On possibles

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ABSTRACT Although there is no lack of reasons for conversation analysis to be reluctant to adopt a cognitivist idiom and paradigm in studying talk and other conduct in interaction, examination of the literature with an open mind will disclose attentiveness to such themes in the conversation-analytic literature nonetheless. The pursuit of such themes however, cannot be appropriately and successfully conducted under the aegis of currently dominant cognitivist paradigms. One central analytic resource in CA work is the notion of a 'possible X', a resource which is here described and exemplified for three discrete 'values' of 'X'. The understanding of how such 'possible Xs' could work for participants in interaction invites understanding by analysts by reference to a 'multiple passes' model of uptake, a characterization which for now can be no more than metaphoric. Here is a venue at which conversation-analysts and neuro/cognitive analysts might usefully try to work together.

KEY WORDS: *action, conversation, interaction, reference, repair*

This special issue's theme

Of the several calls to action for this special issue, I am addressing myself to the last:

> The reason for this issue is that the question of the role of cognition repeatedly comes up especially in those lines of social, ethnographic, interactional or other research *reluctant to introduce cognitive notions (for whatever reason)*. Yet, there are many notions being used by many discourse and conversation analysts that do have at least also a cognitive dimension: knowledge, opinions, intentions, rules, norms, understanding, interpretation, planning (design), and so on. How do we theoretically and analytically handle these and related notions, even when we do not (want to) engage in cognitive analysis? *Is there a fruitful way to combine (social) discourse/conversation and cognitive analysis?*

And, given the limitations of space, I address only the two italicized portions: a) for what reasons might a (or this) conversation analyst be 'reluctant to introduce cognitive notions?' and b) is there a fruitful possible relation between CA and CA? In doing so, I take the liberty of drawing heavily on prior publications where matters necessarily treated briefly here may be examined in greater detail and depth by those interested in pursuing them.[1]

'Reluctance to introduce cognitive notions (for whatever reason)'

Before entertaining possible reasons for a reluctance to introduce cognitive notions, we might do well to make sure that there is such a reluctance; and, if there is, whether it is cognitive notions per se that are the issue, or cognitive notions of the sort currently favored by cognitive scientists; and either way, whether the reluctance is that of conversation analysts or that of cognitive scientists to pursue the cognitive issues in the terms presented in conversation-analytic work.

First, the reluctance to introduce cognitive notions. There are various reasons for such reluctance: the instability of cognitive analysis in the face of encroaching neuro-science; some serious self-doubt at the center of cognitive science itself;[2] but most importantly, the continuing reliance of mainstream work in cognitive science on a model of the mind situated in someone like Robinson Crusoe before the appearance of his man, Friday – that is, an isolated individual whose access to the world is mediated by a sensory apparatus processing unfiltered input (except, that is, for the properties of the sensorium) to the tender analytic mercies of a genetically shaped computational organ.[3] Even work that is explicitly meant to introduce a 'dialogic' element to cognitive analysis (Pickering and Garrod, 2004) omits the core of what is interactional about it (Schegloff, 2004). And work such as that of Levelt (1983) that appeared to engage with conversation-analytic themes and work (e.g. work on repair such as, inter alia, Schegloff, 1979; Schegloff et al., 1977) failed to recognize the non-interactional nature of the context from which he drew his data (Schegloff, 1991). The prospect that these troubles are not inescapable is encouraged by work such as that of Wilson and Wilson (forthcoming), which takes findings about talk-in-interaction as a point of departure, and seeks an account fitted to talk-in-interaction as a payoff.

This suggests that what is needed is not the cognitive science now available, but work which starts with empirically grounded observations about interaction, with practices of talk and other conduct in interaction which appear to underlie those observations, and with the organizations of practice which make for the recognizable features of interaction that constitute the distinctive sociality of humans. In other words, what is needed is not an analysis of interaction trimmed to meet the available cognitive science, but an account of how humans grasp the world and interact with it that takes account of the resources of interaction, on the one hand, and contributes to understanding its workings and capacities, on

the other – a cognitive science whose ambition is to address observable, actual, ordinary human sociality in a fashion at once answerable to the details of actual instances of talk and other conduct in interaction, on the one hand, and formulated in such general and formal terms as to embrace diverse exemplars of a phenomenon, on the other.

These are some plausible grounds (though surely not all of them) for a reluctance on the part of conversation analysts to introduce cognitive notions into their work. Still, such notions are not altogether absent from conversation-analytic work. Here, as elsewhere in this brief reflection, I will speak only for myself.

