Creating order from disorder: a study of pre-closing activity in interactions involving young adults with learning disabilities

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Creating Order from ‘Disorder’: a study of pre-closing activity in interactions involving young adults with learning disabilities

by

Anne Patterson

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

June 2009

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I wish to thank in the first instance the two families who allowed me into their homes and their lives and who allowed me to record precious family moments in their telephone conversations. I am particularly grateful too for their forbearance in switching on and off the recording equipment every time the phone rang! I thank my supervisor, Professor Jonathan Potter for his unstinting encouragement, his inspired ideas and for his support and friendship through the academic and personal challenges of my PhD journey. I thank Professor Charles Antaki for his enthusiastic encouragement and for his wise advice about the opportunities and the challenges of particular research inquiries. I thank Alexa Hepburn for advising and helping me with transcription related dilemmas. I thank Galina Bolden for her helpful comments and insights on a journal version of Chapter 3 of this thesis, which helped me to refine its contents and provoked further thoughts about other aspects of this study.
I am grateful to members of the Discourse and Rhetoric Group at Loughborough for their helpful comments and insights during data sessions, and to conference audiences at the International Conference on Conversation Analysis, 2006, the International Pragmatics Association Conference, 2007 and the Language, Culture & Mind III Conference, 2008 for engaging with and providing helpful feedback upon the data and analysis in this study. I thank the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) for their financial support.
I especially thank my immediate family (they know who they are) who on the one hand have tolerated my being distant and otherwise engrossed for long periods of time, and have not grumbled when I have worked ‘family stuff’ around my need to study. On the other hand I thank them for providing me with distractions and concerns that have kept me grounded and have reminded me about what was important.
Finally, last but not least I wish to thank ‘Sue’ and ‘Craig’, whose lives have inspired me to undertake research in this area and to challenge any social ‘injustice’ they may face.
Abstract

Traditionally matters of disability have been considered in a predominantly clinical domain which positions any ‘impairment’ as intrinsic to individuals, and often calls into question their ‘social competence’. However since Goodwin’s (1995, 2003a, 2003b, 2004) work opened the door for research into diagnosed ‘impairments’ within an interactional framework, there has been a multitude of studies which have provided an interactional consideration of a wide range of diagnosed ‘disorders’. Such work takes a more pragmatic line and recognises that it is for parties to an interaction to jointly accomplish everyday conversational tasks. This thesis follows such a line. It explores how everyday conversational tasks within family telephone calls which include a young adult with a learning disability (LD), are accomplished. The particular conversational task which is considered is that of closing a telephone call. The study considers the mix of practical and psychological matters that appear in two collections of calls between young adults with a diagnosed learning disability staying in a residential school or college, and other members of their families. It draws heavily on the method and findings of conversation analysis, particularly in the arena of closings, and those of discursive psychology, to appreciate how psychological matters manifest as practical and procedural, rather than cognitive and individual. Pre-closing turns are found to contain a range of materials which account for and mitigate an upcoming close. Three formats through which pre-closings are delivered to include an account are analysed; those of announcements, interrogatives and imperatives. A range of other affiliative materials are found to delicately manage and sustain the relationality between participants by invoking aspects of their ongoing relationship. These are combined to produce a closing which displays ‘care’ for the other. This allows for a re-specification of what it is to be ‘caring’. Comparative data sets are used to consider lexical and prosodic patterning in ‘tacit’ pre-closings, and differences are highlighted between those which include young adults with LD and those which do not. There is asymmetric use of many of the resources, and in managing the closing in general, which may index matters of disability or of relationality. This thesis thus has a joint focus on the way both psychological dispositions and matters of disability figure in interaction. The analysis is used to consider broader issues about psychology and interaction, family relations and ‘disability'. 
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Introduction

Traditionally matters of disability have been considered in a predominantly clinical and cognitive psychological domain. However, researchers such as Goodwin, with his work concerning a man with aphasia, opened the door for research into all types of diagnosed 'impairments', within an interactional framework. Goodwin's (1995) pioneering research acknowledged, but at the same time through taking an interactional approach, eschewed, a solely pathological consideration of impairment. Such considerations position impairment as belonging to an individual rather than potentially to society as a whole. So Goodwin in looking at an 'impaired' speakers' interactions with others, paved the way for an interactional consideration of diagnosed 'disorders' which takes a more pragmatic line and recognises that the onus is on all parties to an interaction to accomplish everyday conversational tasks. The responsibility to manage any challenges is thus a shared one. Others (for example, Antaki et al., 2002, 2007, 2008; Dickerson et al., 2002, 2005; Finlay et al., 2008; Rapley, 2004; Shakespeare, 1998; Wilkinson et al. 2003) have built upon interactional lines of research enquiry, in areas such as intellectual disability, autism, dementia and aphasia. Recently Alzheimer's disease has also become an area for interactional inquiry (Kitzinger & Jones, 2007).

This thesis follows in the path of the above ground-breaking work. It considers learning disability from an interactional point of view, exploring how everyday conversational tasks within family telephone calls are achieved. At the outset of this study, the broad objectives were to understand something of the nature of talk which includes someone with a learning disability and to consider whether differences, if any, were oriented to, as being a consequence of one party coming to the interaction with potentially differing challenges. In the early stages of the study it became apparent that the closings of the calls were populated with some interesting data. Hence, the particular conversational task upon which this thesis

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1 The word 'disorder' is used here and in the title of this thesis to represent a variety of diagnoses, rather than referring to the disordering of words within talk, which is characteristic of some specific diagnoses.
reports is that of closing a telephone call. Closing a conversation and particularly closing a telephone call can be a rather delicately organised matter. There are practical matters to be addressed, such as how to ensure that all relevant matters have been satisfactorily accommodated before the call is terminated. Conversation Analytic research has identified a robust organisational mechanism which provides for such contingencies (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Furthermore, bound up with such practical considerations are potentially delicate psychological issues. For example, suggesting closure of a call may suggest boredom or disinterest in one’s interlocutor, whilst unwillingness to close may suggest potential unhappiness at closure. Undertaking, maintaining and terminating conversation with another is a fundamental feature of sociality (Hopper, 1992). Telephone calls are thus a rich site for examining both organisational and psychological business.

In this study then, I consider the mix of practical and psychological matters that appear in a corpus of calls collected from two families. In line with contemporary discursive psychology (Edwards, 2005; Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007; Wiggins & Potter, 2008), and in contrast to the methods of experimental psychology, the data comprises naturally occurring interactions. Each corpus contains calls between a young adult with a diagnosed learning disability, staying in a residential school or college, and other members of their respective families. Again, in line with discursive psychology, the study draws heavily on the method and findings of conversation analysis (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 2006). This study thus explores psychological matters as something practical and procedural, rather than cognitive and individual.

The study has used two-party telephone calls as its data, focussing on a very specific conversational task; that of closing the call. The focus of the study is thus restricted to the consideration of closing sections (or, more precisely, pre-closing

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2 Each of the young adults also has accompanying ‘challenges’. In the case of ‘Sue’ (pseudonym) she also has challenges associated with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and epilepsy, whilst ‘Craig’ (pseudonym) also has communication challenges deriving from dyspraxia.
sequences – since not all such sequences lead to actual call closings). A closing section may include several pre-closing sequences, each of which allows either for more talk to ensue or for participants to bid each other farewell. By concentrating on closing sections, it has been possible to examine a clearly identifiable part of a call and to draw upon a well-established literature to provide a benchmark and inform analysis. It was thus possible to identify generic features of closings as well as any features which appeared unusual or unique in these sets of calls. It is the range of features found in these sets of calls that are explored and discussed in the chapters which follow.

The opening chapter explores a variety of theoretical perspectives which are relevant to the empirical study which is reported in this thesis. I draw upon a range of literature to consider how learning disability has traditionally been viewed, is currently viewed, and how it might be viewed through an interactional lens, this latter view being the one taken in this study. In particular I outline how traditional approaches treat testing and diagnosis, and how they attribute any challenges as belonging to the individual. I use in particular the concept of “Theory of Mind” (Baron-Cohen, 2001; Frith, 1991, 2003) to illustrate departures between traditional ways of thinking about learning disability (in this particular illustration, Autism) and those of interactional approaches. I suggest how using alternative, interactional approaches enables movement away from attributing individual deficit and movement towards an appreciation of joint accomplishments. Since the study draws upon the combined resources of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discursive Psychology (DP), I consider the CA literature related to talk and its organization, and the DP literature, which focuses on psychology as an interactional matter and as a matter for participants, rather than analysts. As the specific site of enquiry for this study is the accomplishment of a particular conversational task - that of closing a telephone conversation, another strand of the opening chapter is a specific consideration of the literature on closings within the conversation analytic tradition.
In Chapter Two, I provide more of the 'nuts and bolts' of the study, initially in terms of analytic methods. The emphasis in both CA & DP analyses is in uncovering action in naturally occurring interaction. In the case of CA, action is bound up in the sequential unfolding of talk whilst in the case of DP it is bound up in the discourse practices used in the talk to manage psychological 'business'. In order to effectively consider 'action', one needs specific ways of representing the data that captures not only what is said but how it is said.

The merits and nature of using the Jeffersonian transcription system is discussed (as are some of the particularly challenging aspects of transcribing some of the talk in this study). I also use this chapter to describe the procedure for obtaining participants and for providing details of their specific challenges. The issue of ethics is discussed as is the process for gathering data and for data management. I also outline details of other data sets that have been used for comparison. Finally the unique issues associated with the dual role of researcher-participant are explored as are the implications for maintaining reliability and validity in the study.

In Chapter Three, the first of the analytic chapters, I outline the preliminary observations. There were several 'episodes' of pre-closing activity in each closing section and close scrutiny of these suggested that the pre-closing turns were populated with many materials which served to extend them. Often these materials included an account for why the call may (possibly) be reaching a close. The standard pre-closing turn that fundamentally offers the possibility of closure, appeared to be being used to manage other business as well as that of closing.

Much activity over and above the economical closing as described by Schegloff and Sacks (1973) was evident. In the chapter I describe that activity and draw conclusions about what may be being managed by it. I begin by examining the architecture of a closing section, followed by some illustrations of the use of accounts. The chapter then goes on to explore the varying designs of pre-closing turn within which these accounts are embedded. Whilst there is some diversity in terms of their design, it is possible to group them into three major groups, distinguishable by their syntactic properties.
I discuss accounts that appear:

- with an announcement indicating that the speaker has to close the call
- with an interrogative about the wish or requirement of the other to close
- with a directive to the other to close

Whilst there is some diversity in the designs in which accounts are embedded, there are common features of the accounts themselves, which index the nature of the work that they perform. Such features suggest an orientation by participants to distance themselves from the idea that they might wish to leave the call and to construct themselves as reluctant to do so. This is shown to be a major ‘pre-occupation’ of participants. I characterise the action of which these activities are part as that of caring. Caring is used here to encapsulate the action that is being displayed by participants, rather than referring to a psychological disposition held by participants. Finally comparisons are drawn with other data sets in order to appreciate whether accounting activity is present in other corpuses. In this way it is possible to appreciate the ‘uniqueness’ or otherwise of the high concentration of these materials in the close-initiating turns in my own data sets.

In Chapter Four, I explore the high concentration of other types of materials introduced into the pre-closing episodes, which also contribute to discursive work. These resources are drawn upon recurrently by participants and represent a range of affiliative practices which provide something of a ‘buffer’ at the point where the trajectory of the call is towards closure. As such they not only contribute to the building of a caring closedown of the call, but they appear to delicately manage and sustain the relationality between participants by invoking aspects of their ongoing relationship. Specifically these materials include:

- the elaborate construction of future individual and joint activities
- explicit ‘checking’ about the potential trajectory of the call
- explicit references to next calls and next meetings
- high concentration of endearment terms and of intonation and voice quality that hearably displays ‘care’.

These resources, though not alien to the closing arena (cf. Schegloff and Sacks, 1973; Pavlidou, 2002) are included in high concentration and with considerable
elaboration in the calls considered here. This chapter explores the discursive work of these resources and considers how it may be related to the work done by accounts. These affiliative resources can be found both as a supplement to the accounts and in place of them. I explore how these various resources manage the relationality between participants, and how these other resources complement the idea of 'reluctance' built through the accounts. I consider how they are combined in several closing episodes, to produce a closing which displays 'care' for the other on behalf of the speaker. This allows for a re-specification of what it is to be 'reluctant' and 'caring'. In the chapter I suggest that these are live and dynamic activities as evidenced by and through the materials we see occurring in these closings.

Chapter Five turns to a consideration of those pre-closing turns which contain often short, rather more tacit indications that the trajectory of the call may be towards closing. A particular focus is on how single words such as 'okay' and 'alright' are hearable as orienting towards closing and how they are responded to. This is explored by considering similarities and differences between the comparative data sets outlined earlier. These more tacit turns (specifically the close-initiating turn and the response to it) are explored in this chapter in terms of their lexical content and their prosodic delivery. This avenue of inquiry arose from an initial noticing that in some calls lexical content was matched with the prior turn and in others it was not. In some calls prosodic delivery was very marked and in others it was not. The chapter also explores a range of data sets, initially to understand something of the nature of these tacit turns, but also in pursuit of one of the broader objectives of this study; to consider whether there are differences in such turns in the data sets which involve a young adult with a learning disability and those that do not.

Chapter Six explores the levels of collaboration in using these resources and in the management of the close in a caring way. I compare these aspects across the other data sets to which I have access. Furthermore I consider how symmetrically or asymmetrically the closing work is done with a view to addressing one of the
broader concerns with which I started, namely; does family telephone talk which includes a young adult with a learning disability look different from any other family telephone talk? In what senses, if any, is disability 'live' in this interaction?

Many researchers of interaction within the area of disability (for example, Goodwin, 1995, 2003; Shakespeare, 1998; Ochs et al., 2004), observe that in talk which includes someone with a diagnosed disability, the interactional business may be asymmetrically distributed. Following their lead, this chapter explores asymmetries of different kinds in this collection of calls involving two young adults with a diagnosed learning disability. This includes an examination of whether the discursive action highlighted in previous chapters is collaboratively produced and whether this is symmetrically or asymmetrically done.

The final chapter draws together the themes that have developed throughout preceding chapters. It considers what this study has added to an understanding of the business of closing; in particular what more it has revealed about the provision of a “warrant” for closing (as first outlined by Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). It considers what this study has contributed to developing a discursive psychology of caring. By focusing upon the closing sequence and its interactional machinery, it has been possible to consider the nature of caring and suggest that it can be re-considered in procedural terms; by considering discursive activity injected into the standard closing sequence. In this concluding chapter, as well as bringing together and discussing the above analytic findings, I make observations about how taking an interactional approach can develop an understanding of interaction and disability that celebrates accomplishments rather than highlights deficit. The chapter discusses several themes which have emerged which have the potential to challenge traditional views and some of the current views about disability. It considers what we may draw from the findings, in terms of how we approach interaction, when interaction includes someone with a diagnosed impairment, which may potentially impede communication.

Creating order in talk can be viewed as the key endeavour for anyone who enters an interaction. Is creating order in the face of a diagnosed ‘disorder’, any
different? Chapter by chapter I consider the very practical ways in which two families, each containing a young adult with a diagnosed learning disability, accomplish often delicate conversational tasks through collaborative effort. I consider whether the observed practices are generic to conversation or specific to talk which includes young adults with learning disabilities, through comparisons with other data sets. This thesis suggests that many of the practices we see are generic though they are often more elaborately and more explicitly done.

Ultimately this thesis argues that many of the practices observed are as much (if not more) about maintaining family relationships than about disability per se. I use the findings ultimately to argue for a movement away from approaches that consider ‘disability’ to be a matter of individual (in)competence towards an approach that considers the conversational procedures and resources that can be drawn upon to sustain rich and equal communication.
Chapter 1 – Perspectives on Learning Disability, Interaction and Conversational Closings

Introduction

This opening chapter will explore a variety of perspectives which are relevant to the empirical study which is reported in this thesis. I draw upon a range of literature to consider how learning disability has traditionally been viewed, is currently viewed, and how it might be viewed through an interactional lens. This latter view is the one taken in this study. Here then I lay the groundwork for the study which follows, and consider how an interactional approach offers an alternative way of exploring issues about learning disability. My study draws upon the combined resources of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discursive Psychology (DP) and so I consider the CA literature related to talk and its organization, and the DP literature, which focuses on psychology as an interactional matter. The specific site of enquiry for this study is the accomplishment of a particular conversational task - that of closing a conversation or, more specifically, a telephone conversation. Consequently another strand of this opening chapter is a specific consideration of the literature on closings within the conversation analytic tradition. Initially, I will provide some definitions of Learning Disability (LD), from both the ‘diagnostic’ and vernacular domains.

What is Learning Disability?

Learning disability (LD) is a broad umbrella term for a range of conditions. The technical apparatus of traditional psychology notes that a defining characteristic of learning disability is a lower than average intelligence quotient (IQ). However for a diagnosis of learning disability to be made it is also a criterion that onset occurs before the age of eighteen (to rule out conditions related to trauma or neurological irregularities in later life), and that a lower IQ score is also accompanied by impaired adaptive functioning. Adaptive functioning refers to measures of how well individuals’ perform in areas of their lives such as
communication, home living, self-direction, work, social-interpersonal skills or safety (APA, 1994, 2000). Thus, the presence of an IQ of less than 70, difficulties in at least two of a number of adaptive functioning areas (as above) and onset of difficulties before the age of 18 may lead to a diagnosis or classification of mental retardation (in the United States) and learning difficulties/disabilities (in the United Kingdom). This is based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision, American Psychiatric Association, (1994, 2000:DSM-IV-TR) definition.

