

Everyday Interaction in Lesbian Households: Identity Work, Body Behaviour, and Action.

by

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Abstract

This thesis is about the resources that speakers can draw on when producing actions, both verbal and non-vocal. It considers how identity categories, gaze and touch can contribute to action in everyday interactions.

The study stemmed from an interest in how lesbian identity is made relevant by lesbian speakers in everyday co-present interaction. A corpus of approximately 23.5 hours of video-recordings was gathered: households self-designated as lesbian (including couples, families, and housemates) video recorded some of their everyday interactions (including mealtimes, watching television, and playing board games). Using the tools of Conversation Analysis and working with the video recordings and transcripts of the interactions, several ways of making a lesbian identity relevant through talk were identified. As the analysis progressed, it was found that many references to sexual identity were produced fleetingly; they were not part of or integral to the ongoing talk, and were not taken up as a topic by participants. Rather, this ‘invoking’ of a participant’s sexual identity appears to contribute to a particular action that is being produced. It was found that ‘invokings’ of other identities, for example relating to occupation, nationality, and race, worked in a similar way, and this is explored in relation to explanations and accounts.

Where the first half of the thesis focuses on verbal invokings of identity in relation to action, the second half of the thesis considers some of the non-vocal resources that participants incorporate into their actions. It was found that when launching a topic related to something in the immediate environment, speakers can use gaze to ensure reciprocity. Also, when producing potentially face-threatening actions such as teases, reprimands or insults, speakers can use interpersonal touch to mitigate the threat.

In addition to showing how identities can be made relevant in everyday interaction, the findings of this thesis highlight the complexity of action design, and that in co-present interaction the physical resources available to participants also need to be taken into account.

Key terms: conversation analysis, multimodal interaction, action, identity, lesbian, gay, action sequences, gaze, objects, touch.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the thesis

Introduction

One of the key elements of interaction is action: the things that speakers do with their talk. When we interact with each other we produce actions: we greet, we offer, we assess for example. Furthermore, we monitor our interlocutors' talk for the actions that they are in the process of producing, and we produce actions that fit appropriately to the ones that came before. However, it is not just a simple case of a particular utterance doing a particular action. An utterance may do one of several possible actions, or it may do more than one action. How an utterance is interpreted can be influenced by the way it is designed: word choice and how the utterance is delivered prosodically can provide clues. Then in co-present interaction there is the significance of non-vocal behaviours to consider: gaze, gesture and touch, for example. So actions are complex things, and speakers have a variety of resources available for when they produce them.

One source that speakers can draw from for actions is their identity. There are a variety of identities that we can claim for ourselves, related to age, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, occupation, relationships, interests, amongst many others, and they can be made relevant to an interaction in many ways. When an identity is referred to it might be significant to the topic of conversation: in a discussion about experiences of sexism, for example, the participants' identities as female or male might be an important part of the topic. Yet often when identities are referred to they are seemingly not connected to the topic under discussion; it appears that they play a more fleeting role in this circumstance. So how is it that these identities are made relevant, and what are their roles in interaction? In everyday interactions in lesbian households, the significance of sexual identity in relation to topic and action is of particular interest.

In face-to-face interactions participants have more than just their vocal resources to draw on. Gaze, gesture, touch, facial expression, eye movement and head movement can also contribute to individual actions in some way. For example, an action that

verbally and prosodically may be requesting confirmation could in fact be seen to have some teasing property when the facial expression of the speaker is taken into account. Additionally, interpersonal touch between intimates can do more than just display intimacy if it occurs in conjunction with particular actions. So when these physical behaviours occur in an interaction they also appear to have some important interactional role.

This thesis describes some of these resources that speakers make use of when producing actions. Drawing on a corpus of video-recorded everyday interactions in lesbian households, detailed analyses of talk-in-interaction and physical behaviour show the significance that these resources have. Starting with lesbian identity and expanding to other types of identity, it sees how identities are verbally made relevant and what roles they play in interaction. The use of two non-vocal behaviours are then explored in relation to two types of action: gaze and opening new action sequences, and touch and potentially face-threatening actions.

The aim of the thesis is to demonstrate the complexity of actions, and how speakers can draw on various resources to do various things within their actions. One such resource is sexual identity, which while being a useful resource in interaction can be an unremarkable thing, an everyday resource to draw on in the settings of the lesbian households in which these data were recorded.

This chapter will introduce the general areas of research that are relevant to this thesis. It will begin with a discussion of action and how this element of interaction has been approached in research in various disciplines. This will include a discussion of conversation analysis and its appropriateness for investigating action by studying naturally occurring interaction. It will also consider how to approach data of co-present interaction, and the importance of studying non-vocal behaviour in addition to and in conjunction with talk.

Finally, the chapter will move on to how sexual identity has been investigated. The data drawn on for this thesis come from lesbian households, and lesbian identity is a particularly interesting interactional resource to consider in this analysis. Moreover, as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have been underrepresented in classic

conversation analytic research (Kitzinger, 2005a), the data presented in this thesis aims to address this in some small part. Approaches to sexual identity and language and sexuality will therefore be discussed.

Action

Social actions in interaction have been of interest in Philosophy, Linguistics and Sociology. Research has examined the kinds of action that can be done in talk, and the various elements that contribute to how utterances are interpreted as particular types of action.

Speech acts

That utterances do more than just state things was observed by Austin (1962). Where the philosophy of language had previously concentrated on statements, assertions and propositions, Austin noted that we do just *assert* things in our utterances but that we *do* things, speech acts. He distinguished between constative utterances, which assert something that could be said to be true or false, and performative utterances, which describe the act that they are doing. Where a constative states something, a performative does the action that it says, for example “I promise” or “I despise”. Austin also claimed that an utterance has three components: the locutionary act, which is the literal meaning of an utterance; the illocutionary act, which is the actual action of the utterance; and the perlocutionary act, which is the effect of the utterance. For example, the locutionary act of the utterance “It’s hot in here” is the assertion that it is hot where the speaker is; the illocutionary act, which is what the speaker intends, may be a request that a window be opened; if understood correctly by the interlocutor in this context, the perlocutionary act will be that they open a window. So it is not enough to take an utterance just at its literal meaning, as there may be a difference between its form, in this case a statement, and its intended action, a request.

Searle (1976) expanded on this, focusing on illocutionary acts and classifying them into five basic types: representatives (or assertives), directives, commissives,

expressives, and declarations. As an utterance can possibly do several different illocutionary acts (the example “It’s hot in here” could be a request to open a window, a complaint, or a refusal to close a window), Searle also noted the illocutionary force indicating devices that can signal to the recipient via the utterance’s syntax what kind of action is being done, including word order, intonation, stress, the mood of the verb (for example whether it is a declarative or in interrogative), and if the verb is performative (“I promise”, “I despise”, etc.) (Searle and Vanderveken, 1985). So the way that an utterance is designed will affect how it is interpreted. The idea of indirect speech acts is also relevant to this discussion. Searle considered “the problem of how it is possible for the speaker to say one thing and mean that but also to mean something else”, cases where “one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing another” (1975: 60). The recipient of an indirect speech act must be able to judge that the main illocutionary act of an utterance is not its literal meaning, and also be able to infer what the main illocutionary act actually is.

In Linguistics, Brown and Levinson (1987) posited a theory for why actions might be done more or less directly. Their theory of politeness suggested that speakers design their turns orienting to saving their own or their interlocutor’s face. When producing face-threatening acts, such as orders, requests, offers and apologies, speakers can choose to take redressive action to protect their own or their interlocutor’s negative face – their desire to be unimpeded by others – or positive face – their positive self-image. In order to save these aspects of face certain strategies can be used. Positive politeness is “the expression of solidarity”, whereas negative politeness is “the expression of restraint” (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 2). Positive politeness strategies include using in-group identity markers, exaggerating, attending to the recipient’s interests or needs, and being optimistic. Conversely, negative politeness strategies include being indirect, hedging, giving deference, and being pessimistic. So not only can the form and the function of an utterance differ, but the design of the utterance can also affect the severity of an action.

Action and conversation analysis

While conversation analysis also treats speech acts or actions as “central to the way that participants, themselves, produce and understand conduct” (Pomerantz and Fehr, 1997: 72), it differs from these approaches in two key ways. Firstly, conversation analytic work studies actual interactions using audio or video recordings together with detailed transcripts, and not invented examples as in the theories discussed above. As conversation analysis relies on instances of actual interaction, it is able to see how actions are produced in real time. This also means that the data under scrutiny consist of sequences of action as opposed to isolated utterances out of context – both the initiating action and the responsive action, as well as any expansion of this basic sequence (see section on sequence organisation, chapter 2). Secondly, Searle discusses illocutionary acts in relation to the speaker’s intention and Brown and Levinson also emphasise speaker intention: how the speaker intended their utterance to be understood by the recipient. However, by using naturally-occurring data a conversation analytic approach allows us to see how a recipient interprets an action by examining their response to the utterance. Consider the example used earlier, “It’s hot in here”: using the terminology of Austin and Searle, this utterance has two possible illocutionary acts, a request to open a window or a complaint. If a recipient responds by opening a window it appears that they have treated the utterance as a request. However, if the recipient responds with an apology or an account for the heat (perhaps “The air conditioning has broken”) it would appear that they have treated the utterance as a complaint. So rather than focusing on speaker intention the initial concern is on how the recipient interprets an utterance. With conversation analysis, therefore, it is necessary to consider the whole interactional sequence and not just its individual components.

A reason for this approach is that conversation analysts avoid speculating about what a speaker is thinking: the contents of their mind are not available to the analyst. What is available, however, is the actual interaction. If the recipient’s treatment of the action does not match what the speaker intended this can be seen if the speaker initiates repair (see section on repair below), thus showing both their interlocutor and then the analyst what their intention actually was (see Schegloff, 1992). Seeing how

participants treat each other's utterances works as a "proof procedure for the analysis of turns":

"It is a systematic consequence of the turn-taking organization of conversation that it obliges its participants to display to each other, in a turn's talk, their understanding of other turns' talk." (Sacks et al., 1974: 728)

Sacks et al. (1974) set out the mechanisms whereby participants take turns in interaction (see section on turn-taking, chapter 2). The proof procedure displays to the analyst, and to the co-participants of the interaction being analysed, that the recipient of an utterance has understood firstly that they have been selected to speak next, secondly what type of action was produced in the prior turn, and thirdly where in the sequence of talk that turn occurred. The following turn will then display the next speaker's understanding of the prior talk. Moreover, just as one utterance will display how the speaker has understood what came before, it will also impose a set of constraints on what can come next. In this way, utterances can be seen as "doubly contextual in being both *context-shaped* and *context-renewing*" (Heritage, 1984: 242). This duality makes visible the intersubjectivity in interaction: the mutual understanding that participants achieve through their exchange of turns.

Turn-taking, the area that examines how speaker change comes about in interaction, can tell us a lot about how recipients display their understanding of their interlocutor's utterances but there is a further key element of conversation analysis that needs to be considered in a discussion of action. Of particular relevance is sequence organisation: the way in which turns occur in clusters as opposed to independently of each other (Schegloff, 2007a) (see section on sequence organisation, chapter 2). When looking at sequence organisation the role that action plays in interaction is crucial. When a speaker produces an utterance, and takes a turn, they are also doing some kind of action, for example greeting, requesting, offering, complaining, agreeing, accepting, declining, disagreeing, and telling a story amongst many others. Actions generally come in pairs and these pairs are of specific types. These pairs are the basic unit of interaction, known as adjacency pairs. They consist of an initiating action or first pair part (henceforth FPP) and a responsive action or a second pair part (henceforth SPP). When a speaker produces an initiating action, they make relevant a responsive action next. The responsive action must also conform to a particular type, depending on what the initiating action is. For example, an offer FPP would make an acceptance or a

declining SPP relevant next, but not a greeting. A greeting FPP would make a return greeting SPP relevant next, but not an assessment. The concept of conditional relevance refers to this expectation, that the production of one action makes a recognisably appropriate second action relevant next (Schegloff, 1968). Sequences are generally longer than one adjacency pair, and can be extended before and after this basic unit, or between its first and second pair parts, and these extensions also consist of sequences made up of adjacency pairs, which are made up of connected actions. Action, therefore, is fundamental to conversation analytic work, and conversation analysis is a useful method to apply to a study of action.

Many conversation analytic studies have engaged with different types of action. Examples of actions examined include requests (e.g. Curl and Drew, 2008; Drew & Walker, 2008), assessments (e.g. Pomerantz, 1984; Lindström and Mondada, 2009), complaints (e.g. Drew and Holt, 1988; Mandelbaum, 1991; Holt, 2012), directives (e.g. Craven and Potter, 2010), amongst many others. When describing these actions conversation analysts not only consider how participants manage the taking of turns and where in a sequence the actions occur; they also consider how their utterances are recognised as these actions by features of their design. For example, one feature of wh-questions in English and many other languages is that the question word comes early in the turn; this gives a clue to the recipient that a question is going to be produced right at the start of the utterance and that they will be expected to provide some information relevant to the question in their next turn (Levinson, 2013). Moreover, the way that speakers design particular actions can provide further information about the type of action being produced. For example, whether an invitation is premeditated or spontaneous can be conveyed to the recipient by the details that the speaker includes in their turn and where in the interaction the invitation occurs: if the invitation is given as the reason for the interaction it can be seen to be premeditated, whereas an invitation that is generated by something produced in the interaction and which implies no great planning involved comes across as less formal (Drew, 2013). Also, the format of a request can give some information about the speaker's evaluation of the levels of entitlement and contingency related to their request. Curl and Drew (2008) found that requests beginning with an "I wonder if" form are done in situations where there is a low level of entitlement to have the request fulfilled and a high level of contingency (i.e. a

greater doubt about whether their request can be met); whereas requests produced with a “Can/could you” format come when the speaker has a high entitlement to the requested service and the contingencies attached to accommodating the request appear to be low. A recipient will, therefore, have an idea early on in the turn of the speaker’s expectations regarding the request they are making. Finally, speakers choose how they design their turns based on who it is they are talking to. One key area of this is person reference, how speakers refer to people in their talk. There is an interactional preference for referring to people in a minimal way (with only one referring unit) and in a recognisable way (to the recipient) way (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979). The default for this when initially referring to someone is by saying the person’s name, as in “I saw Jenny today”. This kind of reference appears to be doing referring only, with no other implications for the action being done in the turn beyond informing. Stivers (2007) provides an example of an alternative recognitional, a reference term that does something more than just refer to a person. In this example, a mother and daughter are talking about where to buy things for a birthday party (Stivers, 2007: 74). The mother first suggests buying “stuff” at a particular shop. Her daughter then checks her understanding of this by asking “which stuff”, and then when her mother comments on her “grinnin” she accounts for her request for clarification by saying “cuz yer sister been on the phone all mornin”. The daughter could have said “Alene” or “Aunt Alene”, both of which would have recognisably identified who she had been on the phone with more efficiently, as it transpires that the mother has more than one sister. However, by opting for this reference the daughter is able to do more with her turn than just account for her earlier question. Her extreme formulation regarding how long she was on the phone for (“all mornin”) adds an element of complaint, directed at the person she was on the phone with. The reference “yer sister” connects the daughter’s recipient with this person, which in turn implicates her recipient with the complaint she is making about this person. So the choice of reference term here adds a further layer to what is going on in the turn, and the implications that this has for further talk.

So far this discussion has focused on the utterances spoken by participants in interaction, and how they produce actions verbally. However, the data examined in this corpus are video-recordings, and so the non-vocal behaviours are also going to be

significant. The following section discusses some approaches to ‘multimodal’ data and the physical behaviours in interaction.

Multimodal interaction

The majority of early conversation analytic work took the spoken word as its focus for analysis (indeed, it is also referred to as ‘talk-in-interaction’ (e.g. Psathas, 1995), showing the priority that talk is given in the analysis of interaction). One reason is practical: when conversation analysis was in its early stages in the 1960s and 1970s the equipment for video recording was less available, more costly and produced recordings of limited quality. Also, the findings relating to the CA tools of turn-taking (Sacks et al., 1974), sequence organisation (Schegloff, 1968) and repair (Schegloff et al., 1977) within talk seemed to apply regardless of whether a conversation took place over the telephone or in person. However, some video data was in use (and is still used in teaching and analyses to this day, see for example extracts from the “Virginia” data in Schegloff and Lerner, 2009), but the emphasis remained on the spoken organisation of the interactions. The non-verbal aspects of interaction were not examined in their own right until the work of Goodwin’s on speaker gaze was published (Goodwin 1980 [2006], Goodwin 1981).

Away from conversation analysis research on the non-vocal aspects of interaction had been carried out even sooner. Inspired by the work of Goffman, Kendon wrote about various aspects of non-verbal behaviour, including gaze (Kendon, 1967), physical greetings (Kendon and Ferber, 1973), kissing (1975), and the way in which speakers organise themselves spatially relative to one another (1976, 1992), which have come under the methodology of “Context Analysis” (Kendon, 1990: 15). He recognised the importance of gesture, gaze and facial expression to interaction, and described the “F-formation system”, which “arises when two or more people cooperate together to maintain a space between them to which they all have direct and exclusive access” (Kendon 1990 [1976], 210). Thus, there was work being carried out on the non-verbal aspects of interaction, but it took a few more years for this to be addressed in the realm of conversation analysis.

By now there is an increasing amount of work using conversation analysis that takes the ‘context’ of an interaction into account as well as the spoken language. This context consists of “everything that surrounds a strip of talk” (Norris, 2004: 101), such as the gaze, gesture and posture utilised by speakers and their recipients, and the physical environment in which an interaction takes place, including for example physical objects, other people present, music playing, etc. So rather than language being the only aspect of a co-present interaction that warrants attention for an analysis, a thorough and accurate analysis would also need to take the context into account.

This is a challenge that has been taken up within linguistics, with Goodwin (2000) and Norris (2004a, 2004b) both suggesting frameworks in which multimodal interaction can be fully described and analysed. Norris’ framework is more related to a discourse analytic way of approaching data. She suggests that actions can be ‘lower-level’ or ‘higher-level’, with higher-level actions being made up of many lower-level actions. She gives the example of carrying out a sociolinguistic interview with a research participant at her home (2004b: 21). During the interview, the participant is constructing three higher-level actions by combining several lower-level actions: the higher-level actions of ironing (consisting of the lower-level actions of choosing an item to iron, smoothing it out on the ironing board, moving the iron over it, etc.), watching television (moving her head and shifting her gaze), and the actual interview which is constructed together with the interviewer. Norris also discerns various ‘communicative modes’ in an interaction, which all need to be taken into account in an analysis. Embodied modes include gaze, gesture and utterances, which clearly are all integral parts of a co-present interaction. Disembodied modes can also be significant, however, and include things such as print (a sign or a newspaper for example), background music, and setting layout. An analysis would need to consider all of the embodied and disembodied modes used or oriented to in an interaction, in order to see how it is that lower-level actions combine to form a higher-level action.

Goodwin’s 2000 framework appears more approachable for use with CA. He calls for a focus not only on the language spoken in an interaction, but also on the various ‘semiotic fields’ that participants orient to. These fields can include speech, gaze, gesture and physical elements of the setting. The combination of fields oriented to by

the participants at a particular moment in order to complete a particular action is referred to as the ‘contextual configuration’, which can change at any time if the participants cease to orient to a particular field and/or make another field relevant to their ongoing interaction. By focusing an analysis only on the fields to which the participants display orientation, the analyst is not able to impose their own fields onto the speakers from above (as also argued against by Schegloff, 1997).

Conversation analysts have increasingly engaged with the wider range of context in co-present interaction, examining non-vocal behaviours and their relation to utterances, and elements of the environment in which the interaction takes place. The following section provide some examples of work in these areas.

Non-vocal behaviours

One of the most significant aspects of co-present interaction is the importance of participants’ gaze. It is not enough for a recipient to only respond to an initiating action verbally; if they do not direct their gaze towards their interlocutor there may be some pursuit on the part of the speaker, in order to also gain this visual proof of reciprocity.

Goodwin (1980 [2006], 1981) describes the significance of gaze in relation to the beginnings of turns. He begins his discussion by observing how speakers abandon and then restart turns. Drawing on video data collected of informal conversations, he noticed that some of these restarts coincided with the recipient shifting their gaze to the speaker, so that the completed utterance was produced while the recipient was gazing at the speaker. He posited a rule relating to gaze – “A speaker should obtain the gaze of his recipient during the course of a turn at talk” (1981: 57) – and described two procedures that are used in order to fulfil this rule. One way is to restart the turn, as already mentioned. The second way is to pause shortly after beginning a turn; this allows the recipient to direct their gaze to the speaker before too much of the turn has already been produced. Goodwin calls these procedures a type of summons-answer sequence (1981: 62), using restarts and pauses to gain the gaze of their recipient. These procedures are not clearly interchangeable, however, and relate to the gaze of

the speaker. Restarts tend to be used when a speaker gazes at their recipient and finds that the recipient is not returning the gaze. Pauses tend to come when the speaker has not yet gazed at their recipient. The importance placed on gaze by speakers is evidenced by the lack of restarts and pauses when a speaker gazes at their recipient and finds that they are already gazing at the speaker. Goodwin also identified a second rule, which requires that “A recipient should be gazing at the speaker when the speaker is gazing at the hearer” (Goodwin 1980 [2006], 201). So if a speaker is not gazing at a recipient and the recipient is not gazing at the speaker, then this rule has not been violated. If, however, a recipient is found to be not gazing at the speaker when the speaker does gaze at the recipient, then the rule has been violated and the speaker will work to get the gaze of the recipient as per the strategies outlined above.

Gaze, then, is mutually negotiated in interaction. A further way in which it can be seen to be interactionally significant is when addressing interlocutors, particularly in multi-party co-present interactions. In his examination of speaker selection, Lerner (2003) defines explicit addressing as producing an initiating action with an address term or with gaze at the intended recipient; if an address term and gaze are used together with the initiating action this would be the most explicit way in which to do addressing. He found that when gaze is used without an address term this can be problematic in multi-party interactions. Firstly, the recipient needs to see that the speaker is addressing them with gaze, otherwise the recipient may not be aware of their status as addressee. Secondly, the other participants must be able to see that the speaker is addressing one particular recipient, otherwise someone other than the intended recipient may respond to the initiating action. In multi-party interactions, then, there are limits to how far gaze alone can be used when selecting a next speaker. Yet this work demonstrates the importance of considering all aspects of the interactional context in co-present settings.

In addition to demonstrating the significance of gaze in co-present interaction, Goodwin (1981) also described how speakers oriented to body positioning. He took as an example an extract in which two women were sat next to each other, their legs diagonally turned towards each other throughout the extract, but their upper bodies and heads shifting from being turned towards each other (‘engaged’) or away from each other (‘disengaged’). During lapses in talk, even when both women appeared to

be 'disengaged', they would still be monitoring the other's engagement and therefore be ready to 'engage' again when necessary (Goodwin, 1981: 98). Moreover, when the recipient moved her gaze away from the speaker during her turn, she continued to display her attentiveness by nodding and producing a verbal continuer, this showing the import attached to 'engaging' physically as well as verbally. Conversely, when a speaker appears to withdraw engagement, they need to account for it by displaying being concerned with another pressing activity, tapping ash from a cigarette into an ashtray for example. So not only are interactants constantly monitoring and managing gaze, but also the movements and position of their whole bodies in relation to their interlocutors.

Gaze and body positioning is significant even before the production of an utterance in interaction. Drawing on video data of doctor-patient interactions, Heath (1982, 1984) observed how participants were able to display reciprocity to their interlocutor, prior to the verbal part of the interaction beginning. One example of this can be seen at the start of a consultation. When a patient enters the consulting room they make their way to the chair by the doctor. There is an exchange of greetings and an identity check (that the doctor is prepared for the right patient), following which there is usually a silence. After this silence, talk about the patient's reason-for-visit can begin. Heath found that the doctor would initiate talk on the patient's reason-for-visit directly after the patient had shifted their gaze and body posture towards the doctor. In this way, the patient indicates to the doctor that they are ready for the doctor to begin their turn, and the doctor produces their talk at this exact point. This display is not limited to the start of an interaction, and can also come during gaps when a response is due; indeed, in this position the compulsion that the display of reciprocity creates to produce talk can be seen even when a dispreferred response is pending. Rather than delay the response further with silence, the speaker will produce vocalisations such as inbreaths or hesitation markers to delay the response, but these vocalisations will again come at the point when reciprocity has been displayed. Thus a display of reciprocity serves to elicit talk from an interlocutor at a particular point, entirely non-vocally.

Heath's (1984) data also appears to corroborate Goodwin's above-mentioned rule: during a turn, when a speaker does not have their interlocutor's reciprocity they can work to gain it. Goodwin noted the restarts and pauses that speakers can use; Heath

also observes that when there are perturbations in the speaker's talk (such as pauses and sound stretches) this can prompt their interlocutor to shift their own gaze and posture to the speaker and thus display reciprocity. However, he also noted a non-vocal way of doing this. If a speaker shifts their posture during the production of their utterance, this can also prompt their interlocutor to display reciprocity. This again shows the importance of non-vocal behaviour in co-present interaction.

Other non-vocal behaviours that have been found to be of significance in co-present interaction include head movement, gesture, and facial expression. Stivers (2008) looked at the nodding behaviour done by recipients to a story-telling. In this she has looked at how the specific non-vocal behaviour of nodding is employed by a recipient and oriented to by a speaker within a particular sequence type: story-telling. Based on a collection of video recorded tellings, Stivers found that a nod does different work in response to a telling than a continuer. Whereas a continuer produced mid-telling displays alignment with the progressing of the story – accepting the asymmetry between the interactants and that the speaker will have rights to the floor until the telling is over (2008: 34) – it does not display affiliation – supporting the speaker's stance to their story (2008: 35). Affiliation, instead, is done by nodding mid-telling. Moreover, a speaker will monitor the responses of a recipient, and if a nod is not forthcoming mid-telling the speaker can attempt to elicit an affiliating nod by using devices such as reported speech or gerunds to provide the recipient with more access to the event being described, and therefore more scope for supporting their stance. A nod at the end of a telling, however, is treated as not sufficient by a story-teller, who would expect their recipient to provide a vocal display of affiliation. In this case, by re-doing the ending to the story the speaker gives the recipient another opportunity to produce a vocal affiliation instead of a nod.

Findings such as this can be relevant in almost any setting where story-telling takes place, whether among intimates or somewhere institutional. Applied research, however, can result in findings that are specific to particular settings. Antaki, Finlay, Walton and Pate (2008), for example, set out to research how service users with intellectual disabilities in residential homes are given choices on an everyday basis by staff members. They found a variety of ways that staff set out choices for the residents, many of which consisted of the choice being given vocally together with

gesture or sign, or visual reference to an object or image. Indeed, one of the most successful strategies used by a staff member involved asking a question which provided two options, but when he said the first option he tapped left fist and when he said the second option he tapped his right fist. The combination of question (with limited options) and gesture led to the choice being made satisfactorily by the resident. The area of second language learning also examines such multimodal ways of communicating. Olsher (2004) describes how speakers of a second language can use gesture to complete a turn, where the turn is begun vocally but not finished, and gesture is subsequently used to complete the intended action. Such work, while specifically orienting to the setting of second language acquisition and teaching, is also applicable to conversation analytic knowledge in general: Olsher suggests that this use of gesture is not necessarily limited to second language speakers.

Facial expression can also be significant for interaction. Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori (2006) found in a case study of facial expression in everyday interaction, that when speakers produced assessments their facial expressions conveyed something about their stance. Moreover, their facial expressions, together with their gaze and their verbal utterances, were coordinated with each other. So facial expression is another part of the context that can be significant for interaction.

The physical environment

A feature of co-present interaction that is more significant than in non-co-present interaction (such as telephone calls) is the environment in which the interaction takes place. There are visual and audible features (and also potentially olfactory and tactile features) that are available to all participants, and that can be referred to and drawn on by any one of them. There has been less focus on these environmental elements in the literature so far, but work in areas such as workplace studies, activity theory, and computing and communication technology development has examined objects in interaction (Heath & Hindmarsh, 2000).

The use of gestures that accompany deictic terms has been studied in workplace settings by Hindmarsh & Heath (2000). Their data was taken from the control office

of a telecommunications company, where employees have to refer to screens and documents in order to monitor the communication network. The authors noticed that when a speaker produced a deictic term to refer to an object, the accompanying gesture would come to completion late in or just after the term's production. So, "[t]he deictic term segments the gesture, displaying just the moment at which it is sequentially relevant" (2000: 1864), highlighting when the gesture is significant to locate the referred-to object (although cf. Schegloff 1984 for a discussion of iconic gestures which come to completion before their accompanying term does).

The same authors also described their aim of demonstrating "that social action and interaction are inextricably embedded within the material setting" (Heath & Hindmarsh 2000: 82) by looking at how participants incorporate action in referred-to objects. In one example given, rather than provide a full verbal explanation for why she was laughing, a participant gave her colleague a partial explanation and then turned her monitor to her colleague who was able to see for herself what was funny. As the authors state, "[i]n this way, an individual may embody an action in the object itself" (2000: 89). Participants can also use more subtle means to refer to objects in their surroundings, such as gazing at the object, and then the intended recipient, and then the object again, in order to encourage the recipient to direct their gaze to the object too. The important thing to consider, as with these examples, is that talk in co-present interaction cannot be studied in isolation from the material environment in which it takes place.

The multimodal aspect of interaction, then, is now gaining more attention and an increasing amount of research is taking co-present interaction as its focus. While the basic technical devices of conversation analysis (turn-taking, sequence organisation, repair, person reference) still hold for a multimodal analysis, there is still much to be learned from research that takes account of the 'context' outside of the spoken language.

So far, this chapter has discussed two of the main areas that are relevant to this thesis: action, which is the main theme that runs through this work, and approaches to the multimodal aspects of co-present interaction. The final section of this review concerns

sexual identity: as the data were collected from lesbian households, and lesbian identity is something that is made relevant, a discussion of the literature follows.

Sexual identity

The concept of a discrete identity based on sexuality is a relatively recent one. Until the nineteenth century the view had been that anyone was capable of committing sexually 'deviant' acts (depending on what was considered to be deviant at the time). However, towards the end of the century scientists and medical practitioners began to classify human and social behaviour on the basis of such traits as race and sex (primarily in order to safeguard certain privileged sections of society). They also became interested in the classification of 'normal' and 'abnormal' sexual behaviour, the latter being feared to cause all sorts of wider social catastrophes if allowed to continue and 'spread' (Hall, 2005: 104-5). This categorisation led to the emphasis being on the individual who behaves in a certain manner, as opposed to the actual behaviour itself which had until then been the subject of concern; and the homosexual, as with practitioners of various other deviant behaviours, became the focus of study. Where there had been people who engaged in (prohibited) homosexual acts but were otherwise categorised by their roles in society, the 'abnormal' sexuality of homosexuals was now seen as their very essence and dominated all aspects of their lives; suddenly their sexuality was what categorised them:

“The nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology.” (Foucault, 1978: 43)

After this ideological change from homosexual as a type of behaviour to homosexual as a type of individual, researchers began to examine every aspect of their lives. For example, 1941 saw the publication of a two-volume survey of homosexuality - *Sex Variants: A Study of Homosexual Patterns* - which clinically examined various aspects of the homosexual and the lesbian, including many physiological traits and a section on language in the shape of a glossary of slang vocabulary (Cameron and Kulick, 2006: 16; Legman, 2006 [1941]).

The view, then, was that sexual behaviour defined a person, and that someone who engaged in ‘abnormal’ sexual practices was different - physiologically, psychologically, socially - from those who were ‘normal’. The fear of homosexuals, and of their possible impact on the fabric of society, resulted in public condemnation, and an individual who was discovered to be sexually ‘abnormal’ could be imprisoned or subjected to medical ‘treatment’. However, as in many cases when a group of people is oppressed, such condemnation was met with resistance. In the case of the scientific and medical establishments, some sexologists did attempt to demonstrate that homosexuality was indeed natural (Hall, 2005: 105). In the case of lesbians and gay men themselves, the new status of being a homosexual that was now allocated to them resulted in the mentality towards homosexuality that is visible today:

It gave rise to the novel idea that a person could be defined by their erotic desires - that those desires might constitute the core of their being and bestow on them a specific identity that linked them to others with similar desires. (Cameron and Kulick, 2003a: 20)

The sexual identities that had been imposed on individuals who behaved in particular ways by the sexologists of the nineteenth century came to be taken on by these individuals as they linked with others who shared the same “specific identity”. They came together in growing numbers to contest the overarching perception of them as debased and mentally sick, and small movements and public actions were taking place as much as a century before the development of the gay rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s (Hall, 2005: 110).

In this way identifying as gay or lesbian proved useful both in terms of developing community and support networks, but also politically. The appeal to a common self-identification has been a useful political tool for many groups in the twentieth century; it has successfully rallied marginalised and oppressed groups to protest against discrimination and demand equal rights and representation, the most prominent examples being the civil rights, feminist, and gay rights movements, and has been termed ‘identity politics’:

“Identity politics, a label most commonly applied from without and used to disparage the political position thus described, revolves around the recognition of one’s identity as a member of a specific (typically oppressed) group: women,

blacks, the working class, the disabled.” (Livia and Hall, 1997a: 6, emphasis in original)

The essentialist nature of identity politics has come under fire, as its assumption “that personal identity is an unproblematic category and that all social relations may be derived from it” is not necessarily the case (Livia and Hall, 1997a: 6). Indeed, the emphasis on similarities can result in the heterogeneity within a group being overlooked; thus, all women have been positioned as identical in opposition to all men, as have all gays in opposition to all straights. This is clearly a problematic stance as despite having sexual identity in common there will be other differences within the group which may be significant. For example, in her essay on “How to recognise a lesbian”, Walker (2001) describes the difficulty faced by femme lesbians, who are only visible when within the butch-femme scheme, and by femme lesbians of colour in particular, who “will probably not be recognised as ... lesbian[s], first because [they are] not white and then because [they are] not butch” (Walker 2001, 207), as white lesbian experience has tended to be treated as representative for universal lesbian experience.

Doing sexual identity: appearance

The making visible of sexual identity was particularly significant as part of the lesbian and gay rights movement:

“Like other new social movements of the seventies and eighties, including the women’s movement, the Black Power movement, and the Asian and Hispanic movements, the lesbian and gay rights movement centered on remaking identity, both public and private, by challenging socially constructed images – or the lack of cultural images – that create oppressive models of identity. This focus on cultural representation put issues of in/visibility at the structural foundation of identity politics.” (Walker, 2001: 7)

On an everyday basis, typification can prove valuable for making a sexual identity relevant by using visual cues, despite the original images of lesbian and gay men having been attributed to them from outside:

“Typification (visually recognizable images and self-presentations) is not just something wished on gay people but produced by them, both in the pre-political

gay sub-cultures and in the radical gay movement since 1968.” (Dyer, 1993 [1983]: 21)

In this way lesbians and gay men can use image to make their sexual identity immediately available when it otherwise would not be, which has the political implication of increasing lesbian and gay visibility, and the personal implication of allowing individuals to be readily recognisable as lesbian or gay to other lesbians and gay men. These considerations are taken into account by lesbians and gay men, something that has been investigated by Holliday (1999; 2000; 2004), whose research involved queer participants displaying and describing how they present themselves visually in various situations using video diaries. The greater visibility and awareness of lesbian and gay men’s own cultivated image can be seen as film and television make use of these types to make characters recognisable as lesbian or gay. Yet, when an identity is made available to others in this way, so too are the implications of that person’s psychology, social role and sub-cultural involvements (Dyer, 1993 [1983]: 22).

Doing sexual identity: language

Just as appearance can make a sexual identity relevant, so too can language. Early research on language and homosexuality consisted mainly of listing words and phrases used by gay men, aiming to identify ‘obscene’ terms or “crack a mysterious code” used by homosexual groups, or to learn more about the culture of homosexual groups in general (Kulick, 2000: 247-8).

Research began to do more than simply identify slang and in-group terms from the 1960s, when such language was seen to be part of a wider linguistic code and used in a wider social context. However it was not until the 1980s that work was published devoted to this code (Kulick, 2000: 258). The focus over the next two decades then stayed with this code and the study of the particular way in which gay men and lesbians communicated, and various names were coined to describe it, for example “Gay English” (Leap, 1996) and “queerspeak” (Livia and Hall, 1997b). Indeed, it seems that the focus on a separate gay and/or lesbian language coincided with the

greater social and political emphasis on the 'gay community', and political arguments based on the biological determinism of sexuality.

As such, the language use of lesbians and gay men has been seen to be closely linked to sexual identity. In the introduction to his collection *Beyond the Lavender Lexicon: Authenticity, Imagination, and Appropriation in Lesbian and Gay Languages* (1995), Leap states that the essays' authors "argue in support of distinctively constructed lesbian and gay languages", and that although these languages may derive their rules and grammar from "the language of the local heterosexual mainstream" they are made distinct by "Independently developed linguistic constructions" (Leap, 1995: x, emphasis in the original). So according to Leap, the language use of a gay man or a lesbian is going to be influenced by his or her sexual identity - an echo, perhaps, of the nineteenth century scientific establishment's insistence that no part of the homosexual is independent of his/her sexuality. Indeed, the notion of a gay and/or lesbian language relies on the category of homosexual that was initially developed in the nineteenth century, a complicated heritage from the early sexologists' medical models of homosexuality:

"On the one hand, they created a discourse about homosexual identity that lesbians and gays use to articulate and affirm their desires. On the other hand, they shaped the way in which lesbians and gays could define themselves."

