. Incipient compliance and verbal reformulations are more likely to be successful at preserving the recipient’s autonomy in situations where:

- The directive is responsive to a preceding action by the recipient.
- The directive is immediate rather than future oriented.
- Compliance is something that will take time to produce and can have preparatory steps.

- Speakers are willing to wait for compliance before upgrading or repeating the directive.

These features may help to account for why this response type is not more common within the data. Nevertheless, studying the cases available has exposed a major underlying concern motivating the behaviour of the recipients (retaining their autonomy) in the same way as the notion of entitlement helped to explicate and account for the wide variety of directive formulations used by speakers.

### Conceptualising directives

The data presented here contained a wide spectrum of formulations that appeared to be working towards getting someone to do something. These varied in the extent to which they foregrounded the speaker's will or the recipient's autonomy. The conventional usage of the term 'directive' seems to easily apply to the more entitled utterances (e.g., finish your fish<sup>47</sup>), but where the attempt to change the recipient's behaviour is more veiled (e.g., Mum's nod in Extract 3.3) squeezing the data to fit into an abstract category like 'directive' becomes increasingly an exercise in interpretive gymnastics than an empirically driven analysis. What can be stated is that the recipient treated both a bald imperative (e.g., sit straight<sup>48</sup>) and an ostensibly casual noticing (e.g., "you've still got beans left haven't you?" in Extract 3.2) as an attempt to get them to do something. That is the territory of actions with which the thesis has been concerned. Whether the behaviour modification attempt is traditionally described as a directive, request, suggestion, or challenge does not alter the basic social action (telling someone to do something). Therefore, the core concerns identified in the thesis for speakers (getting the action done) and recipients (having control over their own behaviour) seem to remain relevant regardless of how the directive utterance is formulated.

This thesis extends previous work within CA into the many acts through which people can get others to do things (e.g., requests (Curl & Drew, 2008; Heinemann, 2006; Lindstrom, 2005; Wootton, 1997), orders/commands (Ahearn, 2001; Cekaite, 2010; Craven & Potter, 2010; M Goodwin, 1980; M Goodwin, 2006; Vine, 2009; West, 1990), advice giving (Hepburn & Potter, 2011b; Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Pilnick, 1999;

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<sup>47</sup> Amberton\_1\_12\_57

<sup>48</sup> Amberton\_2\_1\_116

Vehvilainen, 2009), and complaints (Drew, 1998; Heinemann & Traverso, 2009)). However, it important to note that there are other ways of getting someone to do something that are not covered here (e.g., offers, threats, or bribes).<sup>49</sup> Most of this thesis has been concerned with explicitly directive actions. This addressed the research interest in how to get someone to do something because the more forceful formulations like “sit up straight” made *telling someone what to do* explicit and so brought the action of directing to the surface of the interaction and facilitated observations about how it was managed. An important aspect of the work was to identify the key interests or concerns for directive speakers and recipients. For the speaker, the core interest is in making sure the action they are directing gets done. In practice this could be achieved through a wide range of formulations. For example the speaker can use a directive implicative utterance (perhaps more conventionally called hint, suggestion, or proposal) to signal the ‘to be performed’ action but allow the recipient to perform it on their own terms. Conversely, the speaker can use fully entitled directives that explicitly discount the recipient’s capacities and desires and demand the speaker’s will is carried out. There is also a middle ground whereby the speaker can use a formulation like a modal request, which acknowledges (to varying degrees) the recipient’s capacities and desires. Regardless of how the utterance is formulated, the speaker’s goal remains to get the job done.

For the recipient the core concern appears to be retaining control over his or her own behaviour. Speakers could attend to the recipient’s autonomy in the formulation of their utterance (even if their often chose to disregard or override it). Recipients also attended closely to their own agency within the course of the action. They could fully comply, abandoning autonomy in the face of the speaker’s will. They could resist the directive, refusing to relinquish control of their behaviour. Or, through the delicate and precise design of their response they could find a line between the two extremes. A clear example of the middle ground is the balance between incipient embodied compliance, verbal reformulation, and self-motivated behaviour matching compliance that was outlined in Chapter 7. The incipient compliance response package does perform the action demanded by the speaker, but only after the conditions of sequential relevance within the interaction have been adapted such that the recipient is engaged in self-motivated behaviour rather than compliance.