Terminology for learning difficulties/disabilities has changed over time. This reflects a change of emphasis towards terms which are less prejudicial to people who are part of this group. In the UK the terms learning difficulties and learning disabilities tend to be used interchangeably though the former also encompasses specific difficulties such as dyslexia which apply almost exclusively in the learning environment. This study will use the latter term, learning disabilities, to encompass those disabilities associated with learning and wider social life, but recognises at the same time that in much of the literature difficulties and disabilities are used synonymously. Increasingly the term intellectual disabilities is used in more recent ‘interactional’ work (for example, Rapley, 2004; Antaki et al., 2007, 2008; Finlay et al., 2008). Here I retain the term learning disabilities since this is the one that has been ‘applied’ to the young adults in this study for most of their lives.

Referring, as I have above, to ‘this group’ would suggest that we are talking about a homogeneous group of people. This is certainly not true of the two young adults in this study and of many others who have diverse difficulties but would be classified under the umbrella term. One of the young adults also has what would be classed as a ‘pervasive development disorder’ (Autistic Spectrum Disorder, ASD) and the other also has a ‘communication disorder’ (associated with Dyspraxia). The classification of these two ‘disorders’ also follows APA 1994, 2000: DSM-IV-TR. It would be wrong therefore to assume that the challenges faced by each
individual were the same although they both are diagnosed with moderate learning difficulties. I choose in this particular instance to use the term ‘difficulties’ in recognition of the fact that their diagnoses were made as a result of the statementing process in the educational system and this is the description that was ascribed to them during their educational lives. The ascription ‘moderate’ is indicative of the banding of learning difficulties into mild, moderate, severe, and profound. The banding ‘moderate’ encompasses those with IQs of between 35-55.

At the time of data gathering these two young people were in their late teens and in the process of moving between child and adult services (in the language of social services) or secondary and further education (in educational language). In terms of the language of ‘life-cycle’ both young people were at a life-stage where they were no longer children or adolescents but were fully fledged adults, though relatively new to that ‘attainment’ hence the use of young adults.

Mencap’s\(^3\) rather more vernacular description of learning disability, explicates something of the challenges faced by the young adult participants in this study: A learning disability affects the way someone learns, communicates or does some everyday things. This best encapsulates the only prior assumptions that are made of the young adults in this study.

**Traditional psychological perspectives of Learning Disability**

One of the first striking findings when searching for perspectives on Learning Disability is that any such discussion is presented as abnormal psychology or disordered psychology or alternatively, the psychology of mental disorder. On the one hand this could be regarded as simply the carving up and labelling of various branches of psychology but notably the terms used and the distinctions made,

\(^3\) From www.mencap.org.uk (accessed April 2008)
position learning disability as something which deviates from the ‘normal’ and ‘ordered’.

Prevalent ‘topics’ in the literature on Learning Disability are summarised by Comer (2007) as:

- describing and categorising groups of individuals according to the nature of their difficulties;
- researching aetiologies with a view to understanding from a psychological point of view the characteristics of particular groups
- considering interventions that will help to ‘deal with’ an individual’s ‘condition’ and the effects of that condition

Certainly the first two of these have been traditionally positioned in the psychological domain and at the level of the individual, though the move towards a ‘social’ model of disability means that the latter area has in recent years been studied in a more holistic way. In the main then psychological perspectives place learning disability at the level of the individual and it is expressed in terms of an individual’s (in)ability or (in)competence to lead a ‘normal’ life.

Theoretical Models relevant to Learning Disability

Theoretical models typically treat LD as an atypical developmental disorder which can be attributed to person variables, environmental variables or a combination of both (Nabuzoka, 2004). Hagen et al. (1982) group models of LD as: 

- defecit or neurophysiological models;
- behavioural models;
- developmental lag models, and
- deficiency models. Each can be viewed as laying on a continuum which reflects person-environment attribution.

Defecit or neurophysiological models attribute learning disability to pathological conditions and consider any difficulties to be linked primarily to abnormalities in or damage to the central nervous system. Difficulties in social functioning are seen to be stemming from neural dysfunction (Rourke & Del Dotto, 1994; Spafford &
Grosser, 1993) due in part to defective language processing. Thus when considering an individual’s social interactive skills, *any differences in social interaction*, are explained by attribution to an individual’s neural dysfunction, and any differences or problems are attributed as belonging to one person rather than recognising that social life involves many participants. Coming from this perspective then there is an emphasis on individual difference and there is a strong emphasis on neurological testing and intervention.

Behavioural models offer the opportunity to refer to aspects of environment that may produce challenges for the individual. However whilst this would suggest that difficulties reside in the environment as well as with the individual it is still the case that it is the individual’s behaviour towards any potentially detrimental factors that are called into question. Weisberg (1992) suggests that in the academic environment, it is possible to question aspects of instruction that cause problems, rather than focussing on processes that are present in the learner since often such processes are based upon hypothetical constructs. However the difficulties that learning disabled children are perceived to have are often still expressed in terms of low motivation or lack of conceptual understanding. Built in to the behavioural approach then is an underlying assumption that there is some attitude or inability within the individual to which difficulties may be attributed. Thus whilst a behavioural approach does make it possible to look beyond processes present in the individual and towards the broader aspects of the environment for a clearer picture of the difficulties associated with learning disability, such an approach relies very much on norm-referenced testing and interventions (programming) which set out to change individuals’ behaviours.

Developmental theories of learning disability suggest that people with learning disabilities lag behind their peers in terms of the maturation of cognitive skills and so ultimately may never achieve parity in their final level of competence. Such theories rest on the premise that as children develop, they acquire more and more sophisticated cognitive skills at various stages of maturation (Piaget, 1970; Lerner,
and whilst learning disabled children may develop such skills they will do so at a slower pace. Once more then such a perspective attributes any difficulties to the individual and calls into question their cognitive skills in relation to a theoretical framework which designates norms for certain stages of maturity (age). Whilst educators may intervene to provide stimulating academic environments to help individuals continually 'mature', the learning disability is seen as inherent to the person and so possible progression to higher levels of cognitive maturity rests with them too.

Deficiency models of learning disability are distinguishable from deficit models but are similar to the developmental models above in that they consider that people with learning disabilities are developmentally immature but in this case this is considered to be due to a deficiency in information processing abilities and in particular possible memory deficiencies. Since memory is fundamental to learning, an individual's challenges are viewed as problems with retaining and assimilating new information or experiences and drawing on existing knowledge. Such perspectives are rooted in the early work of Piaget (1952) on cognitive development psychology and the work of Atkinson and Schiffrin (1968) on memory.

With the exception then of behaviourist perspectives, which include a consideration of environmental aspects, most psychological perspectives on learning disability, situate it as a cognitive matter and place it as something innate within the individual. Cognitive theorists (for example Beck, 2004) see psychological disorders as some sort of thinking disorder which is indicative of abnormal cognitive processing and which can produce a flawed sense of reality within affected individuals.

Despite their different theoretical frameworks these perspectives all tend to emphasise deficit and deficiency in mental processing and they do this by indicating individuals' deviation from some theoretical norm. Such perspectives on
learning disability have prevailed for a long time but are being complemented, and in some cases challenged, by alternative insights into the nature of learning disability. For example, Rapley (2004) has provided a powerful and passionate critique of traditional perspectives (particularly in terms of how they produce a less-than-desirable identity for people with learning disabilities) as well as giving an exemplar of the application of newer perspectives. In the following section, I illustrate an alternative start-point from which to study learning disability. I will focus here on one theory in particular which has received much attention and has been heavily researched in the psychological domain (Comer, 2007). This theory is relevant in particular to the diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) made of one of the participants in this study.

**An alternative perspective on Theory of Mind**

Traditional psychological theories suggest that people with ASD have perceptual and cognitive disturbances that mean that normal social interaction is hampered (Comer 2007). This has been extensively attributed to an impaired Theory of Mind (ToM). ToM is the ability to infer a range of mental states (beliefs, thoughts, desires, imagination, emotions etc) that cause others to act in certain ways (Baron-Cohen, 2001). By the age of 3 to 5 years children are able to take into account the perspective of other people and to be able to anticipate how they might act. This is also referred to as ‘mind-reading’, and so people with ASD are considered to suffer from ‘mind-blindness’(Baron-Cohen et al., 1985; Baron-Cohen, 2001; Frith, 1991, 2003). This interferes with, indeed in some cases prevents, full engagement in social interaction, in forming relationships and using language which reflects an appreciation of the perspectives of other people (Comer, 2007). This theory implies that ‘beliefs’ and ‘thoughts’ and indeed ‘mind’ are things which are available to be reviewed and recognised as a particular entity. Alternative positions however, for example a discursive psychological approach (Edwards and Potter, 1992) questions whether reference can be made to these as definitive objects. Similarly, Antaki (2004:668) says that,
"referential-sounding phrases about minds seem to be taken by Theory of Mind advocates as literal descriptions of what competent people do successfully (they are accurately referring to 'a thought' when they 'think X about themselves' or 'think others think X').

ToM then as a theory relies on an assumption that somehow it is possible to identify definitively entities such as beliefs and feelings and can adjudge whether, in particular people with ASD, can identify them 'correctly'. This specific theory also has much in common with the general models described above in that individuals are judged to have some sort of impairment if they do not do what in theory 'normal' people do. In this case as in many of those above, the identification of impairments is based upon measuring individuals against a pre-defined norm, often in an abstract situation, rather than what can be considered a naturalistic situation.

Many of the experiments used to test for ToM rely on such abstractions. One such experiment (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985) involves children viewing two dolls (Sally and Anne). Sally places a ball in a red cupboard and then leaves. Whilst she is away Anne moves the ball from the red cupboard to a blue cupboard. The children who have witnessed this activity are asked where Sally will look for her ball when she comes back. It is theorised that children who have autism are not likely to be able to understand Sally’s state of mind and will answer that she will look for the ball in the blue cupboard (to where it has been moved), when in fact most other children with an intact ToM would answer that she would look for the ball in the red cupboard as that is where she (Sally) believes it to be. On the basis of this experiment ToM theorists would attribute an impaired or intact ToM. However there are alternative indicators of intersubjectivity apart from whether one person can guess another’s thoughts based on an abstract situation and using pre-formulated norms of behaviour. For instance, we might look at the talk that takes place in more naturally occurring environments to see examples of where people orient to the (possible) thoughts or feelings of others.
Starting from this alternative position we may find the 'dispositions' of others constructed in talk in practical ways. The following example will illustrate this. In any interaction there are practical matters to be defined, defended, explored or attended to in some way. This is a practical issue for participants and we can inspect talk in naturally occurring situations for how participants work actively to achieve intersubjectivity. Studies of talk do not attempt to replace experiments like the Sally-Anne one, since they are not coming at this from an assessment (of particular competences) perspective. Moreover studies of talk do not set out to study whether participants can 'read' the thoughts or feelings of others, but such studies can show where in their talk they orient to alternative trajectories that others' actions might take. A short example from this study may help to illustrate this.

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{(Mr R is the headmaster)
Sue: [i haven't done ma hair dye yet cause i] was worried about Mr R's going to shoot-
[t' get me]
Mum: [to shout]
Sue: if i wore my 'air dye he'll be ong- angry
Mum: mmhh.
he won't darling it's not a bright colour it's only a- it's only one of those >wash in wash out ones< =but
[≠bring it home.] and we'll do it in a couple of weeks

In this short extract we see Sue, a young adult with autism talk about how another person (Mr. R) may 'feel' in a certain situation. We are not however looking to see if Sue has 'read' Mr R's thoughts 'correctly' or 'incorrectly' as would be the case in the Sally-Anne experiment. What we are able to glean from inspecting Sue's talk is that she orients to the fact that the action of dyeing her hair might produce a response from Mr. R, and this response she characterises as 'anger'. That she has chosen a 'correct' alternative (a correct 'guess' at Mr R's likely reaction) is not at issue. It arises in Sue's actual talk that Mr R may have a perspective on the situation and Sue expresses overtly her suggestion for what that might be, characterising it in terms of something that is accessible to both participants as potentially 'not being very pleased' (ie being 'angry'). Through the talk we can see how intersubjectivity is built up between participants such that this is being
presented to her interlocutor (Mum) as her (Sue's) take on what might happen if she dyes her hair. Sue uses a description ('angry') taken from the 'psychological thesaurus' (Edwards, 2005:263), which we might or might not treat as a 'mind-reading' of Mr R's mind. What is more significant is that Sue uses this mentalistic description to construct her 'take' on Mr R's potential reaction if she dyes her hair. She also talks of how Mr R is 'going to shoot-' and repairs this to 't'get me' at the same time as Mum offers a candidate repair of the former, cut-off phrase ('to shout'). All of these things are hearable as potential manifestations of that which might be characterised as 'anger'. Sue then talks about Mr R being angry if she wore her hair dye and Mum hears this as that 'he won't be pleased' but assures Sue that he won't (be angry) as the dye is not a bright colour and it's not a permanent one, thereby showing her hearing of Sue's assignation of anger by offering up mitigating reasons for why he may not be. Thus progressively through turns at talk the two participants develop a shared understanding of how Mr R might react at Sue applying a hair dye. Thus we can see that intersubjectivity is a matter to be managed by participants within talk (Edwards, 1997) rather than something which can be adjudged by observers of whether people can read each other's minds and arrive at a precise understanding of exactly what it is that they feel and would do in a given situation (based on a hypothetical situation).

Inspecting talk for such things as those I have highlighted in this short analysis, is thus a different start point for understanding intersubjectivity. It focuses on interaction as practical and it looks at interaction from the point of view of participants situated in context and time. Furthermore it represents a raw form of empiricism that attends carefully to actual practices rather than producing experimental vignettes.

It is possible to argue then that to assign competence/incompetence to individuals in experimental ways using abstract, hypothetical situations (as in the above) it may only be possible to highlight areas of deficit, when results deviate from a theoretical norm. There is also a very heavy reliance in such tests on abstract entities such as thoughts, feelings and beliefs which it is assumed are recognisable
as a definitive ‘something’. By taking an interactional approach, using naturalistic data we can inspect talk for displays of emotion, expressions of feelings and the like. In the above example Sue talks of being ‘worried’ – she talks of Mr R possibly being ‘angry’ and orients to how this might manifest – that is, he might be ‘going to shoot’ or might ‘get me’. Mum suggests too that he may ‘shout’. Thus there are ways of gaining access to issues such as emotion, thoughts etc. by looking for their manifestations in and for talk in naturally occurring contexts, rather than making assumptions about someone’s ‘state of mind’ based upon an abstract situation.

In looking at a specific theory then from the psychological domain (ToM) we can see how traditional perspectives (as reflected too in the discussion of the overarching models above) have a tendency to focus on deficit and ‘the lack of’. Using a hypothetical task to adjudge someone’s behaviour against a certain norm, and attributing incompetence on the basis of the absence of a predefined ‘something’, potentially sidelines alternative competences and the everyday contexts in which they are used. Focussing on what is accomplished collaboratively in talk in interaction in naturalistic settings enables an opportunity to explore what individuals can and do do in everyday situations and allows for an appreciation too of what we could view as interpersonal competence.

In this regard Rapley (2004:77) says that traditional approaches are,

“still reliant on a materialist, indeed naïve realist, appreciation of competence and approaches to its demonstration. ...... rather than adopting this, traditional approach, (in)competence, must be approached as a matter not for analytic or professional prescription, but rather more respectfully, as a matter for members. Competence, from a discursive psychological perspective, is much more a subtle social competence than can be captured by standardised testing or the ticking of boxes on adaptive behaviour lists”.

Traditional psychological work then has provided a range of perspectives on learning disability that have contributed significantly to the diagnosis of learning
disabilities. Since diagnoses provide the basis for the provision of assistive services these approaches are thus very important. However their reliance upon hypothetical situations means that they may only present a limited insight into the social world of someone with a learning disability. Similarly, the reliance on some predefined norm against which someone might be judged, leads to the attribution of incompetence whilst alternative competences may be overlooked. Furthermore this places any challenges at the feet of the 'learning-disabled' individual rather than seeing any challenges as something belonging to a wider community.

I have begun to suggest how an alternative analytic take, that cuts across traditional and contemporary conceptualizations, might be employed to realize an alternative perspective on learning disability. This would rely upon naturally occurring data collected in situ, rather than upon hypothetical situations. It would dispense with pre-defined measures of what constitutes competence and treat issues of competence as in the hands of participants to an interaction to attend to within that interaction. This would allow for an alternative view of learning disability which focuses on the collaborative rather than individual accomplishment of everyday conversational tasks. It is in the accomplishment of these that we may find out more about learning disability, by considering participants' orientation to any matters, which may or may not include matters of competence or deficit.

**Interactional perspectives of Learning Disability**

The above discussion has shown up some differences in the type of data that might be used to explore issues around learning disability; ranging from experimental situations where participants are invited to provide possible guesses about another's thoughts to a consideration of naturalistic data in which it is possible to explore more overt displays related to feelings and emotions. In this section I will discuss more fully the differences between traditional psychological approaches and interactional approaches. I also discuss Conversation Analysis and
Discursive Psychology and consider in particular how they can be combined in the analysis of naturally occurring data. Finally in this section I detail some studies that have used interactional analyses to study various areas of disability.

**Points of departure from psychological research**

The differing emphasis between traditional approaches and interactional approaches not only influences the type of data which is collected. It also has a bearing on how and where it is collected and how it is analysed.

The site where data is collected can have profound effects on how disability is viewed. Goodwin (1995,2003a,b,2004,2006) has looked in detail at conversations which include people with aphasia and other brain traumas. In particular he has looked at interactions comprising talk between Chil, an aphasic man, and other members of his family. In studying Chil in a naturalistic setting he is able to show how with the help of other family members Chil can hold very complex conversations with just a few words at his disposal. Goodwin’s work emphasises the importance of having co-operative interactional partners and of working collaboratively to accomplish diverse and often complex interactional tasks. In gathering data from such a naturalistic setting then it is possible to highlight joint accomplishments rather than draw out individual deficiencies. That is not to say that the talk may not be completely unproblematic, but such data can be explored for how any potential difficulties are collaboratively managed and so any difficulties can be seen to be shared as a result of the context in which the data is collected.