(Walker, 2001: 6)

Research on the language used by lesbians and gay men covers a vast area, including work on the voice characteristics of lesbians and gay men (e.g. Moonwomon-Baird, 1997 [1985]; Gaudio, 1994), and on the use of labels and pronouns by lesbians and gay men in various languages (e.g. Murray, 2004; Kleinfeld and Warner, 1997, Abe, 2006 [2004]; Bunzl, 2000). Of particular interest to this research, however, is work which investigates how sexual identity is negotiated in everyday conversation. Morgan and Wood (1995) examined a conversation between a group of lesbian friends at home, and describe how their co-narration of a "L"esbian scene (in which an explicitly lesbian-related topic is discussed) and a "I"esbian scene (which does not have a lesbian-related topic) functions "to bind us together in a temporary conversational community, allowing us to strengthen our identity as lesbians and promote the idea of a cohesive community" (Morgan and Wood, 1995: 248), although

the example given of the “l”esbian scene, in which the women talk about childhood wet weather items and not a specifically lesbian topic, does not sufficiently support this claim. Land and Kitzinger’s (2005) work is more successful in its investigation of how lesbians make their identity as lesbian relevant in everyday interaction, based on a collection of telephone calls to and from five UK lesbian households. Their informants do so with familiars by topicalising something lesbian-relevant, joining same-sex names as a couple, and invoking their own status as in a same-sex relationship by using the pronoun we. With non-familiars who have incorrectly assumed that they are heterosexual they have three choices: they can not come out and allow the interlocutor to continue with their assumption; they can come out explicitly by correcting this false assumption in an exposed manner (“Uh:::m It’s not my husband it’s my wi:fe” (Land and Kitzinger, 2005: 396)); or they can come out implicitly using an embedded correction (substituting an incorrect pronoun he for the correct pronoun she, which can then be taken up by the interlocutor in their next turn). A significant thing to note about Land and Kitzinger’s study is that the examples that they provide of lesbian identity contain instances where this identity is clearly made relevant to the interaction by a speaker, something that is dubious in Morgan and Wood’s essay.

Issues in research on language and sexual identity

Morgan and Wood’s study could be said to be guilty of the circular argument problematised by Kulick (2000) in his discussion of analysts finding a gay or lesbian identity in a piece of spoken data just because they expect to find it there:

“If we ask “What is Gay English?”, the answer is “English spoken by gay men”.

What makes it gay? The fact that gay men speak it. Why do gay men speak it?

Because they are gay men. And so on, round and round.” (Kulick, 2000: 264)

Looking at language in this way shows the danger of assuming that just because a lesbian or gay man does a particular thing, that thing therefore indexes gayness. That thing might indeed be a resource that can be used by many social groups for different purposes, and not necessarily only for doing sexual identity.

A contributing factor to this circularity is the methodological problems faced by researchers on language and sexual identity. Most research involves participants who are generally out, and therefore open about their sexual identity (Kulick, 2000: 260), and who are more often than not known by the researchers. As a result, the knowledge in advance that the participants openly identify as lesbian or gay can affect the analysis; some features may end up being attributed to the speaker's sexual identity when it is perhaps not relevant to do so. Furthermore, the fact that studies have focused only on members of the gay community who are openly out means that the language use of those who are not so open about their sexual identity has been neglected - can we assume that their language use will be the same as the rest of the community? As Kulick notes, "to say that some self-identified gay men and lesbians may sometimes use language in certain ways in certain contexts is not the same thing as saying that there is a gay or lesbian language" (Kulick, 2000: 247).

Indeed, Kulick (2000) and Cameron and Kulick (2003a, 2003b) have advocated a retreat from identity categories altogether, claiming that in focusing on sexual identity, sexuality itself has been neglected. They therefore condone an approach that aims to describe language and desire. They are critical that the majority of research carried out in the name of sexuality does not actually address sexuality, focusing instead only on social identity and not on the desire that marks a sexuality-based identity (Cameron and Kulick, 2003b). Moreover, the fact that studies on language and sexuality have concentrated on "'minority' identities" has been criticised, as they note that the language of heterosexuality, and of its desire and sexuality, has not been examined in quite as much detail (Cameron and Kulick, 2003a: 134) (although see Kitzinger, 2005a, Kiesling, 2002; and Kiesling, 2005 for examples of work that do take language and heterosexuality as their focus). An emphasis on desire, then, would encompass all aspects of sexuality, thus minimising the need to refer back to identity categories. Not surprisingly, this suggestion has been met with disagreement from various quarters, disputing the claim that identity and desire should be examined separately (Buchholtz and Hall, 2004: 472), or taking issue with the focus on desire in order to examine sexuality in greater depth (Boellstorff and Leap, 2004: 9).

Sexual identity in everyday interaction

Using conversation analysis to investigate identity at the level of interaction does not solve the problem of only representing lesbian and gay speakers who are out, but it does reduce the likelihood of imposing identities onto speakers that are not relevantly there. Land and Kitzinger (2005) successfully avoided this ‘circular argument’ by examining the identity work done by lesbian speakers only when the speakers or their interlocutors made that identity relevant.

Moreover, Land’s examination of lesbian identity in a corpus of telephone calls made to and from lesbian households (Land 2006) shows how everyday interaction is a fruitful site for seeing how identities are negotiated, sexual identity among many others. Studies on various examples of everyday interaction have demonstrated how various identities are managed by participants. Sacks’ discussion of how “Doing being ordinary” (1984) is something that takes work provides an example of how ‘doing being’ any identity also requires work. For example, Kitzinger (2005b) has demonstrated how being heterosexual is done unproblematically in calls to an out-of-hours doctor; in addition to being heterosexual, the speakers in the data also make their identities as parents, siblings or spouses relevant through word selection.

Cameron (1997) also showed how a group of male students performed their masculine heterosexual identity by positioning themselves as other to a group of possibly gay men about whom they are gossiping, gossip being another example of everyday talk. People make relevant, negotiate and manage their various identities through their interactions, making everyday talk a rich site for the examination of sexual identity in action.

Outline of the thesis

This chapter has outlined the main areas of research that are relevant to this thesis: action, approaching analysis of co-present interaction, and sexual identity in interaction. It has mainly focused on conversation analysis, and has demonstrated how this method is appropriate for looking at action, non-vocal behaviour and identity

work in everyday interaction. Areas of research that are specific to the subjects of the analytic chapters will be covered in those chapters.

Chapter 2 will describe the methodology used for this research. It will expand on conversation analysis as a method for researching interaction, and discuss some of the practical considerations entailed in carrying out a conversation analytic study. It will then detail the research process taken. First the participant recruitment and data collection phases, and the content of the data corpus and the households that took part, will be described. Then the analytic process will be discussed, including how the corpus was approached in terms of initial observations, making collections, and transcription. The final section will consider the ethical issues related to this research.

Chapter 3 is the first of the analytic chapters in this thesis. It begins by describing how two key areas approach identity in interaction: conversation analysis and membership categorisation analysis. It goes on to look at some ways that the participants in this corpus make relevant, or 'invoke' their identities as lesbian, gay or potentially bisexual. The examples given range from the more explicit to the less. Examples are shown where participants name a sexual identity category and apply it to themselves or to an interlocutor. They can also make their sexual identity relevant by positioning themselves or an interlocutor as opposite to a named category; by stating that they are not straight they imply that they are lesbian. Referring to activities and cultural knowledge that are bound to the categories of lesbian, gay or bisexual can also make their sexual identities relevant. Finally, referring to same-sex relationships and same-sex attractions make lesbian identity relevant. These examples are also considered in terms of what these mentions of sexual identity do, as they are produced in the service of some action.

Chapter 4 expands on the finding that mentions of identity have some interactional role by focusing on a type of action where participants also mention an identity: explanations. This action is considered in relation to a range of identity types, including race, occupation, nationality, age, amongst others. After a discussion of how identities can be made relevant in talk, and the concept of accountability in relation to explaining, examples are shown of explanations being produced through a mention of an identity. Similarly to the lesbian identity mentions shown in chapter 3, participants

can name the identity category that they claim to belong to, and they can imply their identity by referring to category-bound behaviours. A further resource that they have is to invoke a category by naming a prototypical member, such as a television character or a celebrity. There are associations with these figures that help to explain various behaviours in the interactions being studied. So there are a variety of ways that an identity can be made relevant, and these identities serve as useful resources for particular interactional purposes.

Chapter 5 moves on to a different type of action, and a different type of resource: opening a new course of action and gaze. The chapter opens with a discussion of how topics can be launched. Examples of this being done in the corpus are shown. As the analysis progresses, examples are shown where a participant opens a new action sequence that is related to something in the immediate environment, which is visually available to all participants. Even though it does not appear to be necessary that the recipient see the object in the environment in order to understand the conversation, the speaker will do some work to ensure that their interlocutor gazes at the object in question before the sequence can develop. It is also shown that these topics can be launched both verbally and non-vocally, and reciprocity gaze appears to be equally important in both cases.

The final analytic chapter again has as its focus a different type of action and a different resource: potentially face-threatening acts and interpersonal touch. Research on touch and the effect it can have on interactions is described, before examples are shown where one participant touches another when some potential threat to face is produced. Examples are shown where a speaker who produces a potential threatening act, such as a tease or critical assessment, accompanies this utterance with a touch. Touch, together with elements of turn design, appears to contribute to the non-seriousness of the action in some way, mitigating the critical content of teases, assessments and potential reproaches. Recipients of a potentially face-threatening action can also use touch. When receiving what appears to be a reprimand, a recipient can touch their interlocutor, thus displaying affection and displaying that they are not treating the action as a reproach. The touches shown all occur between romantic partners, so there is an added layer to what touch does. In addition to contributing to

action in some way, the touches shown convey affection and also display the relationship, thus making relational identity relevant to the interaction as well.

Chapter 7 recaps the findings of this thesis, pulling together the different strands of action and resources that participants can draw on when doing action. It then shows how they have contributed to the field, building on work that has come before. Suggestion for areas of further research are then given.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will provide a detailed outline of how the research for this thesis was carried out. First, as this thesis is informed by conversation analysis, some of the methodological perspectives that conversation analysis takes will be introduced; this includes approaches to data collection, transcription and analysis. Next it will describe the recruitment process, the households that took part in this research, and how video data of everyday interactions was collected. An overview of the data in this corpus will be provided, detailing the kinds of interaction that took place, the participants involved, and the volume of data collected. How the data were approached for analysis will be discussed, including the method of transcription, the building of collections, and the development of analyses. Lastly the discussion will turn to the ethical considerations of this research, both those considered at the outset of this endeavour and those that arose during the research, and describe how they were managed. This chapter should give a clearer insight into the research process and the final shape of the thesis.

Conversation analysis

Much of chapter 1 had an orientation to conversation analysis as an approach to interactional research, and specifically to research concerned with action, both verbal and non-vocal behaviour, and sexual identity. This section will give a brief overview of the main areas of conversation analysis not covered in chapter 1. Moreover, there are methodological considerations as well as analytic ones when the decision to use conversation analysis is taken. This section will also detail some of the practical and analytic issues that accompany a piece of conversation analytic research.

Conversation analysts examine instances of actual interactions to see how it is that talk is organised and coordinated by speakers (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 1998: 1), and

four key technical areas have emerged within the field. An overview of each of these “organizations of practice” (Schegloff, 2007a: xiv) follows.

Turn-taking is concerned with how speakers manage the taking of turns, so that generally only one person speaks at a time. The turn-taking system was first outlined by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). They described how talk is made up of turn constructional units (TCU's), the basic building block of a turn at talk. A TCU can consist of a single lexical item (e.g. “Hello”), a phrase (e.g. “In August”), or an entire sentence, and every speaker is entitled to produce one TCU. At the completion of every TCU there is the potential for speaker change to occur, a point known as a transition relevance place (TRP). A key property of a TCU is its projectability, meaning that its point of potential completion and potential speaker transition can be projected before it is reached (ibid., 1974: 720); due to this property the recipient of a turn is able to respond immediately, and not wait for a silence to know that the prior speaker had finished their turn. At the completion of a TCU the speaker can opt to continue their talk and produce a further TCU or they can select a next speaker, or a next speaker can select themselves if no next speaker has been clearly selected by the current speaker (ibid., 704). These basic rules of turn-taking organisation have been built on to see for example how speakers are selected in interaction (e.g. Lerner, 2003); the orderliness of overlapping talk (e.g. Jefferson, 1984a; Jefferson, 1986); and how more than one speaker can construct one TCU (Lerner, 1991; Lerner, 2004). An interesting finding from this research is that apparent violations of the rules of the turn-taking system can actually show affiliation among participants. Jefferson (1984a; 1986) found that overlapping talk that occurred near to a TRP was not interruptive, but rather demonstrated close attention on the part of the overlapping speaker to where their interlocutor would complete their TCU. Similarly, Lerner (2004) described the phenomenon whereby a second speaker completes a TCU begun by a first speaker as an affiliative utterance, as opposed to being interruptive by taking their own new turn within someone else's. The building blocks of TCU's together with the rules of turn-taking organisation are significant when considering the next technical part of conversation analysis, sequence organisation.

Sequence organisation, partially covered in chapter 1, concerns how utterances are built into larger sequences (Schegloff, 2007a). The first and second pair parts of the

adjacency pair described earlier will be made up of TCUs, and where speaker transition occurs (where the first pair part ends) and who is selected to speak next (to produce the second pair part) is all regulated by the turn-taking system. However, a sequence can be expanded to consist of more than just one base adjacency pair. If the sequence is expanded before the first pair part this is a pre-expansion. These sequences can be used to check the likelihood of the base first pair part receiving a preferred response, or to give some indication of the stance the speaker is taking in their upcoming base first pair part. The exact character of the pre-expansion depends on the base sequence to come. An invitation may be prefaced by a pre-invitation which serves to check whether the invitation should be produced; for example the pre-sequence first pair part “What are you doing later?” might receive a second pair part go-ahead (e.g. “Nothing”) which would allow the invitation to be issued, or a second pair part block (e.g. “I’m having dinner with Jane”) which signals that there is only a slim chance that the invitation would be accepted if it was produced now. Other action sequences that can be prefaced in this way include tellings (pre-tellings) and offers (pre-offers). If the sequence is expanded between the first and second pair parts this is an insert expansion. This can be used to do some kind of check or repair (see below) on the first pair part utterance, for example:

Extract 2.1 (Schegloff et al, 1977: 367, example 25)

Base FPP D: Wul did'e ever get married 'r anything?
Insert FPP C: Hu:h?
Insert SPP D: Did jee ever get married?
Base SPP C: I have no idea.

The insert first pair part in this example indicates some problem in hearing or understanding the base first pair part. A response to the base first pair part cannot be produced until it is clarified within the insert second pair part of the insert sequence. Then, speaker C is able to respond to speaker D’s base question. Finally, if the sequence is expanded after the second pair part this is a post-expansion, and this can be minimal, consisting of just one turn to close down the sequence such as “Oh” or “Okay”, or non-minimal for example to initiate repair (see below). In this way the building blocks that make up turns, TCU’s, are combined to make sequences, which can be expanded in several ways.

Repair is the mechanism by which speakers correct or repair errors in their or their interlocutors' talk; when there is some disruption to the progressivity of talk speakers can repair the source of the trouble in a variety of ways and in different sequential locations (e.g. Schegloff, et al., 1977; Drew, 1997; Jefferson, 1974). Moreover, a speaker can initiate repair on their own talk, known as self-initiated repair, or on their interlocutor's talk, known as other-initiated repair. When initiating self-repair, a speaker can replace the trouble source with the correct lexical item(s), insert something extra into their utterance, or delete something from their talk; they can also display that they are searching for a word, or name the problematic item that they are repairing. The source of the trouble can also be highlighted in more or less detail in other-initiated repair, where this can range from an open class repair initiator such as "what?" (Drew, 1997) which potentially targets the whole prior utterance, to a partial repeat with a question word (Schegloff, et al, 1977: 368), which targets a specific part of the prior talk. Repair can occur within the turn containing the trouble source, or in the TRP following the turn, or in the turn after that.

Word selection concerns how people, places and objects get referred to in ways that allow their interlocutors to understand who, where or what is being referred to (e.g. Schegloff, 2007b; Kitzinger and Mandelbaum, 2013). For example, Sacks and Schegloff (1979) showed how when referring to people in talk there are preferences for minimisation (that reference should be done with a single form) and for recipient design (that the reference used will be recognised by the speaker's recipient). If there is any uncertainty that the reference will be recognised, the speaker can produce it with rising intonation, and this try-marker can be followed by an assertion that it has been recognised; if it has not, then a second reference can be produced in an attempt to gain recognition. The choice of reference form used can also say something about the categories that the speakers are displaying membership of, and the epistemic status that they share about the person being referred to and the topic at hand. For example, Fitzgerald et al. (2009) showed that when producing a telling participants draw on "known-in-common" knowledge (ibid.: 57) to successfully refer to a person in an ongoing telling; not only do the participants display an assumption that a particular person reference will be recognised, but even when it is not initially recognised subsequent person references will also display this assumption. Drawing on this

shared knowledge and experience also displays something about their relationship, in this case that they are friends.

These technical elements of talk as described using conversation analysis highlight the immense detail within any interaction. Conversation analysts examine the taken-for-granted understandings that we employ to communicate successfully, and attempt to describe what they are.

Data

In order to see how communication is actually managed it is necessary to use actual interactions as data. Although participants are regularly successful when they interact with each other, just how they accomplish this is not something that they might think about in detail during an actual interaction, akin to the everyday “seen but unnoticed” expectancies noted by Garfinkel (1964: 226). Remembering the kind of detail that would be useful for an analysis would also be extremely unlikely, and so participants would have difficulty in accurately describing how they interact at a micro level: gathering data based on participants’ recollections and intuitions limits the amount of detail available for an analyst to work with (Heritage and Atkinson, 1984: 3). In order to see how identity work is done at this level in everyday interaction, therefore, interactions themselves need to be the primary data, and not reports about them. For this reason conversation analysts work with audio and video recordings of naturally occurring interactions, and base their analysis on the recordings and the transcripts produced from them.

It is possible to do conversation analytic work using interactions that were set up for the purpose of research, for example using specially set up conversations (e.g. Sikveland, 2012; Peräkylä and Ruusuvuori, 2006). However, the majority of the data on which conversation analytic work is based are interactions that may well have taken place whether or not they were recorded for research¹. An ideal, then is to have

¹ By “may” have taken place I mean that in some recording situations participants may feel the need to talk more than usual or about particular things due to the research being conducted. This was something that was noticed in this data set; as participants were asked to record themselves during

access to data that is naturally occurring, whether this is informal telephone conversations or co-present interactions, or institutional data such as medical interactions, telephone helpline conversations or business meetings. Yet, there is always the question of the observer's paradox (Labov, 1972), that an interaction will no longer be 'natural' if the participants know that they are being observed, in this case by a recording device. It appears for conversation analytic research that this is not necessarily such a problem, as participants' reactivity to being recorded is less problematic than some qualitative researchers may think. Speer and Hutchby (2003) suggest that even any overt orientations to being recorded can be analysed as part of the ongoing interaction, for example when a speaker uses an orientation to the camera as a resource to do an indirect complaint (although Hammersly (2003) in his response to Speer and Hutchby's piece maintains that this may prove more difficult for methodological and analytic approaches other than conversation analysis).

Transcription

Conversation analysts work with detailed transcripts of the interactions that have been audio- or video-recorded. Such a transcript will not only contain the participants' utterances, but also timed silences, how utterances are delivered prosodically, and non-verbal vocalisations including laughter, crying, continuers such as "hm" or "mm", and in- and outbreaths. This level of detail is necessary to see the finely tuned level of orderliness that makes up interaction. For example, a silence in interaction does not necessarily indicate a break in talk. If it occurs within a TCU that silence still technically belongs to the current speaker, who maintains the right to complete their TCU. However, if it occurs at a TRP it can indicate that a dispreferred response is forthcoming (Pomerantz, 1984). Where emphasis is placed in an utterance can have a bearing on the action that it is doing: whereas the question "Where is he" may serve to find out where a particular person is, if emphasis is placed on "he" in this utterance some implication is hearable that "he" is absent when some other people are not. The transcription conventions used to convey this detail in a transcript were developed by Jefferson (2004) (see appendix for the transcription conventions used in this thesis).

everyday activities such as having a meal or watching television, some did state that they tried to talk more than they would do ordinarily if they were not being recorded.

Yet despite containing all this detail, the primary source for conversation analysis remains the recorded interaction; the transcript is more of an aid to analysis. This is particularly important when working with video-recorded data, where there is potentially too much detail, too much context, to include in a transcript, and there is a danger of including so much detail in a transcript that it becomes unmanageable. One way to manage this is to only include the amount of detail necessary for what is being analysed: details are not relevant to the point being illustrated can be omitted for the sake of clarity. Furthermore, stills from the video can be included alongside the transcript to show the non-vocal behaviour done by participants; these can be annotated to even more clearly show the trajectory of a gesture or head movement.

Analysis

One key feature of a conversation analytic approach to interaction is that it allows the analyst to be led by the data. It is an exploratory method; analysts engage in “unmotivated looking” (Psathas, 1995: 45) without aiming to prove some previously formulated theory. However, even if a piece of research is approached with particular research questions in mind, the analyst will still be open to whatever interactional phenomena emerge from the data being studied. This has two advantages: it can prevent an analyst from forcing an analysis onto data that might not actually be borne out, and it allows an analyst to find more phenomena in the data than only those which they had originally intended to examine. An analysis of one piece of interactional data can yield a variety of phenomena to investigate.

Now that some of the practicalities regarding doing a conversation analytic study have been addressed, the chapter will move on to how the present research was carried out.

Data collection

This research is based on a conversation analytic methodology, which requires naturally occurring interaction to work with. Although the approach taken to the data

in the corpus was inductive, employing the “unmotivated looking” noted above, there were two main research questions set to guide the study, with an initial strong interest in sexual identity in interaction. The research design of this project was largely directed by these original research questions: 1) *do* lesbians make their identity as lesbian relevant in everyday interaction? and if so, 2) *how* do they make this identity relevant? In order to answer these questions it was decided to collect data of everyday interactions involving lesbian speakers.

The first question resulted in an affirmative answer initially, however when lesbian identity was referred to in some way it was frequently not done explicitly, and so questions arose concerning whether lesbian identity was actually relevant to the interactions at hand. However, due to the exploratory nature of conversation analysis, and the “unmotivated looking” that took place when looking at the data, other things of interest emerged from the data. Initially this included the many other identities that participants referred to in the course of their interactions, and an observation from this was that often identities were referred to in the course of doing some other action. It was then noticed that other phenomena in the data were also produced within the context of some other action. These observations resulted in the scope of the thesis moving beyond the original research questions to focus on how these phenomena can be drawn on as resources when producing actions. This altered focus still allowed the second research question to be addressed, and some of the ways that lesbian identity is made referred to in the data set could still be documented. This shift in focus occurred while data collection was well underway, and no changes were made to the data collection process as a result of the focus shift. Although less of the thesis is concerned with lesbian identity than had been anticipated, the data set proved to be a rich source of a variety of interactional phenomena.

Data has been collected for conversation analytic work since the 1960s. However, the vast majority of these data do not represent speakers who are not heterosexual. This was not necessarily intentional; the relative lack of visibility that non-heterosexual people experience generally is echoed in the everyday data gathered in the past: there was no agenda to exclude people who were not heterosexual, it is just that they were not visible (see Kitzinger, 2005a, for a critique of the classic conversation analytic data sets regarding sexual identity) and this resulted in the heterosexual bias in

conversation analytic data. Victoria Land broke this trend when she gathered a corpus of audio data for her PhD (2006), consisting specifically of five UK lesbian households' in- and out-going telephone calls. However, a corpus of video data specifically focused on lesbian speakers had not yet been collected for conversation analytic purposes. An interest in the ways that lesbian identity is produced in interaction, together with an attempt to address this lack of data from lesbian speakers, led to this corpus of video-recorded interactions in lesbian households being collected.

This corpus also provides a selection of everyday activity-based interactions, including meal-times, watching television and playing board games. There is a general trend in conversation analytic work to examine interactions in such settings, including settings such as family meal-times (e.g. Butler and Fitzgerald, 2010; Kent, 2011; Wiggins, 2002) and children at play (e.g. Butler, 2008; M. H. Goodwin et al., 2002; M. H. Goodwin, 2011; Butler and Weatherall, 2011). This data-set is part of this growing trend, and the physical elements in these settings – captured on the video-recordings – also play a role in the interactions described here.

Recruiting participants

The participants are all members of lesbian households, or friends who have visited a household and agreed to be part of the recording. The wording on recruitment materials specified that households would be taking part; this highlighted that all members of the household would need to agree to take part, and that recording would take place in the home: a fruitful setting for informal interactions. As households consist of a variety of people – partners, children, and friends – and all members took part in the recordings, this means that not everyone necessarily identifies as lesbian. It was never a stipulation that all participants should identify as lesbian: it was enough that one participant did. This should not affect the lesbian identity work done in these interactions: one of the initial questions was *whether* a lesbian identity was made relevant so there was an initial awareness of the possibility that it may not have been a prevalent thing. Moreover, as the participants were members of a household, with one exception recordings took place in the home among familiars, in a setting where there would be less likelihood of participants feeling unable to refer to their sexuality.

The recruitment drive, then, asked for lesbian households to take part in the research. Several avenues were pursued to recruit participants. Enquiring among friends and acquaintances, either to take part themselves or to suggest taking part to their own acquaintances, proved fruitful. Four households took part through this approach. Posting details about the research on internet forums for lesbian and bisexual women and in LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) publications was not successful however: there was no uptake from this route, and some forum members expressed disapproval and impatience with my research. Posting to mailing lists led to some interest being shown, but ultimately these did not come to fruition. The most successful recruitment strategy was emailing leaders of LGBT social and sports groups; this led to a further six households taking part (see Appendix 2 for the email wording). In total I approached 32 groups and mailing lists, whose activities included sports, religion, family support, and general socialising, and posted seven advertisements on internet forums and printed publications. It is impossible to know how many people the advert reached, as the email was sent on by the leaders of the social groups and those in charge of mailing lists, but presumably it was seen by a number of people. Yet, the seemingly small number of households that did take part, while not being representative of all lesbian households, provide enough data to develop findings about their everyday interactions that can inform the relevant areas of interactional research, and which can be applied to other contexts by other researchers, in keeping with the methodology of conversation analysis (Heritage, 1984; Sidnell and Stivers, 2012).

The advertising materials did not provide a definition of what a lesbian household is, and the people who got in touch to take part did not question this term. As a result the people who contacted me to take part self-identified themselves as members of lesbian households. The household member that contacted me and organised the household's involvement was the primary contact.

Recording interactions

The first five households were asked to video record two hours of any kind of interaction that they wanted. Suggestions were given of potential interactions to record, including mealtimes, having coffee, or watching television in a group. A variety of interaction types were recorded, including watching television or films, playing board games, chatting in a pub, and mealtimes. One of these participants had expressed confusion about what exactly to record, and so after reflection on the successfulness of the data collection process and in an attempt to improve the way that the data was collected, the decision was made to focus on one particular type of interaction: mealtimes. Households were asked to record six mealtimes. Any kind of mealtime of any length could be recorded – breakfast, lunch or supper; a quick snack or a more formal sit-down meal – and in this way the definition of a mealtime was personal to each household group. This was simpler for participants, and meant that they were able to leave the camera in one place for the duration of the recording period. Mealtimes are also a good site for exploring everyday conversation, as it is a time when household members come together to eat and talk, and as it is likely that these interactions would take place even if the camera was not there it is a good setting in which to gather naturalistic data. New participants expressed satisfaction with this arrangement, with some saying that they had enjoyed the experience and how it made them think about eating together as a household. Moreover, two households recorded significantly more than the six mealtimes asked for.

The recording process

Once a primary contact had agreed on behalf of her household to take part, a meeting was arranged where the details were discussed and the equipment and documents handed over. These meetings took place either in the household itself, or in a public setting such as a cafe. What taking part entailed was explained to the contact and their questions were answered. The contact was given a bag containing the camcorder and a small tripod, and a folder containing instruction and information sheets, and consent forms. The camera functions were explained and tested, and two receipts were signed

by both parties stating that the equipment had been handed over, each keeping a copy for their records.

The households kept the camcorder for between one and three weeks, depending on their availability. After this time, another meeting was arranged with the primary contact or another member of the household to collect the equipment and documents. Again, this took place either in the participants' home or in a public place. The documents were checked and a discussion about how the participants found their experience of recording their everyday interactions followed. Before leaving, the contact was asked if they would be happy to pass details about the study onto their contacts who might be interested in taking part.

The meetings before and after the recording period lasted between 20 minutes and an hour, depending on how much time the participant had. The discussions, while professional, were relatively informal leading to a positive atmosphere surrounding the recording.

Consent procedure

As the recordings might include visitors to the household who the researcher would not be able to meet, the primary contact was responsible for getting everyone who took part to read the information sheet and to sign two consent forms – one to return to the researcher and one for their own records. The researcher's contact details were on the information sheets so if anyone had any questions they could contact the researcher at any time. Visitors were given slightly different information sheets that explained the research being carried out in the household they were visiting. Participants were also given consent forms to complete on behalf on any children that took part.

The data

This corpus consists of nearly 23.5 hours of video recorded interactions from ten lesbian households. The types of household are varied, consisting of two lesbian families with children, three lesbian couples, two student households, two professional houseshares, and one single household with a visiting friend. Nine of these households resulted from the recruitment drive; the tenth is the researcher's own household. A further student household did take part, but as insufficient consent was obtained from the participants these recordings had to be discarded (the issues of insufficient consent will be considered in chapter 7). The households recorded several different types of interaction: mealtimes, ranging in length from 5 minutes to 1.5 hours; participants watching television or a film, ranging from 45 minutes to two hours; participants playing board games, lasting from one hour to two; and participants talking with friends in a pub, lasting 45 minutes. Some of these activities occur simultaneously; for example, in some recordings meals are being eaten in front of the television, and in one a board game is being played during a mealtime. In addition, other activities take place for short periods within these larger interactions, such as using a computer, tidying, and reading, so it is rare to find a 'pure' example of a particular type of interaction in this data set. Tables 2.1 and 2.2 outline the households and the types of data collected:

Table 2.1

Household data tag	Type of household	Total recording time
RV:LHH1	Single occupant with visiting friend	01:54:41
RV:LHH2	Professional house-share	00:35:02
RV:LHH3	Lesbian couple	01:57:38
RV:LHH4	Professional house-share with visiting friend	01:02:53
RV:LHH5	Student house-share with visiting friend	02:01:58
RV:LHH6	Lesbian couple with two friends (interaction took place in a pub)	00:48:20
RV:LHH7	Student house-share	01:51:23
RV:LHH8	Lesbian family with one child	03:24:12
RV:LHH9	Lesbian family with one child	06:09:54
RV:LHH10	Lesbian couple	03:37:28
	Total amount of recorded data	23:23:29

Table 2.2

Type of interaction/main activity underway	Number of interactions
Mealtime	48
Mealtime, trying out camera	1
Mealtime, watching YouTube	1
Mealtime, playing board game	1
Playing board game	3
Watching a film	1
Watching television	1
Chatting in a pub	1
Total	57

The vast majority of the interactions involve some kind of meal. Moreover, the type of meal in these interactions varies considerably, from having tea and biscuits at the kitchen table, to having a sit down family meal at the kitchen table, to eating a meal with plates on laps. As the initial focus of this research was primarily concerned with identity work, the most important consideration was to record everyday interactions regardless of the setting. Even as the scope of this thesis broadened to look at action, the main need was to have video-recordings of everyday interactions. Therefore, the type of meal or activity occurring in the interaction is not as significant as it would be if the activity was a focus of the analysis, for example studies for which the setting of a mealtime is key (for example, Kent, 2011; Wiggins, 2002)

Data analysis

The data collected resulted in a large corpus. Moreover, its nature as a video-recorded data set means that it is a rich source for many interactional phenomena. This section details how the corpus was approached and managed.

Collections

When a new set of video data was recorded, it was watched and notes made about its rough content. As the initial focus was on instances of lesbian identity work attention was paid in particular for any times that sexual identity was referred to or topicalised. Once notes had been made, the task of preparing orthographic transcripts began. Once more instances of lesbian identity were identified in the growing corpus a collection began to grow. However, due to the inductive nature of conversation analysis, other things of interest were also able to be considered, including other identities, gender work, participants' orientations to their environment, and their physical behaviours. Thus several collections were being added to simultaneously. As the collections grew, the criteria for inclusion became more stringent. Some examples were excluded, and sub-collections were formed. Moreover, some collections, while interesting, were abandoned in favour of others.

Detailed sequential analyses were prepared of the strongest extracts in the collections, which indicated how general points about the phenomena in question could be made. A literature search and review specific to the phenomena was made, and incorporated into the analysis.

It may sound as if anything of interest was chosen to form a collection, without a common theme to connect the collections as a whole. But the focus when going through the data set was on the two things that were special about the data collected: firstly that it was collected in lesbian households, and so orientations to identity were of particular interest; secondly, that as the data are of co-present interactions physical behaviours are also highly significant. These two themes determined the original focus when working through the data.

Transcription

Initially, orthographic transcripts and notes were used to navigate the data set. Extracts of particular interest were then re-transcribed based on the transcription system developed by Jefferson (2004). In order to gain enough detail from the spoken part of the data, the audio was separated from the video and played in Audacity, a free editing programme which allows the user to manipulate the audio in ways that assist understanding and capturing detail, and to see the sound waves which assists with timing silences. To check particular details the video was referred to: if speaker overlap meant that speaker identification was difficult, this could be checked in the video; also if an utterance was unclear, looking at the speaker's facial movement could help to clarify what was said. QuickTime Pro was used to play back the video and to produce clips. However, Elan was particularly useful for noting where various things occurred in a clip, and for organising collections.

The reader will see that there is a difference between the transcripts in chapters 3 and 4 and those in chapters 5 and 6. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with a phenomenon that is verbally produced: references to identities. Non-vocal behaviour that is relevant is included in double brackets within the transcript. However, the phenomena in chapters 5 and 6 involve both verbal and non-vocal behaviour, and it is important to

see where the non-vocal behaviour occurs in relation to the talk. So an extra layer of transcription was necessary to convey this. Where non-vocal behaviour occurs, including gaze, head movement, gesture and touch, this is written in the transcript below the talk that it corresponds to. Right angled brackets indicate exactly where the non-vocal behaviours occur, and to avoid confusion the non-vocal behaviour is in a grey font where the talk is in black, and in double parentheses.

The reason that such detail is absent from the transcripts in chapters 3 and 4 is that it is not necessary. Transcripts need to have enough detail that the reader can follow the analysis, and too much would be counter-productive. However, this level of detail is necessary when describing non-vocal behaviours. Video stills are also provided to illustrate specific parts of the physical behaviour, but they are not a substitute for a detailed transcript. A still alone would not show when particular movements begin and end, and how they map on to the talk, and this is what a detailed transcript can provide. Extract 2.2 shows an example of the detailed transcript use:

Extract 2.2 - RV:LHH8.1 apple juice story 00:16

01 Dan: [And thenç (0.3) to [eat her porridge she had to
02 D: [((sit at table)) [((grasp L's bowl))
03 [stir the ice in °like this°,
04 D: [((grasp spoon, stir L's porridge))
05 (1.4)
06 Dan: °l[like ↑this:°]
07 Luc: [I want a bi]b. hhhh

From this we can see at what points Dana grasps her daughter Lucy's bowl and spoon: she sits down at the start of line 1 and after a 0.3 second pause she begins to talk about eating the porridge; just after she begins this utterance, she grasps the bowl as she produces “eat the porridge”, and she grasps the spoon as she begins to stir the contents of the bowl. So her physical movements match the activities that she names, and this can be seen from the detail in this transcript.

Ethics

Issues of confidentiality had to be taken into consideration when designing the research. As this data is of video, participants' faces and homes are available in addition to their voices and words. To anonymise the audio, the decision was made to blank out any names and identifying features mentioned in the interactions when playing the data publicly (i.e. in conference presentations or teaching settings). In addition transcripts are pseudonymised. However, the video element of the data is more problematic, as non-vocal behaviour such as gaze and facial expression is often significant for co-present interaction. Therefore, it was decided to not blank out participants' faces when showing the data publicly, but this means that anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

This is a big concern. One reason for this is the nature of the corpus: many of the participants identify as lesbian or gay, and this is apparent from these interactions. Despite getting nearer and nearer to equality some LGBT people still have reservations about being 'outed' in a setting that is not of their choosing; indeed, one participant was explicit about this concern when issues of consent were discussed. A second reason is the fear that the video recordings could end up on the internet, particularly if the recordings include children; again one participant addressed the camera during a recording to request that a clip of her doing an accent should not be put on YouTube.

This was a big consideration when designing the research: how to show the necessary detail without showing identifying features? The solution was to give participants options on the consent form that they are asked to sign which give them greater control over the use of their recordings. They could choose whether or not to allow their recordings to be played in public settings. They could opt to not allow video stills from their recordings to be used in publications. They could also choose to not allow clips of their recordings to be placed on academic websites in association with publications. This can cause some frustration when presenting the data: when a particularly good example cannot be presented to colleagues because the participants did not give permission for that. However, the transcription system described above allows for a great deal of detail to be included in written form, which still adequately

conveys the behaviours being done. In chapters 5 and 6, which are primarily concerned with non-vocal behaviours, not all of the extracts have accompanying video stills. Including stills would be the ideal, but the detail of the transcript is sufficient for the analysis at hand.

A further option is provided regarding the potential to deposit the data in the Loughborough University Discourse and Rhetoric Group's (DARG) archive for other researchers' future use; again, participants could choose not to allow this. Although these are the only options given on the consent form, other requests by participants regarding the use of their data were respected. For example, one primary contact agreed to the use of stills but only if the participants' faces were anonymised.