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<sup>49</sup> It remains to be seen how far the notions of entitlement, contingency and a preference for autonomy can be applied to a wider range of social control actions including offers, threats and bribes.



If the directive speaker chooses a low entitlement / high contingency formulation they may be able to get the job done without threatening the recipient's autonomy. The risk is that the recipient might fail to perform the projected action. However, as the multiple directives collection in Chapter 5 shows, there is a system for successive upgrading in repeat directives to progressively heighten the speaker's entitlement and lower the contingencies available to the recipient for resistance. Where a directive utterance is positioned along the dimensions of entitlement and contingency determines the relative importance the speaker places on the conflicting interests of a) getting the job done, and b) each participant having control of his or her own behaviour.

For the recipient, full compliance satisfies the speaker's interests and avoids the conflict or argumentative threat to intersubjectivity but it requires sacrificing autonomy over their own actions. Relinquishing control over your own actions risks rendering the interaction redundant. There is no intersubjectivity required if there is only one subject position in evidence. Much of being a participant in interaction rests on being a separate entity to your interlocutor; otherwise you're just the speaker reading someone else's speech (c.f. Goffman, 1981). All out resistance preserves the recipient's sense of autonomy but fails to address the speaker's goal and so risks an upgraded repeat directive and escalation of the incipient conflict. When faced with being in second position to a directive the recipient has to weigh up the risks and benefits of any response they might give and try to chart a course through the conflicting interests to avoid a breakdown in intersubjectivity that could sink the conversation.

Therefore I suggest that the practices outlined in Chapters 3-7 represent resources available to participants for managing the social action of getting someone to do something and the associated risks to personhood and intersubjectivity. I argue it is unhelpful to conceptualise a directive as a speech act or even as a distinct social action in interaction. Instead, I suggest that directive type actions are a collective gloss that can be used to describe resources used to get someone to do something while managing (however permissively or dictatorially) the rights of the other party to determine their own behaviour.

## Implications and Contributions

In addition to contributing to our understanding of directive actions in interaction, the current study has the potential to contribute to the existing bodies of research relating to *power and authority*, *children's socialisation and development* and *the organisation of talk-in-interaction*. I will now briefly outline the contributions of the current study and the areas in which further work is required.

### *Power and authority*

Canonical studies of directives have taken up the problems of the myriad linguistic formulations available for directive work and have focused on classifying these in terms of the level of direct control exerted by the speaker (e.g., Blum-Kulka, 1997; Ervin-Tripp, 1976). This led to the conceptualisation of directives within the research literature as a display of power or an assertion of the speaker's authority over the recipient. The approach adopted here stepped back from analyst-derived classifications and used the orientation of the participants themselves and the notion of entitlement (see, Curl & Drew, 2008; Heinemann, 2006; Lindstrom, 2005) as displayed in situ by the participants as a starting point for analysis. This crucially moved away from static concepts of power and authority and looked instead at how the actions of the participants in any given moment of interaction served to heighten or flatten asymmetries between them.

To some extent the analysis can be seen to support the notion of a directive as a forceful display of control. For example, overt directives were shown to embody a heightened claim of entitlement to control the recipient's action in comparison to more contingent request forms. The entitlement claimed was to tell rather than to ask. Additionally, speakers were shown to design their directives to restrict the recipient's scope for responding to solely compliance. In so doing they worked to bypass the recipient's right to refuse to go along with the proposed course of action (Chapter 5). Directives were also shown to often violate normal turn taking and sequence organisation structures by breaking into ongoing courses of action to launch their own project (i.e., getting the recipient to do what they are told). Overt directives showed considerable lack of regard for conversational conventions, particularly their

interlocutors right to finish their current TCU or to take the floor for the next turn (Chapter 4).

The speaker can recruit both the timing and the manner in which directives are delivered to enhance the sense in which they have the authority to override the autonomy of the recipient both as an interactional partner and as a separate and independent social actor. The act of telling someone to do something is clearly an assertive action and several of the features outlined above could be used to argue that directives are a privileged resource of those ‘in authority’.