Shakespeare (1998) also considered the effect of where data is collected when looking at talk which included potentially confused speakers (with diagnoses of varying degenerative difficulties). She noted particularly that when data was gathered in an environment which was also the source of diagnosis, that this had an undesirable effect on the participant’s ability to accomplish non-confused
interaction. This arose, Shakespeare suggests, because when non-impaired participants become confused it is explained away as being a consequence of the situation in which they find themselves, whereas in the case of a diagnosed ‘confused’ speaker, it is assumed that it is because of their diagnosed condition that interactions may become confused. Furthermore it is asserted that ‘confused’ speakers find it difficult to readily draw upon resources that will ‘fix’ the confusion, (especially in environments which are also the site of their diagnosis), whereas non-confused speakers may not experience such difficulties. This would seem to suggest that in choosing as naturalistic as possible a context in which to collect data, there is an opportunity to explore beyond the diagnosed impairment and look to the accomplishments that those with additional challenges and their interlocutors jointly achieve.

Schegloff (1999:419) has also considered the site of data collection when talking about the potential interactional challenges faced by a man after major brain surgery. On this matter he states,

“But in order to specify in a reliable way just what the effects are, we need empirically grounded accounts of what such persons can do — do do — in circumstances embodying ordinary contingencies of interaction, and not just how they perform in testing situations which, far from neutralizing interactional contexts, themselves can constitute distinctive speech-exchange systems which confront participants with quite distinctive and potentially complicating, interactional exigencies.”

Here, Schegloff alerts us to the negative effect that may arise when competence is ‘tested’ in a non-naturalistic setting. He draws attention not only to the fact that testing situations themselves are not helpful in assessing what people can do in “ordinary” contexts, but such situations may have a particular patterning of talk that provides additional challenges for an individual to negotiate. For example, consider how different institutional talk may be in relation to family talk. In the
former there are additional contingencies with which a participant has to deal, which are features of that particular framework. This makes a powerful case for the use of naturalistic data and naturalistic environments for a greater (and more empirically grounded) understanding of challenges faced by some individuals in talk.

There is another dimension that can be explored when looking at this naturally occurring data in varying environments which is how the interactional work is distributed among participants. We can inspect data for how symmetrically or otherwise the talk is distributed between participants. We might look at how actions within the talk are managed and by whom they are accomplished. Using naturally occurring data in varying environments can highlight differences in how talk involving those with some sort of additional challenge varies from what might be considered mainstream talk, though it notably does not highlight these as one participant's incompetence and another's competence. This is distinct from traditional approaches. Some caution has to be exercised however in attributing any variations from 'mainstream' talk to one factor or another as will become apparent in this study, and so it has to be explored rigorously and cautiously.

So far then I have highlighted ways in which the type of data and the site in which it is collected may vary between traditional and interactive approaches and how this has significant influences on how disability (including learning disability) is presented. The way in which data is analysed also has significant bearing on how learning disability is considered. Conversation Analysis and Discursive Psychology (the two approaches discussed below that are used in this study) contribute significantly to a view of interaction as a range of achievements accomplished collaboratively and issues associated with individual competence are treated as matters for participants within an interaction. It is to a discussion of these approaches that I will now turn.
Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discursive Psychology (DP)

These two approaches used together have a great propensity to unravel the intricacies of social interaction, and they also have unique characteristics which make them quite different (Wooffitt, 2005). Thus they will first be considered separately and the way in which they can be combined effectively will then be considered.

CA developed from the work of Harvey Sacks, and his associates, Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. CA studies the organisation of social action as it is realised through talk. Such action is to be found “in everyday interaction, in discursive practices, in the sayings/tellings/doings of members of society.” (Psathas, 1995:2).

Of CA, Antaki (2000:329) says,

“It’s an analysis that assumes as little as possible, and tries to make its claims sensible by grounding them in what actually happened, somewhere, at some time, to some real people who were involved in something they seemed to care about and which would have had material consequences.”

This straight-forward description reveals the key ideas which are at the heart of CA. CA makes very few assumptions - a very pertinent issue when considering people who may come to an interaction with potential additional ‘challenges’ as these would not be taken for granted and data would only be perused for any such things as became evident in the talk. Analytic claims can be grounded in what actually happened at some place and time – there is no reliance on abstract notions or prior theoretical stances – data is inspected for how the talk unfolds on a turn by turn basis and any claims are based on observations that are transparent and available for review. CA studies data which is naturally occurring within a variety of possible frameworks - it may be that of a family telephone call or a
consultation appointment with a doctor – and therein the business of that occasion is managed collaboratively between participants.

The latter part of Antaki’s description alludes to something of CA’s links to DP in that the granularity of CA provides for a turn by turn scrutiny of talk and the actions it is performing, whilst DP provides for an analysis of the psychological business that is being taken care of in the talk. Thus when Antaki talks about participants being “involved in something they seemed to care about” we might consider how that ‘care’ is displayed discursively in the talk. We might look for materials which display, or enable participants to build, a caring disposition. Such analysis is indicative of the DP approach.

The machinery of CA comprises a range of “organizations of practice” (Schegloff, 2006:71) such as turn-taking, sequence organisation and conversational repair. It is the inspection of these practices as they occur in talk-in-interaction that provides analytic insight into what is being accomplished in the talk.

Conversation analysts may view aspects of turn-taking and may discuss this in terms of how turns are co-ordinated between a number of participants, whether turns overlap and whether there are pauses or gaps in the talk. Sacks et al. (1974) described a set of practices for allocating turns at talk (for example by naming a next speaker or by a speaker self-selecting), and analysts may for example draw upon this to explore how participants may self-select if they wish to begin a particular course of action, for example the closing of a telephone call. In this case a participant may self-select after a hearable pause and say something like ‘okay then I’d better go’ to begin a trajectory towards closing.

Sequence organisation refers to another level of organisation that is scrutinised in CA. Analysts may look at how several turns or actions are built up to be coherent and how participants may collaboratively construct a sequence of turns to pursue a particular course of action (for example a closing sequence). The minimum form
any sequence can take is two turns. A first turn may begin a course of action such as an offer to close as in the paragraph above and a second action may be to accept that offer with an ‘okay then’. This may then result in another set of utterances in the form of ‘terminal exchanges’ such as ‘bye bye’ followed by a reciprocal ‘bye’. It is possible too, and is often the case that sequences become extended, so in our working example we may not have an ‘okay then’ but we may get additional talk to indicate that the second participant is declining the offer to close, and we may have an extended sequence before the final farewells.

Conversation Analysts also study the machinery that addresses trouble in talk. Repair of talk due to some problem of hearing, speaking or understanding is central to the development of intersubjectivity between participants. According to Schegloff (2006:79):

“...The practices of repair and their ordered deployment are probably the main guarantors of intersubjectivity and common ground in interaction. The practices of repair make intersubjectivity always a matter of immediate and local determination, not one of abstract and general shared facts, views or stances.”

We see then that intersubjectivity is treated as something which is worked at on a turn by turn basis by participants. In the case that a misunderstanding is raised in the talk a next turn can amend utterances, or delete or insert parts of it, and so on. Through the machinery of repair this can be revisited and repeated until the misunderstanding is resolved. The machinery of repair in particular illustrates the contrast between the traditional approaches we considered earlier and those of CA. Rather than assuming joint knowledge of some abstract indeterminate object, CA relies on a set of practices which can deal with trouble and can demonstrably display participants working to achieve intersubjectivity.
Another facet of CA is that of recipient design. This refers to the particular formulation of an utterance that is used by a speaker. Speakers will choose a particular way of formulating a particular utterance, from a range of alternatives, in order to accomplish a particular action with that turn at talk. This is because a recipient will be inspecting that talk for what the talk is doing in being delivered in that particular way using those particular words (Schegloff, 2006). The speaker and recipient taking turns at talk will design their turns to fit with the previous turn and the action being pursued through the talk.

All of the above aspects of CA have been discussed in relation to turns and sequences or repair opportunity spaces, but CA is also concerned with the overall structural organisation within which these units, turns and sequences of talk occur. Apart from openings and closings of conversations which by their very nature mean they appear at the beginning and end of talk occasions, other units, turns and sequences can be inspected for what they are doing there in that occasion of talk. Matters can be raised early in an episode of talk to signify urgency or later to mark it as something which is mentioned 'by the way'. Again these are important features of the study of CA in terms of the actions they demonstrate.

Thus the apparatus of CA can be used to inspect naturally occurring for actions that are displayed, but in talking of inspecting for these elements, it is assumed that this will be done in the spirit of empirical enquiry which begins with "an unmotivated looking" (Psathas, 1995:45). This is in contrast to traditional perspectives which tend to start off with an hypothesis-driven agenda.

A brief definition of Discursive Psychology (DP) is provided by Edwards (2005:258) as,

"the application of principle and methods from discourse and conversation analysis, and increasingly CA, to psychological themes"

Two aspects are of immediate note here. First the link to Discourse Analysis (DA) and Conversation Analysis (CA) and second the application of these to
psychological matters. Wooffitt describes DP as "a thorough reworking of the matter of psychology" (2005:113) and Edwards (2005:259) outlines the three strands of DP as:

- "the re-specification and critique of psychological topics and explanation";
- the use of the language of psychology (the "psychological thesaurus", p.263) and,
- the management of psychological business in interaction.

The first of these is particularly pertinent to earlier discussions concerning traditional psychological perspectives. There we established that a reliance on psychological concepts and theoretical norms to explain people's actions and attitudes meant that they may be judged competent or incompetent in a particular dimension. For example, the way in which someone might report an event, could be viewed as relying on memory (a psychological concept). The report could be analysed in a way which measures and makes judgements about someone's ability to remember and recall facts. However taking a DP-based perspective, someone's report would be looked upon as the construction of a particular version of events that may have been selected from any number of alternative versions. The event reporter would have created that particular version in that particular way in order to accomplish something with it. The starting point for any analysis is thus very different. Rather than seeing language as a window into what is going on inside people's heads, a discursive psychological treatment of language looks at the discourse practices which are entailed in the talk and how these are used to manage psychological matters such as stake, agency and so on (Edwards, 1997).

Applying such a perspective to my earlier example:

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((Mr R is the headmaster))
Sue: [i haven't done ma hair dye yet cause i] was worried about Mr R's going to shoot- [t' get me]
Mum: [to shout]
Sue: if i wore my 'air dye he'll be ong- angry
Mum: mmmn.
he won't darling it's not a bright colour it's only a- it's only one of those >wash in wash out ones< =but [↓bring ↑it ↑home.] and we'll do it in a couple of weeks
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Here Sue constructs her talk to suggest that Mr R may be 'angry', by citing elements which suggest possible displays of 'anger' by Mr R and by attributing her having not dyed her hair to this possibility. She constructs this in a way which attends to her stake in this, in a way which invites reassurance from Mum that he may not react in the way she has suggested. In so doing she is showing some proficiency in discourse practices which it would have been impossible to explore except by applying discursive psychological principles. From a purely psychological perspective Sue may have been judged upon whether she had an intact ToM if she had guessed Mr R’s mental state correctly as that of anger. From a DP perspective we see Sue borrow a term from the “psychological thesaurus” (Edwards, 2005:263) to characterise her take on, and manage her stake in, the matter she is reporting. DP thus allows us to look at potential accomplishments in discourse practices rather than judge whether people can guess the minds of others. Indeed it is not for analysts to judge the adequacy or otherwise of individual’s accounts, or arrive at a view on whether they are fact or fiction, but to develop an appreciation of how, “people themselves manage and understand descriptions and their facticity” (Potter, 1996:123). DP thus has the propensity to reveal a very different complexion of competence which is very relevant to the consideration of learning disability. DP can address some of the issues raised as problematic in traditional approaches particularly in terms of adjudging competence.

“Attributions of agency, intelligence, mental states....are in the first place participants’ categories and concerns...” (Edwards, 1997:319)

In the first instance then, a discursive psychological approach places any concerns (for example, about competence) as a matter for participants rather than observers/analysts.

So far then, CA and DP have been considered separately, but an exploration of the links between the two will enable us to see how they can be combined to give an insight into the key focus of this study; the closings of telephone conversations between family members one of whom has a diagnosed learning disability. CA’s analytic methods provide for a fine-grained scrutiny of sequential talk and how it is
organised; it provides a “standard” closing (Schegoff & Sacks, 1973) against which the closings in this study can be compared. Any such findings can be drawn upon as a resource for DP which looks at the psychological business that is being taken care of by participants when they construct their utterances in a particular way. Any similarities or differences then to the standard closing might be scrutinized for what psychological business they may be managing. CA and DP used in combination can thus provide an analytic framework that pays close attention to what is said, how it is received, in what sequence it is said and received, how it is said and what all of these things are designed to achieve; in other words what the talk being done in that way is accomplishing.

With regard to how things are said, CA has shown increasingly that there are features of the delivery of talk that are live and can be captured by the Jeffersonian⁴ transcription system. This enables analysis of what people may be doing by delivering their talk in a particular way. A very simple example may be that of the transcription of a certain word with underlining, which denotes that a speaker has placed emphasis on that utterance and this can be heard in the recording. It is important for analysis in that if a certain something is marked with greater emphasis by the speaker, this is doing a different action than if it were not selected for particular emphasis. The use of intonational contours in talk (also referred to as prosodic features or prosody) figure particularly in the traditional clinical literature on disability, to suggest that prosody is sometimes used ‘inappropriately’ or not at all by people with autism in particular (see Simmons & Baltaxe, 1975; Wilkinson, 1998; McCann & Peppé, 2003; Paul et al, 2005). Such studies often go on to link ‘appropriate’ intonation to ‘competence’ in communication. The drawing out of intonational features in this current study is done purely in the context of turn-taking and sequence organisation in keeping with the tradition of CA’s fine-grained approach.

⁴ Explained further in the following ‘Method’ chapter.
Interaction and Disability

In addition to the work of Goodwin and of Shakespeare whose research I discussed earlier to illustrate the difference between traditional and interactional approaches there are a great many studies in the area of disability which use conversation analytic and/or discursive psychological approaches.

A number of studies by Dickerson et al. (2002, 2005) look at talk, gesture and gaze used as interactional resources by children with autism. In these studies a robot is used as the co-participant in order to capture gaze, making this a unique study. These studies have much in common with the work of Goodwin mentioned earlier, in that gestures, talk and gaze become powerful interactional resources in the co-construction of interactions. The sequencing of the occurrence of these types of resources is studied with a view to reworking and sometimes challenging some of the traditional views of the competencies of autistic individuals. Dickerson et al. (2005) illustrate how attention to aspects of interaction other than language (that is, gaze direction) can uncover previously unappreciated interactional competence and concurrently this reveals the shortcomings of non-interactional approaches which dwell upon deficit (for example, linguistic deficit). Wilkinson (2003), using an interactional approach uncovered previously unappreciated pragmatic competence in individuals with aphasia. Again without an engagement with interactional approaches such competencies may be overlooked and individuals would be adjudged in terms of linguistic deficit, rather than pragmatic competence. Recently Alzheimer's disease has also become an area for interactional inquiry. Kitzinger & Jones (2007) have described the interactional competence displayed by an Alzheimers patient in the routine aspects of the openings of calls.

Dobinson et al. (1998) looked at structural features of conversation with an adult with autism. The main tenet of the authors' engagement with CA as an analytic tool was again to highlight that a coordinated approach is intrinsic in any
conversational trouble” then is viewed by Dobbinson et al. (1998:115) as stemming from, “particular structural patterns which once identified can be avoided or modified, thus enhancing the communicative potential between clinicians or carers and those with autism”.

Thus once more the notion of having co-participants who will adapt (“modify”) their own talk to improve joint accomplishments is evident in this study’s conclusions.

Another series of studies concentrated mainly on verbally competent individuals. Kremer-Sadlik (2004) explored how children with autism responded to questions using the concept of conditional relevance (Sacks, 1992), employing this to adjudge the success or otherwise of question-answer episodes which took place in family exchanges. This was referred to as a “naturally theory of mind task” (Kremer-Sadlik, 1992:185) making a distinction between the more cognitive perspectives on theory of mind (as discussed earlier) and alternatives offered in the discursive domain. However making judgements about whether children had answered appropriately does still make assumptions of the sort we saw in traditional cognitive ToM work (in terms of looking for signs that the children appreciated the mental states of the questioners). Though this represents an attempt to move towards a more naturalistic way of researching autism it is apparent that there remains some resonance with the more traditional cognitive perspectives (particularly related to ToM). This illustrates then that there remain areas of cross-over, some grey areas, that serve to highlight the importance of grounding observations in situated actions in the data, rather than making assumptions about possible mental ‘states’.

Ochs et al. (2004:171) observed how because of “the local orderliness of sequences and turn-taking in conversation” most high-functioning children with autism enjoy a great deal of success in turn-taking. However in more complex interactions some reparation and scaffolding on the part of parents was recognised
as contributing to their success. Solomon (2004) looked at the competence of children with autism to engage in narrative sequences in family settings. Both of these studies highlighted the collaborative effort needed to engage in family talk and the idea that generous interactional partners are a key feature in such interactions. Rendle-Short (2003) drew similar conclusions when she used a conversation analytic approach to study telephone talk which included an eight year old girl with Aspergers Syndrome (AS). As well as highlighting the interactional challenges faced by the young girl she noted in particular the allowances that others made in terms of waiting-time and the prompts they provided. These varying studies share a common thread regarding the reparation and scaffolding provided by others in the family setting, which highlights the collaborative nature of talk and also a shared responsibility in its accomplishments. Moreover, the focus of attention in taking an interactional approach in these studies is on joint achievements rather than individual deficiencies.