Before embarking on this data collection, this research had to gain the approval of the University of York Ethics Advisory Committee, and then the Loughborough University Ethics Advisory Committee when the research was continued at this new institution. Approval was granted by the University of York Ethics Advisory Committee in January 2009. Approval was granted by the Loughborough University Ethics Advisory Committee in March 2010. Please see the appendices for the consent form and other research instruments used in the data collection.

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the processes involved in producing this research. The method is very much in line with that adopted for conversation analytic studies, using naturally-occurring interaction to look at identity work and action. The exploratory approach taken to the data also reflects the conversation analytic focus of this study. The level of detail required to do analysis has been developed in conversation analytic studies, and the transcription conventions used in this thesis to reproduce the detail of participants' utterances are based on those developed by Jefferson.

The practical elements of recruiting participants and recording data were described, together with how the corpus was approached in preparation for analysis. Finally, the ethical considerations involved were discussed.

The following chapter is the first analytic chapter of this thesis. Chapters 3 and 4 are primarily concerned with how identities are made relevant interaction, and the focus is on participants' verbal behaviours. Chapters 5 and 6 will incorporate non-vocal behaviour into the analysis. How these behaviours contribute to actions produced by participants will be the main focus of analysis.

Chapter 3: Lesbian identity in everyday interaction

Introduction

The data in this corpus consist of everyday interactions that take place in lesbian households: participants know each other well and are aware of everyone's sexual identities. However, participants do not refer to their sexual identities very often, and actual topicalisation of lesbian experience is even rarer. Other identities are mobilised by participants equally or more frequently than a lesbian identity, including age, nationality, occupation, and relationship status, among others. In the settings recorded for this study, participants' sexual identities are generally unremarkable, an identity like any other that contributes to the make-up of the person as a whole. As these identities are unremarkable, when they *are* mobilised in an interaction the question arises as to why: what else does mobilising sexual identity do, apart from drawing attention to that identity?

This chapter will first consider approaches to identity in interaction, and then show some examples of when a sexual identity is mobilised and the various ways that this is done. The import of these identities to the interaction will be discussed by examining where in a sequence they are referred to, and what actions they may be part of.

Studying identity

Two approaches to conversational data are relevant to a discussion of identity work in interaction: conversation analysis and membership categorisation analysis.

Conversation analysis

Conversation analysis in its purest form is somewhat restrictive in its approach to participants' identities. Being a bottom-up type of analysis that limits its discussion of data to what is actually evident in the interaction being examined, in order to say

anything about a speaker's identity the analyst has to be able to prove that this identity is relevant for the participants for the interaction at hand (Schegloff, 1997). So although an individual will have several identities that are relevant to them, not all will necessarily be relevant to every interaction: for example, when a patient suffering with a cold visits a doctor, the participants' identities as doctor and patient are relevant to the interaction but their gender identities may not be. Yet some conversation analytic work has sought to argue that identities are mobilised by speakers without being overtly relevant for the interaction at hand. Kitzinger (2005b) describes how speakers make their heterosexuality available to their interlocutors although the main action in the talk is not related to their sexual identity, but rather to some other project, for example a woman calling the emergency services because her husband cannot talk or move (2005b: 236), or a woman accounting for moving away from where she grew up due to getting married (2005b: 233). Moreover, when these identities are made available in this manner, despite the main action not being a topicalisation of this identity, the identity aids the speaker's project in some way. To take Kitzinger's examples above: by stating that she is calling about her husband, which implies that she is in a heterosexual relationship, the caller to the emergency services does not have to account for her involvement in the situation – it is perfectly normal for a wife to be concerned about her husband; for the woman who is explaining why she moved away from where she grew up, getting married, and therefore being in a heterosexual relationship, is a perfectly normal account for moving somewhere new. In this way, an identity does not need to be the central focus of an interaction in order to be of importance to the action underway.

Membership categorisation analysis

This way of looking at identity can also be seen in studies drawing on membership categorisation analysis developed by Sacks in his series of lectures (1992). This analysis is based on the idea of the membership categorisation device (MCD), a collection of categories that fit together. To take his most-quoted example from a story told by a young child (1992: 236-251), in the sentences “The baby cried. The mommy picked it up.” the categories of ‘baby’ and ‘mother’ belong to the MCD called ‘family’. It is clear to a recipient of this story that the baby is picked up by its

own mother, despite there being no grammatical indication of this relationship in these sentences. Therefore, if categories can be heard as belonging to the same MCD then that is how we should hear them. Moreover, certain activities can be heard as being bound to particular categories: in this case ‘crying’ is bound to the category of ‘baby’, and it is inferable that the mother picks up her baby *because* it is crying. Yet categories are not limited to one MCD: ‘baby’ also belongs to the MCD ‘stage of life’, which includes other categories such as ‘adult’, ‘teenager’, and ‘pensioner’. So when participants refer to themselves or others using particular categories, recipients are able to infer which MCDs they belong to and what things are associated with them. Conversely, recipients can associate particular categories with activities that are bound to those categories; for example, if a participant describes attending a mass, their recipient can infer that the speaker is a member of the category ‘Catholic’, which belongs to the MCD ‘religious affiliation’.

In terms of identities *doing* things in talk, the same can be said of categories. Stokoe (2009) describes how categories are utilised by speakers in making complaints and denials. For example, a caller to a neighbour mediation centre ascribed the category of ‘single mother’ to herself within her complaint about excessive noise from her neighbour’s child. She says that after putting her own child to bed she is tired and does not have “many resources left for coping with things”, physical and emotional states that are here tied to the category of ‘single mother’ and which are therefore accounted for by membership of this category (2009: 76-77). Ascribing this category to herself, with its accompanying state of exhaustion, underscores the reasonableness of her complaint (and the unreasonableness of her neighbour) and thus aids her in her overall action of complaining.

Terminology

Various terms have been used in conversation analytic work to describe identity in talk, including making an identity ‘relevant’ (Schegloff 1997), making an identity ‘available’ (Kitzinger 2005a), and ‘mentioning’ an identity (Schegloff 2007b). However, in my analysis I will be using the term ‘invoke’ as a more general way to

talk about the identity work done by speakers, as these other terms have connotations of the identity in question being topicalised which is not the case in these examples.

Lesbian identity in interaction

The participants in this data set invoke sexual identity in a variety of ways, and these identity invokings may concern the speaker or be attributed to an interlocutor. The following data extracts demonstrate how this is done, beginning with two examples of sexual identity labels being used in tellings of coming out (extracts 3.1 and 3.2), and going on to describe invokings that are less explicit: where a lesbian or gay identity is mentioned in contrast to a straight identity (extracts 3.3 and 3.4), where a discussed activity or piece of cultural knowledge is bound to the category of lesbian/gay (extracts 3.5 and 3.6, 3.7), where a same-sex relationship or attraction is referred to (extracts 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10).

Sexual identity labels and topicalising lesbian issues

The first two extracts are taken from a recording of four friends chatting in a pub, and provide a rare example of the topicalisation of being out as lesbian in the participants' everyday lives. The issue under discussion is being recognised as lesbian in work settings, and two of the speakers ascribe sexual identity categories to themselves in the form of labels in their tellings about not being recognised as lesbian.

Couple Tamsin and Megan, and friends Ellie and Abby, know about each other's lives and that they are lesbian. Prior to this extract, Tamsin had been telling a story about some diversity training at a university, for which she had delivered a section on being lesbian. After the main story is completed, regarding a different section of the training that was unsatisfactory, she applies the label 'lesbian' to herself in line 20 as she reveals that the students at the session were surprised by her sexual identity:

Extract 3.1 - RV:LHH6.1 lesbian department 32:12

01 Abb: [(What-)] (Were) you in a lesbian (department).
02 Tam: It was at u:m: Townville Univers[ity.]
03 Abb: [(°Okaly°.)]
04 (): (.)
05 (0.8)
06 (A): (°mm [Yeah °])
07 Tam: [for a whole] bunch of clinical psychology:
08 (.) trainees.
09 (0.4) ((Abby nodding))
10 Tam: All (in the room.)
11 (0.6) ((Tamsin moves right forearm, holding drink,
12 in horizontal arc across body and back again))
13 ((Abby nodding))
14 Meg: ((coughs))
15 Tam: But [um]
16 (A): [mm]m.
17 Tam: All of them about my age.
18 (0.8)
19 Tam: All of them went .HH ((gasp facial expression)) (.)
20 -> >°when I said I was a lesbian (I said)< ↑just
21 'cause I <look like you> doesn't (mean tshh hh)°
22 Meg: uReally.
23 Tam: mm [hm,]
24 Meg: [You] still have that.
25 (0.2)
26 Tam: °mm mm:° ((while drinking))

Abby's question in line 1 comes after Tamsin's telling is complete, and incorporates the label "lesbian" in the context of the training ("(Were) you in a lesbian (department)"). Tamsin's SPP in line 2, a nonconforming response to the yes-no interrogative design of the FPP (Raymond, 2003), does not confirm the candidate location in Abby's question, supplying instead an alternative place formulation ("Townville University") for where the diversity training ("it") took place, thereby omitting the label that Abby had provided and going on to specify with an increment (Schegloff, 1996a; Couper-Kuhlen & Ono, 2010) that it was "for a whole bunch of clinical psychology: (.) trainees" (lines 7-8).

After Tamsin has provided more context about the training in two more turns at lines 10 and 17, she self-selects to produce a further turn in lines 19-21. As with her previous two turns, she begins with a stressed "All", serving to connect this coming

turn with those just produced (effectually incorporating a three-part list into her telling (Jefferson, 1990)). However, rather than providing further background information about the training, Tamsin uses this turn to tell about an interaction that occurred during the training: when she said that she was a lesbian, the students gasped. She produces their response in the form of direct reported speech, introducing it with the direct reported speech indicator (Holt, 1996) “All of them went”, and then performing their non-verbal reaction by opening her mouth wide as she takes an in-breath and holding this facial expression for a micropause after her ‘gasp’. In this way she indicates to her interlocutors in the pub that the students were surprised about something (Ekman, 1972), which turns out to be the fact that she is a lesbian. She reproduces her response from the training session, again in direct reported speech, addressing the students (“you”) and accounting for why they would be surprised that she is a lesbian (although not excusing their assumption that she is not): “(I said) ↑just ’cause I <look like you> doesn’t (mean tshh hh)”. This extract, then, contains an instance of a participant attributing the label “lesbian” to herself, during a telling for which her identity as lesbian is a key component.

Extract 3.2 takes place approximately 2 minutes and 45 seconds after extract 3.1. In the intervening time Tamsin expressed her hope that having tattoos would help people to realise that she is lesbian, which was dismissed by the rest of the group as ineffective, and Ellie told a second story (Sacks, 1992) about some colleagues not realising that she was gay, in which she ascribes the category “dyke” to herself. Ellie then goes on to produce a further telling about a “homophobic conversation” that she had with a group of offenders in a training session that she led, in the course of which she explicitly labels herself as gay (line 14):

Extract 3.2 - RV:LHH6.1 gay as they come 35:34

01 (0.8)
 02 Ell: #u# The- they were talking about gay people and
 03 some: some: an they were (w) gettin derogatory
 04 about it a[n >some of them sa]id< .hh well I I=
 05 Tam: [°mm hm.°]
 06 Ell: =don’t think >we should be talking about this an they
 07 were getting all uncom:fortable< an I (say/said) ↑no
 08 that’s alrigh:t, (sayin) (0.2) like (0.2) they say
 09 °that’s right (that’s what) they said° they

interlocutors in these extracts. Instead, they are merely telling about a time when they did come out to some other people (as the act of coming out in a largely heteronormative society still has a “continually renewed and never complete” relevance for people who are not heterosexual (Land, 2006: 74)). The main action of the talk, then, is not coming out as lesbian, but describing instances of having to come out, and the categorisations are not actual current categorisations but reported ones. These mentions of lesbian identity, while explicit, are part of the larger action of the tellings.

The first two extracts are interesting as they are taken from a stretch of talk that topicalises lesbian experience, and also because of the sexual identity labels that are used by speakers to do self-categorisation. However, invokings of sexual identity can be done less explicitly and can have other interactional significances. In the following extracts speakers invoke lesbian identity in a variety of topics that are not related to lesbian experience, and which do not necessarily include sexual identity labels. Moreover, the identity invokings serve some kind of purpose for the action in which they are produced.

Contrasting sexual identity categories

Participants can invoke their own, or an interlocutor's, sexual identity by contrasting it with a differing sexual identity category, so that their sexual identity can be inferred from the category that they do not identify with. Extracts 3.3 and 3.4 provide two examples of this.

In addition to labels, speakers have a variety of idioms at their disposal to apply to themselves or others. In extract 3.3 an idiom that refers to a lesbian/gay identity is used to invoke an identity. Unlike the previous two extracts, in this case the identity is attributed to the recipient as opposed to the speaker. A couple, Katrina and Anastasia, are eating a meal in their home. The conversation has previously turned to relationships in which one of the partners resembles the other's parent. Anastasia says that Katrina is not like her mother, and also not like anyone that she knows, going so far as to say that she is “unique”. But Katrina has been told that she resembles her

friend's boss's wife in many ways (lines 1-2). Anastasia interjects to suggest one way that Katrina is still “unique”: at least this woman “doesn’t bat for the right team”, unlike Katrina who does (lines 16-17):

Extract 3.3 – RV:LHH10.1 bat for the right team 18:32

01 Kat: mt .hh Sally said to me that I remi:nd her of her
 02 boss's wi:fe.
 03 (0.6)
 04 Kat: nt .hh Who is also: (0.4) erm hh (0.6) mt sma:ll
 05 bla:ck (0.4) has glasses (0.6) very ca:lm and works
 06 in I-T. .hh
 07 (0.2)
 08 Kat: n hhh h[uh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh]
 09 Ana: [hah hah hah hah hah hah hah ha]h hah .h[ahhh]
 10 Kat: [A(h)n:]d
 11 u- [I]
 12 Ana: [Go:d] there are so many of
 13 y[ou. HAH HAH HAH hah hah ((sniff))]
 14 Kat: [u huh I know: indee:d] an .hh she said
 15 erm: u- her friend Ian wh[o I met at]
 16 -> Ana: [(Oh well) at least she doesn]'t
 17 -> ba:t for the right te(h)[am. hn hn hn .hhuh .hhuh]
 18 Kat: [hn Yeah: she doesn't. .hh and he]r
 19 friend Ian
 20 Ana: .hhuh (.) hn
 21 Kat: who: I actually was introduced to .hh um: at your party,
 22 Ana: mm.

Katrina launches her FPP in lines 1-2 with indirect reported speech attributed to “Sally”, a recognitional (and therefore known or known of by Anastasia) and locally initial reference form in locally initial position (Schegloff, 1996): “Sally said to me that I remi:nd her of her boss’s wi:fe”. She then produces an adjective clause in lines 4-6, which grammatically connects this turn to her prior utterance: “Who is also: (0.4) erm hh (0.6) mt sma:ll bla:ck (0.4) has glasses (0.6) very ca:lm and works in I-T”. In this turn Katrina has described herself as having five similarities to Sally’s boss’s wife: physically they resemble each other in that they are both small, black, and wear glasses; in terms of personality they are both calm; and finally they share the same profession, working in IT. Katrina treats this as a laughable, and initiates laughter in line 8 after a 0.2 second gap, an action that serves as an invitation for her

recipient to join in with the laughter (Jefferson, 1979). Anastasia accepts the invitation and laughs in overlap with Katrina in line 9.

Katrina begins to produce a further turn in lines 10-11, but Anastasia comes in in overlap in line 12 with the evaluation “Go:d there are so many of you”, which is also treated as a laughable by Anastasia as she laughs loudly immediately after her turn. Katrina produces a laughter particle in overlap with “you” at the end of Anastasia’s utterance and proceeds to agree with her evaluation (“I know: indee:d”), before attempting to restart in lines 14-15 the turn that she had abandoned in lines 10-11. She gets further this time but is interrupted by Anastasia mid-TCU, who provides a candidate way in which Katrina does not resemble Sally’s boss’s wife: “at least she doesn’t ba:t for the right te(h)am”; this is confirmed by Katrina in line 18: “yeah: she doesn’t”. Anastasia’s description appears to be an adapted version of the expression ‘bat for the other team’, stemming from cricket or baseball terminology, which means to be homosexual²; the ‘other’ team denotes being homosexual with the implication that being on the ‘same’ team means being heterosexual. Anastasia’s adaptation – “right team” instead of ‘other team’ – implies that “the right team” denotes being lesbian or gay. She knows that Katrina is a lesbian and that Sally’s boss’ wife is not, perhaps due to the term “wife” which, despite civil partnerships being currently available to same-sex couples in the UK and marriage to be made available in 2014, still has overtones of heterosexual marriage. By saying that this woman “doesn’t bat for the right team” in contrast to Katrina, the fact that Katrina *does* “bat for the right team” implies that she is a member of the category ‘lesbian’; ‘batting for the right team’ here is hearable as something that lesbians do, an activity bound to this category and to that of ‘gay’ (Sacks, 1992).

We can see that Anastasia’s invoking of lesbian identity via this idiom categorises Katrina as lesbian and Sally’s boss’ wife as not lesbian. Yet it comes interruptively within a topic that does not relate to anything particularly lesbian, so why does Anastasia mention this? Prior to this extract Anastasia had stated that Katrina was “unique”. But after Katrina lists the ways in which she resembles Sally’s boss’ wife, Anastasia jokingly states that “there are so many of you”. This contradicts Anastasia’s

² http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/bat_for_the_other_team

earlier assessment of Katrina as “unique”, even though it is delivered in a joking manner and Katrina subsequently agrees with it. Mentioning Katrina’s lesbian identity, by stating that at least Sally’s boss’ wife “doesn’t ba:t for the right te(h)am”, highlights a way in which she is dissimilar to the other woman, and reiterates the uniqueness that Anastasia had previously attributed to her.

The next extract provides another example of a speaker’s mention of her lesbian identity via a contrasting sexual identity in order to carry out an action. The participants are three undergraduate students who live together – Amy, Beth and Daisy – who are sitting at their kitchen table having tea and biscuits. They are talking about a scene in the UK soap opera *Eastenders* from 2006³, in which two female characters kiss. Amy is very negatively assessing the scene and Beth and Daisy are laughing at these assessments. In lines 16-17 Beth describes her extreme reaction to the episode: “I think I actually considered being straight after watching that”:

Extract 3.4 - RV:LHH7.1 considered being straight 29:10

01 Amy: [It w]as: the: bigge]st:: turn off of a lesbian
02 scene that you could ever possibly imagine,
03 (0.2)
04 Amy: J[ust th]ese two du:mplings like=
05 Bet: [Yeah.]
06 Bet: =uhhhhh [°°huh°° ↑huh huh hu]h hu[h huh ↑↑.HHHH]
07 Amy: [(°°k(h)issing°°)]
08 Dai: [ohh:: huh!]
09 Bet: h[ah hhh!]
10 Amy: [W(h)ith ab]sol[utely n:o: s]exual
11 Dai: [#uh::#]
12 Amy: chemist[ry between them at a(h)ll.]
13 Bet: [.hhhhhh hhoh::] Aw:fu[l.]
14 Dai: [↑A]RH:: huh=
15 Amy: =Both looking horrified to be[: there.=ah huh!]
16 -> Bet: [I think I actual]ly
17 -> considered being st[raight after watching th]at.
18 Amy: [.hh! °huh huh huh°]
19 (0.2)
20 Amy: uh ↑.HHH It was a:bsolute- [it was s]o cringey
21 Bet: [uh hih]

³ Broadcast on BBC1 28/11/2005.

Amy's assessment in lines 1-2 uses an extreme case formulation (Pomerantz, 1986) to depict the scene as exceptionally bad: no other "lesbian scene" could ever be as unappealing as this one, even if you tried to imagine one. After a short gap of 0.2 seconds she self-selects to continue, and expands on why the scene was so terrible by describing the women involved as "these two du:mplings" (line 4) who had "absolutely n:o: sexual chemistry between them at a(h)ll" (lines 10/12). This gets a minimal second assessment from Beth in line 13 with "Aw:ful", and Daisy produces a loud laughter token. Amy produces a further turn in line 15, describing the women as "looking horrified to be: there" and in overlap Beth produces a further assessment, this time upgraded. Amy's assessment and description is already extreme and highly negative; in order for Beth to sufficiently upgrade her own assessment (Pomerantz, 1984), she also needs to say something extreme. Her first assessment, "Aw:ful" (line 13), does not match the level of negativity expressed by Amy. So instead of stating just her opinion or describing the scene as Amy as done, Beth draws on her own personal reaction to the scene: it was so awful that she "actually considered being straight after watching that" (16-17).

It is inferable from Beth's turn that if she was to consider being straight, that must mean that she is not actually straight. So by setting up this contrast she has invoked her sexual identity in this interaction. Moreover, her sexual identity is a useful resource in this interaction and specifically for the action that she produces: a sufficiently strong assessment of the television scene. Her reaction to and assessment of the scene is more subjective than Amy's. Where Amy's assessment is descriptive, Beth's is more personal: it was so terrible that she considered changing a significant aspect of her being, her sexual identity.

Extracts 3.3 and 3.4 illustrate how speakers can invoke their own or an interlocutor's lesbian identity in order to facilitate a particular action. In extract 3.3 Anastasia invokes Katrina's lesbian identity in order to reiterate her earlier assessment of her as "unique"; in extract 3.4 Beth invokes her own lesbian identity in order to produce a sufficiently upgraded second assessment. A further similarity concerns the way in which these invokings are produced. Both of them are done by contrasting their recipient or themselves with being straight. If Sally's boss' wife does not bat for the right team that must mean that Katrina does. If Beth considered being straight that

19 (1.0) ((Abby nods))
20 (M): ((coughs))
21 (0.4)
22 -> Tam: Now:: °we've° done the civil partnership (↓#pa::rt#),
23 (0.4)
24 Tam: She's gotta (.) go for an interview:: (#and at
25 a-#) (0.4) #s:even °hundred° pou*ndsǃ#
26 (1.0)
27 Tam: >Well actually< if we do it by po:st I think
28 it's five hundred.
29 (0.8)
30 Tam: An:d then they give her two year:s during (.)
31 er: during which she then ()
32 processed.
33 (0.8)
34 Abb: An she's got [(no wor:k] to go do.)
35 Tam: [°No work.°]
36 Tam: Hey:?
37 Abb: °(She got n[o w]°
38 Tam: [She's] got a recruiter that's
39 intereste:d °so:°,
40 (2.2) ((Abby nods))
41 Tam: °°ts°°

Abby's FPP addressed to Megan in line 3 concerns whether Megan has found work yet. Her ability to ask this question is dependent on some prior knowledge that she has available to her: that Megan is American and has recently arrived in the UK to join her Australian partner Tamsin, who has lived and worked in the UK for several years; and that Megan did not have a job waiting for her when she arrived in the country and so has had to look for work. Megan does not immediately respond and instead initiates repair in line 6, possibly as she is still occupied with the camera, although she may produce a "No" shortly afterwards in line 9 but this is unclear. Abby's shortened redone FPP still addresses Megan, as she gazes at Megan initially, but she shifts her gaze from Megan to Tamsin as she produces "jo::b", possibly after noticing that Tamsin has mouthed something in line 10. Tamsin responds first by shaking her head to indicate 'no' and Megan verifies this by saying "No" in line 11. Tamsin then expands on this negative response by providing more information about Megan's visa status, and as Megan's partner she would be expected to have access to knowledge about Megan's employment situation. She states "Gotta wait for her visa () gonna

change” in line 14, meaning that Megan has to wait for this change to take place before she can work.

After Abby asks for more detail about this change (“From what to what”, line 16) Tamsin provides more information about the visa: “Well she came in under a civil partnership visa”. As mentioned above, in the UK civil partnerships are still only available to same-sex couples. For Megan to have come into the UK with a civil partnership visa she must have entered into a civil partnership with another woman, and therefore be in a same-sex relationship. As such, the activity of entering into a civil partnership is currently bound to the categories of ‘same-sex couple’ and ‘lesbian/gay’. By referencing Megan’s visa type, Tamsin has also mentioned Megan’s membership of these categories and therefore her identity as lesbian. Tamsin goes on to include herself within this category in line 22, as she explains at what stage of the immigration process that Megan is in: “now:: °we’ve° done the civil partnership (↓#pa::rt#)”. By using the pronoun “we” in relation to doing “the civil partnership (↓#pa::rt#)”, Tamsin states that the civil partnership is something that she was also involved in, that she has also entered into a civil partnership with another woman, Megan. By stating her involvement in the category-bound activity of entering into a civil partnership she has also categorised herself as a member of the categories ‘lesbian/gay’ and ‘same-sex couple’.

Tamsin’s categorising of herself and Megan as ‘lesbian’ is not the focus of the action underway, but their lesbian identities are incidentally invoked as the action is carried out. In order to adequately and correctly answer Abby’s question about Megan having a job, Tamsin has to refer to Megan’s visa to explain why she does not have a job yet. As her visa-type is particular to people who have entered a civil partnership, which is bound to the categories ‘same-sex couple’ and ‘lesbian/gay’, it is inferred from this category-bound activity that the parties to the civil partnership – Tamsin and Megan – are members of these categories.

Such inferring can also be done in reference to lesbian- or LGBT-specific cultural knowledge, where displaying such knowledge can signify membership to the category ‘lesbian/gay’ or ‘LGBT’. The next two extracts provide examples of such cultural knowledge used to mention a speaker’s identity as lesbian or gay.

In extract 3.6, the three undergraduate students Amy, Beth and Daisy are having tea and Oreo biscuits. Talk about dipping an Oreo in tea led to joking that this could be a euphemism for something, following which Daisy produced “fluffing with your muffin”, an approximation of a lyric from a pop song by the singer Lady Gaga, which also sounds as if it could have some euphemistic meaning. This leads to the topicalisation of a Lady Gaga music video, in which the singer kissed a butch woman. Daisy indirectly quotes from an article that she read about the video, and states that she had read it “on Diva.” (line 21), a magazine and accompanying website which is aimed at lesbian and bisexual women:

Extract 3.6 - RV:LHH7.1 article on Diva 00:40

01 Amy: [What's fluffing] with the muffin.
 02 (0.2)
 03 Amy: What does that mean.
 04 (2.2)
 05 Dai: Lady Ga:Ga:¿
 06 (0.4)
 07 Bet: .HH Ooh I watched the video.
 08 (0.4)
 09 Bet: S:ó:: goo:d.
 10 (.)
 11 Dai: (hm I(h)sn't) it amazin.=
 12 Bet: =(That one [good.]
 13 Dai: [>I r< I r]ead a[n article:,]
 14 Bet: [I actually lo]ved it.
 15 (0.8)
 16 -> Dai: on Diva:,
 17 (0.2)
 18 Bet: Mm. ((Daisy nods her head slightly to the right))
 19 (0.2)
 20 Dai: °t(h)huh:: h[n hn°]
 21 Bet: [(h)h (h)h]
 22 Dai: Wh(h)ich: u(h)m: said that it==
 23 Bet: =.hh
 24 (0.8)
 25 Dai: it's- (.) it's a ba:d video.
 26 (0.4)
 27 Bet: ↑Bad.
 28 Dai: Yea[h.]
 29 Bet: [W]hy?

30 (0.2)
 31 Dai: In that it- (0.6) t(h)akes adva:ntage of:
 32 <transg(h)end(h)ers a(h)n(h)dʒ>
 33 (2.2)
 34 Bet: I think it's brilliant myself.=
 35 Dai: =an it's a freak show.
 36 Amy: mfhh[hhhhh]hhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh
 37 (D): [khhhh]
 38 Bet: [↑huh] >↑huh huh huh<
 39 Amy: <£It's a freak show.£>
 40 Bet: .hhhh
 41 Amy: hm hm hm
 42 (1.2)

The Lady Gaga video is topicalised by Beth in line 7 after Daisy has produced “Lady Ga:ga:ʒ” in response to Amy’s question about the meaning of “fluffing with the muffin”. Beth does not say which video she is referring to, stating only that she has seen “the video”, before assessing it as “S:ɔ: goo:d” in line 9. Daisy produces an upgraded second assessment (Pomerantz, 1984) of the video in line 11, without requiring further specification as to which video Beth is talking about: “the video” is sufficient in the context of coming after Daisy’s “Lady Ga:ga:”. In overlap with Beth producing a further upgraded assessment of the video in lines 12 and 14, in line 13 Daisy starts a FPP telling about an article that she read. The FPP begins with “I read an article”, which has a continuing intonation indicating that she is not finished with her turn. She pauses for 0.8 seconds after Beth has completed her assessment and then continues her TCU by producing “on Diva:” in line 16, again with continuing intonation implying that she has still not completed her turn. After a pause of 0.2 seconds Beth produces a continuer, and at the same time Daisy slightly nods her head to the right. (Her back is to the camera so unfortunately her facial expression is not visible, and it may have something to do with the laughter that she then quietly produces which is joined in with by Beth.) Daisy then continues with her TCU in lines 22 and 25 (with a 0.8 second pause after the first cut-off “it-”), producing “wh(h)ich: u(h)m: said that it- ... it's- (.) it's a ba:d video”, with the determiner *which* connecting this relative clause to Daisy’s prior utterances to create one TCU. Beth produces a confirmation check in line 27 “↑Bad”, which she follows by questioning “Why” after Daisy confirms the article’s negative assessment. Daisy reproduces the article’s opinions about the video: firstly that it “t(h)akes adva:ntage of: <transg(h)end(h)ers”,

an opinion that Beth disagrees with by claiming instead that it is brilliant; and secondly that it is “a freak show”, which receives laughter from both Amy and Beth.

There are three interesting things to note about Daisy’s inclusion of the publication name *Diva* in her telling. Firstly, as *Diva* is a specifically lesbian/bisexual woman magazine (although it focuses more on lesbian issues than on bisexual ones), reading it can be classed as a category-bound activity, one bound to the categories ‘lesbian’ or ‘bisexual woman’. So Daisy’s knowledge of and reading of the publication indicates that she is a possible member of one of these categories. Lesbian (or bisexual) identity is incidentally invoked as a by-product of the telling about the article, by displaying some knowledge about a culturally-specific thing; the main action underway is describing an article about a music video. Secondly, Daisy says that she read the article “on Diva:” without providing any explanation as to what kind of publication *Diva* is. From this we can say that the publication name is treated by Daisy as not requiring any explanation for the benefit of her interlocutors. Indeed, neither Beth nor Amy perform repair on the term *Diva* but wait instead for Daisy to continue, thus indicating that they also have access to the culturally-specific knowledge about what kind of publication *Diva* is. Lastly, the fact that Daisy includes the name of the publication as the source of the article implies that it is of some significance to her telling. The music video that *Diva* is being critical of includes a scene in which Lady Gaga kisses a particularly butch lesbian; given that depictions of butch lesbians in the media are somewhat rare this scene was heralded as a positive thing by some writers in the LGBT community (e.g. Michelson, 2010). So for a lesbian/bisexual woman publication to comment negatively about the music video is a noticeable thing, which may contribute to the newsworthiness of Daisy’s telling about the article.

In extracts 3.5 and 3.6 participants invoked their own or their interlocutor’s sexual identity by referring to an activity that they undertook or cultural knowledge that they have that is bound to the category of lesbian/gay. Again, the identities are a resource when doing particular actions: accounting for not having a job in extract 3.5 and telling about an article in extract 3.6. The last extract in this section also draws on shared cultural knowledge, however in this case the knowledge is not as clearly related to the category of ‘lesbian/gay’, being more general. Yet it is still used by one

participant to invoke the lesbian identity of an interlocutor while producing a candidate account, thereby connecting this knowledge to the ‘lesbian/gay’ category.

Samantha and Natasha are a couple who share a flat with Sidney. Dee, a friend of Natasha’s, is visiting, and the four are chatting in the flat’s living room. The conversation has come round to the Teletubbies, four characters from a UK pre-school children’s programme of the same name, and Dee, Samantha and Sidney have been saying which characters they liked. Samantha announces that she liked a character called Tinky Winky in line 1. In line 3 Dee provides a candidate account for why Samantha would like Tinky Winky: “is that ’cause he was gay”:

Extract 3.7 - RV:LHH4.1 Tinky Winky 01:20

01 Sam: mp I like[dt Tinky] Win[ky.]
02 Sid: [()] [Dips]y was °good°.
03 -> Dee: Is that ’cause he was gay.
04 (0.2)
05 Sam: Which o[ne was Tinky W]inky.=
06 Sid: [They’re all gay.]
07 Dee: =The on[e (who) carried a ha:ndba:g an:] had the=
08 Sid: [Tinky Winky was the purple ()]
09 Dee: =>little:< purple triangle=
10 Sid: Ye[ah.]
11 Dee: [=an]ten[na.]
12 Sam: [ah]:. .hh I really liked the hat.
13 (.)
14 (D): hh!
15 (.)
16 Sam: of: of the (0.2) green one.
17 (.)
18 Sam: But I also did kind of like the fact that
19 Tinky Winky had a ha:ndba:g.

In overlap with the end of Samantha’s turn, Sidney in line 2 assesses the character “Dipsy” as “good”, thus continuing with the activity of listing which Teletubbies they liked. Dee, however, keeps her gaze on Samantha and asks her “is that ’cause he was gay”. The male character Tinky Winky had a red bag which looked like a woman’s handbag, and he was purple with a triangular antenna. Despite the character being the age of a toddler, it was claimed that he was gay and this perception of him

held⁴. Dee knows that Samantha is lesbian, and by giving the character's alleged gayness as a candidate account for Samantha's liking of him, she thereby invokes Samantha's own identity as gay. In this way she does two things of interest here. Firstly, she connects liking the character with the category of lesbian/gay: liking Tinky Winky is something that a lesbian or gay person would do, and if a lesbian or gay person likes him then they like him primarily because he is gay and not because of any other attributes. Therefore, suggesting that Samantha likes him because he is gay makes her own identity as gay relevant to this interaction. Secondly, the main action underway is not related to Samantha's sexual identity, but to the business of producing a candidate account for liking the television character, which the reference to Samantha's lesbian identity facilitates. There is also a possible third layer to Dee's turn. She draws on Samantha's lesbian identity to produce a candidate reason, but in providing this candidate reason she may also be teasing Samantha or indeed joking about the claim that Tinky Winky was gay, because as he was actually a child-like children's character he was not intended to have had any type of sexuality attributed to him.

Dee's action is not responded to immediately by Samantha, as she begins an insert sequence in line 5 to check which character they are talking about. Dee and Sidney both respond to Samantha's FPP in lines 7/8/9 by describing Tinky Winky's appearance, after which Samantha states that she liked something about a different character (lines 12/16). She finally orients to Dee's turn of line 3 by saying that she liked the fact that Tinky Winky carried a handbag, but although this is not a clear rejection of Dee's candidate account it also not a confirmation; ultimately Dee's candidate account does not appear to be accepted, and if there is a joking aspect to this action it is not oriented to by Samantha. Yet although Samantha does not confirm the candidate account, and therefore the relevance of her sexual identity to liking Tinky Winky, this does not detract from the usefulness of her sexual identity for Dee when producing this action.

⁴ In February 1999 Reverend Jerry Falwell, a former leader of the American political organisation Moral Majority, claimed that Tinky Winky was gay and therefore a bad role model for children. He cited the character's appearance as the main reason, purple being the colour of gay pride and the triangle being the symbol of gay pride; he also referred to the character's bag (BBC News, 1999; The New York Times, 1999).

Same-sex relationships and attractions

The extracts in this last section demonstrate involkings of lesbian identity that are related to being in a same-sex relationship or having a same-sex attraction, and which again have some bearing on an action being produced in the interaction.

Land and Kitzinger (2005) found that same-sex couples can be produced in talk by linking same-sex names together, for example “Lisa and Emily”, in the same way that different-sex names can be linked to produce heterosexual couples (Kitzinger 2005a), for example “John and Mary”. Extract 3.8 involves a speaker invoking the same-sex relationship of her interlocutor by linking the pronoun “you” with a female name.

Kimberley and Barbara are flatmates. They are in their living room watching an episode of *The Apprentice*⁵, a reality television programme which doubles as an interview process, where contestants compete for a position working for a well-known UK businessman. The contestants are split into two teams and each week the teams have to successfully complete a business-related task; at the end of the episode one member of the losing team is “fired” and leaves the selection process. In this particular episode the teams have been challenged to select new products to sell to retailers, and to sell as much as possible. One team has chosen a product called “Lovers’ Lead”, which is a dog leash with two handles so that couples can walk their dog together, and both Kimberley and Barbara are unimpressed by this product. The scene on the television has changed to show this team arranging appointments with retailers to pitch the product. Kimberley topicalises the product as she produces an evaluation of the team’s choice in line 2, and then addresses Barbara to ask whether she would buy it “if you and Leila had a do:g” in line 4:

Extract 3.8 – RV:LHH2.1 love leash 11:06

01 (1.0)
02 Kim: I can’t believe they’ve got the love leash.
03 (2.2)
04 -> Kim: **Would you buy a love leash if you and Leila had a do:g.**
05 (1.2)

⁵ Broadcast on BBC1 6/5/2009.

06 Bar: £Nah.£
07 Kim: thn huhn huhn .hh I'd buy you on:e huhn huhn huhn
08 Bar: She can take the dog for a walk.

In line 4 Kimberley directly addresses Barbara by using the pronoun “you”; there are no other participants in this interaction so “you” can only be addressed to Barbara despite Kimberley keeping her gaze on the television on front of her. However, an extra referent is added as her question progresses: “would *you* buy a love leash if *you and Leila* had a do:g”. The question of whether Barbara would buy the product is not based on her owning a dog herself but on her owning a dog together with Leila, who is known by Kimberley to be Barbara’s partner. The linking of the pronoun “you” with the female name “Leila” produces the addressee, Barbara, and Leila as a couple. Moreover, this question is posed in the context of talk about a product that is marketed at couples and the name of the product, “Lovers’ Lead”, also has connotations of romantic coupledom. Barbara responds negatively to Kimberley’s question about the “Lovers’ Lead”, producing “£nah£” in line 6 after leaving a gap of 1.2 seconds after Kimberley’s FPP. However, she does not reject the couple status and the accompanying identity that Kimberley has invoked by linking her with Leila, and she goes on to assert that “she”, meaning Leila, could walk the dog.