However, the bald, on the record, directives examined in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are only one small part of a heterogeneous collection of related actions. The successively upgraded directives in Chapter 5 clearly highlighted how different formulations can be used to try and get the same action done. Directive utterances can be designed to maximise the speaker’s entitlement but they can also be formulated to foreground the recipient’s knowledge and agency. In Chapter 3, speakers attempting to get someone to do something were shown to make use of utterances I have roughly glossed as being directive implicative. That is, utterances in which the directive is just an implication embedded within a non-directive surface form utterance (e.g., ‘You’ve still got some beans left haven’t you?’ in Extract 3.2). These types of utterances oriented closely to issues of autonomy and agency in interaction. They enabled the directive speaker to display a concern for the recipient’s sense of autonomy and active participation in the interaction. Crucially, they offered an opportunity for the implicitly proposed course of action to be acted on before the speaker went ‘on the record’ as claiming a forceful entitlement to control the recipient’s behaviour.

Traditional conceptualisations of authority as an essential character trait of a ‘powerful person’ (such as a parent) have failed to stand up to empirical examination (see Braine, Pomerantz et al., 1991) and cannot account for the subtle, situated management of local entitlements observed in my data. Consequently, a more situated and fine-grained understanding of authority is required in order to explicate the action that takes place during directive sequences. The notion of entitlement is one attempt at providing a more nuanced understanding of the concerns being oriented to by participants during the exchanges that constitute a directive and its response (Craven & Potter, 2010; Curl & Drew, 2008; Heinemann, 2006).

Philosophical work on authority has postulated two main domains: epistemic and deontic. Epistemic authority relates to knowledge and concerns who has the right to know what. This aspect of authority has received serious and careful attention from conversation analysts (e.g., Drew, 1991; Heritage & Raymond, Forthcoming; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Perakyla, 1998; Perakyla, 2002; Raymond, 2000). Such work has shown how participants orient closely to the issue of who knows what and that they use delicate and precise interactional practices to manage “their relative access to, or rights to assess, knowledge, events, behaviour, and the like in specific, locally organized sequences of talk” (Raymond & Heritage, 2006, p681). In contrast, deontic authority relates to decisions and obligations and is concerned with who can set the rules about what should be done, or “who prevails in decision making” (Allsopp, 1996; Bochenski, 1974; Lukes, 1979, p636; Peters, 1967; Walton, 1997). This aspect of authority is just beginning to receive interest from within CA. However, recent findings suggest that, just like epistemic authority, “deontic authority is an interactional accomplishment, claimed, displayed, and negotiated at the level of turn-by-turn unfolding of the interaction” (Stevanovic & Perakyla, Under editorial consideration, p tbc).

These two domains of authority (epistemic and deontic) are distinct but related, and often co-occur in similar circumstances such as planning future actions: “we both *know* our plans and *decide* about them” (Stevanovic, 2011, p3). Chapter 7 in particular highlighted how issues of deontic and epistemic rights can become intertwined. For example verbal responses to directives often asserted the recipients’ primary epistemic access to their own body and challenged that asserted by the directive speaker (e.g., Daisy’s assessment of her mouthful as “finished” in Extract 7.3). Asserting epistemic rights from second position was a relatively unproblematic matter for Daisy in Extract 7.3. It was her mouth; she had unassailable access to it, and shows no compunction in telling Mum that she had finished. In contrast, the negotiation of who had primary rights to make decisions about future actions (complying with a directive or engaging in self motivated behaviour) was an altogether subtler affair with the outcome designedly fuzzy. Although both epistemic and deontic rights are involved in directive sequences they appear to be treated as distinct concerns and negotiated separately.