One bit of evidence that (at least) this conversation-analyst has no principled reservations about examining what is here being termed the 'cognitive' may be offered by an excerpt from a recent article (Schegloff, 2005). The topic is the occurrence of bits of whistling or humming – in particular, ones in interactional settings – which display some tacit orientation of the whistler/hummer to aspects of the environment, the situation, etc. Here is one exemplar taken from the article, followed by a characterization of the class of occurrences of which it is a member and an invitation to one way of studying it (Schegloff, 2005: 22):

> One evening I am giving a biologist colleague at UCLA and neighbor in Topanga canyon a ride home, where the roads are very winding and narrow. We are taking other than the usual route because of the mud slides caused by recent very heavy rains. It is still rainy and misty, and as we get off the freeway and start driving the canyon roads, the conversation between us lapses and he begins whistling.
>
> [Specimen #2] (Alas, the quality of my whistling has deteriorated, so I had better identify this specimen as the beginning of The Star Spangled Banner, the national anthem of the United States.) At first I don't get the point, and ask him if he has a grant application pending at a government agency, else why is he being so patriotic.
>
> 'No,' he says. Then I catch on. 'Are you worried that I can't see the road?' I ask.
>
> He almost rises from his seat in astonishment and asks how I knew that. I point out that the words to the part of the United States' national anthem that he was whistling are 'Oh say can you see.'

The [occurrences] I am pursuing seem to rest on a linkage between a language-formed or even non-linguistic gist of an external environmental feature or event or an internal 'subconscious' one, on the one hand, and the wording of some lyric, on the other; and then by the lyric's evocation of the melody that carries it or which is titled by it. Two sorts of analytic resonance invite consideration.

> Those who come to this article with neuro-scientific, cognitivist, and/or psycho-linguistic interests might reflect on the processing apparatus that would have to be available to make these whistled or hummed displays of orientation to the world possible if the description in the preceding paragraph is near the mark, which it surely seems to be. What might a search procedure look like that finds (spontaneously and subliminally) the lyrics of a song not heard for many years which suits or 'captures' an experienced but tacit sense of the environment or of a presently

sustained 'preoccupation,' and retrieves as well the melody of the whole of the song, and often the specific musical phrase that 'carries' the language which the search had found, and has it produced without that language? Readers with those interests might bear this question in mind as they engage the specimens to follow.

To be sure, the phenomenon addressed in these paragraphs is not exactly *talk*-in-interaction (though it *is* subsumed under the more general rubric 'talk-and-other-conduct-in-interaction'), but the invitation to neuro/cognitivist colleagues is in any case an open one.

Nor is this without precedent in my work. In an article first presented at a conference on space, place and deixis at the Max Planck Institute for Psychlinguistics in June 1978, I described the relationship of the deployment of iconic and locational gestures to the talk they were designed to accompany. Although that article is generally known as one about gesture, its actual design focused on using gesture onset as a possible indicator of the opening boundary of what I termed the 'projection space', – something very much like the speech-production process. The following paragraph summed up its introductory section (1984: 270):[4]

> The possibility that a sound stretch or other hitch well before a later repair is a pre-indication of that later repair suggests a further possibility. As some item enters the 'projection space', as it 'comes into play', as it first becomes a specifically planned-for item, if it is sensed or recognized by speaker as a possible trouble-source (e.g., the exact word is not available, a difficult sound pattern is involved, how to say it is unclear, etc.), then a hitch appears in whatever is being produced – whatever is in the process of being said – at the moment. (By momentarily delaying the point at which the possible trouble-source is to be said, the possibility is enhanced that the trouble will be solved before that point arrives. Also, notice is given interactionally of possible trouble ahead.) Then some hitches would mark the early ('left') boundary of the projection space, which would thereby become 'visible'. To establish, or begin to work toward, such an investigation requires, however, some anterior sense of which 'early' hitches are candidates for 'early repair indication' status, and that sense requires some independent estimate of how far back before the actual appearance of an element of the talk it can be shown to have been 'in play'. That is, an independent estimate of the size of projection space is needed in order to work toward establishing early repair harbingers as another type of evidence on this issue. In the next section, I will try to show how one sort of independent estimate can be derived from the organization of gesture.

Workers in cognitive science and psycholinguistics may recognize here themes from their own literature, such as Clark and Fox Tree (2002) and Levelt (1983, 1989) inter alia, which I suppose evidences the cognitivist resonances of the earlier article.

So much for past reluctance: how about future possibilities?