Kimberley’s question comes directly after she has expressed her disbelief that the team picked this product, so it is apparent from this that her opinion of the “Lovers’ Lead” is negative. Moreover, when the product had appeared earlier in the programme both participants had expressed that they were not impressed by it. So when Kimberley asks Barbara whether she would buy one herself she does so knowing something about Barbara’s opinion already. Therefore, it seems that Kimberley turn is doing more than just eliciting an opinion from her interlocutor. Rather, Kimberley is able to draw on Barbara’s status as being in a couple, and thereby invoke her lesbian identity, in order to mock the product further (and possibly tease Barbara, as she goes on to say that she would buy it for her despite Barbara clearly not wanting one).

In addition to referring to same-sex relationships, referring to a same-sex attraction is another key way that a lesbian sexual identity can be mentioned in an interaction. Extract 3.9 shows how a speaker mentions her lesbian identity in this way within an

account for an opinion that she holds. The participants are the undergraduate students Amy, Beth and Daisy, who are still discussing the Lady Gaga video that was the subject of their talk in extract 3.5. They have been listing things that they like about the music video. In lines 1 and 3 Beth provides an instance of the video that she likes: “the bit at the< star:t when: er:m the lesbian: in the biker jacket °is there°”. After a short gap in line 4 she then provides an account for why she likes this part of the video: “°I just quite fancy her°”:

Extract 3.9 - RV:LHH7.1 lesbian biker jacket 05:07

01 Bet: But >I really [like] the bit at the< star:t when:
 02 (A): [.HH]
 03 Bet: er:m the lesbian: in the biker jacket °is there°.
 04 (.)
 05 -> Bet: °I just quite fancy her°.
 06 (0.2)
 07 Bet: tkshhhh hh hh [hh .hhhhhhhhh .h]a (h)Yeeah
 08 Amy: [What the one she pulls.]
 09 Amy: Really.
 10 Bet: °(h)Y(h)eah°.

Beth’s account is to do with finding the character in the video attractive: she likes this part of the video because she fancies a particular character in an early scene. In providing this account Beth invokes her lesbian identity by announcing her attraction to a female character in the video (“the lesbian”, line 3; “her”, line 5). Her admission that she fancies “the lesbian: in the biker jacket”⁶ is not a free-standing utterance, but one that accounts for her prior assessment of the early part of the music video; she has drawn on her attraction to the woman in order to produce this account. So the invoking of her lesbian identity is done incidentally within her larger action of accounting for her initial assessment.

The last extract of this chapter contains a similar instance. It involves the four women from extracts 3.1, 3.2 and 3.5 talking in a pub, and one participant says that she was

⁶ It is interesting that she refers to the character as a ‘lesbian’ and not as a ‘woman’; this may have something to do with identifying the character as there are many women in the video and this character is butch and therefore more visible as a lesbian, but Beth also further specifies that the character is wearing a biker jacket which would also help with identification. Nevertheless, following this description with the information that she fancies this character also specifies the type of woman that Beth fancies.

attracted to a woman she knows. Ellie has been describing a club night that she went to recently with a woman called Lisa. Abby asked who Lisa is, which received a reprimand from Tamsin about needing to know people's names, and after Abby rewords the question for Tamsin in line 1, Ellie describes who Lisa is to Abby and Tamsin. One of the pieces of information that Ellie provides about her relationship to Lisa is that she “did- (0.6) fancy her >sort of< at first” (line 6):

Extract 3.10 - RV:LHH6.1 fancy her at first 06:00

01 Abb: [I (just said wh)o) Lisa i[s.]
 02 Ell: [I]t's Lisa Jones.
 03 She's only twenty five but I feel I've
 04 known her: on the scene for a long time,
 05 Abb: (hm)
06 -> Ell: I did- (0.6) fancy her >sort of< at first till I knew
 07 how old she was an now (we're just good time friends).
 08 (1.0) ((Abby nodding))
 09 Ell: Which is nice ([])
 10 Tam: [Till she hits thi]rty
 11 (an) [huh ↑hih huh huh huh huh]
 12 Ell: [No no coz then I'll b]e
 13 [even o][:lder.]
 14 Abb: [HHHHHH]
 15 Tam: [HAHAAH]A

Ellie's SPP covers various aspects of Lisa Jones and how she knows her. Firstly she provides her full name. Secondly she provides her age (“only twenty five”) and how she knows her (“I feel I've known her on the scene for a long time”). She then provides a description of the kind of relationship that they have in lines 6-7: “I did- (0.6) fancy her >sort of< at first till I knew how old she was an now (we're just good time friends)”. Ellie's admission that she initially fancied Lisa references her attraction to someone of the same gender, and thereby mentions her lesbian identity. Yet in the same turn she also refers to Lisa's age as a hindrance to this attraction: she only fancied her until she realised that she was “only twenty five”, and now they are just friends. So although Ellie mentions her lesbian identity by stating her previous attraction to another woman, this piece of information is part of a larger description about Lisa and her relationship to Ellie. Indeed, it is Ellie's age identity, not her lesbian identity, that is drawn on by Tamsin when she comes in in overlap with “till she hits thirty” in line 10, which targets the “just good time friends” that Ellie had

produced in her description of her and Lisa's relationship, thus teasing Ellie that if she waits five years until Lisa is thirty then her age will not be a problem.

An additional thing to note in this extract is Ellie's description that she has known Lisa "on the scene". "The scene" can refer to the gay scene, which includes social events, nightclubs and bars among other things, although this term can also be used within other subcultures for similar purposes. Ellie treats this term as unproblematic for her recipients by not explaining what she means by it, and her recipients also treat this as unproblematic by not initiating repair on it. They all apparently have access to the necessary knowledge required to understand what the "the scene" is, in the same way that the participants discussing the Lady Gaga video understood what *Diva* was. Other such category-bound cultural items that are used to invoke lesbian/gay identity in the corpus include gay club names, lesbian bar names, and lesbian television programmes; as with "the scene" these names are produced without explanation and are not treated as problematic by participants.

Discussion

Although this is not frequent or focal in the corpus, participants invoke their identities as lesbian or gay in a variety of topics. These invokings occur in very mundane talk, for example about television programmes, work, or people that are participants are attracted to; as such, this identity is treated as an everyday part of life by participants.

This chapter has described some of the ways in which the participants in this data set invoked their sexual identities in their everyday interactions. The ways in which they did this could be quite explicit, by applying sexual identity category labels to themselves (extracts 3.1 and 3.2) or contrasting themselves with opposing sexual identities (extracts 3.3 and 3.4); or less explicit, by referring to activities and cultural knowledge that are bound to the categories of lesbian/gay (extracts 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7) or referring to same-sex relationships that they are in or same-sex attractions that they have or have had (extracts 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10). Moreover, these invokings can relate to the speaker or to an interlocutor.

What is particularly interesting about these invokings is the other work that they are doing in the interactions. The participants know each other well, as friends, flatmates or romantic partners, and so when a sexual identity is made relevant in an interaction it is not news – they are not coming out to their interlocutors or outing each other. When a sexual identity is invoked, it contributes in some way to another action, the one in which it is being produced. In extracts 3.1 and 3.2, Tamsin and Ellie invoke their lesbian identities when telling about times that they were not recognised as lesbian at work; they were not coming out to their interlocutors in the pub when they recounted these stories, but their lesbian identities were relevant to and necessary for the stories that they were telling. A telling is also the main action in extract 3.6, when Daisy invokes her own sexual identity when providing context for her telling about a magazine article. In extract 3.3 Anastasia mentioned Katrina’s sexual identity in order to show her uniqueness in a discussion of being similar to other people. Beth invoked her own sexual identity in extract 3.4 in order to upgrade an assessment. In extract 3.5 Tamsin invoked her partner’s and her own sexual identities when producing an account, as did Beth in extract 3.9. Dee also invoked Samantha’s sexual identity in order to produce a candidate account in extract 3.7. In extract 3.8 Kimberley invokes Barbara’s sexual and relationship identities when mocking a product. Finally, in extract 3.10 Ellie invoked her identity when providing context about someone she knows.

This use of participants’ lesbian identities when producing these actions shows that they are a resource that can be drawn on in interaction. They are not just invoked for their own sake, but for other interactional purposes. Moreover, they are invoked unproblematically: they are not treated as news and they are not queried in any way. They are used in a similar way to many other types of identity, incidentally invoked during the course of some action. The everyday use of these identities reflects, perhaps, the growing ‘normalisation’ of homosexuality in general, the living “beyond the closet” as suggested by Seidman (2002). This, together with the fact that these invokings do not occur frequently, show a lack of orientation to the participants’ lesbian identity in the data set: invoking lesbian identity is unremarkable in these instances.

However, this needs to be considered in relation to the settings of these interactions, and the groups that take part in them. Firstly, these interactions take place in ‘safe’ situations: among friends or intimates where everyone’s sexual identity is known. It may be the case that lesbian identity is less likely to be used as a resource in this way in other settings. Secondly, clear mentions of lesbian identity such as those in this chapter are not found in the recordings of families or in some of the groups of friends where not everyone is lesbian. So involkings related to sexual identity in this corpus are more likely to occur among lesbian couples and groups of friends where most participants are lesbian, and not in interactions with children or less well-acquainted friends where discussions or mentions of sexual identity or sexuality may be less appropriate in general.

This chapter focused on one type of identity being invoked, but showed how they contributed to a variety of action types. The examples in chapter 4 will show some of the other identities that these participants invoked in their interactions, and specifically show how they are used to contribute to one type of action: explanations or accounts.

Chapter 4: Lesbian and other identities as resources for action

Introduction

In chapter 3, various ways in which sexual identity can be invoked in interaction were described: applying sexual identity categories to oneself or an interlocutor, contrasting a participant's sexual identity with an opposing identity, by referring to activities or cultural knowledge bound to a sexual identity category, and by referring to a same-sex relationship or attraction. It was shown that these invokings have a significance for the interaction beyond displaying this identity; their primary function is to contribute to action. A variety of actions were described, three of which were accounts (3.5, 3.7 and 3.9). However, the participants in the data set mention a wide range of other types of identity and one situation in which this is done is when producing explanations or accounts. This chapter will show some of the ways in which these other identities are invoked, and how they are used by participants to contribute to the action of explaining or accounting.

Identities

A wide variety of other identities are mentioned by the participants in this corpus, relating to age, national identity, race, occupation, health and interests. West and Zimmerman (1985) proposed three categories of participant identity that are made relevant in interaction: "master identities", "situated identities", and "discourse identities" (1985: 116), and the identities that the participants draw on can be categorised according to this classification. "Master identities" include those that are brought by the speaker to every interaction, such as age, sex and ethnic background. "Situated identities" are not as obvious; they are specific to certain settings and include such identities as nurse, school pupil and teacher, and may in addition involve the use of registers particular to their setting. "Discourse identities" refer to the role that the speaker plays in discourse or in a conversation; they may invoke the identity of questioner in an interview, or of audience or story-teller in a telling sequence.

Certainly it can be argued that in some cases language is not necessary for a given master identity to be recognised, for example if they are clearly visible to others, as may be the case with sex and age. Moreover, some situated identities can be ascertained without the need for them to be displayed through language use: in the case of the examples given above, a uniform would indicate if a person identifies her/himself as a nurse or a school pupil. Discourse identities, however, are dependent on the conversation that participants are engaged in and are therefore constructed in language use. Moreover, as discourse identities are constructed through conversation, they will be relevant to that conversation. This is significant, as from the large catalogue of identities that a person has access to, only a few identities will be relevant at any one time:

“It is one thing to register that there are many ways to characterize a person, a stretch of conduct, or a setting or context in which the person enacts that conduct. It is quite another to claim that they are all equally warranted, equally legitimate, entitled to legitimate uptake and weight.” (Schegloff 1997: 166)

Schegloff (1997) puts forward the point that it is the participants in a given interaction who determine which identities are to be made relevant in their interaction; it is they who “orient to their context” (1997: 166). A speaker’s master identity may indicate that she is female and her situated identity may indicate that she is a doctor. However these identities will not be relevant if she is talking with a colleague during her lunch-break about a play that her colleague saw at the weekend; it is the discourse identity that is made relevant, in this case that of audience to the colleague’s narrative about the play. As with the lesbian identity invokings discussed in chapter 3, the identities in this chapter are made relevant by the participants, if only fleetingly, to the interaction.

The identities are also invoked in similar ways to those discussed in the previous chapter, by naming categories, and by mentioning category-bound activities. These practices have also been documented elsewhere. Goffman (1981) gave an example of a news report which described an interaction between President Nixon and the reporter Helen Thomas. This shows the President assigning identities to Miss Thomas, as opposed to her making them relevant herself, by naming a category: “After a bill-signing ceremony in the Oval Office, the President stood up from his desk and in a teasing voice said to UPI’s Helen Thomas: ‘Helen, are you still wearing

slacks? Do you prefer them actually? Every time I see girls in slacks it reminds me of China.’

Miss Thomas, somewhat abashed, told the President that Chinese women were moving toward Western dress.

‘This is not said in an uncomplimentary way, but slacks can do something for some people and some it can’t.’ He hastened to add, ‘but I think you do very well. Turn around.’” (*The Evening Bulletin* (Philadelphia), 1973; cited in Goffman, 1981: 124).

A number of identities are made relevant about Miss Thomas in this exchange.

Although she is at the ceremony in her professional capacity as a reporter, President Nixon makes relevant her identity as a young woman when he names the category “girls in slacks”. When he tells her to “Turn around” he is making relevant an identity of a fashion model by drawing attention to what she is wearing, and also instructing her to behave in way associated with models by turning around. Moreover, her identity as someone of a lower status than the President is invoked by his use of her first name, together with his assessment of her appearance: “I think you do very well”. Miss Thomas has little choice but to concur with the identities that the President makes relevant and she does so by pirouetting to display her outfit to the people gathered there to see (ibid.; cited in Goffman 1981: 124).

The naming of opposing categories to invoke sexual identity was another technique described in chapter 3. This is a common way to distance oneself from different groups. This method of constructing identity is visible in language use regarding national identity. The following explanation given by a Serbian soldier, at a Serbian militia command post in 1993 in former Yugoslavia, shows his use of an ‘other’ in describing the difference between Serbs and Croats:

“Look, here’s how it is. Those Croats, they think they’re better than us. They think they’re fancy Europeans and everything. I’ll tell you something. We’re all just Balkan rubbish.” (Ignatieff, 1994: 1-2; cited in Woodward, 1997: 8)

In referring to “Those Croats” who “think they’re better than us”, the Serbian soldier is distancing himself from Croats as a people different from his own. As Serbs and Croats were on opposing sides during the Yugoslav Wars, these national identities are in one sense in opposition to each other. While associating Croats with “fancy Europeans” he also disassociates himself from a European identity. Yet at the end of his utterance he applies the same category to himself and the Croats: Balkan. This

provides an explanation for why Croats are no better than Serbs: that they are both actually the same and have the same regional identity even if their national identities differ.

This idea of using identity to do explaining is the focus of this chapter. As with the lesbian identity invokings discussed in the previous chapter, the identities under examination here also serve other interactional purposes. The examples in this chapter consist of invokings of a variety of identities, but seem to serve a similar interactional purpose, that of explaining or accounting for something.

Explaining and accounting

The actions of explaining and accounting are closely connected with the concept of accountability. This can be traced back to Garfinkel and ethnomethodology, when the everyday became a subject of study. Ethnomethodology developed within sociology as a means to examine the previously neglected “common sense world of everyday life” (Garfinkel, 1964: 226). Garfinkel wanted to consider the background expectancies that an ordinary member of society uses to interpret everyday events. In order to do this the researcher “must either be a stranger to the ‘life as usual’ character of everyday scenes, or become estranged from them” (ibid.). One way in which he demonstrated this was through breaching experiments, where the researcher behaves in an unexpected manner in an everyday situation; behaving in a way inappropriate to the setting exposes what would ordinarily be expected, and thus the social moral order. Interviewing Agnes, an intersex person who chose to identify as a woman after having been raised as a boy⁷, also allowed Garfinkel see how the everyday is produced, by seeing how she had to learn the expectations of being female and work at incorporating them into her own behaviour (Garfinkel, 1984). When the breacher in Garfinkel’s experiments behaved in an unexpected way, they were accountable for this and had to explain why they behaved as they did. That Agnes had to learn how to

⁷ Initial tests had found that her testes were producing estrogens which led to the development of female secondary sex characteristics; for this reason she was undergoing sex reassignment treatment. However, it later transpired that the real reason behind the excess estrogens in her body was that she had been taking her mother’s post-hysterectomy medication since the age of twelve (Stoller, cited in Garfinkel, 1984: 285-7).

act like a woman shows her orientation to the accountability of not behaving in accordance with her chosen gender.

Sacks also discussed this idea of ‘working’ at being a particular kind of person in his lecture on “Doing being ordinary” (1984; also in 1992, Spring 1970, lecture 2). He observed that when people report about an event, they report its ordinariness. If someone is describing an evening at a friend’s house, they would be unlikely to describe the colour of the carpets and the walls at great length, even if they had noticed them. Rather, they would be more likely to just say that they had had a nice time and that the friend’s house is nice. As Sacks says:

“Presumably, any of us with any wit could make of this half-hour, or of the next, a rather large array of things to say. But there is the job of being an ordinary person, and that job includes attending the world, yourself, others, objects, so as to see how it is that it is a usual scene. And when offering what transpired, you present it in its usual fashion: “Nothing much”...” (1984: 417)

Moreover, if you are not ordinary you are accountable for it. Certain types of person are allowed to describe things in less than ordinary ways, for example creative people (such as an artist or a poet), or people who have a chemical reason for experiencing the world differently (such as someone on drugs or who has a mental health issue); indeed, being creative or on drugs would be an acceptable account for not being ordinary. Being ordinary, then, involves applying background expectations of what is and is not acceptable to say to one’s everyday interactions. The concept of accountability runs right through conversation analytic research; speakers are accountable for producing utterances at certain points in interaction, and they are accountable for producing appropriate utterances. This orientation to accountability can be seen in interactions through the use of repair and pursuit when someone is accountable to produce a particular action, and the production of accounts and explanations to address this accountability.

The identities invoked in this chapter are all done in the course of an explanation. Three types of invoking will be looked at: when a category is named; when something bound to a category is referred to, which implies the category; and the naming of a known individual as a representative of a category.

Naming categories

In chapter 3, examples were given of participants using sexual identity labels to invoke their lesbian identities. In this way they effectively named the categories to which they claimed to belong, or named an opposing category to which they did not belong. In this first set of extracts other types of category are named by participants, who are consequently hearable as belonging to these categories.

Illness-related category

In extract 4.1 a category is named that is related to a particular illness. Couple Anastasia and Katrina are talking about buying food. Katrina has just said that over the last two weeks she has spent twice as much money on food than she ordinarily would; due to having coeliac disease she requires gluten-free food which tends to be more expensive. At the start of this extract Anastasia asks what food Katrina has been buying. Katrina lists some of the food that she has bought and that she is restricted to buying: items that say they are “suitable for coeliacs” (line 15):

Extract 4.1 - RV:LHH10.1 coeliac 06:28

01 Ana: [So what ha]ve you been [↑]buying.
02 (0.4)
03 Kat: .hh Er:m (0.4) mt I've had to go on a [lot] of: (.)
04 Ana: [°mm°]
05 Kat: er:m working lunches this week. so: I've literally
06 been .hh (.) buying salads.
07 (1.0)
08 Ana: hmm. ((nodding))
09 (0.4)
10 Kat: And they're expensi:v:e.
11 (0.2)
12 Kat: er:m .hh mt If I want a sna:ck, (0.8) er:: I have to
13 buy things like <Kettle:: crisps> hh .hh Red Sky
14 cris:ps: you know because they a:ll say at
15 -> the back **.hh suitable for coeliacs** [°you kn]ow°;
16 Ana: [mm.]
17 Kat: .hhh (ur::m) Eat Natural bar:s.

Anastasia's FPP question in line one, prefaced by the initial upshot marker 'so' (Bolden, 2009), requests some kind of elaboration regarding the high expense of Katrina's recent food shopping. After a turn initial delay consisting of a gap (line 2) and an inbreath, "er:m" and pause (line 3), Katrina begins her SPP with the information that she has been on "a lot of: (.) er:m working lunches this week" (lines 3/5), for which reason she has been buying salads that are expensive. So she provides an answer to Anastasia's question (salads) and an explanation for this (going on working lunches). She does not explicitly reference her illness here, but goes on to refer to it in her next utterance as she provides a further example of things that she has been buying: snacks. As with her prior utterance, she does not just state the item that she bought but begins her TCU with "if", which projects that a compound TCU is to follow (Lerner, 1991) and therefore some more information about what she has bought. Her turn informs Anastasia that there is a condition attached to her buying snacks, and that she can only buy particular brands: "if I want a sna:ck, (0.8) er:: I have to buy things like <Kettle:: crisps> hh .hh Red Sky cris:ps: you know because they a:ll say at the back .hh suitable for coeliacs °you know°¿ .hhh (ur::m) Eat Natural bar:s." (lines 12-15/17). The snacks that Katrina lists – Kettle crisps, Red Sky crisps, Eat Natural bars – are usually more expensive than other equivalent brands (she does not explain this to Anastasia, who is assumed to have access to this cultural knowledge). Having to buy these products is problematic, as Katrina has already stated that she is spending a lot on food. However, she does have a valid reason for buying these expensive items: she is limited to products that "say at the back .hh suitable for coeliacs" (lines 14-15), and the products that do say this are more expensive. By giving this as the reason why it is acceptable for her to buy these products she is hearable as being a member of the category that she mentions: when saying "suitable for coeliacs" we can assume that this also means 'suitable for me', thereby including herself within this category. It is her invoking of this category, and her membership to it, that allows her to explain why she has been spending so much money on food.

Race-related

The same participant applies a different category to herself in extract 4.2, again naming the category in the context of an explanation. Just prior to this extract, Katrina has been telling Anastasia about some magazine articles that she has found interesting, and she goes on to recommend another article to her. She introduces the article as potentially being of interest to Anastasia, as Anastasia asks Katrina “all the time” about how she identifies “as a: black person .hhh living in the U-K” (lines 4-5):

Extract 4.2 - RV:LHH10.6 black Briton 13:54

01 Kat: .hh I mean another one that I thought (.) you would
02 probably: (.) find quite interesting because you're
03 asking me these questions all the time .hh you know
04 -> (0.4) <how do I> identify as a: a **black person** .hhh
05 -> **living in the U-K**.
06 (.)
07 Ana: Yeah,
08 Kat: In terms of identity: growing u:p: how you're
09 treated and everything else. .h[hh] and again=
10 Ana: [mm.]
11 Kat: =hh there's an article: that says identity. <How
12 do you> define yourself as a black Briton in the
13 twenty first century.

Katrina's initial turn is comprised of several elements: a suggestion (“I mean another one that I thought (.) you would probably: (.) find quite interesting”, lines 1-2), an account (“because you're asking me these questions all the time”, lines 2-3), and an example of one of the questions referred to in Katrina's account (“<how do I> identify as a: a black person .hhh living in the U-K. ... in terms of identity: growing u:p: how you're treated and everything else”, lines 4-5/8-9). The identity category ‘black person living in the UK’ is mentioned by Katrina in the third element of this turn. Because of its production within the indirectly reported question that Anastasia apparently asks of Katrina “all the time” (line 3), this identity category is hearable as having been attributed to Katrina by Anastasia in the past. Katrina draws on this category in order to explain why she is making this suggestion to Anastasia: because Anastasia has been interested in Katrina's experiences as a member of this category in

the past, she will probably find this article, entitled “<how do you> define yourself as a black Briton in the twenty first century”, interesting too⁸. In this way, Katrina invokes the identity category ‘black person living in the UK’, and includes herself within this category, in order to account for her suggestion that Anastasia would be interested in this article.

In the first two extracts, a category is produced within some kind of reported talk: in extract 4.1 the category ‘coeliacs’ is reported as written on the back of particular products; in extract 4.2 the category ‘black person living in the UK’ is produced as something that Anastasia has said about Katrina in the past. In the next two extracts this is not the case; the categories invoked are produced – as far as is interactionally relevant – as new invokings in the current interaction.

Occupation-related

Extract 4.3 comes towards the end of a stretch of talk concerning a picnic that Anastasia and Katrina attended for Anastasia’s work. At this picnic Anastasia told Katrina to “be professional”, and not call her by any terms of endearment, as although it was a social occasion it was still a work event. In the following, Katrina mentions Anastasia’s title, “doctor”, also an identity category of which she is a member as she has received a PhD, in relation to being “professional” at the picnic:

Extract 4.3 - RV:LHH10.1 doctor T 02:35

01 Ana: I mean we weren't trying not to,
 02 (2.0)
 03 Kat: (Really)
 04 (0.4)
 05 Ana: show off: I jus:t (2.0) It wasn't like oh: pretend you're
 06 not my partner it was (er/a) (2.8) mt you know.
 07 (0.8)
 08 Kat: nt Be pr[ofessional for]:: [for] you.
 09 Ana: [<It was a:> yeuh.] [hm]

⁸ Perhaps this is why Katrina uses this category here as opposed to the one that is in the article title. Using this other category would make an extra element of her identity relevant: the category ‘black person living in the UK’ places emphasis on the category of race, whereas the category in the article title, ‘black Briton’, emphasises both race and nationality.

10 (0.8)
 11 -> Kat: Doctor:.
 12 (0.2)
 13 Ana: hhh hhu[h huh huh huh huh huh huh]
 14 Kat: [hm hm hm hm hm hm hm hm] hm
 15 Ana: .h[uh:] .huh: .huh: °huh h[uh hu]h hm° .hhhh
 16 Kat: [hm] [hn hn] ((nudges Ana))
 17 Ana: nt hhh Doctor T::. hh[uh huh huh huh huh huh huh]
 18 Kat: [ye:(h)s huh huh huh huh]
 19 Kat: .hh Do[ct]or T I presume. hm hm hm hm
 20 Ana: [hm]

Although Anastasia’s request to be professional at a work event may be reasonable, there is a danger of it being interpreted as wanting to conceal their relationship altogether. In lines 1/5-6 Anastasia attempts to dismiss this interpretation: “I mean we weren’t trying not to, ... show off: I jus:t (2.0) it wasn’t like oh: pretend you’re not my partner it was (er/a) (2.8) mt you know”. She does not complete the final part of her turn here (“it was (er/a)”, line 6), and appears to abandon it after a 2.8 second pause by merely saying “you know”. Indeed, with the silences in lines 2, 4, 5 and 6, and the abandoned TCUs in lines 5 and 6, Anastasia seems to be displaying some difficulty producing her turn. After a 0.8 second gap in line 7, Katrina produces an alternative to ‘not showing off’ or ‘pretending you’re not my partner’, a candidate completion of Anastasia’s turn (Lerner, 2004): to “be professional for:: for you” (line 8), which is accepted by Anastasia in line 9. It is after this somewhat difficult episode that Katrina produces “doctor:” in line 11. Invoking this category here accounts for the need to be professional: being a ‘doctor’ is relevant in this work-related setting, and has connotations of professionalism attached to it. As Anastasia was at this work event in her capacity as a ‘doctor’, this explains her request of Katrina to remain professional.

This identity may also serve a second interactional purpose. Katrina produces “doctor:” in a slightly theatrical way. It is somewhat breathy and smiley voice can be heard. As such, it not produced in an entirely serious manner. Considering the possibility for misinterpretation of Anastasia’s request for professionalism, and the trouble that she appeared to have in downplaying this possibility, there was a certain element of tension surrounding this topic. The non-serious manner in which Katrina

produced the category ‘doctor’ serves to diffuse this tension, and show that she is not upset by the ‘be professional’ instruction. Indeed, after her utterance Anastasia laughs and Katrina joins in with the laughter. Anastasia then refers to herself in a similarly theatrical way in line 17 (“doctor T:.”), thus accepting the category being applied to her. So as well as accounting for the need to ‘be professional’, Katrina’s invoking of the identity category ‘doctor’ also diffuses any tension surrounding the topic⁹.

Region-related

So far participants have invoked identities related to illness, race and occupation. In the last extract of this section an identity is invoked that relates to the geographical region that a participant is from. Anastasia and Katrina have been reminiscing about their childhoods and the games that they played at school, one of which was kiss-chase. In extract 4.4 Anastasia, who is Swedish, is describing how the children at her school played kiss-chase. Usually this game involves boys chasing girls and then kissing them when they are caught. Unlike in Katrina’s school, and presumably most others, at Anastasia’s school the girls chased the boys and then kept them prisoner until they kissed a girl. Katrina attributes this to “the Viking spirit” that the girls had:

Extract 4.4 - RV:LHH10.6 Viking spirit 03:30

01 Ana: M:y school must have been the only one where we
 02 did the other way around,
 03 Kat: Hm.
 04 (0.4)
 05 Ana: So: all the girls ch:ased the guys,
 06 Kat: Mm,
 07 (.)
 08 Ana: <and we er> .hh kept them pris:oner, ((sniff))
 09 Kat: ntuh h[uh huh huh huh]
 10 Ana: [in the baseme]nt staircase,
 11 Kat: huh! (.) huh huh
 12 Ana: and they [could only get out if they kissed us.]
 13 Kat: [.hhh ((cough cough cough))]
 14 uhuhm uhuhm hm hm hm hm hm
 15 Ana: hhuh: uhuh huh huh huh ((sni[ff]))
 16 -> Kat: [°hm°] .hhh Oh:: the

⁹ The idea of threat to the participants’ face in this topic will be considered in chapter 6.

17 -> **Viking spirit.**
18 (.)
19 Kat: ((sniff)) [huh huhuh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh]
20 Ana: [uhhuh! huhm huhm hm hm hm hm .hm .hm .hm]
21 Ana: °huhm!°
22 Kat: huh hm hm h[m That's a] compliment. ((sniff)) Yeah.
23 Ana: [(That's a)]
24 Kat: huh huh huh huh
25 Ana: .huh .huh

Anastasia begins by stating that her school differed from others in how they played kiss-chase: they played it “the other way around ... so: all the girls ch:ased the guys, ... <and we er .hh kept them pris:oner ... in the basement staircase, ... and they could only get out if they kissed us” (lines 1-2/5/8/10/12). She orients to the fact that this is unusual, saying that her school “must have been the only one” (line 1) to play kiss-chase in this way. Katrina comes in with laughter at line 9, after she hears that the girls kept the boys prisoner, treating this part of Anastasia’s telling as laughable. She continues to laugh and Anastasia joins in with the laughter when she completes her turn. After Anastasia’s laughter Katrina produces “oh:: the Viking spirit” (lines 16-17). Anastasia is from Sweden, part of Scandinavia where Vikings came from. Popular stereotypes of Vikings depict them as aggressive warriors. Katrina’s utterance appears to account for the girls’ aggressive behaviour, behaviour which is usually associated with boys in this game: they behaved in this way because of the Viking spirit running through them, which they have because they are Scandinavian. Claiming that the girls behaved as they did because of their “Viking spirit” makes theirs and Anastasia’s identities as Scandinavian relevant to this interaction. In this way, Katrina uses the category ‘Viking’, and the national and regional identity that it implies, to explain the behaviour of Anastasia and the girls at her school.

In this example there is also an element of category-boundedness. Katrina’s invoking explains a certain type of behaviour – aggression and holding hostage – and thereby associates this behaviour with, and binds it to, Vikings. The examples in the next section also make use of various elements that are bound to categories.

Implying categories by referring to category-bound behaviour

Examples in chapter 3 showed how sexual identity could be invoked by referring to activities and cultural knowledge that are bound to the categories of lesbian, gay or bisexual woman. Extracts 4.5 and 4.6 contain identities that are invoked by referring to behaviours bound to particular categories – related to a subculture, gender and age – that again contribute to the action of explaining.

Subculture-related

In the first example of this section a category is named, as in the previous extracts, before a behaviour is clearly bound to this category. Housemates Sally and Bernice have been telling Sally's friend Diane about Peter, a Swiss lawyer who is a friend of Bernice's. Diane asks how Bernice met him, and Bernice answers that he approached her in a bar in Berlin, asking if she was a "fan of indie"¹⁰:

Extract 4.5 - RV:LHH5.1 fan of indie 12:12

01 Dia: Where did you find [him.]
02 Sal: [((sni]ff))
03 Dia: H[ow]
04 Ber: [I f]ound him[: in a bar]:: in Berlin >an 'e=
05 Sal: [khh huh! huh!]
06 Ber: =came< up to me: an just- directly an w[ent-]
07 Sal: [hnnn]nn .hhh
08 -> Ber: pushed his glasses >an went< (.) *are you a
09 -> fan of indie!.* hh [HAH HAH] [HAH HAH HAH]
10 Sal: [khah]
11 Dia: [HAH HAH HAH]
12 Ber: .HHH [An I went .hhh I]'m wearing skinny=
13 Sal: [huh huh ↑huh ↑↑huh ↑↑huh]
14 Ber: =jeans an a suit jacket.=Yes. Ye(h)s
15 (h)[I (h)[am.] hah hah] [hah]
16 Dia: [uhah [hah] hah hah]
17 Sal: [↑hih!] [hih] hi[h hih]
18 Ber: [°° .huh °°]
19 .huh .huh .huh .huh [.huh .huh .hh]hhhhh[hhh]
20 Sal: [.HHHHHHHHHH] [He's] so

¹⁰ Indie is a type of music.

utterance between asterisks = said in a mock Swiss accent

Diane's FPP in line 1 asks Bernice where she found Peter, and Bernice's response in line 4 answers Diane's question literally: she "found him in a bar: in Berlin". She then describes exactly how they met: ">an 'e came< up to me: an just- directly an went- pushed his glasses >an went< (.) *are you a £fan of indie£.*" (lines 4/6/8-9). Peter's first utterance to Bernice asked whether she belonged to a particular identity category: 'fan of indie'. He mentioned the category originally, and Bernice is directly reporting it to her interlocutors in her telling; the way that she produces this reported speech, mimicking his Swiss accent, works to enhance the authenticity of her report by indicating that she is producing a direct quote (Holt, 1996). She goes on to report the response¹¹ that she gave to him: "an I went .hhh I'm wearing skinny jeans an a suit jacket.=yes. ye(h)s (h)I (h)am" (lines 12/14-15). This case differs from example 4.4 in that the category is named before the behaviour is described. After 'fan of indie' has been named as a potential category for Bernice, Bernice confirms that she is a member of this category based on her clothing: wearing skinny jeans and a suit jacket is something that fans of indie do. When Peter asked this question, his suggestion of being a 'fan of indie' would have accounted for the way that he could see Bernice was dressed. In her telling of this exchange to Diane and Sally, her interlocutors do not have the same visual access to what she was wearing at the time, and so Bernice has to describe this verbally to them. She produces this description after she has reported Peter's naming of the category in order to maximise the punchline of the story: that it was obvious from her clothing that she was a fan of indie, which made his question laughable. In both the original exchange and in the re-telling, the named category serves to explain the behaviour that she exhibited: dressing in a particular way. Moreover, the behaviour that she describes explains why Peter asked his question in the first place.

¹¹ It is not clear whether Bernice actually said this to Peter at the time, as it may have been a reported thought that was not articulated to him. It is the use of "I went" as the direct reported speech indicator here which causes this ambiguity. However, what she goes on to have claimed to have said is still relevant to her use of the category 'fan of indie'.

Age- and gender-related

The interaction in extract 4.6 involves two categories being suggested to account for a (implied) negative feeling: gender and age. Katrina has asked her partner Anastasia what she has eaten today, and Anastasia has listed what she ate, including a salad that she ate when seeing a friend, Louisa. After Katrina asks how Louisa is, Anastasia replies that she is “just like me”. Katrina then asks “>do you< think everyone has collective P-M-T”, which implies that there is some negative feeling affecting “everyone”. Anastasia rejects this suggestion, and provides an alternative account for the negative feeling: “we decided it’s (er:/a:/our:) thirty year crisis”:

Extract 4.6 - RV:LHH10.4 collective PMT 16:35

01 Ana: An:d er (.) I had a Gree:k sa:lad with Loui:sa.
02 (0.6)
03 Kat: °Oh grea:t°.
04 (1.0)
05 Kat: How’s she doing.
06 (2.0)
07 Ana: huh: (1.0) Just like me.
08 (0.8)
09 Kat: Hm.
10 (3.4)
11 -> Kat: >Do you< think everyone has collective P-M-T.
12 (0.2)
13 Ana: mthuhh! huhh [.hh]
14 Kat: [hm] hm hm
15 -> Ana: No:. (.) We decided it’s (er:/a:/our:) thirty year crisis.=
16 Kat: =nt Ah::: right. °°That makes sense ()°°.
17 Ana: °Don’t know why you have it,°
18 (1.0)
19 Kat: nt .hh Why I have it,
20 Ana: °You’re still in your thirties I guess.°
21 Kat: I am,

Anastasia’s description of having lunch in line 1 is her first mention of Louisa. After producing an assessment of Anastasia’s turn in line 3, Katrina does not continue on the topic of food but asks instead about Louisa in line 5. Anastasia’s response in line 7 is not particularly positive, instead likening Louisa’s state to her own. (The silences at the beginning of this extract are fairly large, but this could be accounted for less by

heavily dispreferred responses (Pomerantz, 1984), and more by the fact that the couple are lying on a sofa with their eyes closed, and appear to be on the verge of sleeping.) Katrina minimally acknowledges Anastasia's response in line 9 (“Hm”) and 3.4 seconds later posits a candidate reason for how “everyone” is feeling: “>Do you< think everyone has collective P-M-T”. Premenstrual tension (PMT), or Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS), is characterised by negative feelings, mood swings, difficulty concentrating and various physical symptoms. It is something limited to women of childbearing age, and as such, Katrina's mention of this category is gendered and bound by age. Having “collective P-M-T” would account for “everyone” feeling negative only if they were female and of a certain age, which would include Anastasia, Louisa and Katrina herself. Anastasia treats this as a laughable: this is not a plausible reason as not only is it impossible for everyone to have PMT, but those who do have it, including herself, Louisa and Katrina, would not all necessarily have it at the same time. In line 15, then, Anastasia rejects this explanation for the general negative feeling and provides another candidate reason that she and Louisa (“we”) decided on: “no:. (.) we decided it's (er:/a:/our:) thirty year crisis”. This explanation is bound by age rather than gender: people who are thirty (or maybe turning thirty) are feeling negative because of their age. This explanation implies a far narrower category than Katrina's did; indeed, Anastasia initially excludes Katrina from this explanation because she is older than thirty (“don't know why you have it,”), line 17), and only includes her in it when she widens the parameters (“you're still in your thirties I guess.”), line 20). Both of these possible explanations for the general negative feeling being experienced by them and Louisa link this negative feeling to category-bound emotional states: having PMT is bound to the category of female (and of child-bearing age); having a thirty year crisis is bound to the age category of thirty (or possibly of being in one's thirties if the category is widened in the way that Anastasia concedes in line 20). These categories are implied when associated emotional states are produced as explanations for a general negative feeling.