The current study contributes to the development of an empirically grounded conceptualisation of authority in interaction and builds on earlier work concerned with how speakers claim the right to make decisions about their own, or other people’s future actions (Cekaite, 2010; Curl & Drew, 2008; M Goodwin, 1980; Heinemann, 2006;

Jones, 1992; Pufahl-Bax, 1986; Stevanovic, 2011; Vine, 2009; West, 1990; Wootton, 1997). It highlights the need to take situated meanings and sequential understandings into account and to avoid assuming that social roles or perceived status hierarchies grant an automatic entitlement to direct. It also demonstrates the importance of studying the responses offered to directives for the vital role recipients play in determining whether a claim of entitlement is ratified or not. Of particular interest for the study of authority in action is the finding that recipients can blur the degree to which their response can be treated as compliance (Chapter 7). Consequently they can blur the degree to which the speaker's claim of primary deontic rights are realised. The current work demonstrates a need for a future programme of work to research deontic rights in interaction that can mirror the work conducted into epistemic rights and develop a fuller account of authority in interaction.

### *Children's socialisation and development*

It is an inescapable feature of the data presented here that parents are telling children what to do: that the entitlement claimed by parents when issuing a directive is an entitlement to control the actions of their own child. The rights of parents (and of adults more generally) to control children's behaviours and interactions are almost universally unchallenged within both popular culture and the research literature (Charles & Kerr, 1985; Cheal, 2002; Nock, 1987). Therefore some could argue that their claimed entitlement to direct is a feature of their category bound identity as a 'parent'.

In this study I have taken very seriously the guiding premise for CA that the scope of the analysis should be limited to that which is demonstrably oriented to by the participants in the interaction. As such I have found compelling evidence that children do not meekly accept their parents' control attempts (Chapter 5 and Chapter 7). Neither do they universally reject all attempts to get them to do something (Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Chapter 6). Instead, each directive action is dealt with on its own terms within bounded sequences of interaction where risks to personhood and intersubjectivity can be negotiated and managed collaboratively by the participants. Similarly, parents showed great variation in how overt or disguised the directive nature of utterance was (Chapter 3 and Chapter 5). Consequently to assume that a speaker's parental status grants them an unequivocal entitlement to direct risks overlooking the subtleties of their manipulation of directive utterances in talk.

However, it is also true to say that within the mealtime context the overwhelming majority of directive actions were initiated by parents to children (Figure 3.1). There is therefore more going on than just a local claim of entitlement to control another's behaviour in order to accomplish a specific task. There is an observable difference between parents and children in terms of the manner and scope of their participation in the interaction. Thus some consideration is required of the (quasi-) membership statuses of family members and how directive actions might both point to participation differences and contribute to children's development towards full membership (Forrester, 2002; Forrester & Reason, 2006; Forrester, 2010; Watson, 1992).

The exact processes through which children become fully socialised, competent members of adult society are not fully understood. Sociologists broadly agree that the family environment is pivotally important for the socialisation process (Nock, 1987) and that interactions between family members are understood to offer a vehicle for the transmission of socioculturally relevant messages (Ochs & Shohet, 2006). But, bridging the gap between detailed microanalyses of children's interactions and theories of socialisation has proved challenging (Gardner & Forrester, 2010).

Wootton (2005) suggests that speech act analysis and sociolinguistic traditions are well suited to conducting correlational or content analyses addressing the distribution and differentiation of different directive formulations issued by parents to their children. However, he argues that "tracing the ongoing dynamics of conversation sequences" and tracking the potential relevance of wider social parameters like who the child was speaking to, other people's rights and entitlements, or whether there exists a local basis for assuming the recipient's co-operation (Wootton, 1997), are more suited to conversation analytic approaches that "give priority to examining how turns at talk are shaped by, and for, the sequences in which they occur" (Wootton, 2005, p187). Thus, CA provides an apparatus within which it becomes possible to examine the situated practices parents use in their attempts to shape their children's behaviour, and to explicate how and when broader issues for socialisation (e.g., authority, autonomy, and moral accountability) are made relevant for the participants in the interaction.

The current study provides evidence that parents use a myriad of directive formulations to get others to do things. Thus children are exposed to a wide variety of

different directive actions and the variations in entitlement that accompany them. Parental directives require a response, typically compliance, and can halt the progressivity of the conversation until compliance is delivered (Chapter 5). Children don't just observe their parents' directive use, they are on the receiving end of it and so have frequent opportunities to develop and refine their own set of practical responsive actions. Children also receive immediate feedback within the conversation about the sequential consequences for every response option they attempt. For example, resistance was shown to typically elicit upgraded repeat directives that progressively restrict the children's scope for responding autonomously (Chapter 5), whereas a subtler approach using incipient compliance was found to hold off a repeat directive and provide space to reformulate the ongoing action as self motivated (Chapter 6). The subtleties of the directive-response exchanges outlined in this thesis offer a rich practice ground in which children are exposed to practical and situated displays of authority and are forced to learn to react appropriately.