'*Is there a fruitful way to combine (social) discourse/conversation and cognitive analysis?*'

In what follows, I will focus on a single feature of talk-in-interaction in the hope of reconciling the limitations of space with the desirability of a somewhat textured account of the feature whose omnipresent operation in talk-in-interaction makes it seem a suitable site for collaborative engagement with neuro/cognitively oriented colleagues. This feature is 'possibility'; its centrality in conversation analysis is embodied in the generic phrase type 'a possible X', as in terms like 'possible invitation' (or *any* action term after 'possible'), 'possible understanding', 'possible turn completion', etc. Let me again draw on past work to make clear what this sort of usage is meant to capture.

In a previous article (Schegloff, 1996a: 57), in a discussion of Extract (01) below, and of line 5 in particular, I had occasion to suggest that the flat intonational contour and fast pacing of the beginning of that turn ('No in fact . . .') are '. . . best understood by reference to the speaker Ava's orientation to the status of "No" as *a possible TCU*,[5] and its end as *a possible turn completion*, and thus as a place at which Bee would relevantly locate *a possible start* for a next turn' (emphases supplied).

(01) TG, 6–7

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1    Bee:      Eh-yih have anybuddy: thet uh:? (1.2) I would know from the
2              English depar'mint there?
3    Ava:      Mm-mh. Tch! I don't think so.
4    Bee:      °Oh,=<Did they geh ridda Kuhleznik yet hhh
5    Ava:->    No in fact I know somebuddy who ↑ha:s huh [now.
6    Bee:                                                [Oh my got hh[hhh
7    Ava:                                                             [Yeh
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A note to this passage (Schegloff, 1996a: 116–7) explained the deployment of the usage 'a possible X' as follows:

> The usage is not meant as a token of analytic uncertainty or hedging. Its analytic locus is not in the first instance the world of the author and reader, but the world of the parties to the interaction. To describe some utterance, for example, as 'a possible invitation' (Sacks, 1992: I: 300–2; Schegloff, 1992a: xxvi–xxvii) or 'a possible complaint' (Schegloff, 1988: 120–2) is to claim that there is a describable practice of talk-in-interaction which is usable to do recognizable invitations or complaints (a claim which can be documented by exemplars of exchanges in which such utterances were so recognized by their recipients), and that the utterance now being described can be understood to have been produced by such a practice, and is thus analyzable as an invitation or as a complaint. This claim is made, and can be defended, independent of whether the actual recipient on this occasion has treated it as an invitation or not, and independent of whether the speaker can be shown to have produced it for recognition as such on this occasion. Such an analytic stance is required to provide resources for accounts of "failures" to recognize an utterance as an invitation or complaint, for in order to claim that a recipient failed to recognize it as such or respond to it as such, one must be able to show that it was recognizable as

such, i.e., that it was 'a possible X' – for the participants (Schegloff, 1995, forth-coming). The analyst's treatment of an utterance as 'a possible X' is then grounded in a claim about its having such a status for the participants[6]. . . This discussion requires modification in various respects for different values of the variable 'X' in the phrase 'a possible X;' one might wish to phrase the discussion differently for 'a possible name', 'a possible TCU', or 'a possible completion'. For now the reader should try to adapt this rough abbreviated account to particular 'possibles' in what follows.

The final sentence of that note referred, of course, to what followed in *that* article. Here I would like to extend the discussion of 'possible Xs' as a suitable site for potentially fruitful interchange between conversation analysis and neuro/cognitive analysis, along the following lines.

What must we take interactants to be doing – to be *capable* of doing, to design their talk and other conduct – so as to have their talk and other conduct taken up for the 'possible Xs' that compose it? And how must they attend the talk and other conduct produced by a co-interactant so as to 1) address the multiple 'possible Xs' that compose it, 2) resolve that multiplicity of possibilities and arrive at some determinate grasp of what the other was saying/doing, and 3) display that grasp in their own responsive conduct – sometimes correctly, sometimes not? If there is to be some *rapprochement* between neuro-/cognitive science and conversation analysis, this would be an inviting site in which to explore the possibility.