Most of the studies spoken about so far have explored communication taking place in family settings but a number of studies have looked at talk which involves people with learning disabilities and their carers within care settings (Rapley & Antaki, 1996; Antaki & Rapley, 1996; Antaki, 2001; Antaki, Young & Finlay, 2002; Antaki, Finlay & Walton, 2007) These highlight a range of issues which are somewhat different to those observed in studies situated in family settings, since the interactions involve people with learning disabilities and care-givers other than members of their own family. The talk it studies is thus of an 'institutional' type. Most of these studies highlight issues surrounding potential non-neutrality by questioners, particularly when questioning individuals about their care environment, and one in particular (Rapley & Antaki, 1996) considers acquiescence in the context of people with learning disabilities. In more recent studies Antaki et al. (2007, 2008) explore how people with learning disabilities are questioned about what they would like to do (and it is observed that such questions usually include

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5 In terms of the distinction made within CA between institutional and mundane talk. The talk takes place within a broader institutional context rather than in the more 'mundane' context of family phone calls.
reference to another person – perhaps another person who does that activity) and about things they would like to eat, and they explore how the way in which questions are asked, have a bearing on what answer is given and whether the recipient changes their answer in the face of subsequent questions. It thus looks at how psychological dispositions such as “friendship”, “choice” and “refusal” are constructed collaboratively in naturally occurring talk, so emphasising the insight which an interactional approach can give into the daily lives of individuals with learning disabilities in different care settings. It is not possible to do justice to this growing body of work in a single paragraph. It is a substantial body of work that has been revelatory and has pushed resolutely for the use of interactional approaches. Previously Antaki and Rapley (1996) critiqued the use of tools such as standardised interviews and questionnaires for eliciting information from people with learning disabilities and this recent body of work demonstrates precisely how an interactional approach can be influential in considering how people with learning disabilities engage in interaction in institutional ‘care’ settings. It is thus quite distinct from the family setting, highlighting different contextual issues such as how institutional objectives come to bear on conversational tasks. However what it raises as an issue, in common with the family talk studied in this thesis, is the importance of recipient-design and its importance in achieving particular ‘desirable’ outcomes – namely, choice for the recipient. As with all of the previously mentioned studies it reflects not on the deficits of individual participants but on the joint accomplishment of conversational tasks.

**Closing Conversations**

In this study the specific conversational task which is under scrutiny is that of closing a conversation (telephone call). This section will thus look at CA perspectives on closings. All of the previously mentioned facets of CA and DP can be drawn upon in the study of closing activity in order to develop an understanding of how the closing is being organised (using CA) and what participants are doing in organising it in that way (using DP). Let us initially look at an archetype closing and consider how it can be analysed in CA and DP terms.
The following is taken from Button’s (1990:132) data:

1. A: Oright
2. B: Okay {honey
3. A: {bye dear=
4. B: =bye

Before the terminal exchanges (“bye”s) in lines 3 and 4, A and B engage in what is known as a pre-closing sequence (lines 1 and 2). This amounts to a “pass” (an offer to close) by A, followed by a “return pass” (an acceptance/confirmation of no further topic to add) by B. Then the closing is completed via terminal exchanges from A and then from B. We can also observe that A’s first terminal exchange overlaps\(^6\) with B’s utterance. We can also see that A’s terminal exchange is immediately followed by B’s terminal exchange\(^7\) with no interval. This is how we might analyse the archetype closing in CA terms. In DP terms we may also note that there is an orientation to close the call without delay, because of the short turns, though we may also draw attention to the use of familiar addresses such as “honey” and “dear” and note that these soften the utterances such that the closing of the call is undertaken amicably. This is what the participants were doing with these utterances. Thus using this short example we can see how analysts can take different perspectives, using CA and DP as analytic approaches. Using both a fine-grained look and a look at what psychological business is being taken care of, we have a fuller picture concerning this interaction than using either of these alone.

Though here we have looked at a simple example, (which will hopefully also help in understanding the following discussion on the technicalities of closings) it is possible to appreciate that these closings could be greatly extended. Given an extended version of a closing we may see much activity taking place, in both a sequential way and in terms of taking care of psychological business.

It is thus possible to see how CA and DP can be combined in exploring some of the issues raised earlier regarding disability and interaction. We could explore the collaboration that takes place in closings, we could see whether this is done

\(^6\) Denoted by the square brackets “[“.

\(^7\) Denoted by the “latching” symbol “=“. A full glossary of symbols used throughout is contained in Appendix A.
symmetrically by participants and we could see if there is any unique activity that may set the interaction apart from other instances.

Schegloff’s and Sacks’ (1973) “Opening up Closings” provided an initial, seminal study of closings. They outlined the “problem” of closing in a technical sense, using the orderliness of conversation and in particular

“the organisation of speakers turns” (1973:289)

to illuminate the “problem”. When we talk of the “problem” of closing, we are talking of it as belonging to conversationalists, rather than analysts. The initial (technical) problem is rooted in the orderliness of turn-taking machinery. Because such machinery allows for any number of strings of talk (enabled by recurring transition relevant places\(^8\)) that could result in ongoing turns at talk) the problem was defined by them as how to lift

“the transition relevance of possible utterance completion” (1973:295)

In simple terms; how could the relevance of transition to another speaker be lifted such that no further talk occurs? A partial solution to this was provided by the use of an organisation which Sacks had previously alluded to; that of adjacency pairs; such that the first part of a terminal exchange (for example, “goodbye”, “see you”, and such) could check another’s orientation to closing. The second part could indicate understanding of the orientation of this prior utterance and show acceptance of this, by also offering an appropriate closing; a reciprocal terminal exchange. We have seen a very simple example of this above.

However, Schegloff and Sacks, recognised that this was only part of the solution, since there didn’t appear to be a universal “next” place after some prior talk where terminal exchanges could be placed. This led to their consideration of what would constitute a “proper initiation” of a closing section (p.300), and further that the closing structure needed to have a place for mentioning “unmentioned

\(^8\) A transition relevant place is a position in an utterance where a next utterance could be appropriately inserted – a position where, upon the completion of an utterance, a transition to another’s utterance would be said to be relevant.
mentionables\(^9\). In other words there needs to be a means of giving advance warning that the conversation may be coming to a close, before it actually does. Schegloff and Sacks, suggest that one way of achieving this is by the use of a “pre-closing” (p.303). These are items such as, “We-ell” or “So-oo” (using falling intonational contours). These serve to indicate that topic talk (on the current topic) has, from the speaker’s perspective, been exhausted and they may be ready to move to close. At the same time they allow another speaker to introduce a new topic, or to accept the pre-closing as such and acknowledge that they too don’t have anything to add by way of current or new topic. Thus the first speaker, using Schegloff’s and Sacks’ terms, “passes” on continuing the current topic, gives a “free turn” to the other speaker to add to or begin a new topic, or to alternatively return the “pass”. This latter situation being the case this may constitute the beginning of the closing section.

It is important to note that expressions such as “we-ell” and so-oo” are possible pre-closings because they are also used elsewhere in conversations and so their placement is crucial with regard to whether they are intended as pre-closings or not. Similarly pre-closings are possible because they allow for either moving to close or not. It seems reasonable to argue then, that to avoid ambiguities of this kind, and those associated with knowing when a topic has ended (which is when such expressions can be seen to be being used as pre-closings), that all pre-closings are possible pre-closings until such time as they do lead to the initiation of a closing section. For this reason, in this current study such activity is referred to as a possible pre-closing.

Schegloff and Sacks also note that certain topic types are particularly closing-relevant, such as making arrangements, and that some types provide more effectively for the initiation of the closing than others. It is usually such types that make the identification of the end of a topic that much easier. The indication of a topic-end by one speaker and acknowledgement by another that they do not wish

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\(^9\) Matters that participants may wish to bring into the conversation but haven’t yet done so.
to take the floor is one warrant for moving to closing, but there are others. Some of these are tied, in the context of telephone conversations, to whether the initiator of the closing is the caller or the called. For example some warrants such as “I gotta go” could be said by either party to a call, though saying “Well I’ll letchu go. I don’t wanna tie up your phone.” is a caller-specific invitation (1973:310) A number of other “warrants” for closing are outlined by Schegloff and Sacks; for example, using materials that have been developed in the conversation. Finally, Schegloff & Sacks (1973) provide examples of a range of other material that might also be found in closings, such as material not previously mentioned, which may require the use of a “misplacement marker”10.

The strength of this seminal work is in the formulation of the “closing” problem and the discussion of how it is dealt with through a properly initiated, closing section. Furthermore Schegloff and Sacks (1973) not only identified that which could be recognised as a closing section, the sectional nature of it enabling passes and free turns, but they also provided the language within the conversation analytic domain to explore and explain closing activity.

Button (1987, 1990, 1991) followed up on this, when he defined a number of “sequence types”11, that serve to a greater or lesser extent to move conversation that was potentially on a closing track, back out of the closing. Furthermore he noted that those types that make a minimal movement out of closings are predominantly used by second speakers and those types that make drastic movements out of closings are predominantly used by first speakers. This left open the question that, since closings are sectional, there may be any number of permutations of the use of varying “sequence types” into varying opportunity spaces, within the same closing section. He looked subsequently then at many of the possible permutations, calling them “closing types”. He suggested that through the use of various closing types, negotiation takes place such that conversation

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10 An example of which is “By the way” (p. 319)
11 He acknowledged that there is some inconsistency with the term as used by Sacks in describing pairs of utterances that go together; the format know as an adjacency pair.
might end or might continue and that this could be done in sometimes quite lengthy and intricate ways. His (1991) work considered closings from a more macro perspective exploring how conversations could be viewed as one conversation in a series of conversations, such that, over the course of the series, participants’ conduct is governed to some extent by a “standing relationship”. For standing relationship here, we are not to read something abstract that is divorced from the interaction. The nature of “standing” is; that which is built up and oriented to as part of the ongoing series of conversations, and the nature of “relationship” is; that which interactional partners find themselves in, in each encounter with a fellow conversationalist. Having outlined, (1991:271), a number of, “different methods that participants may use to provide for the intelligible initiation of a closing section of their talk together”, Button asks what it is that particular participants are doing in using one method for initiation of closings over another. His work thus unravelled and explicated some of the activity that takes place in the closing section of conversations that result in them becoming extended beyond that of the archetype closing.

Pavlidou (1997, 1998) considered closings in Greek and German telephone calls. This highlighted a number of contrasting features, whilst at the same time showing similar complexities. German closings were found to be more orderly than the Greek ones and they included a range of utterances related to future contact and wishes for well-being which Pavlidou’s sees as contributing to the consolidation of the relationship between participants, whilst the Greek closings mitigate against possible feelings of rejection at leaving the call. Pavlidou (1997) asserts then that Greek closings particularly orient towards co-operation in leaving, whilst the German ones orient to sustaining the relationship. In a further study (1998) Pavlidou observes the large number of agreement tokens that occur within Greek and German closings. She asserts that this is not surprising given than according to Schegloff and Sacks (1973) two things are paramount in closing; participants work
to 'agree' to close a last topic and they 'agree' to move to terminal exchanges. It was the repeated occurrence of agreement tokens that was interesting and she was able to establish that certain particles in each of German and Greek closings also do this agreement work. Pavlidou ends this paper by posing two questions: are the observed patterns of confirmation and agreement specific to closings or might they apply to other parts of conversations; and, if, as it appears, these patterns are over and above what as a minimum might constitute agreement to close, what are they then doing. She asserts that the issue is bound up with the purpose that the closing section serves which is largely to organise the closing of the call without leaving any negative feelings upon the termination of the call by either party. So a mutual closing is what is sought, and this mutuality in the German closings is created through the use of what she calls “implicit” (p92) negotiation of agreement devices (such as tag particles), whereas in the Greek calls it is achieved via implicit devices (such as the particle “ade”) in parallel with “explicit strategies”, namely the repeating of agreement tokens. She concludes with the hypothesis that although both cultures' closings (between persons in familiar relationships) tend to surpass what might be minimally required to end a call amicably, Greeks invest more in the interactional import and take longer to close a telephone conversation. Whether the differences that Pavlidou notes are directly concerned with culture is arguable in that in both German and Greek closings the 'actions' performed by the varying tokens all appear to contribute towards the construction of a close that is mutually 'agreed' and jointly accomplished. The varying resources also appear to perform relationship sustaining work, whether by mitigation of the close or by consolidating relational aspects. A major strength of Pavlidou's findings in this comparative work is the identification of a wide range of resources that can be drawn upon in closing sequences to do such relationship-sustaining work.

Pavlidou’s (2002) work on closings, builds on her cross-cultural work but moves away from a contrastive emphasis and concentrates purely on Greek closings. In

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12 'Agree'-ing is implicit in the mechanics of passing and return passing turns.
the Greek closings data she had previously collected she identifies several means of bounding topics, and also some typical ways that closing is initiated. She asserts that both topic closing and the initiation of the closing section, require the same basic task, "achieving consensus to do so" (p.214). She observes however that Greek conversationalists tend to amalgamate the two things to accomplish both tasks in close proximity around the end of the call. Often she observes there is an "interlocking of adjacency pairs" (p.217). This then raises a question concerning how it is possible for participants to know that the call end is coming, and Pavlidou provides answers in the identification of a number of cues. She outlines two ways in which termination is foreshadowed. Firstly, the repeated use of certain particles (given in Greek but loosely akin to "so"). This she contends produces "a gradual movement towards termination of the call" (p.221). Secondly she observes that the closing is foreshadowed by specific talk, like making plans to talk next or asking how one is once the business of the call had been concluded. Furthermore she identifies some particular Greek particles that when used with possible pre-closing utterances give an indication that the call is approaching closure. As well as familiar Greek particles, other features (e.g. latching, overlapping) are also prevalent in Greek closings involving familiars. All point towards the approach of the call close. Pavlidou concludes that although it is problematic to identify precisely the initiation of a closing section a number of devices can be seen to be used in Greek conversation to prepare the ground as it were for closing activity.

"Common to these devices seems to be a foregrounding of the relational aspect of communication, for example:

- by gradually preparing one another for the up-coming end (iteration of (Greek particles inserted here)
- by construing agreement beyond any doubt (accumulation of agreement tokens),
- by point implicitly to the existing familiarity (particles of familiarity),
- by topic talk concerning the continuation of their relationship, the partners well-being, etc." (Pavlidou, 2002:224)
This she goes on to say provides for,

"the interactionally necessary work for the smooth completion of the conversation: it builds on the partner’s consensus to part....".

In this way she says, it is possible to avert any negative inferences about leaving the call. Pavlidou adds that these relational aspects are largely overlooked in the canonical closing and yet this "interactionally exuberant" (p.224) approach ably fends off any concerns related to leaving the call less than amiably. Rather than a moving out of closings (Button, 1987,1990), she characterises all of the aforementioned activity as a gradual movement towards closing. Her findings are consistent with those of other writers (Tannen, 1980; Pavlidou, 1994; Sifianou 2002) in that they also find that Greek conversationalists regularly do interactional work of a relationship-sustaining type.

Bolden’s studies of English and Russian closings (2005,2006) and more recent work on “Reopening Russian Conversations” (2008a) and “Opening up closings in Russian” (2007, 2008b) establish that there are elements in both English and Russian talk that are attending to relational dimensions of interaction. In particular, the English discourse marker ‘so’ is examined for how it attends to the business of indicating that something that is being mentioned now could have been mentioned earlier – that is, ‘so’ appears to mark the matter as something that has been on the speaker’s agenda and is now being launched as an action (Bolden, 2006). Bolden (2005) argues that the Russian particle ‘-to’ is used to mark an action as delayed in relation to the overall structural unit and the sequences organised therein. She finds that each of these discourse markers are present in environments where a sequence of talk has reached a possible end and nothing else has been launched – in other words – one such environment might be that in which participants have as one possible course of action, the option of moving toward close. In such environments then these markers attend to possible issues of accountability (for the late introduction of ‘new’ actions) or attend to matters associated with their interlocutor. In particular, in the case of these latter markers, ‘so’ or ‘oh’ prefaced utterances are thus,
"discursive practices via which interlocutors enact their involvement with their conversational partners and which reflect interlocutors' orientation to doing other-attentiveness." (Bolden, 2006:681)

Thus the relational work enacted here is of a slightly different type to that explicated in Pavlidou's work. Rather than the presence of particles that build agreement about closing, we are seeing in Bolden's work a range of practices that provide accountability for the introduction of new actions at a late stage in a conversation, and also display attention to, and interest in, the life of their interlocutors. In the two sets of studies the work being done is of a different sort since the target of enquiry in each body of work is quite different, but there is commonality in that the practices they each explore indicate attendance and orientation by participants to matters of interpersonal relationships and of sustaining these.

A final area for consideration in this exploration of closings is to do with how prosody contributes to our understanding of how closings are enacted. So far I have explored the literature associated with rather explicit forms of closing activity, whereas in many closing sequences it is possible to hear other more tacit cues that indicate a call may be moving towards closure.

A number of writers have observed the role of prosody in interaction (Couper-Kuhlen, 2004; Ford & Couper-Kuhlen, 2004), in telephone closings (Auer, 1990, 1992, 1999; Auer et al., 1999) and in conversation closings (Goldberg, 1978, 2004; Couper-Kuhlen, 2004). We have seen in earlier sections how certain lexical items such as 'okay' and 'alright' figure in closing environments, often as single word turns. So how is it that such words which can be seen in many other environments are hearable in certain instances as being implicative of closing. Observers (Goldberg 1978, 2004; Bolden 2007, 2008b) have found that, such turns have high pitch onset (relative to the speaker’s prior talk), a rising-falling pitch contour, sound-stretching may also be present and sometimes there may be a preceding in-breath. Furthermore Goldberg has associated next-turn intonational
contours with affiliation and disaffiliation. In Russian closings Bolden (2007) found that the prosodic features described above were also deployed in the closing of topics to index it as a possibly last topic. Not only do these studies enable us to appreciate the import of prosody in closing environments at the very basic level of making turns hearable as possibly closing implicative, but they allow for scrutiny of the prosodic features of next turns to explore for alignment or disalignment and agreement or disagreement (to close). Indeed since the use of prosody can be seen as a more subtle (tacit) indication of possible moves to close, it is worth considering whether such subtleties and complexities are only accessible to ‘unchallenged’ members, as traditional psychological perspectives might have us believe.

The specific focus of this study

I have now considered literature across a range of areas with a view to appreciating the synergy that might be gained by combining these areas into research inquiries. What are the features of closings in interactions which include people with learning disabilities? Why might such interactions be like this and why are CA and DP particularly relevant for understanding learning disability? Are there ‘unique’ features? Are they really unique or are they consistent with the orderliness of conversation?