Invoking a category by naming a prototypical member

The identity categories invoked in this final section are similar to those just discussed, as they also bind certain behaviours and attributes to particular categories. However,

they are particularly interesting as they are not of traditional categories such as nationality or gender, but rather of personality categories which are based on figures from popular culture and the behaviours and attributes that are associated with them. By naming these figures participants are able to produce explanations.¹²

In extract 4.7 a participant compares herself to a television comedy character to account for her behaviour. Niles is visiting his friend Dawn and they have just finished eating. Dawn is clearing the table and Niles thanks her for doing so. As Dawn explains that she is tidying for her own benefit she likens herself to a character from the American sitcom *Friends* called Monica, who is known for her obsessive tidiness:

Extract 4.7 - RV:LHH1.2 Monica 02:34

01 (2.4) ((Dawn clearing the table))
 02 Nil: Thank you.
 03 (0.2)
 04 Daw: That's f[ine.]
 05 Nil: [(]) h[eh]
 06 Daw: [he]h heh .hh It's:: believe me it's
 07 for my benefi:t (.) as mu[ch of it (.) as i]t is yours.
 08 Nil: [hn hnhnhn]
 09 (4.0) ((Dawn moves to kitchen area))
 10 Daw: Me tidying is a purely selfish [thing.]
 11 Nil: [hn hn]
 12 (2.0)
 13 -> Daw: I'm more like Monica- (0.4) than I care to adm[it.]
 14 Nil: [uhu]huhu
 15 (6.8)
 16 Daw: Oh did those want to go in the fridge.
 17 (0.6)
 18 Nil: ↓°Yeah might as well°.

In line 4 Dawn acknowledges and accepts the thanks that Niles gave in line 2. Yet rather than move on from this complete sequence, Dawn extends it by saying that “It's:: believe me it's for my benefi:t (.) as much of it (.) as it is yours” (lines 6-7). Her utterance here plays down her act of tidying and thus the thanks that Niles gave her. While this does some kind of self-deprecating, it also runs the risk of her sounding uncaring towards her guest: her actions are for her own benefit as well as his. Niles

¹² The examples in this section all involve references to famous people, but this does not mean that people personally known to the participants could not be used to represent a category in this way.

produces some laughter in overlap in response to the first half of her TCU (line 8), and Dawn continues to tidy during a 4.0 second silence. After this silence Dawn produces a furtherance of her self-deprecation: “Me tidying is a purely selfish thing” (line 10). This turn effectively upgrades her prior self-deprecation, but also increases the risk of her sounding like a bad host; if she tidies out of pure selfishness, the implication is that she does not care about her guest at all. Indeed, this turn gets a smaller amount of laughter from Niles than her previous TCU. After a 2.0 second silence, Dawn produces a further self-deprecating reference to her tidying: “I’m more like Monica- (0.4) than I care to admit” (line 13).

This last utterance is far less risky than those that preceded it. Initially Dawn stated that she tidied for her own benefit, then she said that she tidied out of selfishness. Niles had previously treated Dawn’s tidying as a positive thing by thanking her, but Dawn has shifted this act into a negative thing by claiming that she is selfish. Invoking the character of Monica, and the associated trait of obsessive tidying that she is well known for, minimises the selfish claim; although she is still tidying for her own benefit, by implying that she is like Monica, someone whose tidiness borders on the compulsive, she plays down her claim of selfishness as it now sounds more like a compulsion that cannot be helped. Thus, invoking the character of Monica provides an account for why it is that Dawn is tidying.

Dawn mentions Monica without explaining who she is or saying anything about why she is like her; moreover, Niles does not request any further information about who Monica is. ‘Monica’ as a cultural reference, and everything associated with her, is known to Niles already. The fact that both he and Dawn have access to this cultural knowledge makes it possible to use this character to represent an entire category of people: those who are excessively tidy.

In the final two extracts the cultural figure used to represent a type of person is not known by all the participants, and so the mentions do not run off quite as smoothly. In order to provide information about who these figures are, some of their characteristics are also provided.

In extract 4.8 Megan pursues a topic that appears to have been discussed earlier off-camera, the discourse marker “though” indicating that something contrastive must have come before Megan’s current turn (Fraser, 1999), when asking her friend Abby about when she was a nanny in America. Megan’s partner Tamsin hears this and reacts with surprise, and likens nannies to the English actress Emma Thompson. This reference is treated as unproblematic by Abby and Megan, but another friend, Ellie, does not know who Emma Thompson is:

Extract 4.8 - RV:LHH6.3 Emma Thompson type 00:39

01 Meg: £How did you:£ (.) How did you
02 get the nanny job though.
03 (0.2)
04 Tam: hhhhho[hhhh] ((Tamsin walks across the camera))
05 Abb: [I: spoke] to a really posh agency in er:
06 Tam: You were a na:nny?
07 (.)
08 Abb: Yeah:. In Amer[ica.]
09 Tam: [°Oh my°] go:d.
10 (0.8)
11 Tam: ([])
12 Meg: [(You s:)] how did you do it;
13 (.)
14 Meg: What d[jou [do;]
15 Abb: [>I ju]s< went to a]
16 -> Tam: [I alwa]ys think nannies is like Emma
17 -> Thompson type.
18 (0.4)
19 -> Abb: um I used to be an Emma Thompson type.
20 Tam: ↑Did you ↑↑really[:,
21 Abb: [Ab]solute[ly, hn hn hn] hn hn=
22 Tam: [(↑↑Really;)]
23 Ell: =Who’s Emma Thomps[on.]
24 Abb: [(I jus)] I s[till a:m.]
25 Ell: [Is this: ‘cause I d]on’t
26 watch[: T-V.]
27 Abb: [uh HAH HAH HA]H HAH HAH H[AH HAH #HAH#]
28 Tam: [Emma Thomps]o[n
29 >you know< that English actress
30 (no[t only for) femmy:] kind of
31 Abb: [I still am by the way, hh hah hah]
32 Abb: hah hah hah hah hah
33 Tam: mm hm;

34 Ell: I knew her if I see her.
 35 S[he (may: be)]
 36 Tam: [You had this bl_o:nd wig at h]ome;
 37 Abb: uhh! ((nods))

Megan's FPP in lines 1-2 is addressed to Abby and asks how she got a job as nanny. Abby begins to respond in line 5, but as she appears to do a word search ("er:"), Tamsin produces her own FPP addressed to Abby in line 6: "You were a n_a:nny?". Abby confirms this in line 8, adding that she was in America at the time, and in overlap with the end of Abby's turn Tamsin quietly produces a reaction token conveying surprise (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2006): "°Oh my° g_o:d" (line 9). Megan then reissues her original question in lines 12/14 ("how did you do it_ɿ (.) What djou do_ɿ") and Abby again begins to answer in line 15. This time Tamsin speaks in full overlap with Abby, not allowing her to produce her turn in the clear at all, as she states in lines 16-17 "I always think nannies is like Emma Thompson type". Emma Thompson is a well-known English actress, who is later described as "bl_o:nd (line 36) and "femmy" (line 30) by Tamsin, and who generally plays upper-middle class or upper class characters in films. If this is the type of person that Tamsin associates with nannies, this would account for her surprise at hearing that Abby was a nanny: Abby does not fit this type. She is not blond, she appears to be more butch than feminine, and she does not come across as upper or upper-middle class (she does not speak with the Received Pronunciation accent that Emma Thompson does for example). After a gap of 0.4 seconds, Abby responds by saying that she was indeed an 'Emma Thompson type', so that when she was a nanny she did fit the type that Tamsin is using Emma Thompson to represent. Tamsin again displays surprise at this, producing a high pitched confirmation check in line 20 ("↑Did you ↑↑really:"), which is confirmed by Abby in line 21.

As in the previous extract, the recipient of the category mention does not initiate repair on the cultural figure named, nor on the traits and characteristics that are associated with this figure. Abby accepts that an Emma Thompson type could represent nannies, and indeed confirms that she did fit this type when she was employed as a nanny in America. However, another participant does not have access to this cultural information. Ellie requests further information about Emma Thompson in line 23 (and provides a candidate account for her lack of knowledge in lines 25-26:

that she does not watch television). Tamsin provides some information about Emma Thompson in lines 28-30, listing something about her behaviour (that she is “femmy”; unfortunately part of this turn is inaudible). However, this meets with no success: Ellie states that she might know the actress if she saw her, thus implying that Tamsin’s description was not sufficient. So while it can be possible to use a public figure to represent a category, it will not always work for all participants.

In the final extract of this chapter, Ellie is the recipient of a cultural reference category mention, but again she does not have access to the knowledge that her addressees do. She has been explaining why she cannot get into a relationship with an “Italian girl” that she has met. After Ellie has listed several reasons for this, Megan summarises how Ellie feels, “like Jerry Sei:nfe:ld”, an American comedian who always finds fault with potential partners:

Extract 4.9 – RV:LHH6.1 Jerry Seinfeld 08:56

01 Meg: (You feel like u:m:)

02 Abb: [m(h)ea hah hah hah hah]

03 Tam: [She likes you too mu:][ch,]

04 -> Meg: [You feel li[ke Jerry] Sei:nfe:ld.

06 Abb: [Ye:s.]

07 Abb: yehh[hah huh]

08 Meg: [()] she lives t[oo far out]

09 Abb: [(Instantly) hn hn

10 [hn huh heh heh heh]

11 -> Tam: [You are you’re turning into] Seinfeld she’s

12 to[o attractive she’s too fa]r:

13 Meg: [() she has ma:n ha:nds]

14 (A): tsch [#hhhhhhhhh#]

15 (M): [#hhhhhhhhh#]

16 (E): °°She doesn’t.°°

17 Tam: Does she have man hands,

18 Meg: huhn

19 (0.4)

20 Ell: °No she’s: (.) all woman,°

21 (0.4)

22 Meg: Okayç

Megan begins her mention in line 1, but as it is in overlap with both Abby and Tamsin, she tries again in line 4: “you feel like Jerry Sei:nfe:ld”. She then provides an

example of what Ellie has said, which could also be said by Jerry Seinfeld: “she lives too far out” (line 8). She says this with continuing intonation, so that it is hearable that further examples are to come. She does not immediately continue, and Tamsin repeats Megan’s comparison to Jerry Seinfeld in lines 11-12. She actually seems to upgrade Megan’s assertion: rather than just feeling like Jerry Seinfeld, Ellie is now “turning into Seinfeld”. She then also produces examples of what Ellie (and possibly Jerry Seinfeld) is saying about her potential partner: “she’s too attractive she’s too far:” (lines 11-12). In overlap with Tamsin’s examples, Megan produces her next example: “she has ma:n ha:nds” (line 13). This is a reason given by Jerry Seinfeld in an episode of his sitcom, in which he goes on several dates with a woman, who is suitable apart from having man-like hands (to add to the joke, the close-ups of the woman’s hands appear to have been played by a male hand-double)¹³. This is a ridiculous reason that Ellie has not given herself, and highlights the joking nature of this comparison with the character. Megan’s example receives quiet laughter from Abby (line 14), but gets a quiet rejection of this suggestion from Ellie in line 16: “°She doesn’t.°”. Picking up on this example, Tamsin then asks Ellie whether the Italian woman does have man hands in line 17, which Ellie again rejects in line 20: “°No she’s: (.) all woman,°”. The fact that Ellie does not join in the laughter surrounding Megan’s comparison, and seriously answers Tamsin’s question about man hands, suggests that she does not have access to the cultural knowledge necessary to understand this comparison. However, both Megan and Tamsin have been able to associate Ellie’s pickiness regarding her potential partner with the behaviour of Jerry Seinfeld, and have used this cultural figure to represent a type of person who is excessively choosy regarding partners. They have been able to explain Ellie’s behaviour regarding this potential relationship – as that of a particularly picky person – by comparing her to a cultural figure who exhibits similar behaviour.

The cultural figures in these extracts, then, provide a further means by which categories can be invoked. They stand for a type of person, who behaves in a particular way. In extract 4.7 Monica represents people who are excessively tidy; in extract 4.8 Emma Thompson represents the type of woman who is a nanny; and in extract 4.9 Jerry Seinfeld represents people who are picky about relationships.

¹³ “The Bizarro Jerry”, broadcast on NBC 3/10/1996.

Drawing on these figures, and the behaviours and attributes bound to the categories they represent, allows the participants to explain certain things. Dawn can explain that she is tidying when her guest is there because she is like Monica, who is compulsively tidy. Tamsin can explain that she was surprised at Abby having been a nanny because she does not appear to be like an Emma Thompson type, who is blond and feminine and quintessentially English. Megan (and Tamsin) can explain that Ellie is cautious about entering into a relationship with the Italian girl because she is like Jerry Seinfeld, who is picky and finds fault with potential romantic partners. Being that type of person explains Dawn's and Ellie's behaviour, and appearing not to be that type of person explains Tamsin's surprise, as these behaviours and attributes are associated with the type of person that the cultural figure represents.

The named cultural figures are also well known, part of the general cultural knowledge available to members of the groups that the participants belong to. As such, they are a useful resource for doing these invokings and explanations. None of the participants who mention the figures elaborate on who they are, so the assumption appears to be that their interlocutors also have access to this kind of knowledge; this is the case in extract 4.7, and also for everyone apart from Ellie in extracts 4.8 and 4.9. The general availability of these types of category adds to their usefulness.

Discussion

The extracts in this chapter have demonstrated the ways in which identities can be invoked in interaction, and the contribution that they can make when producing explanations. Categories can be named, as in extracts 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4; they can be implied by referring to behaviours and attributes bound to that category, as in extracts 4.5 and 4.6; and participants can name representatives of a type of person 4.7, 4.8 and 4.9. The identities invoked can help to explain particular behaviours, such as tidying excessively or being picky, being surprised or buying expensive foods. In this way, it can be seen that identity work is not just about producing an identity. This is not to say that this is the only or main interactional purpose that invoking identities has, or that they cannot result in topicalisation of particular identities; this chapter merely

provides an example of one common interactional purpose provided by the invoking of various identities.

By using identity as a resource for explaining, the account provided is based on something about the speaker or their interlocutor. So this says something about the ready availability of identity as a resource in interaction. Moreover, by invoking an identity of the interlocutor, this displays a certain level of knowledge about that person. So there may be issues of relationality to consider, and of epistemic access.

This chapter expanded on chapter 3 by looking at various other identities and how they also contribute to action, focusing on explanations and accounts. But this data set is of video recorded interactions and there are many physical and non-vocal behaviours to include in a discussion of action. Chapters 5 and 6 will focus on two more types of action and how physical behaviours can be significant for the production of these actions: initiating topics (chapter 5) and face-threatening actions (chapter 6).

Chapter 5: Objects in the environment as resources for action

Introduction

The last two chapters showed how speakers draw on various aspects of their identities when producing particular actions: first it was demonstrated that participants' lesbian identities can be mentioned when doing a variety of actions, and secondly the focus was on one particular type of action, explanations, and showed how speakers can make identities relevant to an interaction, such as age, occupation, and nationality, and draw on these identities as a resources when producing action, such as when accounting for or explaining something. This chapter looks more broadly at the openings of new action sequences, and what speakers can draw on when they initiate a new action sequence, specifically objects in their immediate environment.

Unlike in chapters 3 and 4, the resource drawn on by participants is not verbal. When producing the actions that this chapter focuses on, participants can draw on their physical environment. Moreover, their recipients can use a non-verbal behaviour to display reciprocity: gaze. In order to capture the detail of the non-vocal behaviours, extra detail is included in the transcripts (see chapter 2 for a discussion of the transcription).

The chapter begins with a consideration of one way that new action sequences can be launched: when a new topic is initiated. The following data extracts will show first how participants can open a new action sequence where no apparent cue is taken from the participants' environment, and then how a visually available object can be drawn on to open a new action sequence.

Initiating a new topic

Conversation analytic research, with its emphasis on the mechanics of interaction and the development of action through talk, has tended to examine topic not just as the subject of conversation, but rather from the perspective of how participants negotiate

topic choices and how they move in and out of topics during a spate of talk. As Maynard (1980) states:

“Topicality, then, is a matter not only of content, but is partly constituted in the *procedures* conversationalists utilize to display understanding and to achieve one turn’s proper fit with a prior.” (Maynard, 1980: 263, emphasis in original)

With this concentration on the procedures used by participants to manage topic in interactions, drawing also on participants’ intersubjective displays (showing in their utterances their understanding of their interlocutor’s prior turn), early work on topic identified a variety of ways that topics are introduced in conversation. These included methods by which topics feed into one another without any obvious breaks, and how new topics are launched at sites where this is not the case.

In a series of three articles, Button and Casey (1984, 1985, 1988/89) addressed this latter phenomenon. They outlined three types of topic beginnings used by participants to launch new topics, i.e. in places where a prior topic had been closed down or at the beginning of an interaction: topic initial elicitors, topic nominations (consisting of itemised news enquiries or news announcements), and by assigning a known-in-advance status to a topic.

A topic initial elicitor (Button and Casey, 1984) is an inquiry about a possibly newsworthy event. A speaker produces a topic initial elicitor, which invites their recipient to provide a new topic. Something like “What’s new?” at a topic boundary would give the recipient the opportunity to provide some newsworthy item as a potential topic, or to decline this opportunity by answering “Nothing”. In the case of a positive response – providing a possible new topic – the first speaker can topicalise the suggested item by inviting further talk on it (for example, “Oh really?”). In the case of a negative response – declining to provide a possible topic – the first speaker can recycle the no-news report in an attempt to topicalise their recipient’s lack of news, or can try another topic-launching technique, such as an itemised news enquiry.

Unlike topic initial elicitors, whose purpose is to elude a newsworthy item from the recipient of the elicitor, itemised news enquiries (Button and Casey, 1985) specify an item themselves, and in so doing suggest that the item is newsworthy and that the recipient has knowledge about it, for example “Have you heard yet.” (Button and

Casey, 1985: 6). In this way the nominated topic is related to the recipient: although the speaker has some knowledge of it, they display that the recipient has more by asking about it. Moreover, an itemised news enquiry provides for more than just missing information to be provided by the recipient. In asking about a potentially newsworthy item, a space is created for extended talk on the topic, and talk on that topic is not limited to just these two turns: in addition to providing an extended response to an itemised news enquiry, the recipient should leave more to tell in subsequent turns. Conversely, responding to an itemised news enquiry by solely addressing the speaker's gap in information without expanding on the item is a way of curtailing talk on the topic.

Another method of nominating topic is the news announcement (Button and Casey, 1985). As with the itemised news enquiry, this technique specifies a potential topic. However, the announcement is related to the speaker, and although there is some orientation that the recipient has some knowledge of the topic, the speaker has more knowledge, for example "Uh:m yer mother met Michael last night" (Button and Casey, 1985: 21). The announcement contains only a partial report of the news, and as such there is scope for the news to be topicalised by the recipient producing a go-ahead, providing the sequential space for the speaker to elaborate.

In all of these cases talk on topic is mutually negotiated by all participants. In order for the topic to be successfully taken up, the recipient of the topic initial elicitor has to provide a potential item to talk to, and the first speaker has to agree to talk to this topic by providing space for the recipient to elaborate. The recipient of an itemised news enquiry has to produce an extended response to the enquiry – just fulfilling a gap in information is not enough. The recipient of a news announcement has to provide space for the first speaker to elaborate by producing a go-ahead. The interest here, then, is not purely in what participants talk about, but how they get themselves into a position to talk about something.

These techniques also provide co-participants with the opportunity to curtail the nominated topic (or the attempt to elicit a topic). As a result, when a participant provides a potential topic they do not definitively know that their topic will be taken up. Button and Casey's (1988/89) final article describes a solution to this problem: by

“trading in the item’s *known-in-advance* status” (1998/89: 67, emphasis in original). This consists of effectively scheduling in a topic in an interaction. In a formal setting, such as a meeting, this can be done by having an agenda. More informally this can be done in several ways. In a telephone call for example, the caller could introduce their reason-for-call as the first topic (Schegloff, 1968). Alternatively, the caller could initiate a topic some time into the conversation and name it as the reason-for-call. The caller can state what their reason for calling is at the start of the conversation, but then introduce another topic with the indication that the reason-for-call will be returned to, thus making their recipient aware of the topic to come. Finally, the caller can produce an ‘ad hoc agenda’, listing the topics to be covered. These methods serve to safeguard either the take-up of a topic when it is initiated, or its position in the interaction to come.

A further technique for launching new topics is outlined by Schegloff (2007a). He describes topic proffers as turns in which “a speaker *proposes* a particular topic” (Schegloff, 2007a: 169, emphasis in original), after which the recipient has the option to accept the topic or decline it. This differs from Button and Casey’s (1985) topic nominations in that the producer of the topic proffer “does not actively launch or further develop the proposed topic” (Schegloff, 2007a: 170). Topic proffers are generally oriented to the recipient, displaying an assumption that the recipient has more knowledge of the topic than the speaker. They are also frequently yes-no interrogatives, or formatted in such a way that makes a response highly relevant, for example “So (‘r) you da:ting Keith?” (Schegloff, 2007a: 171). Whether the topic is taken up depends on whether the response encourages or discourages it, whether it aligns or disaligns with the polarity of the question, and whether it is minimal or expanded. However, these features do not neatly coincide with the uptake or non-uptake of a topic: for example, an extended response could encourage the topic by providing more information than was necessary to purely fill the information gap demonstrated by the question, but equally the topic could be discouraged by an extended response that explains that the recipient does not have access to knowledge required to develop the topic further. To thoroughly understand how participants negotiate topic, both the content of the talk as well as its sequential structure need to be taken into account.

The findings described so far all pertain to new topics being launched that are disjunctive to the talk that came before. But the way that topic flow is managed without this disjunction has been described elsewhere in the literature. Sacks (1992) describes one way in which speakers relate new topics to prior topics as a ‘stepwise’ movement. If a speaker wishes to initiate a topic that does not clearly tie in with what is currently being talked about, they can find something that is connected to the current topic and the one to be initiated, and use that connection to bridge the gap between the two topics. This movement in a series of steps from one topic to another avoids any disjunction between them. Jefferson (1984b) describes this process in detail regarding a particular type of topic: troubles telling. In order to shift the topic from a participant’s troubles without being disjunctive, once the crux of the troubles-telling is complete and some supplemental elements of the telling have been produced, the co-participant can focus talk on these supplemental elements before producing “a pivotal utterance” (1984b: 203), a turn that remains on-topic but could potentially become a topic in its own right. The uptake of this topic completes the movement from one topic to another in a stepwise fashion, without the new topic being launched disjunctively, and remaining sensitive to the troubles being told.

Non-vocal behaviour

With the exception of Button & Casey’s final article (1988/89), which included some video data of institutional settings in its analysis, the data on which these observations were based were of audio only – telephone calls. Speakers in face-to-face interactions also make use of these techniques, as I will demonstrate below, but when participants are co-present additional factors come into play: gaze, gesture, and the number of participants present. Before examining these factors in topic launches in my own data, I will mention some of the findings relating to them in the literature.

Gaze

As discussed in chapter 1, gaze is significant in co-present interaction for ensuring that a speaker gains reciprocity. Goodwin’s (1981) rules that “A speaker should obtain

the gaze of his recipient during the course of a turn at talk” (1981: 57), and that “A recipient should be gazing at the speaker when the speaker is gazing at the hearer” (Goodwin 1980 [2006], 201) are seen to be at work in the examples below where something in the immediate environment is drawn on to start a new course of action. Speakers do the kinds of practices described by Goodwin (1981) and Heath (1984), including restarts, pauses and perturbations in their talk, in an attempt to gain the gaze and therefore visual reciprocity of their recipients.

Gesture

Deictic gestures are of particular use in the examples below, where a participant points to something in their immediate environment which is relevant to the new action sequence being initiated. Pointing has been shown to have significant interactional uses beyond just indicating that something is there. Mondada (2007), for example, described how in work meetings participants could use pointing gestures in order to self-select to speak at the next transition relevance place, where pointing to an object on the desk in front of them oriented to speaker transition and the selection of self as next speaker. Goodwin (2003) described how pointing can have a variety of meanings and uses dependent on the situation in which it is used, and whether it can have other gestures superimposed on it, such as maintaining the point but moving it around. In the examples in this chapter, pointing gestures serve as a way to gain their recipients’ gaze towards the object being referred to as opposed to towards the speakers themselves.

Opening a new sequence of action

The concept of topic has been described as problematic within conversation analysis, as it is not always clear where topics begin and end, and a focus on what constitutes a piece of ‘topic talk’ runs the risk of not seeing what exactly participants are doing with their talk (Schegloff, 1990). A variety of topics may be held together in one lengthy sequence (for example Schegloff, 2007a: 113-4; see also Schegloff, 1990), and it is the analysis of the sequence that will be of more use than the topic to see

what the participants are doing. The analyses that follow will focus on the action sequences that are being implemented rather than the topics that are encompassed within the sequences. However, it is still useful to see how the action sequences are opened using the topic launches described above, and these launches will be drawn in for the analysis.

The data extracts presented in this chapter are instances in which a new action sequence is launched by a speaker. They can be clearly designated as new action sequences, as they come either after a lapse, or mark a distinct break from the course of action of the prior talk. They are all face-to-face interactions and most¹⁴ take place when some other activity is underway (in these instances either eating or watching television). They could therefore be classed as being “nonfocused” (Kendon, 1988, cited in Couper-Kuehlen, 2010) or as “open states of talk” (Goffman, 1967), because talk is not the sole focus of the interaction, or as being within a “continuing state of incipient talk” (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973), because lapses in the talk do not signal the end of the interaction and sequences of talk need not begin with greetings or end with closings.

The first three extracts are examples of how speakers in face-to-face interactions can launch new action sequences that are not related to the participants’ immediate environment. There are issues of gaze and speaker selection (particularly when there are more than two participants) to consider, but speakers use the same sorts of techniques reported above that have been documented based (mostly) on telephone conversations (Button & Casey, 1984, 1985, 1988/89; Schegloff, 2007a).

In the first extract there are four participants in a pub: Megan is setting up the camera, and, going from left to right, Ellie, Abby and Tamsin are sat round a table. Abby launches a new action sequence by asking a question of another participant. This initiating action is unrelated to any prior talk and elicits talk on the subject of Megan’s work situation that lasts for approximately 50 seconds. Abby opens this action sequence using an itemised news enquiry:

¹⁴ With the exception of extracts 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.

have some knowledge about the item in question – Abby knows that Megan has been looking for work. She selects her recipient by gazing at Megan and then addressing her by name in post-position after her initiating action (Lerner, 2003), possibly an extra attempt to gain Megan’s reciprocity, who might not see that Abby is gazing at her (we are unable to tell this as Megan is still off-camera). She also tilts her head to her left, perhaps also employing this head movement to gain reciprocity from Megan (Heath, 1984). In response to one or both of the FPPs addressed to her, Megan initiates repair in line 7 (“What’s that,”). Ellie produces a different question for Megan in line 8, and again in overlap Abby repeats her original enquiry, this time omitting Megan’s name (by responding Megan has treated Abby’s – and Ellie’s – talk as addressed to her). Perhaps due to Megan’s continued distraction with the camera, first Ellie and then Abby shift their gaze to Tamsin, who as Megan’s partner would also be knowledgeable about Megan’s employment. During the 0.5 second silence following Abby’s TCU Tamsin shakes her head, thus answering Abby’s yes-no interrogative and leaving Ellie’s query unanswered. Megan then also responds to Abby with “No:”. A feature of itemised news enquiries is that they do not only allow for the recipient to fill the speaker’s gap in knowledge, but also for them to elaborate, and to produce further talk on the subject. Tamsin does so in this instance: after shaking her head she produces an account for why Megan has not got a job yet (that Megan, who is from the US, has to wait until her visa changes). Talk about Megan’s work situation continues for several more turns, before it returns to the camera set-up.

So this is one way that a new action sequence can be opened up in a co-present setting using a technique documented in telephone interactions. The next extract demonstrates another technique, this time in an interaction between a couple in their home. Hannah and Felicity have been playing a board game and have almost finished tidying it away, when after a lapse in talk Hannah opens a new course of action: planning activities for the next day. Hannah does this by producing a topic proffer (Schegloff, 2007a):

Extract 5.2 – RV:LHH3.1 shopping 54:18

((Felicity is clearing the table of board game pieces and putting them into a box on her right; she is looking down at what she is doing. Hannah’s gaze is also directed to what Felicity is doing))

Hannah drinks again. After she places her mug back on the table she launches a new topic while Felicity is still tidying.

Hannah opens the new action sequence in line 1 with an enquiry into what they need to do tomorrow morning, so the course of action being opened here is planning or making arrangements. The couple have not discussed this during the recording up until this point and so it is new. She opens the sequence with a topic proffer (Schegloff, 2007a) in question format, which also orients to her recipient having more access to the subject than she does (Hannah may also know something of their activities in the morning, but by asking Felicity about them she implies that Felicity has more information than she does). Moreover, she prefaces her topic proffer with 'so', which suggests that despite having not yet been spoken about, this course of action was incipient and 'on-agenda' for Hannah (Bolden, 2009). Unlike in the previous extract, the speaker's gaze is not on her recipient, but directed down towards the table where her recipient is still tidying away the board game, and she does not use an address term. As this is a setting in which there are only two participants, it would make sense for Felicity to assume that she is the intended recipient of Hannah's talk (although of course Hannah could answer her own question, but as she does not produce a candidate suggestion of what to do tomorrow morning during 2.3 seconds of silence it is safe to assume that her turn was only directed to Felicity). Hannah glances up at Felicity during the 2.3 second gap at line 2 but then directs her gaze to the tidying up on the table in front of her and joins in with the tidying. She does not look at Felicity again until after Felicity has shifted her gaze to her, virtually at the end of Felicity's first TCU (lines 8/9). Hannah's question receives an extended response from Felicity, covering hers and Hannah's actions in the morning, and Hannah continues on this topic in lines 30/34 by asking further about the shopping that Felicity suggested.

So far we have seen two ways of opening a new action sequence using methods documented in the literature on topic initiation. As these are face-to-face interactions non-vocal elements such as gaze are also significant, for example in extract 5.1 when Abby and Ellie shift their gaze from Megan to Tamsin, resulting in Tamsin responding on behalf of Megan. A further technique used by speakers to open a new action sequence is in the final extract of this section, again a multi-party interaction with Ellie, Abby, Tamsin and Megan in the pub. The sequence of talk just prior to this extract has closed down, and after a silence of

approximately 1.1 seconds (on shown) Abby initiates a new action sequence with a news announcement (Button and Casey, 1985):

Extract 5.3 – RV:LHH6.1 fireworks 05:15

((as the extract begins Ellie and Tamsin are putting their drinks on the table in front of them and looking down at the table as they do so, and Abby and Megan are also looking down))

01 -> Abb: (Ah) you should have come to the fireworks it was

02 E: L((gaze-A))

03 M: L((gaze-A))

04 A: L((gaze-E))

05 -> rea:lly great.

06 T: L((gaze-A))

07 E: L((gaze-above A))

08 Ell: <I: wa:s [doing [something on fireworks night> I

09 M: L((gaze-E))

10 T: L((gaze-E))

11 can't remember ri:ght now: [but I'll

12 A: L((gaze-down))

13 rem[ember ([])]

14 Meg: [You can't [remem]°°b(h)er°°.]

15 Abb: [I must] have] [lit [like

16 M: L((gaze-A))

17 A: L((gaze-M))

18 T: L((gaze-A))

19 [a hundred spa[rk]le-]

20 Ell: [Wh[at night was it al]gain;

21 E: L((gaze-A))

22 A: L((gaze-E))

23 Meg: Where w[as it.]

24 Abb: [It was on] the [Fri]day [night.=There:'s

25 A: L((gaze-M))

26 T: L((gaze-down))

27 [a: (.) a: (0.2) playground that I go to

28 E: L((gaze-above A))

29 [round the corner,]

30 Ell: [Oh [I went to <se]xcetra[:>.]

31 Abb: [I] must have lit like

32 E: L((gaze-T, click fingers))

33 [a hun:dred spar:k]lers.

34 T: L((gaze-E))
35 E: L((gaze-A))
36 Tam: What?
37 (E): ([])
38 Abb: [(£#e[h-#£])]
39 Meg: [A] [playground that you g[o to like]
40 Ell: [Sexcetera]:.
41 E: L((gaze-T))
42 Tam: What's sexc[etera.]
43 Abb: [hhh hah ha]h
44 Ell: It's [a it's (a/>sort of<)] night at bar- wotever.
45 Abb: [[£Ye ah£.]]
46 A: L((gaze-forward, gaze-E))
47 M: L((gaze-E))

Prior talk about a homophobic attack in London, and how violent behaviour is more shocking in women has just come to a close, and after Ellie's final vocalisation there is a 1.1 second silence. Prior to this silence Megan and then Tamsin placed their drinks on the table in front of them, and during the silence Ellie also put her drink down. By the time Abby begins her talk in line 1 all the participants' gazes are directed down towards the table.

Abby does not name her intended recipient, and her gaze is not directed at any of the other participants as she begins her TCU in lines 1/5; she only raises her gaze to her selected recipient after both Ellie and Megan have shifted their gazes to her. Her late gaze at Ellie is sufficient, however, for Ellie to respond as the recipient. Her news announcement (Button and Casey, 1985) – related to herself as speaker, but known about to some degree by her recipient, and only a partial report – allows for her recipient to request more information about the news. This goes somewhat awry in this example, however, as rather than producing some topicalising response (for example 'was it?'), Ellie attempts to produce an account for why she did not go to the fireworks in lines 8/11/13: she was unavailable although she cannot remember what it is that she was doing instead. It appears that she is treating Abby's initiating action not as a topic nomination but as some kind of complaint that Ellie did not attend the fireworks, for which she must now produce an account.

Megan does a somewhat teasing partial repeat of Ellie's turn, a confirmation request initiating a post-expansion addressed to Ellie in line 14, which serves to shift the course of action to

Ellie's accounting and not Abby's news (Schegloff, 2007a: 155). However, interruptively in overlap with Megan, Abby perseveres in elaborating on her news in lines 15/19 ("I must have lit like a hundred sparkle-"), during which Megan's gaze shifts to Abby, and Abby returns Megan's gaze (thus perhaps selecting a new and more available recipient). In overlap with Abby's elaboration Ellie requests further information about when the fireworks took place, immediately after which Megan asks for further information about the location of the fireworks. Both FPPs follow on from the initial sequence opening, but take different trajectories. Ellie is still displaying her attempt to remember where she was that night, and therefore provide a full account of why she was not there; in response Abby states that it was on Friday night. Megan (who perhaps has less knowledge about the event than Ellie) is topicalising Abby's news by requesting more information about it, which allows Abby to provide this information ("there:'s a: a: (0.2) playground that I go to round the corner") and then elaborate on her news by repeating her upshot about the sparklers that was cut-off by Ellie the first time round. Unfortunately for Abby, when Ellie finally produces her account of where she was ("sexcetera:") this is taken up by Tamsin and becomes the focus of the talk, and the fireworks are no longer discussed, so the action sequence that Abby opened took a different trajectory than was perhaps anticipated.

In all of the examples thus far, speakers have opened new action sequences using an itemised news enquiry, a topic proffer and a news announcement. They came in sequential spaces where a prior action sequence had come to possible completion, and were apparently unrelated to the talk so far. The new action sequences opened were not related to anything in the speakers' immediate physical environment. The examples in the next section, however, show how speakers draw on things in their immediate environment when opening a new action sequence, and how these objects are taken up by their recipients, and oriented to both verbally and non-vocally.

Opening new action sequences by referring to objects in the immediate environment

In the co-present data presented in the rest of this chapter, the participants draw on elements of their immediate environment to open new action sequences. They make use of the techniques described above, and their non-verbal behaviour such as gaze, body positioning,

and gesture is also important for what they achieve in their interaction. It is clear in these examples that the subject matter covered in these conversations cannot be analysed without considering the technical detail of the talk, such as its sequence, turn-taking, and speaker selection procedures, and the non-verbal behaviour that occurs.