Just a few paragraphs on the reality of what is referred to in the preceding paragraph.[7] What speakers say in response to prior talk by another may display an understanding of that prior talk that is problematic for *its* speaker, who may then undertake to address that problem in a turn whose canonical form is, 'No, I didn't mean X, I meant Y', – where 'X' and 'Y' may be words, references, assertions, etc., as in Extract (02). Here, in a civil defense headquarters in the immediate aftermath of a hurricane, the public relations officer is requesting information from the chief engineer for distribution through the mass media:

(02) (CDHQ, I, 52)

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1    Art:      Which one::s are closed, an' which ones are open.
2    Zel:      ((pointing to map)) Most of 'em. This, this,
3              [this, this
4    Art:->    [I don't mean on the shelters, I mean on the roads.
5    Zel:      Oh!
```

Zel's treatment of Art's first turn as a request for information seems unproblematic, but the understanding he shows himself to have of the referent of 'ones' is rejected by Art as incorrect, and Zel registers that and proceeds to answer the question as newly understood (this last part not shown). Each party to such an exchange must then have been able to entertain at least two different understandings of the original utterance in question – each of which was, then, a 'possible understanding'.

Sometimes the trouble concerns the action being done in a turn, as in Extract

(03). Then each party must have been capable of grasping at least two different actions the trouble-source turn could have been understood to be doing – the one it was designed to do, and the alternative it was actually initially understood as doing, and each party must be able to see how else it could be understood while having initially not understood it that way. Here, Dan – the therapist in a group therapy session with teenagers – has offered a characterization of one of them (Al), which is understood by another (Roger) as a critique or complaint. Roger responds to the 'complaint' against Al by asserting solidarity with his 'buddy' (at line 6):

(03) (GTS)

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 1   Dan:      . . . See Al tends, it seems, to pull in one or two
 2             individuals on his side (there). This is part of
 3             his power drive, see. He's gotta pull in, he can't
 4             quite do it on his own. Yet.
 5   Al:       W'l-
 6   Rog:      Well so do I.
 7   Dan:->    Yeah. [I'm not criticizing, I mean we'll just uh=
 8   Rog:->>         [Oh you wanna talk about him.
 9   Dan:      =look, let's just talk.
10   Rog:      Alright.
```

At line 7, Dan starts by taking up an accepting or aligning stance vis-a-vis what Roger has just said, but then goes on to disavow it. That is, Dan has heard in Roger's turn ('Well so do I') that he – Roger – had understood Dan's preceding turn (at lines 1–4) as criticism of Al, and he – Dan – now displays that understanding of Roger's understanding and specifically rejects it ('I'm not criticizing'). But note as well that after hearing just the acceptance ('yeah') at the start of Dan's turn, Roger is able to reanalyze Dan's prior turn and re-understand it differently (with 'Oh' marking his change of state; Heritage, 1984), articulating his 'revised' understanding simultaneously with Dan's rejection of his (Roger's) first understanding.

It is striking that misunderstandings are both orderly and accessible to the speaker of what has been misunderstood, who might well be thought to be so committed to the design and so-called intent of the earlier turn as to be disabled from appreciating that (or how) it could be otherwise understood. These are all, then, '*possible* understandings' – even the ones that prove wrong; they are methodically accessible graspings of what another has said or done. The ready capacity of the participants in these exchanges to grasp another's understanding even when it is 'incorrect' suggests that they are pursuing 'possible understandings' of turns at talk – including their own turns at talk – along multiple lines, and are thereby prepared to recognize even ones arrived at by others that might have been thought elusive.[8]

In what follows, I take up three other phenomena that appear on the face of it to involve entertaining multiple possibilities in their understanding. They

suggest the attractiveness of approaching data in a fashion that could benefit from the cooperative attention of conversation analysts and neuro/cognitive analysts. Briefly put, it appears that any model of neuro/cognitive processing for interaction should be designed for (to invoke a metaphor) 'multiple passes'. In the space available, I can offer only a few examples of interactional doings that seem to make such a feature indispensable – each drawn from other publications so that I can present just the main thrust here, and leave it for interested readers to pursue what they find interesting in the source publications.

1). Consider the cut-off – the so-called 'self-interruption' with which a speaker blocks the production of the next sound due in the word currently under production (linguistically ordinarily described as a stop, whether glottal, dental, alveolar, etc.). Conversation analysts are likely to understand this occurrence as a repair initiator – the way in which self-initiated same-turn self-repair is often (*most* often) begun; conversation analysts are inclined to understand it this way because that is the way in which it appears that speakers use it and recipients understand it (Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 1979; Schegloff et al., 1977).