There appears to be an opportunity for more research in the area of interaction and disability, that has no particular agenda, except in so far as the researcher wishes to understand more about the possible difference between speakers’ who have a diagnosed disability and those which do not. A chance exists to move away from hypothesis-driven research and move instead towards exploratory studies that would allow issues to come to the fore, rather than them being specifically sought. Otherwise researchers are at risk of building pre-dispositions for research subjects before they have even observed their talk or their gestures.
Furthermore, it appears that research in this area needs to be more sensitive to context (in terms of data-collection sites) and to obtain data in naturalistic settings as far as possible. This would go some way to removing the labels that confused speakers start off with that pre-dispose them as “less-than full members” (Shakespeare, 1998:213) in interactions. Potentially this could enable a reworking of how disability is to be understood; potentially as a range of accomplishments achieved via collaboration, rather than as a range of deficits as viewed from a clinical perspective.

This study attempts to address such issues. The context used is a naturalistic one, in terms of it studying talk that would take place anyway on a day to day basis. It began with a very open agenda, and a broad research objective which was to understand more about interaction that involved a potentially confused speaker. The focus ultimately became a consideration of pre-closing activity for the following reasons. Since pre-closings are relatively easy to identify these were a good starting point for an initial study and there were many instances of these in the material, such that reliable observations could be made. Furthermore there is an existing literature, as we have seen above, that provides a starting point, a benchmark even, from which to observe similarities or contrasts, and identify possible new findings. Finally, pre-closings can be viewed as an arena in which relationship issues may become relevant and these could be explored, as could their significance to the broader concerns of the study; to understand more about learning disability from an interactional perspective.

Issues surrounding ‘challenged’ speakers and their interactional competencies still appear to a large extent to remain in the clinical domain. However as we have seen in research which employs conversation analytic and discursive approaches, differing insights can be gained which can provide a new appreciation of what it is to be ‘challenged’ and whose concern it is to be managed. It is a matter for participants rather than analysts (from whichever tradition) that any interaction to which they are party is jointly accomplished. (In)competence thus becomes a
matter for ‘members’ and in their hands it may get a ‘fairer’ hearing than psychological perspectives have traditionally allowed.
Chapter Two – Method

Introduction

The previous chapter provided an account of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Discursive Psychology (DP) and how these potentially might offer an alternative view of issues associated with learning disability. Here I consider a little more of the 'nut and bolts' of using such analyses.

Conversation Analytic and Discursive Psychological Methods

Methodologically these two offer an exciting opportunity to explore psychological matters 'in the wild' (and thus at the forefront of scientific enquiry) since they employ as their raw materials, naturalistic data gathered in everyday social settings. They enable detailed empirical work which allows us to unravel matters which are at the very heart of social life. CA enables exploration of,

“how participants design their talk to accomplish these\textsuperscript{13} actions; what subsidiary actions they may also be engaged in; what other actions these focal actions may be the vehicles for; and what all of these practices show us as analysts, for the way in which a world-known-in-common is reflected and produced, moment-by-moment, in the concrete particulars of talk.”

(Kitzinger, 2008:203, italics in original)

DP enables exploration of how psychological matters are dealt with as participants concerns and treats everyday psychological concepts as:

“the bases on which people, for better or worse, actually describe and account for things. They are not concepts that need to be tested to see if

\textsuperscript{13} “these” is a back-reference to the immediately prior analysis, left in for the accuracy of the quote, but redundant in the sentence into which the quote is inserted.
they are the real life of the mind. Their empirical basis is discursive; their uses can be recorded and transcribed, and we can analyse them.”

(Edwards, 1999:272)

Thus the emphasis in both of these analyses is in uncovering action in naturally occurring interaction. In the case of CA, action is bound up in the sequential unfolding of talk and the way in which it is delivered, whilst in the case of DP it is bound up in the discourse practices used in the talk to manage psychological ‘business’. These two analyses used together offer the potential then for empirical inquiry into the discourse practices deployed by participants, in such sequential placement and in such a way, that renders their significance, at that moment, for the social ‘action’ in which participants are engaged. Rather than working with an approach to interaction that is intuitive as has been traditionally the case with cognitive approaches (Potter & te Molder, 2005), this study relies upon detailed empirical work, to consider the mix of practical and psychological matters that appear in a corpus of everyday telephone calls. In line with contemporary discursive psychology (Edwards, 2005; Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007; Wiggins & Potter, 2008), and in contrast to the methods of experimental psychology, the data thus comprises naturally occurring interactions. Each corpus contains calls between a young adult with a diagnosed learning disability4, staying in a residential school or college, and other members of their respective families. Again, in line with discursive psychology, the study draws heavily on the method and findings of conversation analysis (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 2006). This study thus explores psychological matters as something practical and procedural, rather than cognitive and individual.

As already mentioned in the introduction the area which became the subject for close scrutiny was that of telephone closings, and in particular the pre-closing

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4 Each of the young adults also has accompanying ‘challenges’. In the case of ‘Sue’ (pseudonym) she also has challenges associated with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and epilepsy, whilst ‘Craig’ (pseudonym) also has communication challenges deriving from dyspraxia.
activity that appeared in them. Closings represent a discrete environment wherein any materials can be scrutinised for sequential and/or discursive action. Furthermore, telephone data is relatively straightforward to work with, since it is principally ‘one-to-one’ communication. It also avoids the complexities associated with embodied actions, and gesture and gaze do not need to be considered. That is not to say that the study of these are not valid pursuits, just that there are advantages to be had by factoring these out, particularly in instances where the focus is a very discrete set of conversational actions. Drummond and Hopper (1991:302) suggest three “contrasts” between face-to-face interaction and telephone talk, which makes telephone conversation “an excellent site for the study of dialogic speech communication”:

- considering sound only, focuses attention on what is most essential about speech communication
- telephone talk is (in the main\(^{15}\)) limited to two parties which focuses attention on dialogic aspects of the talk and, in particular, sequential action
- a telephone encounter has a very definite beginning and end.

Face-to-face encounters may contain sporadic episodes of talk which people engage in, and disengage from, periodically; telephone encounters begin precisely with the ringing of the phone and end when parties hang up (Schegloff, 1979). There are many precedents for the use of telephone data, particularly in the study of closing environments (for example, Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Pavlidou, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2002; Bolden, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a,b) and so this study draws upon and builds upon both the method and the findings of such precedents. In order to build in system and rigour and to ensure robustness of analytic findings, I have worked with a sizeable corpus of 75 calls in my own data set as well as calls taken from other data sets.

The remainder of this chapter is given to describing the procedure for obtaining participants and providing details of their specific challenges. The issue of ethics is

\(^{15}\) Although technology now allows for there to be more.
discussed as is the process for gathering data and for data management. I also outline details of other data sets that have been used for comparison. Transcription issues are first discussed in general and then in particular in the light of one participant's speech difficulties. Finally the unique issues associated with the dual role of researcher-participant are explored as are the implications for maintaining reliability and validity in the study.

Participants

Who and Why
The participants were selected in the first instance on the basis that they were a family, who had as a member, a person with a diagnosed learning disability. This was with the primary aim of capturing family conversations that potentially may present conversational challenges based upon the inclusion of a young person with a learning disability. Furthermore for there to be a large enough collection of telephone conversations, participants were selected on the basis that the young person with a learning disability resided away from home for extended periods of time (in these cases during term time at residential school/college) and as a consequence there were regular calls home to other members of their family. Whilst the young adults were selected principally on the basis of their having a diagnosed learning disability, it is not uncommon for there to be other associated diagnoses. These are outlined in the following section.

Diagnostic classifications
Whilst it is a key endeavour that this study builds no pre-dispositions about the competences or capabilities of the participants diagnosed with learning disabilities, it would seem appropriate to say something of their respective diagnoses in order to appreciate something of the challenges that may potentially influence any talk which involves them. Both participants are diagnosed as having moderate learning difficulties (see opening chapter for APA 1994, 2000:DSM-IV-TR classification of this), though each also have additional and individualised challenges too.
Sue (pseudonym) also has a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and of petit mal epilepsy. The former is characterised by a ‘triad of impairments’ (Nye, 2000, National Autistic Society), which affect social interaction, communication and imagination; autism may present as displays of indifference, one-sided interaction, echolalia (repeating others talk), perseveration on one topic or one mode of doing things; difficulties may include socially inappropriate behaviour or lack of appreciation of social cues. (See Frith, 1991, 2003; Happé, 1994; Jordan et al., 1995; Morgan, 1996; Wing, 1996). It is important to note that there are degrees of autism which is why it is described in terms of a spectrum and people with ASD may be very proficient in some areas and not in others. Sue displays such a mix of proficiencies. Her verbal skills are quite well developed. The petit mal epilepsy can cause momentary ‘absences’ when Sue may ‘tune out’ temporarily and she may not deliver or hear ongoing talk. These ‘absences’ are often very momentary (a matter of seconds) and are most of the time controlled by medication. During these absences however Sue may not hear or say anything.

Craig (pseudonym) also has a severe speech disorder associated with Dyspraxia. This is characterised by (individuals may experience some or all of these), difficulty in control of the speech apparatus (lips, tongue, soft palate, larynx, muscles used to control breath for speech and muscles used for facial expression); difficulty in speech sound production; difficulty in sequencing sounds to make a word; and difficulty in regulating breathing and in controlling the speed, rhythm and volume for speech (Connery, 2004, Afasic Glossary 18). (See Byers-Brown & Edwards, 1989; Stackhouse, 1992; Crary, 1993; Portwood, 1999; Macintyre, 2000, 2001 for fuller explanations). Craig also has a mild language disorder which affects the recollection of names and vocabulary. Both participants occasionally display challenging behaviours which also impact upon their capacity to engage in verbal communication during those times.
Ethical considerations and recruitment of participants

Ethical considerations were an important pre-requisite of this study, given that the principal participants' diagnoses of learning disability place them in a 'vulnerable' grouping for research purposes. Thus two 'Full' applications were made to the Loughborough University Ethics Committee, and these were granted under reference R05/P38 for the first round of data collection and R06/P3 for subsequent collection. The second application widened the research to a second family and also to children under the age of eighteen (to allow for calls including siblings to be collected). The clearance for each application is included in Appendix B.

Participants were obtained by personal approach to families known to contain a young adult with learning disabilities. This was made possible with the help of a school catering for children with special educational needs, who forwarded initial invitations to take part to several families. Three families were initially keen to take part and of these two eventually agreed to take part. One of the families is the researcher's own extended family. These participants were made expressly aware that their identities could not be completely protected as during write-up, links could be traced between author and participants, though this was unlikely to be of detriment. Revisions were made to the original terms of consent to allow for this disclosure and family members were happy to agree and sign up to these. (Examples of all forms can be found in Appendix C).

When conducting research which involves people with learning disabilities many researchers question just how far informed consent can be achieved and how much is truly understood by such participants about the purpose of the research and their rights within it (see McCarthy, 1998; Stalker, 1998; Swain et al., 1998; Walmsley, 1995). With this in mind, an information sheet was designed which could be read by or read to all participants. This contained information about the purpose of the research and outlined the rights of participants taking part in the study and the rights of the researcher to share data with other academics though it
guaranteed anonymisation of the data. This provided a good basis for most participants to be able to give informed consent. In the case of the young adults with learning disabilities the form was supplemented with extra explanation of the contents therein. It was possible then to be satisfied that the interest of these participants had been fairly served and that informed consent had been given as far as was practicable. In order to build an even greater awareness of the purpose of the research it has been possible to show one of the young people some transcripts and allow them to listen to the recordings (much to everyone's amusement). This certainly provided a further, very practical opportunity to try to ensure that one of the young adults was aware of what was being done in the study and to understand their part in it and so at the first available opportunity this is something that the researcher hopes to replicate with and for the other young adult.

Participants were contacted regularly to ensure that they were managing well with the recording equipment and that they were happy with their continuing participation. Participants remained in complete control of whether they selected to record a particular call or not.

**Data and data management**

**Datasets**

The data comprises audio recordings of telephone conversations between school/college and home. They were recorded on portable digital recorders by family members in their homes. There are 75 calls in total of which 52 calls are between Sue and her family (ranging from 15-40 minutes typically), hereafter referred to as the ‘APS’ corpus or the Sue calls, and 23 calls are between Craig and his family (ranging from 2-10 minutes typically but with some significantly longer), hereafter referred to as the ‘APC’ corpus or the Craig calls. Of the 75 recorded calls, 72 included closing sections.
Overall the 75 calls represent over 24 hours of recorded talk. Additionally, two other sets of data were used for comparison purposes. The 66 calls of everyday mundane calls in the Holt corpus were used (56 with closing sections), as was a subset of 6 calls from the CTS corpus\(^{16}\). The subset used for comparison with the current corpus comprised of those between mother and daughter and grandmother and grand-daughter. They thus approximated in terms of their participants with those in the ‘APS’ calls in particular.

**Transcription**

The closing sections were identified for transcription purposes and ongoing analysis, as being that part of the call from where a first reference to close is made, either explicitly or implicitly, through to the terminal exchange which ends the call. All closing sections were transcribed to at least first pass level and many have been transcribed in greater detail using a Jeffersonian system\(^{17}\). A full glossary of transcription symbols is shown in Appendix A. Before discussing further the benefits of using Jeffersonian transcription, I look at alternative renderings of interaction. The following two examples represent various renderings of and about talk which includes someone with a learning disability (in the second this is specifically autism).

\(^{16}\) The CTS corpus is a collection of calls between young females and their families and friends. I am indebted to Clare Jackson for access to these.

\(^{17}\) Developed over the last thirty years by conversation analysts, principally by Gail Jefferson. See Lerner [ed.] (2004) for a recent discussion by Jefferson)
Example 1

"For example, in response to the objective, open-ended question ‘What time does speech therapy begin?’ SW answered correctly ‘Tuesday, Thursday’. ‘Does speech therapy begin at 11:00, 11:15, 12:00 or 1:00?’ ’11:45’ (which is when he leaves the house). ‘Does it begin at 11:15 or 12:00?’ ‘Ah ... 12:00’. His inflection indicated that he understood what the question meant only after three questions.”

In this first example from an ethnographic study we see a description of a ‘question sequence’ in which the reporter describes how their interlocutor (someone with a learning disability) misunderstood a question until it had been reframed several times. This it is claimed became apparent from the “inflection” of one of the respondent’s turns. Here then, the interactional data is presented within a narrative, presumably in the order in which turns were produced, though this is not completely apparent as we are required to assume who the speakers are of the various turns. Finally we are told that ‘Ah...12:00’ was produced in such a way that suggested understanding/realisation of the questions’ purpose. These are all helpful observations in the context of the article in which they appear, though the dynamic aspects of the interaction, such as the sequential organisation and intonation could be captured much more effectively and presented more transparently using an alternate transcription such as the Jeffersonian system. This could better show the identities of speakers, the order in which they took turns and the way in which they delivered their turns. Potentially then the ‘dynamics’ of the interaction could be made more readily available to the reader such that they might appreciate how the analyst arrives at the conclusion that the final turn of the ‘sequence’ suggests that the respondent has finally appreciated the nature of the questioning episode.

In the following example we see another rendering of talk. This time it is part of a conversation between an autistic girl and a researcher/writer.

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Example 2

"UF: What kinds of things do you cook? 
R: Anything. 
UF: Really. What is your favourite food? 
R: Fish Fingers. 
UF: Oh, yes...And you cook them yourself? 
R: Nearly. 
UF: That's very nice.

(Again, my attempts to make Ruth volunteer information were unsuccessful. All I could do was ask leading questions which she answered with perfect honesty. At no point did she try to create an impression, one way or another, for instance by boasting or denigrating her cooking or reading skills. Indeed, she seemed to express no attitude whatsoever toward either her accomplishments or her failings.) 

UF: And what do you do for fun? 
R: Nothing. 
UF: Perhaps you do some knitting? 
R: Yes. 
UF: Or watching television? 
R: Yes. 
UF: What programs do you like? 
R: Top of the Pops. 

(After some unsuccessful questions relating to the program, with which I was unfamiliar, I switched topics.) 

UF: And do you read? 
R: Yes. 
UF: What sort of things? ...(no reply) Do you read magazines? 
R: No. Just look at them. 
UF: Ah, yes...Because there are lots of pictures in them? 
R: Yes. 

(Presumably Ruth's literal understanding does not allow her to consider "just looking" at a magazine to be called reading.) 

UF: Hmm, what sort of magazines do you look at? 
R: Radio Times and TV Times. 
UF: Oh, yes, I look at those too... 
R: Work time now. 

(The characteristically abrupt ending of a conversation with an individual with autism is well illustrated. Ruth did not mean to be rude, but the break was over and it was time to go back to work. Normally such a fact would be wrapped up in the language of politeness. Ruth does not present any wrappings; instead she gives bare information.)"

In this example speakers have been identified and each turn has been designated a new line. We can thus see the sequential unfolding of the talk. The turns are rendered in a

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standard orthographic style. It employs conventional sentences and standard grammatical punctuation. In this format it resembles something of a play script. Indeed the italicised and bracketed sections are akin to asides, though here they include analytic commentary. Whilst this attends to some of the limitations highlighted in Example 1, it is still rather a ‘static’ account of the conversation. It is not apparent, for example, how the analyst has arrived at the conclusion that R has “answered with perfect honesty” or how this was an “abrupt ending of a conversation”. The final line “Work time now.”, is certainly a brief turn though the way in which it was delivered is not rendered and so it is not apparent to the reader whether this was indeed “abrupt”. We also see several series of full-stops (“...”) used to (presumably) denote lapses in the talk and “(no reply)” is used to suggest lack of take-up of prior talk. Both of these aspects are drawn upon to derive analytic observations. Such observations however could be supported, indeed enhanced, by measuring the length (time-wise) and observing the sequential positioning of the pauses. In this way observations could be made more transparent and might more reliably suggest that they are representative of possible interactional “trouble”, as is currently intimated in the italicised analytic commentary in Example 2.