Face-to-face interaction provides ample opportunity to draw on items that are physically available to the participants. These items can be visually available, visually and tactilely available, audibly available, visually and audibly available, or potentially any other sensory combination. This means that speakers can hold objects, point to items, or refer to something that can be seen or heard, for example. They also have the option refer to an item verbally or non-vocally. Having some environmental feature to refer to allows for different foci of gaze and for different ways of gaining and displaying reciprocity.

Following Hindmarsh & Heath (2000) I will use the word 'object' to refer to the various things in the immediate environment that are referred to by participants in this data; an object could be a physical item, an image on a screen or a piece of music. The objects can also represent something outside the immediate environment, such as an event, which is what becomes the focus of talk.

New courses of action in which objects are verbally referred to

The first set of extracts in this section involves speakers verbally referring to an object while also physically interacting with it in some way. This results in the recipient also physically orientating to the item, in terms of gaze and sometimes even physical deportment.

The first example demonstrates this 'noticing' element, particularly as the new action sequence occurs parenthetically to another action sequence in which Niles asks Dawn about a race that her sister is running. In order to answer his question she suggests looking though the information pack that her sister has left with her, which is lying on the table. While reaching over to pick up the envelope containing the details Dawn notices a flyer lying on the table and asks Niles about it as she picks it up and examines it herself:

Extract 5.4 - RV:LHH1.2 flyer 11:33

((Niles and Dawn are sat a dining table, Niles' face is unclear due to the angle at which he is sitting, but he appears to be gazing at Dawn and Dawn is gazing somewhere to his left))

01 Nil: Whatsh ho^h far: is she running,
02 D: ^h [((gaze-N))
03 ^h [(1.8)
04 D: ^h [((gaze down after (1.6))]
05 Daw: Uh: ^h [(0.4) shall ^h [we: peru:^h:se [the pa:ck.]
06 Nil: ^h [Yea^h yeah.]
07 D: ^h [((reach left arm across table,))
08 D: ^h [((gaze left)lgaze-N ^h [gaze left))
09 N: ^h [^h [((gaze left lgaze-D ^h [gaze left))
10 ^h [(2.0)
11 -> D: ^h [((picks up envelope, gaze shifts to flyer on table,
12 ^h lifts envelope over her head, puts in right hand))
13 N: ^h [((gaze follows envelope in D's hand))
14 -> Daw: ^h [What's this cool flyer. ^h [Is this from: the night
15 -> D: ^h [((reach left ^h [pick up flyer))
16 -> N: ^h [((gaze follows D's left hand))
17 ^h [you went to last nig[ht?]
18 Nil: ^h [Ye]ah yeah it's just som:e
19 -> D: ^h [((bring flyer in front of her face))
20 -> N: ^h [((gaze follows flyer))
21 guys doing: (a bit/few) gigs in their garage.
22 .hhhhh I went to one, (1.6) and then (0.2) goin
23 to the next one probably,
24 (.)
25 Nil: nt.hhhh Ju[st punk ba:nd]s really hh but that
26 Daw: ^h [(are they nuts:)]
27 Nil: ba:nd at the bottom Heroics are really really
28 really really good.
29 (.)
30 Daw: Okay.
31 Nil: The other ones I don't really care so much
32 a[bout ^h] but.
33 Daw: ^h [(well/right).]
34 (0.8)
35 Nil: .hh Hero^hics. Excellen^ht.
36 N: ^h [((gaze-camera ^h [point to camera))
37 D: ^h [^h [((move flyer to left))
38 Nil: ^h [hhh

39 N: L((gaze-D))
 40 Daw: [huh [hah hah hah hah hah hah
 41 D: L((gaze-N [drop flyer on table))
 42 [(4.0)
 43 D: L((gaze-envelope [open envelope, take out papers))
 44 N: L L((gaze-flyer then wine glass, pick up glass))
 45 Daw: I walk at midnight for: ((reading paper))

The first thing to note is that Dawn launches the new action sequence verbally. Her initial TCU (“What’s this cool flyer.”) requests information from Niles regarding what the flyer is, or is advertising. Her second TCU (“is this from: the night you went to last night?”), while in the form of a yes-no interrogative, provides a candidate answer to her original question: the cool flyer is advertising the event that Niles attended the night before. Yet this question, as with the itemised news enquiry in extract 5.1, allows for the recipient to provide extended talk on the item. So Niles starts by responding to Dawn’s yes-no interrogative, but then continues to describe what the night involved (“it’s just some guys doing: (a bit/few) gigs in their garage.”, lines 18/21), his attendance at these events (“I went to one, (1.6) and then (0.2) goin to the next one probably,”, lines 22/23), and finally an assessment of the bands that performed (“Just punk ba:nds really hh but that ba:nd at the bottom Heroics are really really really really good.”, lines 25/27/28). Although the flyer was used to open the new action sequence, it does not become the focus of talk itself, but rather what it represents.

Secondly, the participants’ non-verbal behaviour is of interest. As can be seen from the grey annotations in the transcript, both participants direct their gaze to the flyer for the duration of the sequence. Dawn’s gaze is fixed on the flyer lying on the table as she produces the first TCU of her FPP in lines 14/17 (fig. 5.1), and it remains on the flyer as she moves it towards her while producing her second TCU, and her gaze remains on the flyer as she holds it in front of her face for the duration of Niles’ response. In this way she appears to be examining the flyer for herself (it is the flyer itself that she described as “cool”, not the event that it represents) while Niles provides her with information about the event that would not be available on the flyer: his downplayed description of it (“*just* some guys”), his attendance at it, and his own review of it. Niles’ gaze follows Dawn’s hand as she reaches for the flyer, and then remains on the flyer as she moves it towards her face and holds it there until he turns to the camera near the end of his talk. He orients to her gaze on the flyer by directing her to a particular part of it when assessing one band in particular, by referring to them as “that ba:nd

at the bottom Heroics” (lines 25/27). So both participants display involvement with the object, both verbally and physically, throughout the sequence.

Figure 5.1 (RV:LHH1.2) Dawn: “What’s this cool flyer.”



Only Dawn and Niles are present in this interaction, and they are not engaged in any other activities, such as eating, during their talk about the flyer and the event. So, similarly to the interaction in extract 5.2, it would be expected that Niles would display reciprocity when addressed by Dawn by producing a fitting response and following her gaze on the object she has referred to. Yet in settings when there are other activities underway, initiating a topic by referring to some environmental feature assists the speaker in gaining reciprocity from an addressee whose attention is focused elsewhere. One such example is when people watch television together, where they are looking at and listening to something other than their interlocutors. The following example comes from such a setting. Kimberley has just set up the camera and tidied some things away before joining Barbara on the sofa. Barbara has been watching the television for a while before Kimberley joins her, and so has already been attending to what is going on in the programme she is watching. As Kimberley sits down she picks up a juice bottle from the coffee table and opens a new action sequence by enquiring about it. Barbara not only responds verbally to Kimberley’s utterances but also shifts her gaze to the object in question:

Extract 5.5 - RV:LHH2.1 juice 01:19

((Barbara has picked up a bag of chocolates and is pouring some into her hand, her gaze shifts from her hand to the television and back again; Kimberley has just sat down next to Barbara on the sofa and her gaze is directed on a bottle on the table in front of her, she is leaning forward))

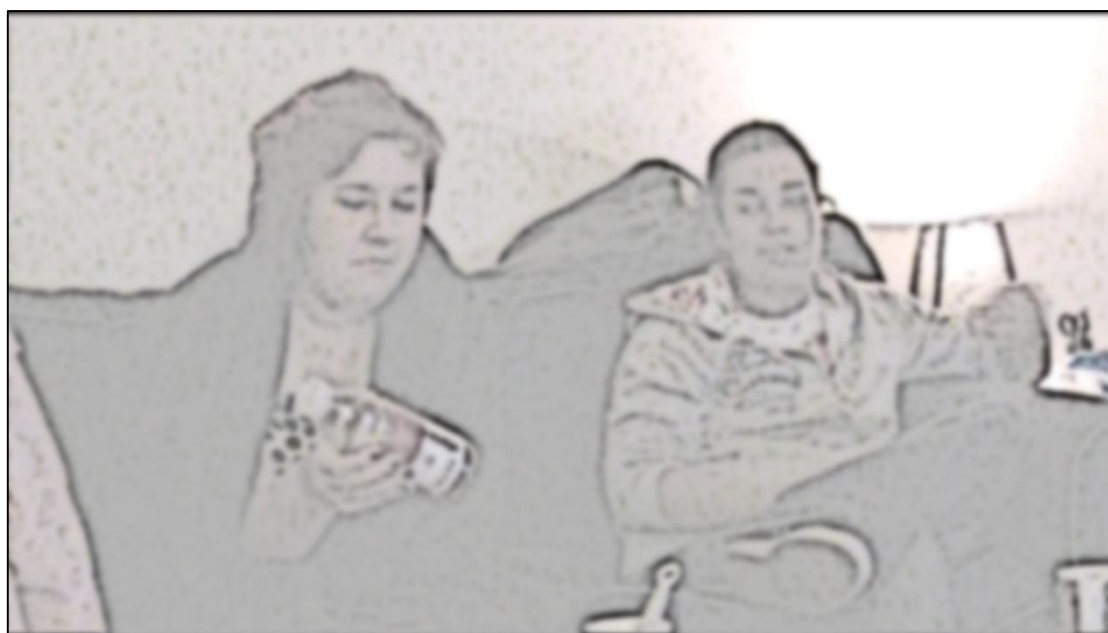
01 -> Kim: Is this Ann's juice:'.
 02 -> B: L((gaze-TV Lgaze-bottle, put chocolate down))
 03 K: L L((reach forward))
 04 (.)
 05 Bar: Uh:: yeah.=
 06 -> K: L((pick up bottle))
 07 Kim: =How many days has it been he[re,
 08 -> K: L((hold bottle in front of her))
 09 -> B: L((gaze-chocolate Lgaze-bottle))
 10 Bar: °I dunno.°
 11 Kim: [uhuh huh [huh
 12 K: L((lean back Lgaze-B))
 13 B: L((gaze-TV, put chocolate in mouth))
 14 [(0.6)
 15 K: L((gaze-TV))
 16 Kim: [uhuh £Does it have [mo[u]ld in it;£ n[huh huh]
 17 Bar: [(£mm:£.)]
 18 K: L((gaze-bottle L Lgaze-TV Lgaze-B))
 19 B: L L((gaze-K)) L Lgaze-TV))
 20 Kim: [uhuh u[huh]
 21 Bar: [un]huhn £Loo[k.£ huh [huh huh]
 22 Kim: [[huh huh] HUH HUH
 23 K: L((gaze-camera Lgaze-TV Lgaze-bottle, remove lid))
 24 B: L((gaze-bottle))
 25 Bar: [£Use yo[ur ey[es.£
 26 K: L((raise bottle to nose Lgaze-TV Lgaze-bottle))
 27 B: L((gaze-TV))
 28 [(0.4)
 29 K: L((move bottle in front of face))
 30 Kim: nHUH huh huhn

As Kimberley sits down just prior to her talk at line 1 her gaze is directed toward the table; thus her physical position may be what occasions her noticing of the bottle. Moreover, her previous utterance was unrelated to this, and concerned the camera that she had just set up. These details serve to highlight the disjunctiveness of the new action sequence from what

came before. Kimberley produces a yes-no interrogative in line 1, requesting information concerning who the bottle of juice belongs to, and Barbara responds fittingly with a “yeah” in line 5. Latched on to Barbara’s response is a further FPP from Kimberley, this time requesting a time reference for how long the juice has been there. This receives a quiet “I dunno”, Barbara’s lack of knowledge accounting for her inability to answer the query. A third question in line 16, another yes-no interrogative regarding whether the juice is mouldy, is responded to by Barbara with a non-type conforming answer: a directive to look at the bottle and “Use your eyes.”. This implies that as Kimberley is in possession of the bottle, she is more likely to know the answer to her question than Barbara is. This is produced with smiley voice, thus giving it an element of teasing and downplaying the strength of the directive (see chapter 6 for more on teases and downplaying seriousness).

Barbara responds promptly to Kimberley’s FPPs, but considering the non-verbal behaviour accompanying her talk it can be seen that her attention is also occupied with watching the television and eating chocolate. Her gaze shifts to the bottle just at the end of Kimberley’s FPPs in lines 1 and 7 (fig. 5.2), and remains there only while she produces her SPPs. She briefly gazes at Kimberley during the third FPP of the sequence, and then gazes at the bottle for the first part of her directive (“look.”) but then back at the television for the second part (“use your eyes.”). Yet although her answers are brief and she does not work to keep the sequence open, she does still turn her gaze away from the other foci of her attention and gaze at the bottle as it is being examined by Kimberley. So in this setting where the sequential constraints are somewhat loosened, orienting to something physical may be an aid to gaining reciprocity.

Figure 5.2 (RV:LHH2.1) Kimberley: “How many days has it been here,”



Unlike in the previous extract, where Niles produced elaborated talk about the event he went to in response to Dawn’s FPP, Barbara does not provide further information about the juice and so Kimberley asks further questions about it. Similarly, however, as Dawn examined the flyer (which represents the event it depicts) while Niles was producing further talk on it and the event, Kimberley examines the bottle while asking Barbara for information about it. Moreover, Kimberley does not direct her gaze to Barbara until after Barbara has responded to Kimberley’s second question, and maintains her gaze on the object of her enquiry (as Dawn did for the entire sequence). Niles’ gaze also fixes onto the flyer and similarly, for Kimberley’s first two FPPs, Barbara also gazes at the bottle and not at her interlocutor. So, in these examples, when the speakers physically interact with their objects, both participants gaze at the object simultaneously.

As with extract 5.4, the action sequence concerning requesting information about the bottle seems to be occasioned by a noticing: Kimberley seems to ask about the bottle because of seeing it as she sat down, and not necessarily because it was on her agenda of things to talk about. The way that the speaker in extract 5.6 opens a new action sequence, despite apparently being touched off by seeing something in the environment, does suggest a prior intention to raise it at some point. Janet and her daughter Natasha are in the kitchen having breakfast. This sequence comes after a lapse during which Natasha left the table to get a cup of water. Janet opens the sequence with a news announcement that she has found a leaflet,

and she follows it up by pointing to it. This gains the gaze of her recipient directed toward the object in question:

Extract 5.6 - RV:LHH9.7 art award leaflet 02:36

((Janet is sat at the kitchen table and is holding her bowl with her left hand and putting food on her spoon with her right hand, her gaze is towards the bowl; Natasha is standing by the table and drinking water))

01 -> Jan: Natasha I [fou:nd tha:t u[m: (.) Deborah Reed art
02 -> J: [((gaze-worktop/leaflet [raise right arm, rub fingers))
03 -> [award competition].
04 J: [((gaze-left of N, stroke down hair))
05 -> N: [((gaze-worktop/leaflet))
06 [(0.2)
07 -> J: [((gaze-worktop/leaflet, scratch nose with right hand))
08 Jan: For[got about [it.
09 -> J: [((point to worktop/leaflet with right arm [gaze-N))
10 [(0.2)
11 J: [((retract arm back to bowl after (0.1)))
12 Jan: [It's: um we've [still got time to do it.=
13 J: [((gaze-bowl [grasp spoon))
14 N: [((gaze-table, lower cup to table))
15 [Do you want to do it;
16 J: [((put food on spoon))
17 N: [((move cup back then forward and put on table))
18 [(0.4)
19 J: [((move spoon to mouth))
20 Nat: [When is it;
21 N: [((put cup on table))
22 [(1.4)
23 J: [((put spoon in mouth, lower spoon to bowl))
24 Nat: [What [is it?]
25 Jan: [Got to ta]ke it [in next [week.
26 N: [((gaze-J))
27 J: [[((gaze-N [lift right arm to hair [gaze ahead))
28 Nat: But what is it.
29 Jan: [mt The [title this
30 J: [((gaze-worktop, reach right arm to worktop))
31 N: [[((gaze-worktop following J))
32 [(0.4) [term [i[s um]=
33 Nat: [.hh] hhh

34 J: L((pick up paper, move to table))
35 N: L L((gaze-table Lsit on chair))
36 Jan: =F(1.9)
37 J: L((put paper on table))
38 N: L((pick up spoon, gaze-paper at (1.7)))
39 Jan: Fhobbies and Finterests.
40 J: L((point to words Lretract hand))
41 N: L((lick hand))
42 F(1.0)
43 J: L((pick up spoon))
44 Jan: Got till next Wednesday to do it if you Fwant to=
45 N: L((move hand down))
46 =Fdo it,
47 J: L((adjust place mat))
48 (1.0)
49 Nat: mnt Okay.
50 Jan: Fmkay, (.) So have a think about what you
51 J: L((put spoon in bowl, get food on spoon))
52 Fmight want to do: then,
53 N: L((wipe mouth on arm))
54 (1.8)

During the silence before Janet's talk in line 1, Natasha is off-camera fetching a cup of water. At one point she is just visible near a cupboard getting a cup, and Janet gazes in that direction. The leaflet on the worktop that is the subject of Janet's announcement is also in this direction and therefore in her eyeline; just as Kimberley noticed the bottle in extract 5.5 when she sat down, so too could this movement of Janet's be what occasions the noticing of the leaflet and her subsequent announcement about the art award.

The object referred to in Janet's announcement, like the flyer in extract 5.4, is not the subject of the ensuing talk; rather it represents an event, the art award competition. It is treated as a reference point for talk about the competition: both a source of information about the event as well as a physical point of reference for the recipient when Janet first opens the action sequence by announcing she has found the leaflet (and later when she picks up the leaflet to read the details on it).

Janet launches the topic by announcing that she “fou:nd tha:t u:m (.) Deborah Reed art award competition” (apparently meaning the piece of paper about it that is on the worktop to her right). Shortly after the beginning of her turn, she shifts her gaze to the worktop and raises her right arm, first rubbing her fingers together and then stroking down her hair. Natasha appears to follow Janet’s gaze (and possibly her arm movement) by shifting her own gaze to the worktop as soon as she finishes drinking, near the end of Janet’s turn, thus showing her physical orientation to the thing that Janet has found. As Natasha turns her gaze to the worktop, Janet moves hers to a space to the right of Natasha, but then returns it to the worktop and points to the piece of paper lying on the worktop. As she points to the paper she produces the next part of her turn, “forgot about it”. She shifts her gaze to Natasha near the end of this TCU and then again to her bowl, where it remains as she produces the rest of her turn, stating that they still have time to enter the competition and asking whether Natasha wants to, while preparing a spoonful of food. During this last part of Janet’s turn Natasha also reorients to the broader activity of breakfast, by returning her gaze to the table and putting her cup down. She keeps the sequence open, however, and produces the first part of an insert sequence, asking when the competition is in line 20, and then a second first part 1.4 seconds later, asking “what is it?” in line 24. The sequence continues, with Janet referring to the piece of paper to answer Natasha’s second question, and Natasha eventually affirming that she does want to take part in line 49.

The way that Janet opens the new action sequence at first appears to be like Button and Casey’s (1985) news announcements. The report is speaker-related (Janet found the piece of paper); there is some orientation to her recipient knowing about the topic (the use of the demonstrative modifier “that” implies that they both have prior knowledge of the competition)¹⁵; and there is more to tell beyond this announcement. However, Natasha does not produce a go-ahead, which would also treat this topic as newsworthy and allow for it to be expanded on. Janet continues though, saying that the competition had been forgotten about and that there is still time to enter, and then asking whether Natasha wants to take part. Yet Natasha’s physical orientation to the object that Janet originally refers to could be seen as a non-vocal form of go-ahead. By the time that Janet has finished her first TCU, Natasha is

¹⁵ A further element that makes this topic hearable as known about by Natasha as well as by Janet is the absence of a subject in Janet’s second TCU. This leaves unclear who exactly forgot about the competition: Janet, Natasha, or them both. This ambiguity allows Janet to avoid explicitly placing the responsibility for remembering on either herself or Natasha, but does provide for the possibility that either participant could have remembered the competition, and therefore had knowledge of it.

already gazing in the direction of the piece of paper that Janet had initially gazed at. Her gaze remains there until Janet's gaze moves to her bowl and the business of eating, and she then shifts her own gaze to the table and physically orients herself to the activity of breakfast as well. Thus the speaker's physical orientation to the environmental cue causes the recipient to mirror this orientation with her gaze, and she subsequently initiates an insert sequence.

Unlike in extracts 5.4 and 5.5, Janet does not pick up the object that she refers to. Rather, her gaze and subsequent arm motions towards the leaflet (at lines 2/4 and 7/9) are sufficient to prompt Natasha to look towards it herself. In extract 5.7 the speaker also uses gesture coupled with gaze to refer to an object, but in this case she does not name the object in question, instead using the demonstrative pro-form "this". Couple Anastasia and Katrina are sitting on a sofa eating breakfast, with their plates on their laps. Katrina opens a new action sequence in lines 3 and 7, by asking a question about the food prepared by Anastasia. Her gaze toward the object in question is matched by Anastasia before the turn is fully produced:

Extract 5.7 - RV:LHH10.1 cheese 03:27

((Anastasia has just picked up a piece of toast and is raising it up towards her mouth, and her gaze is on the toast; Katrina is holding her fork in her right hand and gazing at Anastasia's plate))

01 (1.0)
 02 Ana: nt .hh ((sniff))
 03 -> **Kat: Darling,**
 04 ┌(0.5)
 05 -> K: ┌((gaze-plate))
 06 -> A: ┌((gaze-K's plate after (0.2)))
 07 -> **Kat: Do I ha[ve cheese in this.**
 08 -> K: ┌((point to bread on plate))
 09 Ana: Mhm̥
 10 ┌(0.4)
 11 K: ┌((gaze-A))
 12 Kat: ┌Yeah,
 13 A: ┌((gaze-K))
 14 ┌(0.9)
 15 K: ┌((gaze-A's plate, put down fork, release point gesture))
 16 Kat: ┌Can I nick one of yours.
 17 K: ┌((reach right hand to A's plate))
 18 A: ┌((gaze follows K's hand))
 19 ┌(0.2)

20 K: L((right hand on slice of cheese on toast on A's plate))

21 Kat: [for my toast.

22 K: L((pick up slice of cheese))

23 [1.8)

24 A: L((gaze-K's plate after (0.4) Lgaze-plate after (0.9)))

25 K: L L((move cheese to own plate))

26 Ana: ↑Mm. [↑Yeah.

27 K: L((put cheese on own toast))

28 [0.5)

29 A: L((gaze-K's plate))

30 Ana: [↑Sure.

31 K: L((retract hand))

32 [0.2)

33 K: L((gaze-A))

34 Ana: Do you want mo[re. I can just get (one) some for you sugar.

35 A: L((gaze-K))

36 (0.4)

37 Kat: [Mm-. (Yeah:-/No:-) I'll (g/k) [get it,

38 A: L((gaze-plate, put toast on plate Lgaze-K))

39 K: L((gaze ahead and down))

40 Ana: [↑No: no: [I'll [get it.

41 K: L((slightly raise plate L Lgaze-A, lower plate back to lap))

42 A: L L((gaze-plate, move plate forward))

43 [0.7)

44 A: L((put plate on coffee table))

45 K: L((gaze follows A's plate))

46 Ana: °Ye[ah°.]

47 Kat: [°O]kay°°.

48 [0.8)

49 A: L((still arranging plate on table))

50 Ana: [I didn't [mean [to: hh (0.8) [<no:t give you=

51 A: L((gaze-K's plate Lstand up, move off-camera))

52 K: L L((gaze-A Lgaze-plate Lgaze-A off-camera))

53 =chee[s:e>. huh]

54 Kat: [huh: °huh° h]uh huh [huh huh]

55 Ana: [°huh huh] [huh huh°

56 K: L((gaze-plate))

Talk prior to the silence in line 1 concerned how Anastasia's mother was pleased when Anastasia graduated, and during the silence Katrina turns her gaze to Anastasia's plate. She

then begins her new utterance with a term of endearment that clearly addresses Anastasia, as both her partner and the only other possible participant in the interaction, while maintaining her gaze on Anastasia's plate. She then shifts her gaze to her own plate in the following silence, and Anastasia shifts her gaze to Katrina's plate 0.2 seconds after Katrina. So, before Katrina continues with her initiating action she has gained Anastasia's reciprocity – her gaze – and acknowledgement of what the upcoming utterance might refer to – her gaze at the object that Katrina is also looking at. Goodwin described how speakers can use mid-turn silences to gain the gaze of their recipient at themselves (1981), calling this a type of summons answer sequence. Katrina has done a similar thing, but in addition to silence she also used her gaze at the object in question to procure Anastasia's gaze at the same object.

Katrina then produces her TCU, still gazing at her plate, asking if there is cheese in "this", apparently meaning a piece of toast. This meaning is derived from her hand gesture at line 8. As she produces her utterance in line 7, she moves her left hand over her plate and points to the toast. She reaches the pinnacle of her gesture during the production of "have", and holds her hand in this position for the duration of her turn, Anastasia's response, and her own next turn, releasing it only during the silence at line 14 in preparation of reaching over to Anastasia's plate. As well as locating the object as physically near, her use of the demonstrative pro-form "this" locates her gesture temporally within the interaction: the gesture is being held in place as "this" is produced, indicating that "this" refers to the gesture, which can then be analysed by the recipient to ascertain what it means (Schegloff, 1984). Anastasia apparently understands this meaning as she replies in the affirmative in line 9. After producing a further confirmation check Katrina asks whether she can take a slice of cheese from Anastasia's plate, and simultaneously begins moving her arm towards Anastasia's plate without waiting for a reply. Anastasia finally agrees that Katrina can take some of her cheese in lines 26 and 30, after Katrina has already picked the cheese up. In this way it seems that Katrina's original question in line 7 was a preliminary to her subsequent request, a way of downplaying the potential complaint aspect of her utterance (that she has not been given enough cheese by Anastasia). Indeed, Anastasia does ultimately treat Katrina's request as a complaint, offering to fetch more cheese, and saying that she "didn't mean to: hh (0.8) <no:t give you chees:e>" (lines 50/53).

The examples so far have showed that when referring to an object at the opening of a new action sequence, speakers work to ensure that their recipients are gazing at the objects in

question. It is not enough to just verbally refer to the object; rather, both speakers should also gaze at it. In this way, the recipients are not only signalling their reciprocity to the speakers, but also their engagement with the object being referred to. In extract 5.7, before Katrina opens the new action sequence with an initiating action verbally, she has already indicated via her body behaviour what her first utterance will refer to, and has gained reciprocity from Anastasia who also then gazes in the correct direction before the main part of the first action begins. Similarly, in extract 5.6 Janet shifted her gaze to the object prior to naming it, and succeeded in getting Natasha's gaze on the object during this utterance.

In the following extract, Janet compliments her daughter Natasha about a model of the rainforest that she is making, which is on the worktop to the right of Janet and behind Natasha. At the start of the extract both participants are gazing down at their plates, however when Janet begins her turn in line 1, she shifts her gaze to the object referred to before naming it as she turns away again. Natasha, however, does not follow Janet's gaze until Janet has paused and issued a restart of her turn:

Extract 5.8 - RV:LHH9.4 model 04:22

((Janet and Natasha are sat at the kitchen table having supper. Both are eating and are gazing at their plates. A model of the rainforest that Natasha is making is on the worktop to the right of Janet and behind Natasha))

01 -> Jan: s^o (0.3) [nt this model Natasha,
02 -> J: L((gaze-model [gaze-plate]))
03 (0.8)
04 Nat: Hm.
05 [(0.8)
06 -> J: L((gaze-model after (0.7)))
07 Jan: <I lik:e thee um:>
08 Nat: mnt
09 [(0.5)
10 N: L((food in mouth, turn head toward J))
11 Jan: I [like the [way you've done the tree:s,
12 -> N: L((gaze-J [gaze-model]))
13 (1.9)
14 Nat: [Mm.
15 N: L((gaze-plate))
16 [(0.7)
17 J: L((gaze-plate))
18 Nat: nt Not many [trees le[ft.

19 J: L((gaze-N Lgaze-model))
 20 (0.2)
 21 Jan: Hm.

Talk about football came to a close prior to this segment, and during the silence before Janet opens the new action sequence both Janet and Natasha have returned to eating. In line 1 Janet opens the sequence with a fragment that names the object she is referring to – “this model” – prefacing it with “So” which, as in extract 5.2, could indicate that this topic was on-agenda for Janet, or that this is a return to a prior course of action that had lapsed¹⁶ (Bolden, 2009). As she produces “So”, Janet turns her head and shifts her gaze towards the model which is on the worktop to her right, and then shifts her gaze back to her plate as she produces “this model Natasha” (line 2). Her utterance receives a vocal go-ahead from Natasha in line 4 – “Hm.” – but unlike in the examples given so far, her brief gaze at the object does not result in Natasha mirroring this gaze.

Throughout the silences preceding and following Natasha’s go-ahead, both participants are gazing at their plates. Just at the end of the silence in line 5, and so just before she continues her turn in line 7, Janet again shifts her gaze to the rainforest model and she keeps it there through to line 17. Her utterance in line 7 is produced slowly and is incomplete; she produces a stretched “um:”, possibly initiating a search repair, and then pauses for 0.5 seconds. During this silence, Natasha makes a lip-smacking noise and takes a mouthful of food, and also turns her head towards Janet. As Janet restarts her turn in line 11, Natasha first shifts her gaze to Janet, and then to the model. Janet’s redone turn is this time produced at the same speed as the rest of their talk, and contains no silences or other indications of trouble. This seems to reflect the finding by Heath (1984), that speakers who do not have the reciprocity of their chosen addressee may have speech perturbations in their talk, that disappear once they have gained the reciprocity of their interlocutor. Goodwin’s (1981) observation that silences and restarts can also prompt recipients to gaze at the speaker is also evident in this extract. Janet’s turn in line 11 is produced far more fluently than her first attempt in line 7; Natasha did not gaze at Janet or the object during the first attempt but her head had already turned towards Janet before the second attempt and her gaze continued to move in that direction past Janet

¹⁶ As this extract comes early into the recording, it may be the case that the rainforest model had already been touched on prior to the recording, however it is impossible to ascertain this. Whether the model had previously been referred to or not, launching talk on it with a so-preface does seem to indicate that the topic was on-agenda for Janet.

and onto the object during Janet's turn in line 11. Both participants then hold their gaze on the model throughout the lengthy gap in line 13, before Natasha turns away and acknowledges Janet's compliment in line 14, and produces an assessment of the model in line 18.

It appears, then, that gaining the gaze of the recipient towards the object being referred to is of importance when opening a new action sequence based on something in the immediate environment. The speaker of the initiating action maintains their gaze on the object in question, and the recipient mirrors this by also shifting their gaze to the object. If this gaze shift does not happen, the speaker can indicate some sort of trouble by having speech perturbations in their talk, in an attempt to encourage their addressee to display reciprocity by gazing at the subject of the proffered topic.

New courses of action in which objects are non-vocally referred to

The extracts provided so far have shown new action sequences opened verbally using techniques similar to those documented in the work of Button and Casey (1984, 1985, 1988/89) and Schegloff (2007a). However, in co-present interactions participants also have the option of opening a new action sequence by referring to an object in the environmentally non-vocally, doing so entirely via gaze and gesture. Equally, recipients have the option to respond either vocally or non-vocally. In the final two extracts in this chapter, an action sequence referring to an object in the environment is opened non-vocally; in extract 5.9 this action is responded to verbally by one recipient and non-vocally by another, and in extract 5.10 it is initially responded to entirely non-vocally.

In extract 5.9, Janet and Natasha are sat at the kitchen table having breakfast. Maria was also eating with them, but left the table for a few minutes. She returns with a book about the rainforest, which she non-vocally shows to Natasha, before producing a pre-telling about the book itself. Both Natasha and Janet shift their gazes to the object before Maria's first utterance. Some of the annotations of the non-vocal behaviour have been expanded to ease understanding:

Extract 5.9 - RV:LHH9.3 rainforest book 02:28

((Janet and Natasha are sitting at the kitchen table having breakfast; Maria is just sitting down at the table after having left to get a book. Natasha's eyes are obscured by Janet during parts of this extract, so her head position is taken into account rather than her gaze; Janet has her back to camera so her head position is also taken into account))

01 ┌(5.0)
02 M: ┌(0.0) ((Maria sits down, gazes at the book))
03 M: ┌(0.7) ((Maria gazes at Janet))
04 M: ┌(1.0) ((Maria grasps the book with her left hand))
05 -> **M: ┌(1.1) ((Maria gazes at the book, then moves it towards Natasha))**
06 M: ┌(1.6) ((Maria gazes at Janet))
07 M: ┌(1.7) ((Maria gazes at the book))
08 -> **M: ┌(2.2) ((Maria gazes at Natasha))**
09 -> **N: ┌(2.4) ((Natasha's head is directed towards Maria and the book))**
11 -> **M: ┌(2.5) ((Maria holds the book in front of Natasha))**
12 M: ┌(4.0) ((Maria gazes at Janet))
13 J: ┌(4.4) ((Janet begins raising her right hand holding her spoon))
14 M: ┌(4.6) ((Maria begins moving the book away to the left))
15 Jan: brilliant.
16 N: ┌((gaze-M))
17 ┌(0.3)
18 M: ┌((shift book to left hand))
19 Jan: ┌(>can we<) ┌take it ┌with us;
20 M: ┌((gaze-book ┌gaze-N ┌gaze-down))
21 M: ┌((lower book to table))
22 J: ┌((head follows book ┌scratch lip with right forefinger))
23 N: ┌((gaze-bowl))
24 (0.3)
25 Mar: ┌do you know ┌where I ┌bo-
26 M: ┌((gaze-N ┌put book down))
27 J: ┌((head tilt down, lower right arm ┌put food on spoon))
28 ┌you know when I ┌bought tha:t.
29 M: ┌((tap book twice ┌lift right arm))
30 N: ┌((put food in mouth))
31 ┌(0.8)
32 M: ┌((gaze-down, lean back, tuck hair behind right ear))
33 N: ┌((gaze-M (after 0.7)))
34 Mar: ┌<do you know> when I ┌bou:ght ┌i┌t.
35 M: ┌((gaze-N, lean forward ┌adjust position in seat ┌gaze-book))
36 N: ┌((shake head))

directed at the book, and then at Maria herself in line 16. Her gaze alone is also treated as possibly adequate by Maria, who shifts her gaze and smiles broadly to Janet in line 12, after having gazed at Natasha from line 8 and held the book in position from line 11, 1.5 seconds earlier. It seems that Natasha's gaze is a sufficient acknowledgement of the object shown by Maria. Moreover, Janet only produces her assessment and upshot at this point, having waited until Maria shifted her gaze away from Natasha and towards herself. In this way, Maria's initiating action receives two responses: a non-vocal display of reciprocity from Natasha, and a vocal assessment from Janet. Having gained these non-vocal and vocal responses from both her interlocutors, Maria goes on to talk about when and why she bought her book.

Figure 5.3 (RV:LHH9.3)



When a participant initiates an action verbally they are able to include within their talk some indication of the stance that they are taking towards the subject of their talk (Stivers, 2008). This indication then aids the recipient in gauging how to design their response. Consequently, when a participant initiates action non-verbally or non-vocally, the recipient may have been provided with less information regarding their interlocutor's stance. When an action sequence refers to an object in the environment, providing less information about the speaker's stance in this way can be another way of eliciting gaze at the object; gazing at the object may assist the recipient in gauging how to appropriately respond. In the previous extract Natasha was able to see Maria's face while she held the book in front of her, and Maria was smiling; in the

final extract of this chapter Maria's face is in the opposite direction to where she indicates that Natasha should look, and provides fewer clues as to her stance.

Maria and Natasha are sat at the kitchen table. They have been talking about the art competition that Natasha will enter, and after this topic a 16.2 second silence ensues. During this silence Maria points to something outside, apparently the house next door, and Natasha looks in that direction. The changes made to the house are then topicalised verbally by Natasha.

Extract 5.10 - RV:LHH9.9 next door 07:22

((Maria and Natasha are sat at the kitchen table eating breakfast))

01 Nat: an (wri[te] [ar:t in the (canvas:: at) the to[p.]

02 M: [((gaze-N))

03 N: [((gaze-M))

04 Mar: [wh]at

05 on your: erm: >on (yer) piece of paper that

06 you're< drawing.

07 [(16.2)

08 N: [(0.8) ((nod head))

((During the first 6 seconds of silence, Natasha alternates between gazing straight ahead and at her bowl while chewing her food. Maria gazes at her bowl, then straight ahead, then up at the house next door as she puts her spoon in her mouth using her right hand. Maria then lowers her right arm, leans towards Natasha and shifts her gaze to her, before releasing her spoon in her bowl and reaching towards Natasha, again using her right hand.))

09 -> M: [(5.9) ((Maria taps Natasha's left arm with her right hand and gazes at the house))

10 N: [(5.9) ((Natasha lowers her right arm))

11 M: [(6.0) ((Maria raises her right arm))

12 -> M: [(6.2) ((Maria points to the house next door, still raising right arm))

13 -> M: [(6.5) ((Maria puts her right elbow on table, maintains pointing))

14 N: [(6.5) ((Natasha puts her spoon in her bowl and gazes at Maria))

15 -> N: [(6.9) ((Natasha shifts her gaze up))

16 -> N: [(7.2) ((Natasha gazes at the house))

((At this stage Maria releases her point and leans back, moving her arm off the table. Her gaze shifts to Natasha and then back to the house next door. Natasha, still looking at the house, suspends her chewing. Both participants gaze at each other for almost two seconds, before Natasha resumes chewing and both participants shift their gaze back to the house.))