But here again the parties cannot take their first analysis and be done with it, because the form of a *repair initiation* does not convey what the *object of the repair* will be (or rather, what will be treated as the trouble-source, and therefore the object of repair), nor does it convey the *type of repair operation*:

● whether *replacement*, as happens twice in line 1 of Extract (04)

(04) TG 2:31–33

```
1    Ava:->   En, I had- I wz- I couldn't stop laughin it wz the funniest
2             thing b't y'know you get all sweaty up'r en evrything we
3             didn' thing we were gonna pla:y, 'hh en oh I'm knocked out.
```

Ava first replaces 'had' with 'was' ('wz'), and then replaces 'was' with 'couldn't' – both repairs initiated with a cut-off;

● whether *insertion*, as at line 4 in Extract (05):

(05) TG 8:10–15

```
1    Bee:     .hh Bu:t uh I hope it gets bettuh. as it goes o:[n.
2    Ava:                                              [Well
3             you nevuh know.
4    Bee:->   Nye::h, en my u- my two ar' classes 'r pretty good I en-
5             I'm enjoying them b't=
6    Ava:     =W'that's good.
```

Here, what starts out to be 'en my art classes' gets stopped to insert 'two', yielding 'en my u- my two ar' classes . . .,' again via a cut-off; or

● whether *deletion*, as at line 7 in Extract (06):

(06) TG 9:27–40

```
1    Bee:     Ih wz, I don'know what I'm gunnuh do. hEn all the reading
2             is from this one book so f(h)ar the(h)t I haven' go(h)t!
3    Ava:     hhhhhhhh!
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 4    Bee:        ˙hhhh So she tol' me of a place on Madison Avenue 'n
 5                Sevendy Ninth Street.=
 6    Ava:        =M[mm.
 7    Bee:->        [tuh go en try the:re. Because I als- I tried Barnes
 8                'n Nobles 'n, (0.6) they didn' have any'ing they don' have
 9                any art books she tol' me,
10    Ava:        Mmm
11    Bee:        So,
12    (Ava):      ˙hhhh
13    Bee:        °That's too bad,
14    Ava:        hhhh!
```

Here Bee is starting to say 'Because I also tried . . .' but then stops in the middle of 'also' (again with a cut-off), repeats the prior word and continues without the 'also', thereby deleting it. So the cut-off stops what is in progress, and can be followed by a change of word, an addition of a word, or a deletion of a word, each of which the recipient has to be prepared to incorporate in the online parsing and analysis of the turn-so-far, with potentially different implications for what may come next. In fact, however, there may be no repair at all; the cut-off having ostensibly initiated repair, the speaker may decide to continue the talk as projected, as at line 8 in Extract (07):

(07) TG 15:21–33

```
 1    Bee:        Y'have cla:ss [tomorrow?
 2    Ava:                     [hhhh
 3    Ava:        ((breathily)) One cla:ss I have.=
 4    Bee:        =You mean:: Pace isn't clo:s[ed?
 5    Ava:                                    [No we have off
 6                Monday [°(b't not      ) ˙hhh
 7    Bee:               [Mm I have off ts- Monday too. hmfff
 8    Ava:->      A:nd uh:m ˙hh I haftuh help- getting some schedules
 9                t'gether fuh- m-t! [my o:ld Mistuh Ba:rt.
10    Bee:                          [˙hhhh
11    Bee:        °Hmmm.
12    Ava:        A:nd I haftuh get the group tihgethuh fuh him.hh
13                (0.5)
```

At line 8 Ava is telling about what she has to do at school the next day, and cuts-off the TCU on the last sound of 'help', – 'I haftuh help-'; but no repair follows, and the talk continues in a grammatically continuous way.

   All of this is to say that the cut-off serves as an alert to the hearer that *what comes next may not be a possible continuation of the talk as so far articulated and projected*, and that the hearer should be prepared for something unfitted – maybe a replacement of something already said, maybe an insertion into what has already been said, maybe a deletion of something already said, maybe (and of this and many other possibilities I have given no exemplars) a wholly new way of starting what is recognizably the same TCU, maybe what is clearly *not* the TCU that was in progress but something quite different, and maybe – on second

thought – what was already being said after all. And the hearer now has to be prepared for all these '*possible nexts*', and many more as well (as well as cut-offs on the very thing that has just been inserted, or that has just replaced something, or what sounded as if it were a replacement turns out a few moments later to have been an insertion . . . And all this while monitoring the developing course of the TCU toward '*possible completion*', at which point the hearer may be responsible for replying after one beat of silence to the '*possible action*' that that turn was doing.