Strongly entitled directives fully restrict the response options to just compliance (sometimes through forced physical manipulation). This provides a very strong indicator to the recipient of what constitutes acceptable behaviour in that specific situation. In adult-adult conversation, entitled directives appear to be invasive and face threatening social actions (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967). However, the same might not necessarily be true for children. Kuczynski & Kochanska state "children accept a certain level of control by their parents" (1990: 404). Shakespeare (1998) points out that "because children are not effectively full members, much of their lives is spent in social interactions that offer them directives concerning how to achieve full membership" (1998: 25). Having a clear steer towards an appropriate and acceptable response action may in fact facilitate successful participation in the interaction and offer a scaffold around which the child can build their set of discursive resources.

Cekaite (2010) studied physical manipulation during directives (arguably the most highly entitled form of getting someone to do something is physically moving their body for them). She stated that "verbal directives position the child as responsible and trustworthy, i.e., able to bring about the requested action by himself" (2010: 21). Verbal directives therefore already appear to represent a step back from fully controlling the child's actions, and a step closer towards them being treated as a fully competent member in the interaction.

Whether an interlocutor is treated as a full member can be granted or withheld on the basis of “presumed potential to perform appropriately” (Forrester, 2010, p46). For example, in everyday interactions with strangers we assume they are fully capable of holding a conversation. However, ultimately membership involves actual performance in interactions where the relevant skills and competencies can be demonstrated and tested in situ. The analysis has shown how resources relating to the turn design (Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5), sequence organisation (Chapter 4) and preference organisation (Chapter 4 and Chapter 5) of directive actions are all drawn on in order to manage the conflicting goals of getting someone to do something versus being an autonomous participant in the interaction. I would like to suggest that as the child begins to master the deployment of these interactive tools for responding to directives, their ability to exert their autonomy increases and directive actions become the face threatening act recognisable as such between adults rather than the helpful indication of an appropriate next action it may once have been.

Of course parents don’t just magically know when their child has mastered the skills of interaction and can be treated as a fully competent member. The child will need to consistently demonstrate ‘eating nicely with a knife and fork’ before the parent will stop directing them to do so. Equally, just because they can use a knife and fork correctly does not mean parents will cease directing them to ‘stop talking with a full mouth’. Mastery in one area does not mean mastery in all areas. However, evidence suggests that the type of directive used might vary with age, allowing progressively more autonomy to remain with the child. For example, Cekaite (2010) found that parents exerted a greater degree of embodied control over younger children through tactile steering than for older children. Similarly, Smetana (1988) found that the domains in which children perceived adults as entitled to direct (e.g., telling children to stop fighting, or telling children who they could be friends with) were seen to contract with increasing age during adolescence as children gained independence from their parents in more areas of their life (in, Braine, Pomerantz et al., 1991).

This thesis focused on developing an account of the action, practices, and social implications of directive actions in mealtime conversations. As such it is beyond its scope to do more than speculate about the role of directive actions in socialisation. However, there is a newly developing body of ethnomethodologically informed developmental work interested in how “participant members themselves orient to the host of constructs, ideas, and social practices associated with the social object



‘development’, ‘childhood’ or ‘stage-of-life’” (Forrester, 2010, p45). This type of work has the potential to investigate situations where a child’s quasi-membership status in interaction is made relevant and examine if or how it can be shown to impact on their ability to participate.

### *The organisation of talk-in-interaction*

The primary focus of the thesis on directive actions does not prevent it from being able to contribute to broader theories of action formation and the organisation of talk-in-interaction. For example the highly embodied nature of many responses to directives presented an opportunity to consider the role of embodied actions relative to the turn taking structure of verbal interaction described by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974). Similarly the disaffiliative nature of directive actions provided scope for a consideration of the preference organisation of initiating actions in an environment not previously reported.