The Jeffersonian transcription system contains many features which may enhance and in particular make more transparent the ‘live’ aspects of talk, and the dynamism of interactional ‘actions’. Potter and Hepburn (2005:9) observe that,

“...the full Jeffersonian representation of talk makes most apparent the jointly constructed, socially engaged nature of what is going on,...”

They provide further comment related to the wider context of research saying,

“there is a strong argument that [the] researchers should provide a form of transcription of talk that will allow readers to make a full evaluation rather than one that may already embed their own theoretical assumptions within it.”

We saw in Example 1 that the interaction had to some extent been abstracted and was an episode to which only the researcher could have access, at a prior moment in time. It is such opaqueness that Potter and Hepburn (2005) suggest we avoid through the use of naturalistic research data and a rendering of the talk that is accessible and available
for (later) scrutiny and evaluation. Renderings of talk using the Jeffersonian system can and does enable independent observation and evaluation. Further, it ‘brings to life’ the talk in terms of how it is delivered; whether loudly or softly, high-pitched or low-pitched, quickly or slowly and so on. Through the range of symbols listed in Appendix A, it is possible to represent a vast range of hearable features of the talk, which might otherwise be missed. It can therefore capture dynamic features of talk which are interactionally live and potentially conversationally significant.  

**Transcription ‘challenges’**

There were some additional challenges when transcribing Craig’s talk which were a direct result of his speech difficulty. Craig’s talk was unintelligible some of the time which has meant that there are many instances of empty parentheses, “( )” in the transcripts. With the help of software to enhance the talk it was possible to capture many of the sounds that Craig made. However therein was a further challenge associated with the representation of these sounds. Phonetical notation was ruled out as a means of representation, since phonetics was not the major interest of this study, and as Jefferson (1983) states, “Phonetic transcripts are not accessible to most readers.” Thus, rather than illucidating Craig’s talk and the manner in which it was delivered, such notation may have served to confuse.

Proponents of the idea that standard orthography should be used in cases where speakers are using some dialectic form of a word rather than what might be classed as a standard form, hold that to use anything other than standard orthography is to caricature the speaker. Jefferson suggests that,  

“experts on phonetics such as William Labov, propose that someone who for example says ‘dat’ instead of ‘that’, is not producing defective English but is speaking correctly in his dialect, and thus should not be transcript-displayed as producing an object which is commonly treated as defective.”(Jefferson, 1983)

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20 Ideally I would like to have produced a re-rendering of Examples 1 and 2, to have shown examples of interactionally live elements, but had no access to the original data/sound. For an example of a re-rendered extract for illustrative comparison see Potter & Hepburn (2005:pp.5-7).
Applying this to Craig's talk we could argue that when Craig says "dat'day", which we can deduce from adjacent talk is Craig's way of saying "Saturday" are we then to transcribe this as the former or the latter? If we were to treat this as Craig's 'version' of Saturday that he used consistently would it be appropriate to use standard orthography for such words? Jefferson states that many researchers would recommend standard orthography ("Saturday") in cases such as this. In this study however I would argue that we would actually mask the matter that is at the very heart of the study if we were to do this or as Jefferson (1983:12) would have it, we may by doing so, be "accepting the obliteration of a potentially fruitful database". Thus Craig's talk is part of the phenomena under scrutiny and to represent it in standard orthography would be to mask this. Jefferson (1985:25) says:

"While those of us who spend a lot of time making transcripts may be doing our best to get it right, what that might mean is utterly obscure and unstable. It depends a great deal on what we are paying attention to. It seems to me, then, that the issue is not transcription per se, but what it is we might want to transcribe, that is, attend to."

What my current study attends to then is the collaborative management of the challenges that Craig's mode of talk presents for participants as evidenced in the talk. The study and in particular the transcription does not set out to caricature Craig's talk and hold it up as defective; it sets out to capture the talk as it might be heard by participants in order to understand how it is dealt with in situ.

Jefferson (1985:25) refers to the limitation of transcription, seeing it as "one way to pay attention to recordings of actually occurring events". With this in mind throughout the analysis in this study the sound files have remained a key resource.

The 'researcher-participant' role

Here I address issues related to my own participation in this study as both researcher and participant. There are precedents for the inclusion of family members in interactional research (see Holt, Goodwin and Forrester corpuses).
There are precedents too for the inclusion of family members in disability research which is not in the interactional domain (see Leicester & Lovell, 1997). There is much to be gained in research where the researcher is immersed so fully in the context surrounding the research ‘site’. It is perhaps more unusual for the researcher to also be one of the researched but this strengthens the opportunities for reflexivity in the research process and in the research topic itself. In one sense it tends towards a ‘participatory’ approach to research in that one member of the researched family is also the researcher and so at the level of the family, they have some control over the research process and the outcomes, and there can be some reciprocity, but in another sense it is not completely in the spirit of participatory disability research as it is not ultimately the young adult with a learning disability who will analyse and interpret the significance of findings. This is indicative however of the challenges and tensions that exist when including people with a learning disability in research in so far as there may be limitations to how much they are able to participate and so this is a generic concern.

It remains then that whether or not we term this research participatory in approach there is good scope for feeding back and discussing findings with all of the researchers extended family members and as such it offers a large opportunity in terms of research feeding back into ‘practices’ (this is used in the broadest sense of the word and refers to the practices involved in being a family). It is at the very least therefore collaborative in approach.

Much disability research (particularly policy-related research) is derived from parents’ anecdotal accounts of their life experiences of being in a family which contains someone with a disability. In this study however the researcher does not set out, as an outsider, to collect ‘second-hand’ accounts of life experiences but rather examines how family moments (chatting on the phone) are lived ‘here and

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21 For a recent general discussion of the “Insider-Outsider” debate in qualitative work see Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle (2009).
now' with the researcher as an intrinsic part. It provides for a non-filtered, viewable-by-all set of data from which to draw insights and conclusions.

**Reliability and validity**

Issues of reliability and validity are discussed here in two regards. Firstly I will consider these issues in relation to the conversation analytic approach taken in this study and secondly I will consider these issues in the light of the duality of the researcher-participant role.

Perakyla (2004) notes that different qualitative methods pose different issues related to reliability and validity though there is also some overlap. He explores specifically the issues that arise in research which uses naturally occurring social interaction and which takes a conversation analytic approach. He highlights how CA methods eliminate a number of common reliability problems that are experienced in other qualitative approaches. In a conversation analytic approach researchers work with audio or video recordings which means that the recordings and the transcripts they give rise to, represent a source of data that is detailed, accurate and available for public scrutiny. Of course the quality of recording and of transcription can be variable but as technology improves so can quality of recordings, and transcription can benefit from input from other analysts in data sessions. Such was the approach taken in this current study; data was collected via digital recorders and transcripts were the subject of discussion and review with and by fellow analysts. Thus reliability is built within this study through factors that are intrinsic in CA methods and through careful attention to issues of recording and transcription.

A conversation analytic approach also assists in building reliability even if a researcher is also a participant in the study. If as Perakyla suggests a key aspect of reliability concerns selection of what is recorded, this could suggest that there is room for manipulation by the analyst. However as he also states there are advantages to be had by creating a large data set to draw upon (The APS collection
comprises 52 calls and the APC collection contains a further 23 calls). Perakyla also states (2004:288),

“As the analysis of data in conversation analytic studies usually progresses inductively, the researcher normally does not know at the outset of the research what exactly the phenomena are that he or she is going to focus on.”

This would suggest that there is little chance of a researcher-participant being able to manipulate the data to produce a particular phenomena, and in fact such ‘action’ (in an interactional sense) could be observed and therefore uncovered as a phenomenon because of the public accessibility of naturally occurring interaction. It was also possible to be sure that the researcher-participant could not influence any phenomena-to-be-found through some very practical means. Most of the calls in the data set in question were recorded before preliminary analysis even began and thus well before any phenomenon was mooted. The sub-set of calls used in the first round of ‘unmotivated looking’ did not include those which involved the researcher-participant so the noticeings which form the basis of this study, were present initially in calls which did not include the researcher-participant. The initial examination was of calls which included three participants other than the researcher. They each engaged in the interactional ‘actions’ that have become the main subject of the study. The first and last 5 minutes of a subset of calls were transcribed (with a view to looking at openings and closings as a starting point). In a data session it was observed that participants produced elaborate accounts for closing the call and so it was decided to see if this happened in other calls too and so the initial collection from which this study has developed was begun.

In terms of validity CA contrasts with many other approaches. Schegloff (1992:xviii) says,

“talk can be examined as an object in its own right, and not merely as a screen on which are projected other processes”

So any findings in CA are not construed as indicative of some other underlying social meaning, but the talk actually displays any phenomena; indeed it is the
phenomenon. In CA then issues of validity are inherent to some extent in the approach. Analytic claims can be seen in action in the data. Furthermore participants display their interpretations of what is going on in the talk through their next turn at talk. With such a proof procedure,

“Students of talk are thus provided with a considerable advantage that is unavailable to analysts of isolated sentences or other “text” materials that cannot be analyzed without hypothesizing or speculating about the possible ways in which utterances, sentences, or texts might be interpreted.” (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984:9).

An analyst’s interpretation can thus be checked in terms of whether participants in a next turn treat an utterance in a way which is consistent with the analyst’s interpretation. Furthermore it was possible to illustrate many cases of a similar pattern occurring in the data and deviations from those. Thus, many aspects that are intrinsic to CA helped in building validity in this study, and they have been relied upon to manage the unique researcher-participant role.

This concludes the discussion of the approach taken in this study. The following four chapters will now present the findings and analysis arising from the study. In these chapters I attempt to uncover,

“the organization of action that underpins social life from the obvious, mundane details of conversation and other human conduct” (Lerner, 2004:1),

and show how psychological matters are built, and can be explored,

“as social practice, rather than mental expression” (Edwards, 1999:288).
Chapter 3 – Accounting for Closing

Introduction

Initial observation of the closing sections in the APS and APC calls revealed that there were several ‘episodes’ of pre-closing activity in each closing section and close scrutiny of these suggested that the pre-closing turns were populated with many materials which served to extend them. Often these materials included an account for why the call may (possibly) be reaching a close. The standard pre-closing turn that fundamentally offers the possibility of closure, appeared to be being used to manage other business as well as that of closing. Much activity over and above the economical closing as described by Schegloff and Sacks (1973) was evident. This chapter describes that activity and draws conclusions about what may be being managed.

The chapter begins by examining the architecture of a closing section, followed by some illustrations of the use of accounts. It goes on to explore the varying designs of pre-closing turn within which these accounts are embedded. Whilst there is some diversity in terms of their design, it is possible to group them into three major groups, distinguishable by their syntactic properties. I will discuss accounts that appear:

- with an announcement indicating that the speaker has to close the call
- with an interrogative about the wish or requirement of the other to close
- with a directive to the other to close

Whilst there is some diversity in the designs in which accounts are embedded, there are common features of the accounts themselves, which index the nature of the work that they perform. Such features suggest an orientation by participants to distance themselves from the idea that they might wish to leave the call and to construct themselves as reluctant to do so. This is shown to be a major pre-occupation of participants. I characterise the action of which these activities are part as that of caring. Caring is used here to encapsulate the action that is being
displayed by participants, rather than referring to a psychological disposition held by participants.

Finally comparisons are drawn with other data sets in order to appreciate whether accounting activity is present in other corpuses. In this way it is possible to appreciate the 'uniqueness' or otherwise of the high concentration of these materials in the close-initiating turns in my own data sets.

Architecture of a closing section

For readers' convenience I repeat below the standard pattern of closing turns as described in the conversation analytic literature.

1 A: Oright (passing turn /offer to close)
2 B: Okay [ honey (return passing turn/acceptance)
3 A: [ bye dear= (terminal exchange)
4 B: =bye (terminal exchange)

We can see that the standard closing has four parts, comprising two adjacency pairs. The first (lines 1 and 2) comprises an offer to close, known as a passing turn and an acceptance or return passing turn. A "pass" as defined by Schegloff and Sacks (1973) is an utterance that indicates that a participant has nothing else to add. (The "Oright" in line one is such an utterance). It offers a free turn to the other should they wish to add anything. A "return pass" is an utterance that indicates that the second speaker has nothing to add either (the "Okay" in line 2 is such an utterance). Thus participants can move to terminal exchanges, which is the 2nd adjacency pair shown here in lines 3 and 4. Alternatively the offer to close may be declined when, rather than a return pass, more topic talk takes place. It is the pre-closing exchanges as exampled in lines 1 and 2 above that I am interested in in this study, since the current data would suggest that they are of a more complex nature than the above would suggest.

The closing section below is an indicative example of the closing sections in the current study. Initially I focus upon the architecture of the closing section rather
than the specific content. I initially explore the shape of the closing in so much as there are several 'episodes' of pre-closing activity before a call reaches terminal exchanges. (The main pre-closing sequences are shown in bold.) In later sections we will look at the material content of the pre-closing sequences in more detail in order to highlight the intricate work being done within them.

Closing APS023-D2105

((Sue is asking Dad about extra pocket money as she has spent all hers - this is followed by first reference to closing. Dad is a dental clinician hence his reference to making teeth in line 22)

1 Dad: >I’ll have to hav- I’ll give you some pennies< tomorrow. alright.
2 (0.9)
3 Dad: Yeah?
4 (0.5)
5 Sue: Yeah.
6 (0.3)
7 Dad: Okay.
8 (1.3)
9 Dad: Right >well I’m gonna ged’on now<. I’ll be there for about ‘alf past nine, tomorrow morning.
10 Sue: Yeah.
11 Dad: So ged up. an’ get ready alright.
12 Sue: Yeah.
13 ---Conversation continues for 45 turns---
14 Sue: Carrie ↓went with me
15 Dad: Good.
16 (4.5)
17 Dad: Right. >well I’m going to go now< darlin’. >cus I’ve got lots of< teeth to make.
18 Sue: Yeah. I’ve got to finish ma cards off=
19 Dad: =Okay >you finish yer card,< I’ll >finish ma teeth,< and
20 I’ll >see you in the morning at ‘alf. nine.< =we’ll go an’ av a nice ↓day-out alright,
21 (0.5)
22 Sue: An w’all have a little wa:lk arou:nd,
23 (.)
24 ---Conversation continues for 5 turns---
25
Dad: >she's gonna be in a wheelchair. so,
(2.0)
37 Dad: → Oka:y,
38 Sue: Yeah
39 Dad: Alright darlin'.
(0.9)
40 Sue: 'ave a nice time, tonight. enjoy, the (.) show.
41 Dad: Yeah.
42 Dad: *Alright* apparently there's some real rubbish on
43 Sue: agen heh heh heh heh
45 Dad: Rubbish agen,
46 Dad: Some real funny ones yeah
(1.2)
47 Dad: Yeah.
48 Dad: → Oka:y, lovey?
(2.0)
49 Sue: Yes.
50 Dad: =I love you.
51 Sue: I love you:
52 Dad: =Give me a big kiss
53 Sue: ((kissing noises))
54 Dad: ((kissing noises)) Mma::h:
(0.6)
55 Dad: An I'll see you to[more mornin']<
56 Sue: [I've got CD,UK. at
57 Dad: el:even, Daddy.
---Conversation continues for 11 turns---
65 Sue: I did some puzzles.
66 Dad: Yeah,
(2.5)
67 Dad: → Right >I'll see you,< uhm >tomorrow: morning,<
(0.2)
70 Dad: Oka:y.
71 Dad: Alright, lovel:y?
72 Sue: Okay
73 Dad: *Bye,*
74 Sue: *Bye*
It is immediately noticeable when looking at the above extract, that there are recurrent attempts to initiate closing. It is possible in closings in general and typical in this corpus for several episodes of pre-closing activity to occur before closing takes place. Each offers the possibility of closing or of either returning to, or beginning further talk. It is clear too that the closing comprises an extended version of the archetypal closing form shown above. Another point of note is the recycling of some of the materials used in earlier possible pre-closings in the later ones, for example, those in lines 10-11 and line 59 and 68 which refer to future plans. Such observations are characteristic not only of this collection but of closings in general (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Button, 1987, 1990, 1991).

If we compare the pre-closing activity in lines 10-11 (a pre-closing which is fairly typical of closings in general in that it includes an announcement to go and a reference to future plans), with that in lines 21-27, we see that the latter is significantly extended, is more elaborate and also that it includes some "accounting" activity. It is the extended nature of these pre-closings and the inclusion of accounts that make these unusual closing sections. Comparisons (discussed later in this chapter) with both the standard closing and the closings in other corpuses suggest their unusual nature.

Additionally, note that accounting is done by both participants in the aforementioned sequence (lines 21-22, by Dad and 23, by Sue). It is possible that the talk is organised in order to take care of the business of closing in a particular way and the analysis in this chapter will attempt to explicate this.

Let us now look briefly at the structure of the pre-closing sequences (those in bold). It can be seen that typically these sequences occur after a hearably lengthy pause (lines 9, 20, 36, 49 and 67). The pauses in themselves do not mean that a closing is relevant but the pauses in each case follow the closedown of a previously talked about topic and thus this presents a possible place where a closing could be initiated. In all of the instances except the last, the pre-closing activity results in the
proposal and take-up of further topic talk (lines 13, 29, 43 and 60). In lines 71-72 however, the pre-closing activity results in a move to terminal exchanges which take place in lines 73-74.

The pre-closing activity sometimes takes the form of a direct announcement as in lines 10 and 21, but equally may be in the form of less direct, closing implicative utterances such as in lines 39-41, 50, 53, 55, 59. In these latter cases the move to close is implied

- by the orientation to some future event as in lines 39-41 ("Alright darlin' .(0.9)'ave a nice time, tonight. enjoy, the (. )↓ show.") and line 59 ("An ↓ I'll see you >to[morrow mornin']<")
- by using a typical possible pre-closing form to offer closure in line 50 ("Oka:y, lovey?")
- by (in line 53) the strong downward and thus conclusive sounding intonation on "love" and the terminal sounding ending of "you" ("I ↓ love you.").
- and by the use of familiar closing-down-type-material in line 55 (">Give me a< big kiss").