2). Questions of the form 'Can I ask you a question' appear paradoxical; if the speaker has a question, and has the turn, why not ask the question? Why ask instead if you can ask the question? Examining this usage shows that these 'action projections' are used to convey what the projected action will be, and that it will be delayed so as to allow certain necessary preliminaries to be dealt with. The recipient is thereby put on notice that what will follow directly is not itself what the speaker means to get said or to get done, and its end should not be taken as the end of the speaker's turn. It is, then, not only a preliminary to the announced-to-come action; it is a preliminary to a preliminary to that action, or a 'pre-pre'. It will be followed by one or more preliminaries, which will be followed in turn by the projected action – whether a question, as in Extract (08):

(08) [Schegloff, 1980: 105]

1	Call:	->	I like tuh ask you something.
2	Host:		Shoot.
3	Call:	->>	Y'know I 'ad my license suspended fuh six munts,
4	Host:		Uh huh
5	Call:	->>	Y'know for a reason which, I rathuh not, mention
6		->>	tuh you, in othuh words, (0.3) a serious reason,
7		->>>	en I like tuh know if I w'd talk tuh my senator,
8		->>>	or (0.2) somebuddy, could they help me get it back,

a request, as in Extract (09):

(09) [Schegloff, 1980: 112–13]

1	Fred:	Oh by the way ((sniff)) I have a bi:g favor
2		to ask ya.
3	Laur:	Sure, go'head.
4	Fred:	(.) 'Member the blouse you made a couple
5		weeks ago?
6	Laur:	Ya.
7	Fred:	Well I want to wear it this weekend to Vegas
8		but my mom's buttonholer is broken.
9	Laur:	Fred I told ya when I made the blouse I'd do
10		the buttonholes.
11	Fred:	Ya ((sniff)) but I hate ta impose.
12	Laur:	No problem. We can do them on Monday after work.

or some other action, such as a telling. This is the overwhelmingly most common use of such action projections.

The exceptional cases may be seen to be marking the next thing said by the speaker as 'delicate,' and can therefore be termed 'pre-delicates.' In some instances (such as (10) below), the delicate-ness is marked in other ways (at lines 17–18) in addition to the preliminary action-projection (at lines 14–15)

(10) (Erhardt: 8: 1]

```
 1   Vic:        Yeh is Pam there?
 2               (0.7)
 3   Mom:        Uh:: (1.5) Yes she is C'n
 4               I tell her who's calling.
 5   Vic:        Yeh this is Vicky.
 6   Mom:        Hang on please?
 7   Vic:        °°Okay,°°
 8               (8.2)
 9   Pam:        H'llo::,
10   Vic:        Hi:. Vicky.
11               (0.4)
12   Vic:        You ra:ng?
13   Pam:        Oh hello there yes I di::d.
14        ->     .hh um I nee:d tuh ask you a
15        ->     questio:n?
16               (0.4)
17   Pam:  ->    en you musn't (0.7) uh take
18        ->     it personally or kill me.
19               (0.7)
20   Pam:        I wan to kno:w, (0.7)
21               whether you: will(b) would
22               be free:, (.) to work o:n um
23               tomorrow night.
24               (0.4)
```

In other instances, no such additional marking is done. In Extract (11), for example, the teenaged Joey has called his mother long distance and is asking about an investment she either advised him to make or made on his behalf and which has just suffered a precipitous drop in value.

(11) Openings, #911

```
 1   Mom:        Hello
 2   Joe:        Hello
 3   Mom:        Hi
 4   Joe:        Hi
 5   Mom:        How are ya.
 6   Joe:        Fine, how are you.
 7   Mom:        Uh okay,
 8   Joe:        Guess what.
 9   Mom:        What.
10   Joe:        I dunno, I j(h)us wanted you ta
11               guess..hh no- eh heh How are you.
12               (0.?)
```

13	Mom:	I'm fine Joey, how are you.
14	Joe: ->	heh heh heh Fine. Uhm (0.?) Can
15	->	I ask you something?
16	Mom:	Yeah.
17	Joe:	What has happened to Standard Prudential.

Joey is not asking his mother for a report on the value of his investment; he knows what has happened and is (as the American idiom has it) 'sticking it to his mom'. It is the 'Can I ask you something?' directly followed by a possible delicate that makes it clear that he is not asking, he is complaining. But it is not always clear what usage is being made of an action projection – pre-pre or pre-delicate, or, for that matter, both.