### *Embodied actions in conversations*

Embodied actions have been crucial to the analysis and the conclusions arising from it. I would therefore like to comment on a few observations about embodied conduct within interaction. The analysis revealed the unusual status of embodied conduct within the turn-taking structure of conversations. The data showed that embodied conduct could operate both inside and outside the turn-taking structure. In the examples of full-embodied compliance the embodied action of complying occupied the position of a second pair part directly responding to the directive. Incipient compliance also stood in second position within the turn-taking structure and projected a future action. But incipient compliance could continue through subsequent turns of talk, thereby moving out of the turn-taking structure and allowing any subsequent compliance to be treated as self-motivated eating, a normal part of mealtime behaviour and not sequentially relevant. Part of the problem for researchers trying to study embodied conduct in the same way as they study verbal interaction may be due to the fact that participants can and do exploit the non turn-based nature of embodied conduct

to accomplish actions-in-interaction. The very ambiguity between gestures and random movements offers participants a resource to draw on in interaction<sup>50</sup>.

One element of embodied conduct that I have not discussed yet is the embodied action that prompted the directive. In many of the extracts studied it was an action on the part of the recipient that led to the directive being issued. For example in Extract 7.2 Daisy was talking with her mouthful and in Extract 7.5 Lucy was playing with her cereal with her fingers. The analysis demonstrated participants can and do monitor the embodied conduct of their interlocutors and can hold them to account for it through “retro-sequences” initiated with directive actions (Schegloff, 2007, p217). In Extract 7.3 Mum waited until Jessica has placed her empty glass on the table before issuing the directive for her to finish her soup. Here the monitoring of embodied conduct served a different purpose, namely to allow Mum to select the opportune moment to deliver the directive. As soon as Jessica put her glass down she was momentarily unoccupied. Mum seized on that moment to direct a new course of action. This suggests that although embodied conduct need not always be treated as sequentially relevant to the interaction it is always available for monitoring, comment, and topicalisation within talk.

Conversation analysts struggle when deciding whether or not to include embodied conduct in analyses of co-present interaction (e.g., Goodwin, 1996; 2002b; Schegloff, 2007). In the past technological limitations may have restricted our ability to obtain video data, which in turn restricted analysis to audio data but such is no longer the case. With the wide availability of video recording equipment and the increasing ease with which such data can be manipulated and stored, more and more researchers are having to tackle the dilemma of *how* to study messy, non-sequential embodied actions alongside the neat turn-taking structures of verbal actions. Participants appear to treat embodied conduct as potentially relevant. In the data analysed here, participants couldn’t always be certain whether an action would be picked up and topicalised by a co-participant or not (see Daisy’s surreptitious eating of broccoli to avoid being noticed by Mum on line 24 Extract 7.1). The issue of relevance is as much a murky concept for participants as it is for analysts. I don’t think there is anything wrong

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<sup>50</sup> In relation to participation rights, this study offers evidence that participants who have been sequentially disenfranchised from their normal participation framework (such as recipients of directive actions) can, without much difficulty, switch to alternative modalities in which they have not be disenfranchised (embodied conduct). This highlights the competence of interactants to switch between multiple modalities depending on the precise interactional requirements at the time.

in being cautious when studying embodied action, after all, are we not all sometimes cautious about how our embodied actions may be interpreted by the people we're talking to?

### *Preference organisation*

In Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 I presented evidence to support my claim that telling someone to do something is a dispreferred action and that more strongly entitled directive actions are progressively more dispreferred and so held back within the conversation relative to points they could have first been relevantly performed. This finding advances the developing body of work on the preference structure of initiating actions by introducing another type of action (directives) to the burgeoning collection of dispreferred FPPs (see Figure 4.3). It suggests that, instead of participants having just a binary preferred / dispreferred choice, there are more and less dispreferred formulations available within the turn-design of an utterance for managing the disaffiliative nature of dispreferred actions.

In Chapter 6 I offered evidence for compliance being the preferred response option following directives. This finding was very closely related to the observation in Chapter 5 that if recipients resisted complying (a dispreferred response) then subsequent repeat directives worked to systematically remove or control contingencies preventing compliance and to fully restrict the available response option to only compliance; risking, in the process, a breakdown in intersubjectivity and progressivity.