17 Nat: What have they done.

18 [(5.5)

19 M: L(2.6) ((tilt head to left))
 20 N: L(5.2) ((close eyes, turn head towards M))
 21 Nat: [mkh [(they have)]
 22 Mar: [v they mov]ed the do:r.
 23 N: L((gaze-M))
 24 M: L((tilt head to right))
 25 [(3.1)
 26 N: L((gaze-house))
 27 Mar: [but the- <those um joists> (0.5) I don't know the
 28 M: L((grasp spoon))
 29 name of it <b[ut are to hold [the [wa]ll up while you
 30 N: L((gaze-bowl Lgrasp spoon))
 31 M: L((gaze-bowl))
 32 take something out> fro[m underneath,
 33 M: L((gaze-house))

Natasha non-vocally answers Maria's question by nodding in line 8, and then both participants resume eating. Maria gazes at the house, and then shifts her gaze to Natasha. She returns her gaze towards the house and taps Natasha's arm at line 9. She points to the house at line 12. Natasha gazes at Maria at line 14 and then at the house in line 16. Maria shifts her gaze from the house to Natasha and back again, and they share reciprocal gaze. At this point Natasha verbally topicalises the house by asking "What have they done" in line 17, and Maria verbally provides a candidate answer in line 22.

When Maria taps Natasha on the arm this serves as a non-vocal summons. Natasha answers this summons in line 14 when gazing at Maria. Maria's pointing toward the house in line 12 non-vocally refers the house as the object of interest for this course of action (fig. 5.4). Natasha's lengthy gaze at the house is a non-vocal response to Maria's non-vocal directive to look at the house, treating it as newsworthy enough to warrant further participation; this is compounded when she actually does continue the sequence by asking a question that requires a response from Maria. In this way, Maria gains reciprocity from Natasha by producing a non-vocal first action in the form of pointing and gaze, which is responded to by Natasha non-vocally with a shift in gaze to the object of Maria's point.

Figure 5.4 (RV:LHH9.9)



Discussion

Opening new action sequences in these examples was done by using similar techniques to those described in the literature on topic launches. Speakers work to gain their recipients' gaze by doing the kinds of things described by Goodwin (1981) and Heath (1984) namely pausing, restarting turns, and producing speech perturbations until their recipients shift their gaze to them. However, when an object in the environment is referred to in talk, it is not enough to merely gaze at your interlocutor: the recipients are guided to also gaze at the object being referred to. In this way both speakers and recipients are able to draw on elements of their environment when opening a new action sequence: speakers can refer to an object, and recipients can physically display their reciprocity by gazing at the object in question.

It seems, then, that it is important for the recipients of these topic launches to demonstrate their reciprocity physically as well as verbally or vocally, and sometimes the physical display of reciprocity is sufficient on its own. This seems to be significant in these extracts, where participants are dealing with multiple involvements: watching television while examining a bottle, examining an information pack while noticing a flyer, and eating a meal while looking at leaflets, models and houses. Gaining a physical display of reciprocity perhaps assists in

getting a response to an initial action when there are competing involvements in the interaction. Butler and Wilkinson's (2013) discussion of a child attempting to mobilise the reciprocity of his adult family members shows a similar difficulty, and the child has to work to gain the reciprocity of the adults who are involved in separate spates of talk with each other, by producing summonses and engaging in pursuit. In the cases described here, participants work to gain a physical display of reciprocity, also pursuing this if need be by pausing and restarting turns. It seems that gaining a physical display of reciprocity ensures that the speaker's chosen object is definitely being oriented to.

The examples shown demonstrate that participants can draw on elements of their immediate environment when doing particular actions. Moreover, gaze is a resource that recipients can use in order to gain and display reciprocity. The final analytic chapter demonstrates a further non-vocal resource that participants can use when producing a particular action: touch when producing or receiving a face-threatening act.

Chapter 6: Touch as a resource when producing an action

Introduction

So far a main component of this thesis has been how participants can draw on various elements when doing an action; specifically identity, non-vocal behaviour and the surrounding environment. This chapter describes a further non-vocal behaviour that participants can use when producing actions, namely touching their interlocutor.

Participants in interaction make use of many physical elements in addition to their vocal and verbal resources: facial expression, gaze, body posture, and gesture, as well as using these movements to incorporate aspects of their environment into their interaction. But another possibility open to them is touch: touching something in the environment, touching themselves, or touching an interlocutor. The data set for this research is full of such instances, for example, holding an object (fig. 6.1), touching their own face (fig. 6.2), or touching an interlocutor's thigh (fig. 6,3):

Figure 6.1 (RV:LHH4.1)

Dee (left) holding a card and present which she gives to Natalie (right):



Figure 6.2 (RV:LHH7.1)

Beth (centre) holding her hand to her face during a telling about her parents embarrassing her:



Figure 6.3 (RV:LHH4.1)

Megan (far right) dropping her up-turned hand onto Tamsin's (second from right) thigh while asking the other participants whether Tamsin pronounced a word in a particular way:



While all of these situations are of interest, this chapter will consider the latter instance of touch, when participants touch each other during everyday interactions.

First existing literature on touch will be described, covering intimacy, dominance, and influence, followed by researching examining touch within the field of conversation analysis. The concept of threatening actions will be introduced, in particular teasing, before moving on to data and analysis. The examples given will demonstrate instances of touch that accompany potentially threatening actions.

Interpersonal touch

Intimacy

Interpersonal touch is most commonly seen between couples and family members in this corpus, although there are also instances of this behaviour among friends, for example rubbing an interlocutor's back to do comforting. Instances of touch include kissing and

embracing, touching parts of an interlocutor's body with a hand (such as rubbing their leg, stroking their hair or patting their head), and sitting in positions where participants' bodies are in contact (for example one partner resting their legs on the other or sitting with their arm around the other's shoulders). These kinds of touch appear to demonstrate a level of intimacy between the participants, and this is most obviously seen when the couples who took part kiss and embrace, and when the parents who participated kiss or embrace their children (or vice versa). As such it seems that these kinds of touch are doing something interactional: the toucher can use touch to display affection to the touchee, and secondly, in the case of a multi-party or public interaction, they can use touch to display the pair's intimacy to others present. Furthermore, if the touch is not primarily concerned with affection, for example doing something more practical such as moving hair out of their interlocutor's face or tapping their arm to gain their attention (as in example 5.10 in chapter 5) and it occurs without reproach or without having asked for explicit permission, it can demonstrate the intimate nature of the relationship: as Thayer (1984) says in his overview of touch, "[t]o let another touch us is to drop that final and most formidable barrier to intimacy" (p. 9).

Intimacy is a major theme in the literature on touch (Hertenstein, 2011: 303) and touch has long been deemed significant in social interaction for communicating levels of intimacy and feelings about the recipient of touch and about the relationship between the toucher and the touchee (Thayer, 1986: 8). Much of the work on touch and intimacy has used self-report methods to investigate what kinds of touch occur and where, and how they are perceived (for example Hanzal, Segrin and Dorros, 2008; Willis and Rinck, 1983), or observational methods together with interviews or questionnaires (for example Guerrero and Andersen, 1991; Willis and Briggs, 1992). Findings from these studies cover the kinds of touch that occur, amounts of touch at various stages of a romantic relationship, and what touch conveys about intimacy to observers.

Willis and Rinck (1983) asked college participants to record in a log the 'tactile interactions' that they experienced with others. This resulted in almost 1500 touches being reported, most of which occurred in private settings and which were personal in nature, and they also recorded touches that were sexual. These self-reports, then, gave an overview of what kinds of touch occur and how they are interpreted by the recipient. More recently, Hanzal, Segrin and Dorros (2008) carried out a survey study, also focusing on participants' responses to various kinds of touch. The survey asked participants to what extent they agreed with

statements regarding being touched by their 'significant other': whether being touched in certain ways (such as a pat, squeeze or stroke) on particular areas of the body (classed as intimate or non-intimate) made them feel pleasantness, warmth or love, or sexual desire. The authors were interested in the role that gender, age and marital status played in participants' responses. They found that men responded more positively than women to touch in intimate areas (apart from sexual desire which was higher for men); also, unmarried men had more positive reactions to all touch than unmarried women, but this trend was reversed for feelings of warmth or love and pleasantness in married participants. An earlier study by Willis and Briggs (1992) used a mix of observation and interviewing to see which partner in male-female dyads in public settings initiated touch using their hand first, if at all. From observing 500 such dyads, they found that there was a lesser likelihood of touch being initiated at all in couples who had been married or cohabiting for a year or more. The men in their sample were more likely to initiate touch when dating or engaged, or when married or cohabiting for less than a year, whereas women were more likely to initiate touch after being married for a year or more. Burgoon (1991) investigated observers' interpretations of touch by showing participants photographs either of two people engaged in some level of touch (ranging from shaking hands, to putting an arm around the shoulder, touching the face, or no touch at all) and asking them to complete a questionnaire about the depicted interaction; the touch condition was coupled with different gender combinations, levels of attractiveness, and levels of status. General findings from this study included that a handshake was perceived to be the least affectionate of the touches, with handholding and face touching being classed as most affectionate.

Work in this area has shown the types of touch that are associated with intimacy, how touches are interpreted by recipients or observers, and has made connections between touching in public and couple's relationship statuses. However, studies' mainly focussed on touch within the context of an intimate relationship, for example by observing couples (Willis and Briggs, 1992) or by asking respondents to consider touch as done by their 'significant other' (Hanzal, Segrin and Dorros, 2008). However, touch can do more than just convey intimacy, and another area of research on touch has looked at its relation to dominance and status, where the focus has not primarily been on touch within couples.

Dominance and status

Although intimacy and the conveyance of positive emotions is clearly a major part of interpersonal touch, there has also been much research on the role of status and dominance in the use of touch, particularly in relation to gender differences when initiating touch. Much of this work stemmed from a study by Henley published in 1973 (cited in Hertenstein et al., 2006a), in which a male research assistant recorded touch that occurred between people under 30 years of age in various public settings. Henley found that people of a higher socioeconomic status initiated touch more frequently compared to those of a lower socioeconomic status, older people initiated touch more frequently compared to younger people, and men initiated touch more frequently compared to women. This difference was attributed to differences in status, with people in higher-status positions using touch to maintain this status. In terms of gender this translates to the idea that men have a higher status than women in society, and will therefore initiate touch more frequently. However, it has since been found that there is no strong gender asymmetry when observing male-female dyads (Stier and Hall, 1984), and later studies investigating gender and touch are mixed in their agreement with Henley's findings (Hertenstein et al., 2006a).

Many studies take into account other variables in addition to gender, such as culture. DiBiase and Gunnoe (2004), for example, used observations of male-female dyads in dance clubs in cities in three different countries – Rome, Prague and Boston – to investigate hand touch and non-hand touch in different cultures, drawing on the idea that cultures in warmer climates touch more (contact climates) and those in colder climates touch less (non-contact climates). The authors also noted that compared to Italy and the US, gender roles remained more traditional in the Czech Republic and the men therefore more dominant; based on this, they hypothesised that the male subjects in Prague would touch more with their hands, as per Henley's work on touch and dominance, than in the Rome or Boston samples. This hypothesis was confirmed in the data, thus highlighting the need to take into account the cultural context when investigating instances of touch, with the authors also suggesting that both the setting being investigated, in this case dance clubs, and people's relationships to each other may affect results and should therefore be considered when carrying out this type of research. This need to incorporate contextual information when investigating gender has also been stated in relation to the functions of other non-verbal behaviours. In response to a study on male and female students' nodding behaviour (Helweg-Larsen et al., 2004), which

claimed that nodding indicates submission or subordination and found that female students nodded more than male students, Hall (2006) suggested that the authors should consider what the recorded noddings could be doing: it is not enough to simply say that men nod less than women because they are dominant, as the functions of these behaviours might not be so simple to classify. Hall gave the example of a professor nodding at a student, which could indicate understanding or approval; moreover, nodding as a back channel device (Yngve, 1970) or continuer (Goodwin, 1986) may encourage the student to continue speaking (Hall 2006: 389). In this situation, the higher-status professor might be expected to nod more than the lower-status student, which would contradict the suggestion that nodding is associated with low status and submission (2006: 389). So research on touch would benefit from incorporating the details of the interaction in which the instance of touch occurs into its analyses and subsequent findings.

Gaining compliance with a request

These studies, while telling us much about types of touch and what they convey to recipients or observers, do not consider the immediate interactional significance of interpersonal touch. However, there is a large area of research on how touch can be used to influence recipients' behaviour, particularly in attempts to gain compliance. The focus of the experimental studies in this area is on touch between strangers and not couples, and the touches are not associated with intimacy or affection as in the studies described above.

Studies using experimental observations of interactions in public have agreed that touch can help to gain compliance when requesting something. In an early study on touch and compliance, Willis and Hamm (1980) carried out two experiments to see the effect of touch and level of effort required on gaining compliance. Students were approached by either a male or a female experimenter and asked to fill in a petition; half of the subjects were touched lightly on their upper arm as the request was made and half were not touched. Then shoppers were asked to complete a rating scale for a research project; again half were touched on their upper arm and half were not touched. Willis and Hamm found that the simpler task of filling in a petition had a greater rate of compliance than completing the rating scale, but in both experiments more subjects complied when they were touched on the arm. The authors suggested that touch may increase participants' attention and involvement, which may be

what increases compliance; gaze had been found to have a similar effect on gaining compliance with legitimate requests (i.e. those that seem reasonable) (Kleinke, 1980) and the use of touch in this situation was likened to this other non-verbal behaviour. A similar experiment conducted in a supermarket, where shoppers were asked to sample a pizza by one researcher and then to rate the pizza by a different researcher, also found that the shoppers who were touched lightly on the upper arm were more likely to sample the pizza and then go on to buy it, although the presence or absence of touch did not affect how the shoppers rated the product (Smith, Gier and Willis, 1982).

Other factors have been studied in conjunction with touch in this field. Bohm and Hendricks (1997) looked at the effect of touch, gender and the degree of justification in gaining compliance by observing a female researcher asking someone standing in queue whether she can go in front of them; a higher degree of justification increased the likelihood of compliance, but touch did not appear to have an effect, which the authors suggest may have been influenced by the gender of the researcher, as including a male researcher may have yielded different results. Guéguen (2002a) looked at the kind of touch used when making a request, distinguishing between a 'help touch' (holding a subject's hand for one to two seconds), a touch to draw attention (tapping a subject twice on the shoulder), or no touch at all. Female researchers approached subjects asking for change for parking. The author found that touch increased compliance, particularly when the touch for help was used. There was also a gender difference, with male subjects more likely to comply when a touch to draw attention was used and female subjects complying when a touch for help was used. Guéguen also investigated the importance of status and touch in gaining compliance (2002b). A male researcher asked subjects to answer a questionnaire about children's television programmes; he either lightly touched the forearm of the subject or did not touch them at all. In addition, he was dressed in one of three styles, reflecting a high, medium or low status: in a suit and tie, in jeans and a t-shirt, or looking very unkempt. The use of touch increased the likelihood of compliance, and especially so when the researcher was dressed smartly, and therefore of an apparently higher status.

The studies concerned with gaining compliance show how touch, together with other factors, can have a significance related to the immediate interactional context: by including touch when producing a request to complete a petition or for some change, the likelihood of the response being granted – which would be the preferred response in conversation analytic

terms – can be increased. However, it would be interesting to have a record of the actual interactions to see exactly where in the course of the request the touch occurs. In order to research these types of interaction, they are generally observed by researchers in public settings, and a large amount of short interactions are included in the study. Moreover, some studies do not inform the subjects that they are being observed, and consequently these interactions cannot be recorded. For conversation analysis this is problematic. Similarly, the work on touch and dominance and status that involves observing interpersonal touches in public settings does not provide sufficient detail in its description of the interactions where touch occurs: for example it would be useful to know what the observed male-female dyads are saying when their touches are being counted by researchers in dance clubs (DiBiase and Gunnoe, 2004). The literature on touch and intimacy focuses mostly on self-reports of peoples' interpretations of touch, as opposed to actual instances of interpersonal touch, and while the studies show how different types of interpersonal touch are understood and the meanings that they can convey, they do not tell us about how these touches come about and are responded to in real-life interaction. The studies in which participants were observed touching do rely on actual instances of interpersonal touch, but other major elements of the interaction were not taken into account, such as the talk that was produced when the touch occurred. From a conversation analytic perspective this level of detail is not sufficient to account for what the touches are doing in the observed interactions. Looking at the sequential positions of touch would allow us to learn more about the function and importance of this non-verbal behaviour in action.

Touch and conversation analysis

Conversation analysis is a useful method to see what functions touch can have in interaction, by considering where touch occurs in actual interactions in relation to the ongoing talk and other body behaviours. However, unlike other types of non-verbal behaviour, as yet interpersonal touch has received relatively little attention from conversation analysts (Denman and Wilkinson, 2011). This is surprising, as touch appears to be a common element of interactions, particularly among intimates. Yet the only conversation analytic studies that have incorporated touch into their analyses have concerned institutional interactions.

Nishizaka (2007) described how touch was used during an examination of a pregnant woman by a midwife when referring to objects or locations. In addition to using place references, such as “here”, “this place” and “this”, to show a student where various parts of the foetus’ body were within the mother’s abdomen, the midwife also touched the relevant places and moved the student’s hands to these places as she instructed her. The touches are sequentially relevant, coming at points where place terms are also being produced. Toerien and Kitzinger (2007) also discussed how touch was used by a beauty therapist during a hair removal appointment. The therapist engages in multiple involvements (LeBaron and Jones, 2002) when working with a client, both carrying out the task of eyebrow threading and maintaining talk about threading in general with the client. At one point the therapist needs to direct the client to pull her eyelid with her hand, but the client is still talking on the topic of threading. The therapist moves her hand toward the client’s shoulder twice but then pulls her hand back each time as the client produces a further utterance. The client’s eyes are shut so she does not see these movements. At the completion of a further turn by the client the therapist produces a minimal agreement followed immediately by saying the client’s name and so indicating that a shift in the course of the interaction is underway. Only once the client has produced a go-ahead does the therapist touch her right shoulder as she produces the directive saying that she should use her right hand to pull her eyelid (“With this one darling” p. 650). The touch used in this instance coincides exactly with the deictic word “this”, and both the touch and the directive are postponed until they are able to be produced by the therapist non-interruptively. Therefore, the sequential placement of the touch is significant when considering its interactional function.

Denman and Wilkinson (2011) also applied conversation analysis to their examination of touch used by a person with traumatic brain injury (TBI). This was a case study looking at everyday interactions that took place between a man with TBI and a female carer (although the interaction is classed as ‘everyday’, it still occurs in the institutional context of a carer working with a client). A feature of TBI, particularly in males, is inappropriate touching of the opposite sex; this paper looks at the six instances of the man touching the female carer during the recordings, using conversation analysis. The authors found that the six touches were not produced at random but at particular sequential moments, namely when producing an action (an apology, answering a question, or declining an offer) with some emphasis. So although the touches are still felt to be inappropriate by the carer, and are occasionally

reproved by her, they appear to serve a particular interactional purpose by accompanying particular actions.

So, touch as described in the existing literature does not appear to occur without reason in interaction. A touch can be interpreted as an act of intimacy, and might occur unconnected to talk that may have been taking place. It may be an action in its own right, for example grasping a partner's arm and gazing at their watch, which is followed by the partner moving their arm to further facilitate seeing the watch, thus perhaps serving as a non-verbal request or pre-request. It may work within the ongoing talk: contributing to a request (Willis and Hamm, 1980; Guéguen, 2002a), aiding the recognisability of a locational reference (Nishizaka, 2007; Toerien and Kitzinger, 2007), or adding emphasis to an action (Denman and Wilkinson, 2011). The way in which touch can work together with talk when producing particular actions is the focus of the examples in this chapter.

Face

The examples that follow are instances of touch accompanying or following an action that is in some way threatening to the recipient's face, such as a tease, a criticism or a rebuke. They are not explicit threats as described by Hepburn and Potter (2011a); rather these actions could be classed as potential face-threatening acts (FTAs), which in particular threaten the positive face of a participant (Brown and Levinson, 1987) in that they threaten their positive self-image and their desire to be thought of well by their co-participants. Brown and Levinson posited that speakers have five options when deciding how to produce an FTA, ranging from the highest risk of face loss to the lowest risk: 1) baldly, that is without any move to save their interlocutor's face; 2) to use positive politeness strategies when producing the FTA (which express solidarity); 3) to use negative politeness strategies when producing the FTA (which express restraint); 4) to do the FTA "off record" (thus avoiding impositions); 5) or to not do the FTA at all (1987: 60). The strategies that Brown and Levinson list are verbal, but perhaps non-verbal behaviour could also be considered in this light, with a touch expressing solidarity and therefore making the FTA less blunt. In this way, touch could serve to soften these actions' threat to face.

Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (1987) takes face as a personal attribute of an individual: we all have face which we try to maintain and protect from threat. An alternative theory has been posited by Arundale (2010), Face Constituting Theory, in which face is conceptualised in terms of the relationship created by participants in interaction. Participants interpret each other's utterances in relation to the level of connectedness or separateness that defines their relationship, based on their current interaction and their relationship thus far; Arundale describes this as participants' connection face and separation face, which are not individual attributes but instead referring to their interpretations of their relationship. Participants interpret each other's utterances and anticipate each other's interpretations of their utterances, and the process involves three types of face interpreting in relation to the connectedness and separateness from their interlocutor: a provisional face interpreting of the current utterance or action, an evolving face interpreting of the relationship with their co-participant up until the current point in time, and a contextual face interpreting of their connectedness and separateness as situated in the current context. When the "proffered shift" or seeming difference between the provisional face interpreting and the evolving face interpreting is not consistent with the "situated shift" or seeming difference between the evolving face interpreting and the contextual face interpreting, these interpretations of face are evaluated as threatening. Haugh (2010) explains that one type of tease in the context of Australian English, jocular mockery, can be seen as both threatening to and supportive of face in terms of Face Constituting Theory: it is threatening as it is interpreted as mocking, but as it is seen as non-serious in the context in which it is produced this serves to be supportive of face. This is something that may be of relevance for the teases that follow in this chapter.

Teases

One type of action that is particularly relevant to this discussion is teasing, and this is clearly what is being done in examples 6.1, 6.2 and 6.5 below.

Teases are recognisable by particular features (Drew, 1987: 230-232): they may have exaggerated lexical items, such as extreme, pejorative, or gross terms; they might involve exaggeration by using something formulaic, such as "he'll get to know you"; and they might depict a contrast between reality and what is said in the tease. Moreover, they come in a particular position sequentially in talk, coming second to a prior utterance that is produced by

the one who is being teased. The tease utilises some element of the prior utterance: it “embellishes, satirizes, makes a play on, doubts, trivializes, finds a hidden meaning to” something in the prior turn, and so “a speaker in conversation may be VULNERABLE to being teased to the extent that materials in a current turn of talk may be exploited by next speaker to construct a tease” (Drew, 1987: 235, emphasis in original).

In response to a tease a recipient can display their recognition of the previous utterance as a tease in several ways (Drew 1987: 221-225): by going along with the tease, for example laughingly agreeing (“O(h)h y(h)eah”); by just laughing, possibly prompted by other participants’ laughter; by laughing while rejecting the tease, as in “N(h)o”; or by laughing first and then rejecting the tease, for example laughing, then saying no, and then providing an alternative to what was described in the tease. The laughter element of these responses displays the recipient’s recognition of the non-seriousness of the tease, but any rejection element of the turn (such as saying no or providing an alternative) does not display recognition of non-seriousness. Responses that do not display recognition (although the recipient of the tease may well have recognised the non-seriousness of the utterance but is just not displaying this recognition) include rejecting the tease without laughter, for example saying no and providing a correction or rebuttal, or ignoring the tease altogether by not responding to it at all (Drew 1987: 226-230).

So teases, while designed to be recognisable as non-serious, are frequently responded to in a way that addresses the content of the tease by rejecting whatever supposition is behind it, and are called “po-faced responses” by Drew (1987). The teases that he describes do not just exploit the content of a prior turn, but also display scepticism about it or that the speaker is not taking it too seriously: if an action such as a complaint or an embellished extolling of someone’s virtues is overdone it is vulnerable to being teased. So when a recipient of a tease produces a po-faced response they are working to defend their position: their utterance was not overdone but was in fact accurate and appropriate. That teases are often responded to with a rejection of the content, thus treating the action as at least partially serious, shows the potential threat that they can pose to a recipient’s face in terms of Brown and Levinson’s Politeness Theory (1987).

Touch and action

The way in which a touch is delivered can communicate different emotions, for example a stroke or a rub may convey a ‘positive’ emotion such as gratitude or love, whereas a hit would be more likely to convey a ‘negative’ emotion such as anger (Hertenstein et al., 2006; Piff et al., 2012). The touches in this collection are interesting because they appear to be conveying a ‘positive’ emotion – they consist of tickles, strokes, and pats – yet they accompany actions that convey something more critical about their interlocutor. Combining a ‘positive’ non-verbal behaviour with a less ‘positive’ action-type can downplay the potential seriousness tied up in the content of the utterance.

The first three examples (extracts 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3) concern potentially threatening actions – teases and a possible criticism – that are produced with an accompanying touch by the speaker. Extract 6.4 involves a possible reproach, but this time the recipient initiates a touch. Finally in extract 6.5, a touch occurs together with a tease; however the recipient of the tease initiates the touch, and she does not touch the speaker, but her partner. These different examples will be discussed in relation to the interactional work that the touches do: that they contribute to the non-seriousness of teases and soften criticisms, thus minimising the threat posed by potentially face-threatening actions.

Touch accompanying a potentially threatening action

In extract 6.1, couple Anastasia and Katrina are sitting on a sofa eating with plates and bowls on their laps. They have been discussing what film they could watch later, and after a short lapse Anastasia initiates talk about a collection of Katrina’s films. This leads to two teases about Katrina’s film collection and her taste in films, the second of which is somewhat stronger and accompanied by a tickling touch to Katrina’s shoulder:

Extract 6.1 – RV:LHH10.4 Vin Diesel collection 06.19

((Katrina is leaning forward over her bowl, with her gaze down as she is cutting her food; Anastasia is leaning back on the sofa and gazing behind Katrina’s back, leaning her head on her left hand with her elbow on the back of the sofa.))

01 Ana: mkh #yeah# I was looking (0.7) m through your-

02 your: um:: films.

line 25 – “My girlfriend’s into V(h)in D(h)iesel” – which may have been the reported speech or thought initially projected in line 6.

The reason that this upshot could be considered funny by Anastasia can be seen in the way that she designs this turn. She does not refer to Katrina with the pronoun ‘you’, which would have been sufficient as she is the only other possible interlocutor present. Nor does she refer to Katrina by name. Instead she invokes her role in their relationship, being Anastasia’s girlfriend, by referring to Katrina with this speaker associated alternative recognitional (Stivers, 2007). This makes relevant to the interaction Katrina’s relationship status and also her sexual identity. Not only is her girlfriend “into” someone else, but this someone else is a very masculine man, an attribute that does not fit with her identity as a gay woman. The contrastive identity category invoked here allows the utterance to be heard as non-serious and therefore recognisably as a tease (Drew, 1987: 243-247). The smile voice and interspersed laughter also make the utterance hearable as non-serious and playful. In response to this Katrina shrugs again, and minimally confirms Anastasia’s conclusion with a quiet “What can I s(h)ay” in line 27, thereby going along with the tease by not rejecting its content and including laughter tokens.

After some more laughter Anastasia characterises Katrina’s liking of Vin Diesel as her “dirty little s(h)ecret”, during which she reaches her left hand to Katrina’s right shoulder and tickles it. This time Katrina agrees more explicitly, by nodding (line 34) while repeating that “it’s my- dirty little secret” (line 32), confirming the allusion made in Anastasia’s tease (Schegloff, 1996c), before going on to account for why: that she is unable to help it, and that “He’s just such a cool alpha male”. As with Anastasia’s prior tease, it is hearable as non-serious due to the interspersed laughter, and the deviant behaviour that it alludes to – having a “dirty little secret” – is a gross exaggeration of the actual situation, that Katrina has a possibly slightly embarrassing film collection. But characterising Katrina’s liking of Vin Diesel as a “dirty little secret” is still quite a strong claim, even though it is not produced as a serious assessment. It implies that Katrina’s taste is questionable and that she should be ashamed or embarrassed about it, and so the utterance can still be doing something a bit critical here. But Anastasia works to further mitigate this critical element of her action. Her utterances leading up to this have been interspersed with laughter and produced with smile voice, and in between utterances she had been laughing clearly. Yet although this joviality marks her action as not being meant seriously – Katrina’s liking of the actor is not portrayed as

problematic for their relationship for example – it still poses a threat to Katrina’s face as she is being laughed at, with her taste in actors being a subject of mockery. At the point where Anastasia produces her strongest tease (saying that this is her “dirty little secret”) she reaches out to Katrina and touches her gently on the shoulder. As described above, touching – and being allowed to touch – can be used to display affection. The tickle on Katrina’s shoulder can convey both affection and playfulness, contributing to the non-serious nature of Anastasia’s utterance. Katrina recognises the utterance as being a tease by going along with it, but then she does orient to the content by defending her liking of Vin Diesel: that she cannot help liking him as he is “such a cool alpha male”.

In this extract, then, Anastasia draws on elements of Katrina’s identity in order to produce two teases: that she is Anastasia’s girlfriend and therefore in a same-sex relationship, and consequently liking an “alpha male” actor is a deviant behaviour. Anastasia also uses touch, together with laughter, as a resource to make her utterance recognisable as non-serious and a tease.

In the second extract, a touch comes just after a tease is produced. Couple Emma and Dana are in the kitchen area with their daughter Lucy. Just prior to this extract Emma had spoken directly into the camera asking me as the researcher to not put a clip of her doing an accent from the north-west of England on the internet, and Dana had reassured her that I would not do that. She moves the talk to Lucy’s understanding of accents. This leads Dana to tease Emma about her accent, just after which she touches Emma’s shoulder:

Extract 6.2 - RV:LHH8.12 bloody northern vowels 09.48

((Emma and Lucy are sat at the dining table. Lucy is eating and Emma is gazing at and typing on her laptop computer; Lucy gazes in the direction of the laptop throughout the extract. Dana is away from the table in kitchen area but soon walks over to the table.))

- 01 Emm: Lucy: isn't impressed anyway are you.
 02 [(1.5)
 03 E: [((gaze-L))
 04 Emm: She [can't [hear these [northern [voices.=
 05 E: [((gaze-ahead [gaze-D))
 06 E: [((lift hands towards ears [lower hands))
 07 =[She can only h]ear the Ch(h)e]l]sea [voice can't you.
 08 Dan: [huhhh huh]

09 E: L((gaze-L))
10 (.)
11 Emm: [nk! nk!]
12 Dan: [That's n]ot [true: actually::.
13 E: L((tap L's nose twice, on each click))
14 E: L((gaze-laptop))
15 (0.3)
16 -> Dan: Be[caus:e [(1.6) she's always hear[ing your (0.2)
17 E: L((gaze-down [move papers on table Lgaze-L's plate))
18 D: L((walk toward table))
19 -> **ɛbloody** [northern:ɛ (.) **vow:els.** [hhghh hh!
20 D: L((put spoon on L's plate))
21 E: L((gaze-L))
22 huhn hu[hn
23 -> D: L((put left hand on E's right shoulder))
24 Emm: hhh
25 [(2.3)
26 D: L((walk back to kitchen area))
27 Dan: [Ri:ght.]
28 Emm: [Lucy] >do you< like (.) >do you< like it when you
29 hear: funny voices.

Referring to the accent that she had just been putting on, Emma produces a candidate assessment on behalf of Lucy, saying that she is not impressed in line 1. She continues with an account for this in lines 4 and 7, that Lucy can only hear “Chelsea” voices (a standard southern English accent that traditionally has a higher prestige) and not northern accents. She alternates between addressing Dana and Lucy in her turns, by first referring to Lucy in the third person and thereby addressing Dana, but then directing a tag question to Lucy by using the second person pronoun “you”. Lucy does not respond to Emma’s turns which is to be expected from a child of two years and four months of age. Indeed the tag question seems to be doing some claim to knowledge about how Lucy feels about accents (Hepburn and Potter, 2011b), and Emma appears to be speaking on Lucy’s behalf. Emma’s turns in lines 4 and 7 appear to be a joking evaluation of the accents that Lucy can understand which is designed for Dana, despite being partially addressed to Lucy through the use of tag questions and followed by her tapping Lucy on the nose playfully while making a clicking sound.

Dana comes in after a very brief silence (line 10) after Emma’s turns, and in overlap with the clicking sounds that she makes at Lucy. She explicitly disagrees with Emma’s evaluation,

stating that what Emma said is “not true actually:” (line 12); the turn-final ‘actually’ also adds to the counter-informing nature of Dana’s turn (Clift, 2001). After a gap of 0.3 seconds in line 15 she begins her explanation of why this is not true: “Beaus:e (1.6) she’s always hearing your (0.2) £bloody northern:£ (.) vow:els” (line 16). She follows this with some laughter (lines 16/19), near the end of which she puts her left hand on Emma’s right shoulder and holds it there as she turns towards the kitchen area (fig. 6.4), removing her hand as she walks away. Emma only produces an out-breath, and then addresses Lucy directly on a related but different topic.

Figure 6.4 (RV:LHH8.12)



Dana’s turn could have just been a counter-informing, disagreeing with the claim that Lucy does not hear northern voices as she hears Emma’s own northern vowels regularly, which is a somewhat threatening action already. However, the addition of the adjective ‘bloody’ adds a particular stance towards the northern vowels that it describes, one that is more negative in nature. It implies that Emma’s northern vowels are an annoyance, and given that accent is a significant feature of a person this could be quite an insult to Emma. Indeed, by referring to Emma’s “bloody northern vowels”, Emma’s identity as northern is made relevant to the interaction. But Dana designs her turn so that it is recognisably non-serious and hearable as a tease. The component “bloody northern” is produced with smile voice, so although Emma is not looking towards Dana and so cannot see that she is smiling, she can still hear the smile in

Dana's talk. Immediately after she completes her tease, Dana laughs (lines 19 and 22). However by this point Emma has not displayed recognition of the tease, having not responded in any way to Dana's utterance or to her laughter. As in extract 6.1, Dana uses the additional resource of touch to further convey the non-seriousness of her utterance, but in this case only after she has not received any recognition of this from Emma. She touches Emma's shoulder as she produces the last of her laughter before walking back to the kitchen area. As in extract 6.1, her touch may convey affection, and is an extra resource to show that her utterance was a non-serious tease, after her smile voice and her laughter did not gain any response from Emma.

The final extract of this section involves Anastasia and Katrina again, but instead of a tease Anastasia produces an assessment of Katrina's lack of experience travelling that contains an element of criticism. As in the examples so far, Anastasia's utterance is accompanied by a touch. They have been talking about experiences of different cultures and just prior to this extract Katrina described how she found one part of the US friendlier than another part; as this extract opens Anastasia is agreeing with Katrina's observations:

Extract 6.3 - RV:LHH10.2 haven't seen anything yet 44:39

((The couple are on a sofa; Katrina is sitting and Anastasia is lying with her legs on Katrina's lap, and Katrina's left arm is resting on Anastasia's thighs. Anastasia is gazing at Katrina, who is gazing above and past Anastasia.))

01 Ana: £Yeah:£
 02 (0.3)
 03 Kat: [(°Yeh.°) =
 04 K: [((gaze-A))
 05 Ana: =>Yeh I < see your point. It's different [in the
 06 K: [((nodding))
 07 °comparison (isn't it°.)
 08 (1.0)
 09 Kat: [Yeah.]
 10 Ana: [(Not very] nice.)
 11 (0.6)
 12 Kat: H[m.]
 13 -> Ana: [Dar]l[ing you haven't °seen anyth[ing ye:t:°.]
 14 Kat: [.hhh Darling] [I know.
 15 -> A: [((put left hand on K's left hand and grasp it))
 16 K: [((head nod))
 17 (0.2)

18 Kat: [You don't have to tell me, (0.1) [I know.
19 K: [((shake head [head nod))
20 (0.2)
21 Ana: [hhhhuhhh [huh huh huh]
22 Kat: [[I int]e:nd [t]o.
23 Ana: [.huh]
24 A: [((start stroking K's left hand with left thumb))
25 K: [((nodding))
26 (0.2)
27 Ana: £a.hhh£=
28 Kat: =Yeah.=
29 Ana: =£Yeah:.£
30 (0.4)
31 Kat: Mm hm,
32 (1.2)
33 Kat: (°°I think.°°)*
34 [(7.9)
35 K: [((gaze-up))

Katrina's earlier observation (not shown), that she had found one part of the US far less friendly than another when she and Anastasia had been on a trip to the US together, receives agreement from Anastasia in lines 5 and 7. Anastasia then produces a further assessment of the less friendly place in line 10 ("Not very nice") that also displays agreement with Katrina's observation. A gap of 0.6 second follows, and then Katrina produces a minimal response accepting Anastasia's assessment in line 12. In overlap with Katrina's "Hm", Anastasia produces an evaluating utterance, "Darling you haven't °seen anything y:et:°", during which she puts her left hand on top of Katrina's left hand, which is resting on Anastasia's thigh, and grasps it. This evaluation relates to the lengthy talk prior to this extract about experiencing different cultures in different countries, something that Anastasia has more extensive experience of than Katrina. Katrina's response agrees with Anastasia's evaluation – that Katrina has not travelled extensively yet – but claims to have already made the same evaluation independently: Katrina explicitly states that she does not need to be told that she has not seen anything yet, and that she intends to see more.