In the first of these the possible move to close is implied by the summing up of previously discussed materials. In the second of these (the checking of 'okay-ness') a possible move to close is implied by the checking that previous talk may be coming to an end and that whatever was being discussed is 'resolved'.

In the last two of these the move to close is implied by a declaration of affection (with terminal-sounding intonational contour), and requesting a kiss respectively, which are both gestures associated with goodbyes, and so they imply the beginning of a possible goodbye (close). These are conventionally recognised as pre-closing-type items (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). To exemplify this, an example from the Holt corpus contains some of these items:

Holt:X(C)2:1:6:17-18

1   Ski:   Righto then,
2   Les:   ↑Right
3

69
In this case we see in line 1 a summarizing utterance ("Righto then,"), the "then" in particular making this hearable as if previous talk has been 'resolved'. In line 4 we see a reference to a future meeting ("I'll, see you later (then)") used to imply a move to closing now.

This concludes the more general look at the architectural features of a whole closing from the corpus. It has shown how there may be a number of instances of pre-closing activity before closing actually occurs. It has shown that pre-closings may be very explicitly delivered, as with announcements, or a close may be implied by the use of closing implicative materials. Whilst many of the above observations are in line with standard closing conventions (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973), some observations show these as being quite unique closings and the remaining analysis will attempt to show this. In particular it will concern itself with the accounting that has been observed to take place within possible pre-closing turns; in both the close-initiating and responding turns.

The presence and nature of accounting activity

A recurrent feature of the pre-closing sequences in this corpus is the presence of an account. This accounting activity serves to extend the preclosing sequences to include an often rather elaborately constructed reason for why the call might have to end now. We have seen above that the pre-closing turns use what might be considered fairly conventional means of initiating a close but many turns also include account items in the pre-closing turns that makes these closings appear quite unique. Comparisons with other data corpui (discussed later in this chapter) show how unique these are.
As detailed earlier, the accounts are included in the same turn as announcements to go (leave the call); they are included in the same turn as interrogatives about whether participants want or are required to go; and they are integrated with directives to end the call. The grouping of the pre-closings into these three designs does not suggest that each is performing a different action in the context of closing, since it is their sequential placement that is foremost in determining that their ‘action’ is that of initiating closure. It is the case however that these varying designs are used recurrently to ‘house’ the accounting activity in which I am interested.

Furthermore, individuals’ use of these varying designs allow for self- and/or other-attentiveness to be displayed. A consideration then of the various designs is central to the examination of these accounts and how they manage a closing in a particular way and so I shall examine each in turn.

In the following extracts the close initiations (Cl) and acceptance (A) or decline (D) of these are highlighted in order to show that structurally these are standard pre-closings as defined by Schegloff and Sacks (1973). It will also become clear that in line with Schegloff and Sacks’ observations, pre-closings also contain many other materials than those indicated by the standard closing. It is the ‘other materials’ in this collection of pre-closings, and in particular the accounts, that contribute to the management of these closings as something which I suggest is done reluctantly. I will first consider pre-closings that use an announcement plus an account.

**Announcements + accounts**

**Extract 1** (APS023-D2105)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sue: carrie went with me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dad: good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dad: right. well I’m going to go now&lt; darling’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>Announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ac</td>
<td>Account</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extract 2** (APS027-M2206)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mum: when you said she means i’d just thought that you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>meant that uh (0.5) she grumbled ab(h)out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>(h)ever(h)th(h)ing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>Announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ac</td>
<td>Account</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extract 3 (APS010-M1205)

1 Mum: so: you’ve got enough to keep you going.
   2 Sue: w- But If we’re out an’bout and we’ll see
   3 Mum: right, I suppose I’d better think about going
   4 Sue: and gettin’ someFre:at,
   5 Mum: l’ve got to bed now,
   6 Sue: because I’ve got school in the morning.
   7 Mum: I’ve got some nice sleep then.
   8 Sue: I don’t have to be~ grumpy for Jane Norris.
   9 Mum: ifKay ma darlin’ that’s fine.

Extract 4 (APS037-G3006)

1 Gran: didn’t you hear it just now, uh-
2 Sue: no neh mi:nd.
3 Gran: kay, Then, Ducky,
4 i’m going now
5 Sue: i’m getting thirsty and croaky
6 Gran: okKay
7 Sue: hhh

Extract 5 (APC045)

1 Mum: right, listen, Cra: (( ))
2 Cra: ()
3 Cra: ()
4 Cra: hk
5 Cra: (0.3)
6 Cra: (0.4)
7 Cra: (0.4)
8 Mum: yeah. yer mone,y’s going to run out soon
9 Cra: (° °)
10 Mum: h. hhh [oka:y]
11 Cra: (( ))
12 (0.2)
13 Mum: h. hhh [oka:y]
14 Cra: [m u : m m y,]
15 (0.4)
16 Mum: an I’ve got to go
17 Cra: [m u : m m y,]
18 Mum: some supper in the oven
19 Cra: [m’umy-]
In all of the above extracts one participant announces an intention to ‘go’ (and thus close the call). These can be seen in Extract 1, line 5; Extract 2, line 6; Extract 3, line 6; Extract 4, line 4 and Extract 5, line 16. In each case an account is also provided in the same turn. Note that in Extract 5, line 10, there is also an orientation to a constraint that Craig has, though Mum’s announcement about her going is delivered along with an account related to her having to rescue her supper and so that becomes the focus for initiating call closure. Each account details some circumstance that must be attended to and so provides a warrant for the call to end. In all cases too the reasons appear to be circumstances over which participants have no control. This is a significant facet of the construction of the closing as something done reluctantly as it positions the close as something that is inevitable and necessary. Having to do one’s work (Extract 1) is something that it could be argued is outside of Dad’s control; Mum having to get tea ready (Extract 2) is something that could be seen as outside of her control and the same could be said of Sue having to go to bed in readiness for school the next morning (Extract 3) and Gran getting “thirsty and croaky” (Extract 4) suggests a physical constraint to her continuing talking. In Extract 5, Mum has referred previously to some sausages that have been cooking in the oven for some time, and so it is now a necessity that they be “rescued”. This construction is a particularly strong one in the building of reluctance since it suggests that Mum has not left the call when she needed to attend to supper but has left it such that now the sausages need rescuing. In using the above items to build an account, the agency is managed such that it is each of the stated circumstances that are accountable for the close rather than it being the choice of participants that they leave the call. Thus participants supplement their announcement to go with an account which is built as a constraining and exigent requirement. This serves to display reluctance about leaving the call and to indicate that they are not doing so for any other reason than that they have to. The circumstances used in the accounting are managed as a circumstance to which the participants are subjected rather than it being their choice that they cease conversing. Note that in Extracts 1, 3, and 5 the accounts are constructed using expressions that participants have “got” to go, which strengthens the idea that this
is not something that is wanted but to which the speaker has to attend. Such expressions contribute significantly to the construction of reluctance to the impending close. In Extracts 2 and 4, this is achieved in a slightly different way. (See below for a more detailed analysis of Extract 2). In extract 4, Gran uses the delivery of her account to indicate her inability to continue as she is becoming hoarse. She enacts the very croakiness that may require the end of the call in her delivery at line 6. Whilst on the surface this appears to be a self-attentive reason for initiating the close, the croaky delivery displays her potential inability to carry on, which in turn gives strength to the idea that she is closing reluctantly.

In order to explore other features of these pre-closing turns that contribute to the building of reluctance I will examine two of these extracts further.

Extract 1 (APS023-D2105)

1 Sue: *carrie* went with me
2 Dad: *good.*
3 (4.5)
4 Dad: *right. >well*
5 I’m going to go now< darlin’.
6 → >cus I’ve got lots of teeth to make.
7 Sue: yea::h
8 → I’ve got to finish ma cards off=

In Extract 1 we can observe a number of features. We can see a hearably lengthy pause followed by a marker that could indicate a possible change in topic ("right.", line 4). In line 4 we also see a dispreference marker ("well"), followed by the announcement of going (line 5). The announcement to leave the call is softened by the use of a familiar reference to the fellow participant ("darlin’."). It is in line 6 that we see an account for why the call must move towards closure, namely because Dad has to do his work. This is ratified by Sue in her affirmative in line 7. Finally in line 8 Sue offers a further reason why the call may need to close. This suggests an orientation by both participants to providing an account for closing. This is significant in that though there are two different reasons put forward, their sequential organisation (one immediately following the other) suggests collaborative effort in building an account for closing that incorporates items that each have “got” to do.
Having looked at the turn by turn organisation of this sequence let us now consider some of the things that appear to be happening in this pre-closing that are of interest in the context of managing the closing, in particular, with reluctance. I have previously commented on the use of accounts and observed the ‘unavoidable’ nature of the circumstances that are cited. In addition there are other materials which contribute in a similar way to the work which is done to construct reluctance about closing the call. Care is taken here by Dad to express reluctance about leaving the call, through the use of a dispreference marker, and he softens the announcement to go with a familiar reference to Sue. He offers an account for this; a very practical and clear account about precisely what he must go and do. Sue accepts this with a straightforward affirmation, but also shows an orientation to adding to the account to close, constructing her reason in a very similar way to Dad’s (note the common expression of “I’ve got”). The utterance comprises an extended turn which pulls in resources, including an account, which produce the pre-closing as something done reluctantly. The delicate work done here is relationship sustaining in that it averts any negative inferences that might arise were the participants to display anything other than reluctance about leaving the call and their fellow participant. The response to the closing initiation also contains an account which suggests an orientation by both participants to this kind of work.

The function of a passing turn or more generally a close-initiating turn, is to foreground a possible move to close and to offer fellow participants an opportunity to accept or decline the offer to close (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). The extended nature of the close initiating turns and their responses that we have seen above, serve to make very clear that the trajectory of the call is indeed towards closing. Furthermore, these well-explicated moves to close are softened by the insertion of other materials (for example, the term of endearment). Thus the closing is managed so as to provide clarity for both participants concerning the trajectory of the call, but a range of other materials buffer against the idea that either participant actually “wishes” to leave the call. It seems then that it is the nature of the turns as
extended close-initiating turns and the nature of the materials that are included that show these as very carefully produced pre-closings. A look in more detail at a further example will consolidate this.

Extract 2 (APS027-M2206)

1  Mum: when you said she moans i’d just thought that you
2        (h)ever(h)thing.
3  (4.3)  
4  Mum: right,
5  I sup’pose I’d better think about going and gettin< some tea,
6  Sue: mummy.

The following elements occur as before: a hearably lengthy pause in line 4; a topic change implicative (“right,”) in line 5; a reference to the call ending in the form of an announcement in line 6, and a reason for the call potentially ending (an account) in line 7. Many of the materials appear to perform the same functions as before: the pause after a topic closedown, provides a possible space in which to begin pre-closing; the “right” and the “well”, denote the possible change of topic and dispreference respectively; and notably again there is the presence of an account in the same turn as the announcement to go. Note that here, as in Extract 1, there are elements included in the announcement that serve to soften it. Rather than a term of endearment as we saw in Extract 1 the softening is achieved by Mum’s supposing that she’d better think about going. The “sup’pose”-ing that she’d “better” go and get some tea suggests that she may not necessarily want to but that some unavoidable circumstance (such as, it being a time when she should get tea) may lead her to suppose that she ought to get some tea. This is less direct and thus is softer than a straight forward announcement such as “I’m going now because I want my tea”. Mum’s “think”-ing about going also suggests that she is not fully committed to actually going and this both softens the announcement and also places the going as something which is still optional. Thus it seems that the idea of going is just being mooted at this stage, and expressed in this particular way it suggests that the ground is being prepared for an eventual going. Whilst this is the basic function of a pre-closing turn the particular lexical choices of this turn which construct the going as something done reluctantly and with some reticence (as Mum is only “think”-ing about
going), go beyond this basic function and make this a particularly delicately handled close-initiating turn.

We have seen in examples 1 to 5 that through the deployment of a range of resources, principally through the use of accounts, that much is done by participants to manage the closing of the call as something that is not desired by anyone but is something that is done reluctantly. I have talked here of reluctance being something that is produced in and for the talk, which makes it possible to consider it not as a psychological disposition which exists separately from the talk, but as something that is displayed live in the talk. I will elaborate upon this discussion later in the chapter.

Interrogatives + accounts

In a second pre-closing design, accounts are used with questions. In the first of the examples the close-initiation and responding turn are highlighted once more to illustrate the structural features of these sequences in relation to the archetypal closing. As before, I note in particular the inclusion of accounts and what they are discursively accomplishing.

Extract 6 (APS012-M1505)

1 Sue: everybody’s havin’ their supper, "th-a-s."
2  

Latent Account
3 (0.4)  
4 (called to another person)) CARRIE can
5 i have my supper in a bit. (.)
6 when I’ve finished ma phone.  
7 Mum: well do you want to go sweetie.  
8 → and get [yer supper=]  
9 Sue: [not- ]
10 Mum: -and watch the rest, of Indiana?  

Possible start of declining offer to close

Candidate Account

Extract 7 (APS016-M2205)

1 Mum: >You’re going to be an independent? young lady aren’t yer an’ i- it’s great  
2 to talk to mum: but there’ll  
3 be times when y-.h you’ll think,  
4 ooh? I want to do my own thing;
5 (1.7) ((TV in background))
6 Sue: ↓Yes: h:.  

Latent Account

Candidate Account
8 (0.3)
9 Mum: "Yeah"
10 (1.5) ((TV noise in background))
11 Sue: strictly- >is it?< the uh:n:, is i' th- a- Latent Account
12 >i can hear it in the< background:.- Interrogative
13 Mum: o:kay- >did you want to go. Candidate Account
14 -> and try and< watch i:t.  
15 (0.9)
16 Mum: [d’y want t:o:?:] Interrogative
17 Sue: [m u m: y: I h]aven’t voted for Sadie, I haven’t. Interrogative

Extract 8 (APS049-G2707)

((Sue has talked of being dizzy))
1 Sue: my eyes feel a bit- (0.7) >do you think< i’m a bit
2 sleepy or something:
3 Gran: you must be: if tha- if you’re feeling a bit (0.4)
4 dizzy you said [didn’t yer,
5 Sue: [>no not dizzy< maybe
6 i’m just a bit sleepy or something. Latent Account
7 Gran: oh [i see.
8 Sue: [bit sleepy.
9 Gran: yeah
10 (0.8)
11 Gran: alright (”love”) do you want to go then Interrogative
12 -> if you’re feeling sleepy? Candidate Account
13 (1.9)
14 Gran: mmm,
15 Sue: ((talks to someone else away from the phone))
16 carrie I feel sleepy
17 ((turn continues away from the phone))

Extract 9 (APS015-M2005)

((Sue sounds sleepy throughout the whole call))
1 Sue: what time is it? Latent Account
2 Mum: tuh:m: let’s have a look.
3 (0.8)
4 Mum: mum: makes it about- >it’s about< quarter
5 past ni:ne ma lo:v:e.
6 (3.8)
7 Mum: are you wanting to go: ↓ma ↓darling, Interrogative
8 (2.3)
9 Mum: it’s ↑okay to say that you want to ↓go y’↑know,
10 (2.9)
11 Mum: ↓i’ll talk to you for as ↑lo:ng >as you li:ke,
12 -> < but if you- (. ) feeling rather ti:red, Candidate Account
13 and you want to go an get comfy, and watch telly,
14 (0.6) you’ve just gotta ↓sa:y.
15 Sue: m’mmy:, ((quietly and sleepily))

In Extract 6, we see that Mum’s close-initiating turn in line 7, uses an interrogative relating to Sue’s “wanting” and incorporates an account item, the material for which has been introduced by Sue in line 1. We observe in line 9 that this offer to
close is not accepted in this particular instance (indicated by the “not” in the overlapped turn). The salient observation is that in many closings in the corpus potential items that may index a possible closure are introduced as they are in line 1. I refer to these as latent accounts to reflect their tentative status as account items, until a next turn makes them relevant as a candidate account.

It is noticeable then in all four of the above examples that some sort of reference is made to a background event or time. In Extract 6 reference is made to having supper in lines 1 and 4; in Extract 7, lines 11 and 12 reference is made to a television programme heard in the background; in Extract 8, line 6 reference is made to Sue being “a bit sleepy or something”; and in Extract 9 the issue of time is raised in lines 1 and 4-5. All of these circumstances are of a type that could be viewed as items over which neither current speaker has control (“Everybody's” having their supper orients to it being a time when Sue should also perhaps have supper; that Sue is feeling sleepy; that a certain programme is coming on; that a certain time has been reached). They are built as unavoidable exigencies to which participants have to attend.

Thus there are elements here that were also seen in the earlier pre-closings; a statement related to ending the call (though this time framed as a question) and some sort of account (developed differently, but again built as a constraining external exigency). Though each extract contains an account as in the earlier examples, in these instances the accounts are not made relevant as such by the participant who potentially may wish to leave the call (Sue in these cases). A key feature in these pre-closings appears to be the reference to an event or circumstance by one participant and then some work done by the other to assist in accounting for a possible wish to end the call. In all four extracts, the initial references to background circumstances (impending mealtime; programme starting; dizziness/sleepiness; the issue of time) are not hearably introduced as closing implicative utterances, though the next turn in each case would suggest that
they have been received as such. However in order to check whether the trajectory of the call is indeed toward closing, the next turn appears in the form of a question.