In Chapter 7 I outlined an alternative response option: Through a combination of embodied incipient compliance and a verbal reformulation of the ongoing action, recipients could regain control of the agency for their actions, treat it as self-motivated behaviour rather than compliance and, ultimately, retain their autonomy and status as an independent actor in the interaction: quite a feat for a four-year-old!

In Chapter 7 I discussed the similarity between incipient compliance and Heritage and Raymond's (Forthcoming) repetitional responses to polar questions. Both appear designed to assert primary rights to assess and describe the action from second position. Waring (2007) has described two contrastive techniques for accepting advice in interaction 1) type conforming, unproblematic acceptance characterised as "the simple 'okay', 'Got it', and the like", and 2) more complex acceptance embodying claims

of comparable thinking or mitigating accounts (2007: 108). She argues that the more complex acceptance formats “are designed to forestall the interpretation of acceptance as mindless compliance” by asserting the agency of the recipient and displaying his or her “identity as an independent, thoughtful, engaged co-participant in the advising process” (Waring, 2007, p113). She suggests the contrasting response formats can be taken as evidence for a *preference for autonomy* that competes with the *preference for acceptance* in response to advice giving. I suggest that a similar *preference for autonomy* can also be observed to compete with the *preference for compliance* in directive responses that use incipient compliance and verbal reformulations to reclaim the agency for the ongoing action and assert primary deontic rights from second position. A preference for autonomy also helps to account for the dispreferred nature of directives themselves in favour of more implicit formulations that a) maximise the recipient’s scope for designing their response and b) allow them to self-correct on their own terms (Chapter 3).

### Future Directions

In this thesis I have tried to explicate the nature of directive actions during family mealtimes. In so doing, I have inevitably raised more questions than I could have hoped to answer in one document. In this section I will briefly collect together some of the limitations and unanswered questions from the current study and propose future lines of enquiry and areas in need of further clarification.

I have outlined one way of conceptualising directive actions, which draws on the situated relevance of notions such as entitlement, contingencies, and autonomy as oriented to by participants in interaction. Through the analysis I have shown how speakers can design their directive utterance to look like, for example, a noticing of beans on a plate (Extract 3.2) and in so doing manipulate the display of entitlement and contingencies to maximise the recipient’s agency for designing their own response and preserve their autonomy over their own conduct. Alternatively I have shown how speakers can deliver a forceful order for the recipient to, for example, finish their fish (Extract 6.5), in which the speaker treats themselves as fully entitled to control the recipient’s actions, disregards the recipient’s will or capacity in relation to the action

and permits the recipient little or no autonomy over their own conduct.<sup>51</sup> The notions of entitlement, contingencies and autonomy/agency offer a means of accounting for the huge variety of sequential and syntactic designs of directive actions and responses observed in the data and reported by other researchers (e.g., Curl & Drew, 2008; Ervin-Tripp, 1976; House & Kasper, 1981; Liebling, 1988; Wootton, 2005; Wootton, 1981). Crucially my account of the situated action of directing rests on features of the interaction that have been shown to be relevant for participants at that moment rather than drawing on abstract theoretical concepts or broader social categories that may or may not be consequential for the parties involved in the talk.

However, I can offer no account for how related behaviours like offers, threats, accusations or complaints might make relevant similar concerns for participants or whether they are influenced by other considerations. For example, offers (Curl, 2006) might tentatively be distinguished from requests on the basis of who would benefit from the projected action (Clayman, 2011; Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006). Threats are recurrent features of the family mealtime data and further work will be needed to establish how far these actions are more extreme forms of the directive actions studied here and how much they have their own social organisation. Initial work with threats suggests they have a complex organisation of their own (Hepburn & Potter, 2011a). A final family resemblance that warrants further investigation relates to the moral element of directing. Demanding someone changes his or her behaviour contains an inherent moral judgement that the current behaviour is in some way wrong. As I have noted in passing at various points throughout the thesis, directives share some characteristics with accusations, challenges, admonishments and complaints (e.g. Drew, 1998; Heinemann & Traverso, 2009; Koshik, 2003; Robinson & Bolden, 2010; Trosborg, 1995).