> It does not appear that these several uses (some of which can be cooperative in a segment of talk) are discriminated and differentially prefigured in the form or placement of the action projection. Which use is being made of an action projection on any given occasion is something worked through by the parties in the ensuing talk. A recipient may have to entertain the full range of possibilities momentarily, using the immediately following talk to find out what sort of sequence is in progress. Should a possibly delicate question follow directly, then the action projection may be treated as having so marked it. Should a 'D'ya remember . . .' type of question follow the action projection, then a 'pre-pre' analysis may result, with the projected question being waited for through a set of preliminaries. It is expectable that, in this working-through, errors, misunderstandings, and efforts to head them off will occur. Recipients may hear projections designed to be pre-delicates as 'pre-pre's' and ones designed as 'pre-pre's' as pre-delicates. Speakers who find that they have produced an action projection and are in the course of producing an instance of the projected action, which is thus possibly subject to hearing as delicate, can find ways of dealing with that potential analysis by recipients. (Schegloff, 1980: 135 ff.)

There are, of course, many other ways in which a turn at talk, or a turn-constructional unit in it, can require of its recipient ongoing, moment by moment analysis of what set of multiple possible action(s) is/are getting done by the talk, not least of all the ways in which questions, assessments and noticings can be a resource for doing other actions: questions serving in this way for requests, offers, invitations, etc.; assessments for compliments (Pomerantz, 1978) among others; noticings for complaints if, for example, the noticing is of something missing (Schegloff, 1988). This is not a matter of ambiguity; as often as not, finding that some utterance is 'doing a noticing' is not mutually exclusive with its 'doing a complaint'; it is in the very way it is doing the noticing that its doing a complaint is to be found (Schegloff, 1988).

3). In describing some practices for referring to persons in talk-in-interaction, it turns out that (in English and a great many other languages) the practices for referring to speaker and addressed recipient are insensitive to prior usage in that occasion of interaction. Speakers refer to themselves as 'I' and refer to addressed recipients as 'you' every time in the course of the conversation that they have occasion to refer to self or addressed recipient. For describing so-called 'third person' reference, however, it is necessary to differentiate between locally-initial

and locally-subsequent reference (Schegloff, 1996c). In doing so, it turns out to be relevant to discriminate locally initial/subsequent *occasions* of referring from locally initial/subsequent *forms* for referring. The basic locally initial form for referring is the use of some noun, or noun phrase or clause – for example, 'Keith', or 'my friend', or 'the girl he used to go with'; the basic locally subsequent form for referring is a pro-term – for example, 'he', 'she', etc. The first time there is occasion to refer to this person in some stretch of talk-in-interaction is the locally initial reference occasion; each subsequent occasion for referring to this person in that stretch of talk is a locally subsequent reference occasion.

But what if some stretch of talk appears to have run to conclusion, and the talk turns to something else, or lapses for a while into silence? If this person is to be referred to again, how shall a speaker refer to him? Here is where the reflexivity of occasion and form comes into play.

A speaker can show that they are treating the talk now about to be prosecuted as a continuation of what came before by using a pronoun; by doing so, they show they are treating this occasion of referring to that person as locally subsequent. On the other hand, even if the next mention of that person comes only moments after the prior mention, but a possible sequence boundary or topic boundary has intervened, the speaker can show that their mention of the same person is nonetheless not to be understood as extending the just preceding talk; by using a locally initial form, they can show that, although the same person is being referred to, this is a discrete episode of the conversation, a different unit of the organization of the talk, and this is the locally initial occasion for referring to that person. Here is an example.

(12) SN-4, 16:2–20

```
 1   Mark:      So ('r) you da:ting Keith?
 2              (1.0)
 3   Karen:     'Sa frie:nd.
 4              (0.5)
 5   Mark:      What about that girl 'e use tuh go with fer so long.
 6   Karen:     Alice? I [don't-   ] they gave up.
 7   Mark:           [(mm)]
 8              (0.4)
 9   Mark:      ('Oh?)
10   Karen:     I dunno where she is but I-
11              (0.9)
12   Karen:     Talks about 'er evry so o:ften, but- I dunno where she is.
13              (0.5)
14   Mark:      hmh
15              (0.2)
16   Sheri: ->  Alice was stra::nge,
17              (0.3) ((rubbing sound))
18   Mark:      Very o:dd. She usetuh call herself a pro:stitute,='n I
19              useteh- (0.4) ask 'er if she wz gitting any more money
20              than I: was.(doing).
```

Here, in close proximity to talk about 'Alice' which has come to use locally subsequent reference forms (at lines 10 and 12), but whose sequence-topical unit has come to possible closure, Sheri produces a turn with further talk about the same referent. She could treat this as a locally subsequent reference occasion, and again refer to her as 'she'. She does not. She treats it as a new spate of talk, in which the referent will figure in a different way. She embodies this, and incipiently constitutes it, by use of the locally initial reference form.