Anastasia's action more serious than the teases described so far. It is not produced with smile voice or laughter particles which would display non-seriousness. Saying that Katrina has not seen anything yet can imply that she has not travelled as much as she should have, and that

she is in an inferior position to Anastasia in this regard who by using this expression appears to be more well-travelled. Moreover, by making this evaluation Anastasia is claiming access to Katrina's own knowledge and experience, when Katrina should have primary epistemic rights to such information (Heritage and Raymond, 2005; Heritage, 2013); her utterance is a type-2 knowable (Pomerantz, 1980), something that she can only have inferred about Katrina as opposed to have experienced herself. However, she does do some work to mitigate the seriousness of her turn: she uses a term of endearment, "Darling", in turn-initial position, she speaks with soft voice, and she initiates a hand touch near the start of her turn. The terms of endearment and the touch can indicate affection, and contribute to the encouraging nature that her utterance could convey. Katrina, however, does not respond positively to Anastasia's utterance. She does not disagree; indeed she does a strong agreement with Anastasia's assessment, placing emphasis on the "I" in her response in line 14 ("Darling I know") and claiming her epistemic rights to this knowledge, then saying "You don't have to tell me" with stress on "don't", followed by saying that she knows again. She appears to treat Anastasia's possible encouraging utterance as more of a nag or a criticism: she knows that she has not seen anything yet, and she intends to see more. Just after Katrina says for the second time that she knows, Anastasia laughs (line 21); at the same time she begins to stroke the hand that she is grasping with her thumb (line 24). This touch and the laughter come at a slightly tenser moment, after Katrina has said that she does not need to be told, and again may be a belated second attempt to show that the utterance was not intended to be critical.

Touch accompanying a response to a potentially threatening action

The above examples involved the producer of a tease or a potentially critical assessment touching the recipient, which contributed to the design of these turns as non – or at least less – serious, by conveying affection and playfulness. The following example differs in that it is the recipient of a potentially threatening action, a reproach, that uses touch.

Couple Katrina and Anastasia are having breakfast and are sat side by side on a sofa. Katrina has been telling the story of when she attended a picnic for Anastasia's work, where she had to avoid calling Anastasia by terms of endearment as this was a professional setting. She is telling how she had to explain to another attendee that she was not allowed to use terms of endearment, and Anastasia's agreement with this stipulation contains an element of reproach.

At this point she is mid-telling; both participants are gazing towards the table in front of them as they take their food from the table:

Extract 6.4 - RV:LHH10.1 evolution picnic 01:21

01 Kat: [.hhh [and of cou]r:se=
02 Ana: [.hah [.hah .hah]
03 K: [((gaze-A, lift glass on to lap))
04 Kat: =[that: y:oung:: [biologist
05 Ana: [.hah .hah ((sniff)) mk .hh [(I love)]
06 A: [((gaze-K))
07 Kat: [comes along: and she [clock[s (us) straight away: .hh]
08 Ana: [uhh uhah uhah huh]
09 K: [((raise right arm and drop [raise right arm and drop))
10 [(>↑how long have< you two been together.
11 Ana: [[.huh °huhm huhm°]
12 A: [((gaze-bowl, put food in mouth))
13 Kat: [.hh uhuh heh heh [[heh huh] hn °An I said yeah.=
14 Ana: [[((sniff)) hn]
15 A: [((put bowl on table))
16 K: [((gaze-down))
17 Kat: [= .hhh She told me [not to call her dar:ling and sugar
18 K: [((gaze-A))
19 A: [((gaze-K [nodding))
20 [pl(h)um° huh huh hu[h huh [huh hn hn hn hn hn]
21 -> Ana: [**£yeah. TH(h)ANK YOU.£** [u HAH [uHAH uHAH uHAH uhah] ha .hm
22 -> K: [((lean forward, gaze-down, put right
23 -> hand on A's left thigh))
24 A: [((gaze-down))
25 Ana: .hm [.HH[HH [That totally d]efeats the pur:[pose s]ugar.£=
26 Kat: [hn [hn hn hn hn] [.hhhhh]
27 K: [((remove hand, lean back))
28 A: [((put plate on lap))
29 Kat: =↑A:bsol[ute]ly well (.) you know.
30 Ana: [hm]
31 (0.3)
32 Ana: [.hh hhuhh=
33 A: [((put food in mouth, gaze-K))
34 Kat: =some p(h)eople h(h)ave w(h)ays o(h)f br(h)ing(h)ing
35 [st(h)uff out.
36 K: [((gaze-A))

As Katrina progresses with her telling she reaches the punch line of her story at lines 7/10: that despite not using any terms of endearment it was still clear to the young biologist that they were a couple. After some laughter Katrina reports the speech that she delivered to the biologist, repeating Anastasia's instructions that she should not be called "darling" and "sugar plum" at this event, during which Anastasia nods. However, rather than just receiving more laughter, this utterance is responded to with "£yeah. TH(h)ANK YOU£" and then laughter. At this point Katrina leans forward and puts her right hand on Anastasia's left thigh. As Anastasia takes an in-breath prior to her next utterance, Katrina leans back and removes her hand. Anastasia provides a justification for her request to not use terms of endearment in line 25, saying that doing so "totally defeats the pur:pose" at a professional event. Katrina agrees in line 29 with "↑A:bsolutely" before explaining that "some p(h)eople h(h)ave w(h)ays o(h)f br(h)ing(h)ing st(h)uff out" of her.

Anastasia's response at line 21 marks the part of Katrina's telling at lines 17/20 as not just as another funny point. As the instructions were given by Anastasia she has a stake in defending them (Edwards and Potter, 1992), particularly if they have been repeated to someone else. There is an element of defensiveness in her utterance, and also the possibility of reproach: that her request was appropriate for the professional situation they were in and that it therefore should have been respected. Herein lies the threat – that Katrina is accountable for not taking Anastasia's request seriously and consequently there is an element of reprimand in Anastasia's utterance. It is at this point that Katrina leans forward and touches Anastasia's leg. Together with the laughter, the touch can convey non-seriousness and affection. Indeed, Katrina does not explicitly treat Anastasia's "TH(h)ANK YOU" as a reproach; she does not agree with Anastasia's instructions here, nor does she apologise for not complying with it as rigidly as she might have done. But by having listed Anastasia's instructions in lines 13/17/20, Katrina has already shown that she did pay attention to Anastasia's stipulations. Moreover, the reason that this telling is funny is that the young biologist was able to tell that they were a couple even though Katrina had not been using any terms of endearment, so Katrina has no reason to apologise. Only after Anastasia has produced her justification for her instructions in line 25 does Katrina produce an agreement and explanation.

Katrina does not verbally respond to the element of reprimand and seriousness in Anastasia's turn, and the touch that she does at this point is a further resource to convey that she is not treating Anastasia's turn as serious. Even if a threatening action is done baldly (Brown and Levinson, 1987), the recipient of the action can work to downplay the seriousness of the threat themselves. In one of his early lectures, Sacks (1992, part 1, lecture 2) talks about threats specifically, and how threats of suicide get laughed off by recipients: someone will say that they want to or that they will kill themselves and their recipient will treat it as a joke. Sacks questions what the proper second part pair to a threat first pair part would be, and in his data many times the second is laughter or dismissal. A serious response to the threat would mean that the threat is being taken seriously; this would then place obligations on the recipient to help, who would then be involved in and accountable for the situation. Treating the initiating action as a joke instead of as a threat changes what the appropriate next action should be; now laughter is acceptable, and makes the recipient non-accountable for helping the maker of the threat. Similarly, Katrina's treatment of Anastasia's possible reproach as non-serious can change what the relevant next action should be, in this case from an apology to laughter.

A touch, then can be used by the recipient of a potentially threatening action, as well as by the producer of the action. In this case, the person touched was the producer of the threatening action. In the next extract the person touched is neither the producer nor the recipient of the potentially threatening action, but they do still have a stake in it.

Couple Tamsin and Megan are in a pub with friends Ellie and Abby. In this extract a new topic is launched by Abby about the barmaid. The women are sat in a semi-circle around a table, from left to right Ellie, Abby, Tamsin and then Megan; Megan is also referred to as Jamie. It transpires that Megan found out that the barmaid is gay. Abby questions Megan on how she came by this information, at which point Megan puts her hand on her partner Tamsin's leg:

Extract 6.5 - RV:LHH6.1 gay barmaid 21:09

01 Abb: ʃ°She (is/was) quite cute ʃ(0.1) (the) barmaid
 02 A: ʌ((gaze-ahead))
 03 M: ʌ((gaze-A))
 04 ʃ(isn't/wasn't) ʃshe.°
 05 E: ʌ((gaze-down))

06 M: L((raise left hand to face, rubs face until *))

07 F(0.4)

08 T: L((gaze-A))

09 Tam: She's gay a[s well.

10 A: L((gaze-T))

11 F(0.2)

12 T: L((head nod))

13 Abb: Is [sh[e.=

14 A: L((head nod, raise eyebrows))

15 E: L((gaze-T (but unclear, could be A then T)))

16 Tam: [=°Mm ↑hm.°=

17 T: L((head nod))

18 Abb: [=How do you know that.

19 T: L((head nod))

20 (0.6)

21 Abb: [£By the] way£.=

22 Tam: [Uh]

23 A: L((shake head, slightly raise then lower left hand))

24 Tam: [Well `d[a[use-]

25 Abb: [HHH] huh [huh [HAH HAH

26 T: L((gaze-down Lgaze-A))

27 T: L((move left hand towards M Lbring hand back, gaze-M))

28 A: L((lean forward as laughs, gaze-M))

29 M: L((lower hand, point to self))

30 [°huh huh] [huh°]

31 Ell: [[(This [is)]

32 Tam: [[Jam] [[ie ↓°say[s[so°.]

33 Ell: [[(busine[s[s) r]egu[lar.

34 (A): [(UhHH!)]

35 T: L((move left hand to M Lbring hand back))

36 M: L((hold hand palm up Lput hand on left thigh,

37 move right hand to glass,))

38 A: L((lean back Lgaze-E))

39 Abb: [U h h [h h h h h h h [h h

40 M: L((gaze-A , retract hand Lgaze-T))

41 A: L((gaze-M))

42 Tam: ['Cause

43 M: L((place hand on right thigh, gaze-T))

44 (M): Mm.=

45 Tam: [=°Megan's a (regular.°)

46 M: L((scratch right knee))

47 Meg: Yeah::.

48 Tam: [°t's right.°]

49 M: [((gaze-A))

50 (0.5)

51 Meg: ((clears throat))

52 Tam: [(Oh we [go here.)

53 Abb: [£I just [°stil] a:s[k>£]

54 Meg: [I] know.

55 T: [((gaze-A))

56 A: [((shakes head [raise left hand, move hand in circle))

57 -> Abb: [£how do you know tha(h)#hhat#.£ °huh hu[h huh°]

58 Meg: [(>How do I] know

59 A: [((move hand in circle [stop circling hand [lower hand))

60 -> M: [((puts right hand on T's left leg))

61 that,< (0.1) 'Cause she started [talking to me: and

62 M: [((raise right hand palm up,

63 drop onto own right thigh))

64 <then um> (1.1) I told [her about]

65 Tam: [(<She's l]like> th'poster

66 M: [((point left thumb to T, gaze-T))

67 T: [((point right hand to M, gaze-A))

68 child (she's very nice).

69 Meg: (I am.) [Yeah. (0.4) We were in the ba:throom she started

70 M: [((twist open hand, drop hand onto thigh))

71 T: [((gaze-M))

72 [talking to me:: a::n:d (0.9) the::n (0.3) [I<mentioned

73 M: [((point to self [point to T))

74 her:: and then she said (0.1) that she (0.2) >had a<

75 partner:: (and) (0.3) [so and so.

76 M: [((wave both hands))

77 Tam: °(And) apparently who had a female [name.° But]=

78 Meg: [((clears throat))]

When Abby assesses the barmaid as cute no one agrees, but Tamsin provides some more information about her: that she is gay. After seeking confirmation, which Tamsin provides, Abby then asks how Tamsin knows that the barmaid is gay: if the barmaid was not visible as gay then Tamsin would have found out in some other way. This is indeed the case – Megan (also known as Jamie) told her that the barmaid is gay. Ellie also provides a candidate reason at this point, saying in line 33 that they are regular customers at this pub, and Tamsin confirms this candidate account by stating that “Megan’s a regular” in line 45, which Megan

then also confirms in line 47. However, this is not a sufficient account for Abby, who reissues her question to Megan in lines 53/57: “£I just <still a:sk how do you know tha(h)##hhat#£”. While Abby is producing her question, Megan moves her right hand from her own leg to Tamsin’s left leg (fig. 6.5). She removes it once she has started telling how she knows that the barmaid is gay, dropping it back onto her own leg and then gesticulating as she continues her account.

Figure 6.5 (RV:LHH6.1)



The threat is present in Abby’s question, and can be most clearly seen when she first issues it to Tamsin in lines 18/21: “How do you know that”. When she produces the question she places emphasis on “know”, making this knowledge an accountable thing; she also shakes her head when appending “£By the way£” to her question, implying that this is a piece of information that needs to be included in this telling. If the information was gained by speaking to the barmaid then there might be implications: disclosing one’s sexual identity is not always done freely, particularly not among strangers, so for Tamsin to know this, she would have to have had an interaction with the barmaid, and perhaps as she is in a relationship insinuations can be made about having conversations about personal subjects with strangers in a pub. Having conversations with strangers about sexual identity is not a behaviour associated with people who are in relationships, and is potentially sanctionable.

Tamsin is able to divert the question, and therefore the implications of being the one to find out this knowledge, to Megan, as Megan is the source of this information. When Abby

addresses the question to Megan, again shaking her head, and this time also circling her hand, Megan puts her hand on Tamsin's leg before beginning her account. Abby's question is doing two actions (Schegloff, 2007a: 9) in that it both asks for information but is also teasing. Megan can provide the information – that the barmaid spoke to her in the bathroom and mentioned a partner with a female name – but this does not address the tease element. Indeed this is a po-faced response (Drew, 1987) where Megan does not display her recognition of the tease part of Abby's turn. Megan also places her hand on her partner's leg, which could be a further resource for showing that the implications in the tease are unfounded: by touching her partner's leg she briefly displays their relationship, which is relevant for this point in the interaction where Abby's turn implies some kind of inappropriate behaviour in finding out about the barmaid's sexual identity. So while not displaying her recognition of Abby's turn as a non-serious tease, Megan's use of touch can address the implications of Abby's tease and reject them by displaying and making relevant her relationship.

Discussion

The examples in this chapter have shown that touch can be used as a resource when constructing an action. In extracts 6.1 and 6.2, touch contributed to the design of teases so that they are recognisable as non-serious. In extract 6.3 touch accompanied an assessment that contained a potentially critical element, and was a resource to mitigate the potential criticism. Extracts 6.4 and 6.5 differed from the first examples, in that it was not the producer of the threatening action that initiated touch but the recipient. The recipient of a potential reproach in extract 6.4 used touch while laughing, and so not treating the utterance as a reproach. In extract 6.5 the recipient of a tease touched their partner's leg, where the implications of the tease were potentially threatening to the recipient and her partner.

The teases shown (extracts 6.1, 6.2 and 6.5) also made some kind of identity relevant to the interaction, drawing on this as a resource in a similar way to the examples given in chapters 3 and 4. Yet the identities were depicted as deviant or exaggerated in some way (Drew, 1987) in order to make the tease recognisable as non-serious: someone with a "dirty little secret" in extract 6.1, who actually might just be a bit embarrassed; someone "Northern" in extract 6.2, whose accent is actually not very strong; and someone who finds out about attractive young women's sexual identities despite being in a committed relationship in extract 6.5.

The types of touch depicted in this chapter could be said to convey positive emotions such as affection (Hertenstein et al., 2006; Piff et al., 2012). In these extracts where the context is of softening an action that may have an element of threat to face, the touches can convey affection while also being a resource for action design. In terms of Face Constituting Theory these touches may also cause the participants' relationship to be interpreted as more connected than separate by the participants. So these touches can do many things, and in the field of conversation analysis there is still a great deal to be discovered. From the work that has been done in this area so far, and the findings from this chapter, it is clear that touch has real interactional significance, as well as the potential to convey emotions, intimacy and dominance. This thesis has been concerned with how actions can be modified by participants using both verbal and non-vocal strategies, and touch is a resource equally open to be used in this way in interaction.

The final chapter will summarise the findings of the thesis and discuss the contributions that it makes to the field. Limitations and areas for improvement will also be covered, as well as potential future directions.

Chapter 7: Discussion and conclusion

Introduction

In this thesis I have described ways in which participants can draw on various resources in order to contribute to particular actions produced in interaction. The aim of the thesis was twofold: firstly to show how verbal and non-vocal behaviours can be used as resources by participants, thereby highlighting some of the complexities of actions and their design; and secondly to contribute to the visibility of lesbian speakers in conversation analytic research, by gathering a corpus of data from lesbian households.

This final chapter will summarise the main findings from the thesis and draw the main conclusions from them. Each analytic chapter will be summarised in turn, before the contributions that the thesis makes as a whole is considered. Finally, some suggestions for future directions will be suggested.

Chapter summaries

Chapter 3: Lesbian identity in everyday interaction

The first analytic chapter of the thesis set out in the first instance to describe the ways that participants can make their identities as lesbian relevant in an everyday interaction. One initial consideration involved how to characterise the instances when some identity is referred to, without alluding to other types of references and thus confusing the issue. Terms that have been used elsewhere, such as making an identity 'relevant' or 'available', seem appropriate but have connotations of potentially becoming topicalised, or that once they have been made available they will remain so for the duration of the interaction. Similarly, the term 'referring' is ordinarily quite specific when we speak of referring to people, places and objects. The term 'invoke' was settled on as it best encompassed the elements of citing or calling on an identity

as a resource when producing actions in interaction, and this term was used in descriptions and discussions of identity work in the thesis.

Drawing from a collection of instances where lesbian identities were made relevant in some way, four means of invoking a lesbian identity were described. These means were also able to work both for a speaker's own identity, or for that of their recipient.

Speakers could name sexual category labels and apply them to themselves or to an interlocutor. The identity category in these cases is explicitly named ("lesbian", "gay") and their invocation is significant for the actions in which they were invoked – tellings. The examples given in this section occurred during stories told by two participants about having to come out in work settings. The speakers' sexual identities were significant for the content of the tellings, as they were invoked within reported speech or thoughts that apparently took place during the events being described in the stories. In the context of the interaction within which the stories were told, where all the participants knew of each others' sexual identities, the speakers were not coming out to their co-participants in the current interaction, but naming their sexual identities as a necessary part of the stories.

The second way in which participants invoked their identity as lesbian was by naming a category but then positioning themselves or their interlocutors in contrast to it. Again, the identities were invoked within particular actions: as part of a commentary highlighting an interlocutor's uniqueness, and within a second assessment. The examples also demonstrated that the categories could be based on idioms ("bat for the right team") as well as more traditional labels ("straight").

Thirdly, a sexual identity could be invoked by referring to an activity or piece of cultural knowledge that is bound to a sexual identity category; the examples given concerned civil partnerships, reading a lesbian and bisexual woman's magazine, and liking an allegedly gay television character. Again, the sexual identities were invoked within particular actions: answering a question, as part of a telling, and providing a candidate account. By referring to their participation in a category-bound activity or access to some category-bound knowledge, speakers indicated that they or their interlocutor are part of that category themselves.

The final way that participants invoked their sexual identity was in reference to a same-sex relationship or having a same-sex attraction. By being named as part of a same-sex couple, or stating an attraction to a member of the same sex, having an identity as lesbian or bisexual could be inferred within the context of the interaction. The speakers' sexual identities were invoked as part of particular actions: eliciting an opinion, providing an account, and describing a person.

Apart from the first two examples of a sexual identity being invoked, which took place in the context of talk about not being visible as lesbian and having to come out, these invokings were produced relatively fleetingly. Moreover, the participants were not invoking their identity as lesbian in order to come out. The question then arises, why are they there? The answer appears to be in the contribution that they were making to particular actions. As summarised above, some invokings were part of explanations and accounts. Others served to provide contextual information for a telling. One was used to highlight a unique characteristic about her interlocutor, and another occurred in the service of mocking something on television. These invokings, then, were useful resources for participants to draw on in the course of building these actions.

The fact that the participants' invoke their or their interlocutors' sexual identities as part of particular actions shows that their identities are an ever available resource to be drawn upon in their interactions. The invokings can also tell us something about the relationship that the participants share. Firstly, when a participant invokes her lesbian identity, it signals that this is a setting in which it appears appropriate to do so. Moreover, it is a setting in which it is safe to do so; despite much progress in British society there are still times and places when LGBT people do not feel able to safely let other people know how they identify. Secondly, some of these invokings and the action-work that they do require some shared prior knowledge in order to be understood. For example, a co-participant would need to already know what "Diva" is to understand the significance of the article that Daisy read in it (extract 3.6), or that Tinky-Winky had been branded gay by some in the media to understand why this might be an appropriate account for liking him (extract 3.7); already knowing that Diva is a magazine for lesbian and bisexual women displays a potential membership of the category of lesbian or bisexual woman, and knowing that Tinky Winky had been branded as gay displays a potential membership of a particular age group category (as the television programme had been widely known during the 1990's when the participants were all teenagers). Similarly, in

order for Beth's second assessment to be seen as sufficiently strong, her co-participants would need to already know that she does not identify as straight (extract 3.4), something which could indicate that they all are members of the relationship category of friends. So, invoking sexual identity categories in these interactions can be a useful resource for doing particular actions and can also invoke relationship categories among the participants.

Chapter 4: Lesbian and other identities as resources for action

The analysis in chapter 4 built on the analysis of chapter 3. It was found that participants did not invoke a lesbian identity that frequently, but a variety of other identities were invoked. After looking at several examples of other identities it appeared that many were produced in the course of a particular type of action: an explanation. Three ways of invoking identities while doing explaining were described.

Participants invoked various identities by naming categories in a similar way to that described in chapter 3. In these instances the identities were related to having a illness, to the speaker's race, to their occupation, and to the geographical region from which they are from. In each case the invoking contributed to explaining something. Naming the category of having an illness (being a coeliac) accounted for buying expensive food (as only more expensive brands state that they are safe to eat for people with this illness). Naming an occupational category (Doctor) explains having to be professional in a particular setting; moreover it is doing being professional.

Participants also implied categories by referring to behaviours bound to those categories, in a similar way to how they did so for sexual identity categories. Identity involkings related to subcultures, age and gender were described in this section. A gender identity was invoked to explain having a negative feeling; an age identity was also invoked to explain the same thing.

Lastly participants were able to invoke a category by naming a prototypical member. By naming a cultural figure, who was assumed to be known by their co-participants, a particular personality type could be invoked. By saying that they or an interlocutor are like this person, the behaviours of the person become associated with the participant. Participants use these prototypical members to explain why they act in a certain way. A character from *Friends* is

named in order to explain why a participant is cleaning, as the character represents a type of person who compulsively cleans. So not only are their own identities available as resources to draw on for actions, but representatives of a category are too.

Chapter 5: Objects in the environment as resources for action

This chapter moved on to look at other types of resources that speakers have for doing action. One way that they can draw on a physical resource for producing action is by opening a new action sequence drawing on something that is in their immediate environment. This is interesting as it can involve both a verbal and a non-vocal orientation to the object being referred to. For the discussion of this phenomenon it was decided to refer to any aspect of the environment that is referred to as an object, whether it is an actual object or not.

It was shown that a participant can refer to an object verbally, but still orient to it physically. So the speaker can hold an object while verbally referring to it, direct their gaze to it, and gesture towards it. Because the object is an available resource in the environment to draw on when opening a new action sequence, and the participant will have noticed it in order to be able to refer to it, it makes sense that there should be a physical orientation to the object as well.

Participants can also refer to an object non-vocally, using only gesture. In this way there is again a physical orientation to the object but no verbal; verbal orientation to the object will then come as the sequence develops but at the stage of the sequence opening it is possible for there to be none.

When an object is referred to verbally it appears that gaze is treated as highly significant. When objects were referred to in the examples shown, both the speaker and the recipient oriented to it physically with their gaze. Furthermore, if the recipient did not orient to the object physically, even if they had done so verbally, with a vocal go-ahead for example, then the participant who referred to the object as they opened a new sequence can pursue this visible reciprocity by stalling the progressivity of the talk until gaze at the object has occurred. So not only is the immediate environment a resource for opening new action sequences, but gaze is also used to display physical reciprocity of the topic launch.

Chapter 6: Touch as a resource for modifying action

The final chapter describes a further way that participants can draw on a resource in order to contribute to action. In this instance, they can use interpersonal touch to contribute to the design of potentially face-threatening actions.

Examples were given showing that when a speaker produces a potentially face-threatening action, they also initiate touch with their recipient. A tease was accompanied by a tickle, another tease was followed by a shoulder touch, and an assessment with a critical element was accompanied by rubbing hands. In each case the touches contributed to highlight the non-seriousness of the action in some way, so that the teases were non-serious and the assessment less critical.

It was then shown that a recipient of a face-threatening action can also initiate touch to contribute to their response to the action. A participant who has just produced what could be construed as a reproach is touched by the recipient of the reproach. The touch can convey affection while also showing that the action is not being treated as a reproach, and thus its potentially threatening element is not being acknowledged.

A third constellation involved a participant teasing a recipient, and the recipient touching a different co-participant. The tease was related to knowing someone else's sexual identity, knowledge that was made accountable by the teaser due to the recipient being in a relationship. This kind of tease is potentially threatening not only to the recipient but to her partner as well. The touch initiated by the recipient to her partner contributed to the recipient's rejection of what the tease implied, that knowing a stranger's sexual identity is an accountable behaviour for people in relationships and has negative implications for the relationship.

It was also shown that the teases described invoked particular identities by implying deviant behaviours: having a "dirty little secret", speaking with "bloody northern vowels", and knowing about strangers' sexual identities despite being in a relationship. So the examples in this chapter illustrated again how identity can be drawn on as a resource for action.

Furthermore, the touches described had dual functions in these instances. As well as contributing to the non-serious nature of the actions they could also displays affection and the participants' relationship to the person who they are touching in these contexts. In multiparty interaction this display is especially significant, for it signals affection not only to the person being touched but also displays to the other participants that these people are intimate.

The chapter showed that touch can have real interactional significance. Again, it is a resource that participants can draw on when producing actions.

Theoretical implications

This thesis has several theoretical implications. Firstly the findings contribute to research on the complexity of action and turn design. Invoking identities has been shown to be a useful resource for accounting and explaining, and for producing teases as found by Drew (1987). The contextual or category-bound attributes tied up in the identity categories invoked also allow speakers to do such things as upgrade assessments. The examples shown contribute to and highlight the importance of engaging with the categories and identities that speakers regularly draw on in their interactions and the significance of their inclusion in conversation analytic work (Stokoe, 2012).

The examples in chapter 5 also show the significance of the environment in co-present interaction, where any object available to participants can be drawn on as a resource when opening a sequence of action. This also connects with work on how people navigate multiple involvements in their interactions, such as LeBaron and Jones (2002) and Heath and Hindmarsh (2000). The analyses also demonstrated the apparent importance of a recipient gazing at an object that is referred to, with the initiators of action pursuing this gaze until they gain it. This also connects with work on gaze and how participants manage displaying their reciprocity (Goodwin, 1981; Heath, 1984).

The significance of the gaze work in these examples shows the work that non-vocal behaviours can do. Participants would pursue gaze from a recipient toward an object by gazing at that object themselves. Gesture is also used to gain this type of reciprocity. The

findings of chapter 6 further highlight how non-vocal behaviours can be used by showing the interactional significance that interpersonal touch can have. This area can be a fruitful site for research in conversation analysis, which has not been explored in great detail thus far.

Finally the findings contribute to work on sexual identity in interaction. The data show that sexual identity is used as a resource for designing actions just as are the multitude of other identities that the participants had available to draw on. The fact that sexual identity is used in this way by the participants shows how far sexual identities other than just heterosexuality have become normalised and accepted in our society, as also found by Seidman (2002). Furthermore, the data set has increased the visibility of lesbian speakers in conversation analytic research, adding to the work done by Land (2006) using her corpus of telephone calls made to and from lesbian households.

Future directions

There are several directions that future work could take drawing from the findings of this study. The examples in chapters 3 and 4 focused on the ways that identities were invoked, with particular emphasis on accounts and explanations. It would be interesting to look at more specific types of actions for the work that identity categories do for them.

The area of non-vocal behaviour has received less attention in conversation analysis than the area of verbal behaviour, and the analyses in chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate that there is much more to discover focusing on this. How people use gaze to navigate multiple involvements would be a useful avenue to pursue, as would how people incorporate objects into their talk at all points of a sequence.

In particular, the use of touch in interaction will be a very fruitful route to go down, to see how it can contribute to a range of other actions and the significance of different types of touch, for example strokes, pats, ruffles, slaps and so on. If these touches can be demonstrated to convey emotion, an interesting avenue might be to see how these emotion displays contribute to action.

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Appendix 1: Transcription key

(0.2)	silence in tenths of a second
(.)	micropause (less than 1/10 of a second)
talk	produced with emphasis
TALK	louder than surrounding talk
°talk°	quieter than surrounding talk
>talk<	faster than surrounding talk
<talk>	slower than surrounding talk
[talk]	talk produced in overlap
#talk#	creaky voice
£talk£	smile voice
↑talk	produced at a higher pitch
ta:lk	lengthened sound
talk-	cut-off sound
heh/hah/huh	laughter particles
(h)	laughter particle that occurs within a word
.hh	inbreath
hh	outbreath
.	falling intonation
,	continuing intonation
?	rising intonation
¿	between continuing intonation and rising intonation
!	animated tone
=	latched talk / indication that a turn continues over two non-adjacent lines
(talk)	uncertain hearing
((talk))	transcriber's description
┌	talk with accompanying non-vocal behaviour
└	non-vocal behaviour also in grey

Appendix 2: Recruitment email

Please contact Rowena (email address)

**RESEARCH ON LESBIAN HOUSEHOLDS:
PARTICIPANTS WANTED**

Would you be willing to help with my PhD research?

I am looking for lesbian volunteers to record six mealtime conversations. Recording equipment will be provided and your identity will be kept confidential.

I am a research student at Loughborough University, and I am researching interactions in households with at least one lesbian member.

About the study

This research aims to investigate interaction in lesbian households during mealtimes. Previous work has focussed on heterosexual households and this study will address the absence of work on lesbian households. It will also contribute to work on interaction in everyday settings. This study is part of my PhD research, funded by Loughborough University.

If you are happy to take part you will be given a camcorder for approximately one week, during which time you will be asked to video record six mealtimes. You choose which mealtimes you want to record - any meal is suitable, whether breakfast, lunch or dinner, everyday meal, snatched meal or special occasion. It also does not matter who is at the meal, as long as there is at least one other person present and that everyone who is there has consented to take part.

I will transcribe the recordings and analyse them to find patterns of language use, and the findings will be written up in a report on interaction in lesbian households.

Please contact me to volunteer, or for more information:

Rowena Viney
- (email address)
- (telephone number)

Thank you!



A Study of interaction in lesbian households

Participant Information Sheet

About the study

This research aims to investigate interaction in lesbian households during mealtimes. Previous work has focussed on heterosexual households and this study will address the absence of work on lesbian households. It will also contribute to work on interaction in everyday settings. This study is part of my PhD research, funded by Loughborough University.

How the study works

Initially I will meet you to go through what is involved and to answer any questions that you may have.

If you are happy to take part you will be given a camcorder for approximately one week, during which time you will be asked to video record six mealtimes. You choose which mealtimes you want to record - any meal is suitable, whether breakfast, lunch or dinner, everyday meal, snatched meal or special occasion. It also does not matter who is at the meal, as long as there is at least one other person present and that everyone who is there has consented to take part.

I will also give you some consent forms and copies of this information sheet. You will need to sign a consent form yourself, and you will need to make sure that everyone else who takes part in the recordings reads the information sheet and signs a consent form too.

I will then meet you again to collect the camcorder and the consent forms.

What happens next

The recordings will be transcribed by the researcher and analysed to find patterns of language use. The findings will be written up in a report on interaction in lesbian households.

You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time during participation; and to withdraw any or all of your data for up to two weeks after taking part. You will not be required to explain your reasons for withdrawing.

What will you do with my personal information?

You have control over which recordings you choose to share with the researcher. If you are unhappy about me using a particular recording you can delete it before returning the camcorder to me, or if you let me know within two weeks of taking part I will delete it for you.

In order to preserve your anonymity, pseudonyms will be used for identifying names and places in the transcripts, and any identifying names and places will be blanked out in the recordings.

The recordings will be kept securely for the duration of the study and for 10 years after its completion, and will be stored securely and separately from your contact details.

If you agree, your recordings will be donated to the Discourse and Rhetoric Group (DARG) archives at Loughborough University Social Sciences department for research and teaching purposes.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

If you are unhappy with how this research was carried out you can consult the University's policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing. It is available online at: [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm)

If you have any further questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rowena Viney is a PhD student at Loughborough University Social Sciences department. Her background is in Sociolinguistics at the University of Essex, where she completed a Masters degree dissertation on the linguistic strategies used to highlight lesbian identity in everyday conversation.

(email address)
(telephone number)

Rowena is being supervised in this research by **Professor Sue Wilkinson**.

(email address)
(telephone number)

Thank you for your interest in participating.

Rowena Viney, February 2010

Appendix 4: Consent form



A Study of Interaction in Lesbian Households

CONSENT FORM

(to be completed after reading the Information Sheet)

Please tick the boxes and sign to say you understand and agree.

The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.

I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time during participation; and to withdraw any or all of my data for up to two weeks after taking part; and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

Please tick if you agree to your recordings being used for any of the following purposes:

Stills of video-clips can be used in publications.

Video-clips can be shown in academic contexts (e.g. teaching) and professional meetings (e.g. conferences).

Extracts from transcripts and associated video-clips can be displayed on academic websites in conjunction with publications.

My recordings can be donated to the Discourse and Rhetoric Group's (DARG) archive at Loughborough University after the completion of the study.

Your name

Your signature

Signature of investigator

Date

Appendix 5: Information about gaining consent



A Study of Interaction in Lesbian Households

Giving consent

You have been supplied with multiple copies of:

- “Participant information sheet”
- “Information sheet for visitors to the participant’s home”
- “Consent form”
- “Parent/guardian’s consent form for participants under 18”

Please ensure that everyone in your household has a “Participant information sheet”, which explains what the research is about and what taking part entails, and has the researchers contact details.

Any visitors to your house who might be in the recording should be given a copy of the “Information sheet for visitors to the participant’s home”.

Everyone who takes part in the recording – household members and visitors – must sign 2 copies of the “Consent form”. One copy is to be returned to the researcher after the recording period, the second copy is for the participant to keep for their records.

If someone in the recording is under the age of 18, their parent or guardian needs to sign 2 copies of the “Parent/guardian’s consent form for participants under 18”, again returning one to the researcher and keeping the second for their records.

Information about Video Recording Research

Name of Researcher: Rowena Viney

About this research

I am a PhD student at the University of York and I am carrying out research on how people construct social relationships in everyday talk, particularly in relation to lesbian identity.

This research will contribute to work within the field of conversation analysis, which seeks to understand how people communicate with each other in everyday settings. This includes not only what is said but also the small details of interaction, such as how people use gaze and gesture. Therefore, such conversations are video-recorded to capture how people communicate non-verbally, for example through nodding or smiling.

How it works

I would like you to video-record approximately 2 hours of interactions between you and your friends or family members whilst you are doing some activity at home, for example watching television or a film, playing a game or having friends over. You will be given a video camera to make the recording, and you decide which interactions you record. If you change your mind about any of the recordings that you have made, you can erase them before returning the equipment to me, or I can edit parts out for you.

What happens next

I will make written transcripts of the recordings and I will maintain confidentiality by anonymising any names and places mentioned in the talk. Your personal details will not be passed to any other people. I would like to be able to show the video to other researchers and to publish clips from it, and because communication relies in part on facial expressions, I would like to be able to show your face. If you agree to allow me to show the recordings to other researchers, I can bleep out any names and places mentioned if you wish.

It would be helpful if researchers other than myself could be allowed to use the recordings in their own research into language and communication, as there is so much detail in interaction that can be studied. I will only share it in this way if you agree.

Thank you for taking part.

If you have questions or concerns about this research please feel free to contact me:

Rowena Viney
Department of Sociology
University of York
Heslington
York YO10 5DD
Tel: 07968 442194 Email: raev198@yahoo.co.uk

Video Recording Release Consent Form

This consent form **must be signed by everyone** who has participated in the recording.

I agree to the use of my video-recording by Rowena Viney for research purposes.

I understand that:

- written transcripts will be made of the recordings and that these may be included in written or oral reports of the study;
- the transcripts will be entirely anonymous (i.e. my name and other identifying features will not be included in any written or oral report of this study);
- the recordings and transcripts will not be used in any other way unless I agree.

The following list shows any additional ways in which I am willing for the recordings and transcripts to be used:

1. Stills of video-clips can be used by Rowena Viney in academic publications.

Yes [] No []

2. Video-clips can be shown by Rowena Viney in academic contexts (e.g. teaching) and professional meetings (e.g. conferences).

Yes [] No []

3. Extracts from transcripts and associated video-clips can be displayed by Rowena Viney on academic web sites in conjunction with publications.

Yes [] No []

4. The recordings can be placed in an archive for other researchers to use.

Yes [] No []

5. I am happy for my name and any identifying features to feature in the recordings when played publicly. (If you would like me to bleep out these features please select "no".)

Yes [] No []

Note: all participants in the interactions you record must sign this form. If there are more people taking part in this recording than the space below allows for your names, signatures and dates, please continue overleaf. If you are interested in hearing about the findings from this study please also provide an email address or telephone number so that I can contact you when the study is finished. Thank you.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Contact email/tel.: _____

Contact email/tel.: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Contact email/tel.: _____

Contact email/tel.: _____