I have not been able to fully unpick the exact nature of the relationship between the closely related family of directive actions including orders, requests, suggestions, and proposals and also potentially offers, threats, and other related behaviours aimed at ‘getting someone to do something’. Systematic study of all formulations used ‘to get someone to do something’ across a range of interaction environments would be required to comprehensively address that issue. I can only hope that this study might form part of the wider effort to understand how we construct and recognise social actions.

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<sup>51</sup> Note also the case of physical manipulation in Extract 5.6 where the recipient is not even permitted to comply by herself but is manhandled into a compliant position with the directive to “move back”.

As has already been discussed, the data presented here are of family conversations between adults and children. This raises issues of competence and membership (both for the participants and for analysts). An interesting avenue for related study would be to look at what directives can reveal about family organisations. How do children’s discursive competencies get oriented to during conversation and what accommodations are made to facilitate their participation in the interaction? In what way does the less-than-full membership of children manifest itself and impact on the organisation of talk? This line of work has the potential to provide a practical interaction-based pathway to addressing core issues of child development and social organization. This may ultimately be a different and more interactionally concrete way into the topic of socialisation than has previously been possible.

The adults and children within the data have been shown to participate differently with regard to initiating directive actions (parents initiate far more than children). Although the exact nature of this difference has not yet been pinned down we cannot ignore the possibility that it might be exacerbating the asymmetries between directive speaker and recipient. Consequently a comparative study of adult participants, free from the issues of competence inherent in studies of children’s language, would reveal how far the conclusions reached here can be taken to apply to all directive actions rather than just those in family mealtime talk. Other task-based settings such as therapy sessions, call centres, or driving lessons might offer fruitful sites for study where the institutional nature of the interaction provides for different potential asymmetries than those found between parent and child.

### Concluding comments

Telling someone what to do is a face threatening and disaffiliative social action that involves claiming primary deontic rights and an entitlement to control a co-present interlocutor’s behaviour. Directives are highly situated actions that vary in terms of how overtly they display the speaker’s claim of entitlement. When a speaker initiates a directive action, they (to a greater or lesser extent) claim the right to control the recipient’s actions. Consequently, when a directive utterance is delivered in the interaction, a deontic asymmetry is created between the participants. The recipient

must then respond to and manage the asymmetry. They can either choose to ratify the speaker's entitlement (through compliance) or reject the speaker's claim (through defiance or resistance). Refusing to comply typically led to an upgraded repeat directive and a tighter restriction of the response options unless work was done to disguise the non-compliant nature of the response (e.g., incipient compliance and verbal reformulations). For directive recipients, a key determinant in how they respond appears to be how they manage the conflicting preferences made relevant by the directive action: a preference for compliance and a preference for autonomy.

In order for a directive to be taken as actual evidence of the speaker's entitlement to control the recipient's actions, the recipient has to ratify the speaker's claim to entitlement. This means directives are not a one-sided imposition of authority but are a highly collaborative exchange, in which the recipient plays a crucial role in determining the progression, shape and outcome of the negotiations for control of the agency for the ongoing action (or primary deontic rights).

In this thesis I examined the turn-design, sequence organisation, and preference organisation of directive sequences during family mealtimes. I have outlined the practices and resources used by participants in first position to claim the right to tell someone what to do, and how this claim can be ratified, refused, or subverted by participants in second position (compliance, resistance, and incipient compliance with verbal reformulations respectively). I have been amazed by the sophisticated understanding of epistemic and deontic rights displayed by children as young as three-years-old. And astonished at the subtle and delicate techniques such young children have mastered in the service of preserving their autonomy from their parents. Although children are, demonstrably, disenfranchised in many respects during interactions with adults, my hope for this thesis is that it proves that in specific domains, children, even very young ones, can demonstrate the mastery of language required in order to be treated as a full member of the conversation. Consequently, I propose that researchers looking at children's conversations should start from the position of assumed symmetry and full membership status until participants reveal their orientations towards an interlocutor having less than full membership within a given domain.

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# Appendices