The reflexivity of this practice turns on being able to have it both ways. For example, . . . the position (at line 16) seems at first to be locally subsequent; that the form employed is locally initial; that that form in that position can change that position to being locally initial – that is, can constitute this as a fresh spate of talk. This practice (if my account is remotely correct) adumbrates multiple stages in reference composition and reference analysis for any given reference for the participants, in which, for example, the second stage of the analysis can confirm the first ('looks like a locally subsequent position; it has a locally subsequent form; it is a locally subsequent reference') or change it ('looks like a locally subsequent position; oops! it has a locally initial form in it; it's a locally initial reference and we're into a new sequence/topic'). This sort of reflexive relationship between position and what is in the position has appeared elsewhere in studies of conversation (for example, between the position and form of repair; cf. Schegloff, 1992b: 1326–34) and resists reduction to more familiar, linear depiction. (Schegloff, 1996c: 452–3)

If I may end this section as I began it. Briefly put, it appears that any model of processing for interaction should be designed for 'multiple passes' . . . and that turns out to mean 'multiple passes' for each order of organization that is inescapably implicated whenever 'talk in interaction' – actual or potential is the state the participants find themselves in.

To return to an earlier theme: if colleagues in the neuro- or cognitive sciences of cognition are to work with us, there could hardly be a more strategic place to do it. But it cannot be done in the conventional experimental settings of the past; it cannot be the product of individual minds planning and performing in splendid isolation. It cannot even be done by statistical manipulation of already coded corpora of varieties of so-called 'spoken language'. Still, here is a place where students of brain/mind/cognition can bring their resources to bear on what we must suppose they care most about – how humans do what they do: here is that place; devotees of the neuro-and-cognitive sciences are most welcome to come and do what *they* do. We are waiting to help, and to be helped. What forms that help might take, remains to be discovered as well.

NOTES

1. Publications are available at my website: [http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/].
2. To cite but one example, in his account of the then-upcoming Kanner Lecture for 2005 at UCLA, Jerry Fodor wrote: 'It seems entirely possible that we don't know, even roughly, how the cognitive mind works; and that figuring it out will require extensive revision in both our theories of mental representation and our theories of mental

processes,' – a position well supported in the body of the lecture itself. (The quote is taken from the advance announcement of the lecture; its authorship was verified by the organizer of the occasion.)

3. Not to mention its reliance on the psychological experiment as virtually the only vehicle of inquiry that will be taken seriously, in spite of its evident incapacity to examine the forms of ordinary conduct that in the end our disciplines must come to terms with.

4. The papers from the conference appeared in a volume edited by Jarvella and Klein (1982). I declined to have the paper included in that volume because no provision was made for access to the video extracts which were its primary data. I subsequently agreed to the paper's publication (as delivered at the conference) in Atkinson and Heritage (1984) when it appeared that no such provision for the data could be made in the foreseeable future without some monetary subvention. With the necessary technology now available, the paper is planned to appear in the journal *Gesture*, with video data accessible.

5. The acronym 'TCU' stands for 'turn-constructional unit' – grammatical units which can constitute a recognizable possibly complete turn given appropriate prosody and when constituting a recognizable possible action-in-context. In English (and many other languages/cultures) these are words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

6. For an extended exploration of how a form of turn construction – repetition – can constitute a practice for producing possible instances of a previously undescribed action – 'confirming allusions', cf. Schegloff (1996b).

7. These paragraphs draw on Schegloff (1987, 1992b).

8. This also helps understand the practice of speakers to anticipate possible misunderstandings of their talk and move to disambiguate them before yielding the turn. In the following extract, Tony has called ex-wife Marcia to ask when their son Joey, who has been visiting Marcia, can be expected back home.

MDE, Stolen
```
1   Marsha:   ˙hhh Uh:(d) did Oh: .h Yer not in on what ha:ppen'.(hh)(d)
2   Tony:     No(h)o=
3   Marsha:   =He's flying.
4             (0.2)
5   Marsha:   En Ilene is going to meet im:.Becuz the to:p wz ripped
6 -      ->   off'v iz car which is tih say someb'ddy helped th'mselfs.
7   Tony:     Stolen.
8             (0.4)
9   Marsha:   Stolen.=Right out in front of my house.
```

Marsha apparently 'hears' that 'the top was ripped off of his car' allows alternative hearings, either as 'the convertible car's cloth top was torn' or as 'the convertible car's cloth top was stolen', and moves to make clear that it is the second of these that occurred. For an examination of this phenomenon, see Mandelbaum (2004).

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