In the next turn the speaker employs the materials that have been previously mentioned to construct a candidate account for possible closure. The circumstances are not initially presented as accounts, but are made relevant as accounts in subsequent turns. The way in which these become relevant as accounting items is similar in all of the above extracts. In Extract 6, line 7, Mum asks if Sue would like to leave the call, adding an account for this as being that of getting supper. In Extract 7, line 14 it is Mum too who makes relevant the watching of “i:t.”, a television programme, an account for Sue possibly wanting to leave the call. In Extract 8 (lines 11-12) Gran asks if Sue wishes to go as she has commented on possibly being sleepy. In Extract 9 it is likely that the hearer draws upon not just what is said in terms of time but on other cues too, namely that the speaker displays hearable sleepiness, to construct an account which is once more delivered together with an interrogative. Pre-closing turns are designed to ‘test the water’; to check participants’ readiness to proceed to terminal exchanges, but in these cases the use of a question amplifies this activity. Questions provide an additional means by which participants can check whether this is indeed the trajectory the call is taking and use the account materials (which are initially introduced in an almost cursory way) as a candidate account for a possible move to close. As Extract 9 in particular illustrates, it is not clear whether the circumstance that Sue talks of is actually something that indexes a need to close and so by means of an interrogative this can be clarified. As with the announcement design described above, the design of the pre-closing turn here represents a much extended version of the archetypal passing turn, both in terms of the additional materials (accounts in particular) but also in terms of the additional checking device that the interrogative provides. Again I argue that this represents a more elaborate and yet delicate way of closing that manages more than simply the action of closing.
In order to unpack how the closings are being managed, I explore the last of the extracts in more detail.

Extract 9  (APS015-M2005)

(Sue sounds sleepy throughout the whole call)

1 Sue: What time is it? \textbf{Latent Account}
2 Mum: \textit{Um: let’s have a look.}
3 (0.8)
4 Mum: Mum: makes it about quarter past nine ma lo:ve.
5 (3.8)
6 Mum: Are you wanting to go ma darling, \textbf{Interrogative}
7 (2.3)
8 Mum: It’s okay to say that you want to go y’know, (2.9)
9 (2.3)
10 Mum: I’ll talk to you for as long as you like, \textbf{Candidate Account}
11 < but if you- (. ) feeling rather ti:red,
12 and you want to go an get comfy, and watch telly,
13 (0.6) you’ve just gotta say.
14 Sue: M’mmy:, (quietly and sleepily)

In Extract 9, an account is constructed during an extended turn punctuated by some lengthy pauses. The account appears in 12-13, after encouragement from Mum (line 9) in support of Sue’s potential wish to end the call. The pre-closing activity begins after a hearably lengthy pause in line 6, in which Mum responds to Sue’s question about what the time is. The next turn could potentially be a slot where Sue might give some upshot about why the time was significant but she adds nothing to indicate that that is relevant to possibly closing the call, so Mum asks the question about her desire to leave the call (line 7). Eventually after another hearably lengthy pause (line 8) and a supportive statement that it’s okay to express a desire to go (line 9), followed by a further lengthy pause (line 10), Mum mentions the issue of time in a slightly different way (referring to being prepared to talk “for as long as you like,” line 11).

The account itself then centres around Sue’s possible tiredness. Notably in this case the account is quite a distance from the interrogative about going. Potentially then this sequence may have been rather a different shape if Sue had simply responded to Mum’s question in line 7, but noticeably Sue does not respond despite having slots to do so (lines 8 and 10). Mum appears to respond to this lack of uptake by preparing the ground a little more for Sue to be able to say she wishes to go and by
the provision of an account. Noticeably Sue does respond once the elements (encouragement and account) have been produced and it is possible that Sue orients to a requirement for there to be some sort of accounting activity in Mum's extended close-initiating turn which spans lines 7-14. Additionally we see other work being done by Mum. Mum's utterance in line 11, which invokes time as an aspect thereby paying attention to Sue's mentioning of time but alluding to it in a different way, does the work of saying that she is not wishing to end the call (and so is 'reluctant') but is recognising that Sue may need to do so.

In this case Sue's potential tiredness due to it being a late hour becomes a possible account for ending the call. The construction of this as an account is collaboratively managed, albeit asymmetrically. Mum provides the account, drawing on materials made available by Sue. It is noticeable too that Sue's involvement here is limited to this reference/question, but Mum takes an extended turn, punctuated by pauses, to construct an account for closing, that places Sue as the one needing to go, and also offers support and scaffolding for Sue to say that she wishes to go. This latter extract is a more complex example of an interrogative plus an account but it has all the features in common with other examples of this design.

The recurring pattern then is that, what I refer to here as latent accounts, are introduced as apparent commentary about something that is a competing event to that of continuing the call, and then these materials are reformulated as a candidate pre-closing account expressed along with a question relating to the wants or wishes of the person making that commentary. The activity carried out here appears to accomplish several complementary tasks. It provides a warrant to close, and at the same time provides a checking mechanism for ensuring that that was the potential trajectory that the call was taking. A further feature of the accounts is that they appear to be of an 'unavoidable' nature. All of these resources contribute to the work of averting the notion that a participant may leave the call for any other reason than that it is necessary to or unavoidable that they do so. Thus the interrogative pre-closing design has much in common with announcements in that
they house an account for why the call might end now, and such accounts are
presented as things which are outside the control of the current interlocutors.

Before moving on to the third prevalent pre-closing design, I will show some
examples of where interrogatives are used along with an account to produce a kind
of "asking for permission" to leave the call or close the conversation. They are
included to illustrate once more how accounts are incorporated into pre-closing
episodes, but in addition they illustrate once more how the use of an interrogative
amplifies the function of pre-closings to check or 'test the water' as to whether
participants are ready to close. Each uses similar resources (questions plus
accounts) to manage the closing as something that allows for the other’s stake or
opinion about whether they do move to close. Again there is the provision of some
sort of account in each (in Extract 10, watching a TV programme; in Extract 11,
being sleepy; and in Extract 12, saying hello to someone else that they haven’t
spoken to for ages).

Extract 10 (APS016-M2205)
1 → Sue: Do you think I should go,
2 and watch it?
2 Mum: You’re ver- if you want to:, you: can. that’s
3 [>fine that’s<]

Extract 11 (APS015-M2005)
1 → Sue: Can we now. because—
2 (said away from phone) do I look sleepy?
3 (inaudible talk in background)
4 Sue: She said I look sleepy:
5 Mum: [Alright. look, we’ll catch up
6 another, time. then sweetheart. alright, don’t you go,
7 worrying.

Extract 12 (APCO11)
1 Mum: yes is Lily there?
2 Cra: uh,
3 Mum: is Lily there:
4 Cra: ’Lily:, yeh.
5 Mum: [yes I haven’t talked to Lily< for A:ge:
6 Cra: aah:
7 → Mum: so can I say goodbye to you
8 and (.). say hello to Lily?=
9 Cra: yeah and u talk me ‘ater
((talk continues for several more turns before hand over))

Examples 10 to 12 are similar to those discussed above (Extracts 6-9) in that a
participant initiates the possible pre-closing using a question in which the recipient
is asked about whether they move to close. These examples are at the same time distinct from those above however in that these include what appears to be a request for ratification. So whereas in the former examples the interrogatives allowed for speakers to offer to close, based upon something their recipient may wish to do, these appear to be requests to close, based upon circumstances related to the speaker. Thus we have a sub-set within the interrogative design of pre-closings that appear self-attentive rather than other-attentive. The first of these is particularly interesting in that Sue appears to seek an opinion on whether she ‘should’ go which ostensibly presents closing as a matter for joint consideration, but refers in the account to a matter related to her own self-interest. It thus has elements of both other- and self-interest woven into rather a subtle turn. (The issue of self- and other- attentiveness, briefly mentioned here is something I will return to at the end of this chapter).

In these examples then, accounts are an almost necessary feature of these particular pre-closings since they provide a justification for the request. This is particularly evident in Extract 12 where Mum’s request to close is based upon her wish to speak to another person. This is potentially quite a delicate matter since it could suggest that she ‘prefers’ to speak to another speaker rather than Craig and so she produces an account in line 5 (note how this is expressed in objective terms – Mum just hasn’t talked to Lily for “Ages.”). She couples this with a request in line 7 which refers back to this account (through the use of “so”).

On the one hand then the construction of oneself as reluctant to close is rather diluted because the request is based upon something that is self-attentive, but on the other, the request for ratification enacted by these ‘asking permission’-type interrogatives, mitigates this. Put another way, the ‘permission-asking’ has elements of optionality and of opinion-seeking on the prospect of closure, which mitigates the fact that the speakers are requesting closure to pursue a self-attentive activity. Thus this is a very delicately balanced matter, a central component of which is an objective account.
This subset within the interrogatively designed pre-closings further illustrate the role of accounts in managing closing as something that is due to objective circumstances and is not necessarily something that either party want. I have shown that this can be accomplished in a number of ways using an interrogative format (some which offer and some which request closure).

**Directives + Accounts**

A further group of pre-closings in the corpus use directive forms. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) observed that directives provide warrants to close and state how these often use materials that are cited at some point earlier in the conversation. This is true of these pre-closings. Moreover these pre-closings include a very elaborate spelling out of what the other should go and do, often constructing closing as a means of moving on to another desirable activity. This once more illustrates that an attentiveness to fellow participants' needs or wishes is a central preoccupation in these closings.

I first draw out some of the common elements of the following three extracts and highlight elements that contribute to the management of the closing as something that neither participant wants but that may be desired or required by one participant. I then look at the latter two of these in more detail.

In all three examples the use of a directive in itself can be seen to be other-attentive, as participants attend quite carefully to a need or requirement of the other participant.
The following analysis of these will also suggest, as with many of the examples we have seen in previous sections, that the inclusion of a range of materials and in particular the use of some sort of account for why the call may close, builds a caring\textsuperscript{22} dimension. As with the pre-closing turns we have already seen, the materials cited here within the accounts are constructed as being exigencies outside the control of the participants.

Extract 13 (APS029-M2706)

1  Sue: T\#mummym, East\textless; anders\textgreater; is Tstarti:n\textless;g.\rightarrow; 

2  Mum: [.h Allright

3  \rightarrow; then, ma sweetie,=you go\’an T\#watch, it,=an I\’ll Directive +

4  talk to yer later in the \#wee:x.; \n
5  (0.3)

6  Sue: ok\:y.\ Direc+ 

Extract 14 (APC037)

((Craig is displaying some anger and upset about being at college and arrangements for coming home))

1  Cra: ((crying)) (mummy) >Mum<<

2  (loud inbreath through sob)

3  Cra: [.huu #\textgreater;aaa\textgreater;agh\# ((continued sobs))

4  \rightarrow; Mum: [y’ need to go and find someone. \#oka:y. Direc+

5  (0.7)

6  Mum: [because th\:e more you talk to me, the [more sad]= Candidate A/C

7  Cra: [{{sob}}] \n
8  Mum: =you’re g\:etting.

9  Cra: ((periodic sobs 1.3))

10  Mum: swri:ght?

11  Cra: [{{sob}}]

12  Mum: say bye-bye now, go and find some-one to make

13  you feel [happier an i’ll talk later.] + Candidate A/C

14  Cra: [ [((periodic sobs))]. h hh.=

15  Mum: =you need to go and get some tea, cause you’re #hu\textless;ngry.\# Imp+C/Acc

16  Cra: [{{sob}}] \n
17  Mum: mummy?

18  Cra: mummy?

19  Mum: #ye:s;#\n
Extract 15 (APS015-M2005)

1  Sue: \textgreater;if I drop to sleep on this phone Latent Account

2  right. no:body’ll wake me up,\textless;then

3  I’ll be:, (0.8)

4  Mum: \#we:ll I just think if you sit there

5  an’ you’re gonna get cool d ar:en’t you,

6  (0.9)

7  \rightarrow; Mum: \#you \textgreater;need to go an’ sit in a nice Directive +

8  com\:fy chair, =go an’ sit on the 

9  settee in the lou:ng:e, \n
10  (0.7)

\textsuperscript{22} ‘caring’ is used here to encapsulate the action that is being displayed, rather than referring to a psychological disposition.
In each of Extracts 13, 14 and 15 we see the mention or display (as in Extract 14) of something which could necessitate ending the call (in line 1 in each of the extracts) though it is not delivered as a pre-closing turn. We see as with previous examples, that the recipient reformulates the material into a candidate account for possible closure. In all three examples the account becomes integral with a directive about closing. Each uses the material offered up by the first speaker (the young adult in each case) to produce an account for closing. This design of pre-closing is structurally the same as a standard closing, an observation made of the first two pre-closing designs too, but they contain many more materials. In this design, directives and accounts are organised as extended turns or (as in the latter two examples) in several successive turns, each building upon the previous one.

In Extract 13 Sue mentions a TV programme that is starting and Mum uses this to form a close-initiating turn that orients to the programme start ("it,") as a warrant to close. This account is embedded within a turn which directs Sue to go and watch it. Note too the use of a familiar reference ("ma sweetie," in line 3) which serves to soften the directive, thus producing it as a caringly meant instruction rather than a more formal order or command. (Such familiar terms have now occurred in all three designs that we have studied here which suggest their import in managing the close. Chapter 4 examines this further.)

This familiar reference is supplemented, in the same turn, with a reference to when participants will next talk which also serves to soften the instruction, by indicating a future point when the participants will talk although they may cease doing so now. Once more the inclusion of these additional materials (familiar term and reference to future conversation) displays a caring approach which manages the potential dilemma between closing the call and pursuing another desirable activity (in this
case watching a favourite TV programme). Here then Mum suggests closing in response to Sue’s commentary regarding the imminent start of the programme.

In Extract 14 Craig hearably displays frustration and upset. It is this which provides the materials for a candidate account by Mum which is embedded in a turn directing Craig to leave the call. In response to Craig’s sobs and outcries (lines, 1 and 4), Mum suggests (line 5) that he should go and find someone (presumably who will comfort him), and Mum accounts for this by indexing that he is getting sadder the more he talks to her. After no verbal uptake (though Craig is audibly sobbing), Mum provides a further utterance to invite a verbal receipt in line 11. In the absence of such a receipt, she issues another directive to “say bye-bye now.” (line 13) and adds a further account for this, though this time reformulating it not as a ‘need’ but as a prescription for his ongoing action (lines 13-14). So this becomes a slightly upgraded directive though she includes in that turn, at line 14, a reference to a later talk or a resumption of talk. This serves potentially to mitigate the more firm directive she issues in this utterance. Craig continues to produce periodic sobs but no verbal uptake and so Mum issues a further directive, this time drawing upon the fact that earlier in the call Craig has mentioned that he hasn’t had any supper and is hungry. Notably once more she expresses this as Craig’s ‘need’ as she did in her first attempt at line 5. Eventually, at line 18, Craig speaks, issuing a summons to Mum. This begins a move out of closing as Mum responds with a croaky “ye:s:”. Following this (not shown) there are several further such summons’ by Craig, before they move into more conversation. Mum’s croaky delivery of “hungry” in line 16 and “yes” at line 19, also has a hearably ‘sympathetic’ quality, which is difficult to capture in the transcription, but is noted here as it contributes to the utterance, something which is consistent with the caring approach I have indexed elsewhere.

In this example then we see the use of several directives which incorporate accounts, as well as audible cues (intonation or other aspects of voice quality) being used to manage the closing activity in a caring way. In this particular example we see Mum pursuing a move to closure over several turns, each time offering up an
account for why Craig should close. These accounts are each presented as being in the interest of Craig.

In the following example we see Sue’s Mum carrying out similar activity. Over several extended turns Mum provides rather an elaborate account for why Sue may wish to close.

Extract 15 (APS015-M2005)

1  Sue: >if I drop to sleep on this phone  Latent Account
2      right. no:body’ll wake me up, <then
3  Mum: I’ll be:, (0.8)  
4  Mum: >we’ll I just think if you sit there
5  Mum: an’ you’re gonna get cold aren’t you, (0.9)
6  Mum: (APS01S-M200S)
7    Mum: ↑you ↑need to go an’ sit in a nice Directive +
8  Mum: com:fy chair, =go an’ sit on the Candidate Account
9  Mum: settee in the lou:ng:e, (Continuation) +
10     (0.7)
11  Mum: <↑yea::h>=
12  Mum: =and ↓watch, the progra:mm:e, Candidate Account
13  Mum: that you want to watch. ↓h
14  Mum: and then: ↓(.) get into bed.
15  (0.3)
16  Mum: >an ‘ava< nice: early, night. ((whispe:ry voice))

In Extract 15 (repeated above for convenience) Sue refers to the possibility that she may fall asleep (line 1) which she delivers as commentary rather than as a reason to close. In line 4 Mum adds a little to this commentary herself by saying that Sue may also get cold if she sits by the phone and falls asleep. In line 7 Mum begins to build an account which is delivered using a directive prefaced by a phrase relating to Sue’s ‘need’ to go. It is this need that is offered up as an account, the need being related to the commentary about falling asleep and getting cold. As with previous examples the accounting does appear in response to something that Sue reports in the first instance and this is repackaged by Mum to become a directive about what Sue needs to do along with an account for doing so (her tiredness and potential coldness).

On the one hand it could be argued that these are but a series of very practical steps that anyone may suggest to someone who is tired, but on the other, looked at
in interactional terms, these turns represent the construction of rather an elaborate account for closing the call. Note the intonation and other audible aspects in this account. The upward contours of “↑You ↑need” in line 14, the emphasis on the comfort of the settee in the lounge in lines 15 and 16, the inclusion of watching a programme and then going to bed, and finally the whisperiness of the “ ↑ava< nice early, night.”; not just any early night, but a “nice” one. These turns are delivered as a series of possibly tempting things to help Sue to leave the call whilst at the same time emphasising that this is also a “need”. The continuation of the directive over several of Mum’s turns, manages the lack of immediate take-up. Notably this fairly elaborate construction is building a strong account in the event that they do move to close and Sue leaves Mum to take the floor to do this. The collaboration and yet asymmetry in the interactional work being done by the two parties is rather striking, and this will be discussed in a later chapter dedicated to these aspects.

Each of Extracts 13, 14 and 15 contain instances of parents taking extended turns, following Sue and Craig ‘putting out there’ some sort of circumstance that is a potential reason to close. In Extract 14 this comprises a display of upset from Craig, whilst in Extracts 13 and 15, materials are verbally introduced by Sue. We see in subsequent turns that each Mum packages the circumstance to formulate lengthy close-initiating turns, to suggest that Sue and Craig leave the call and attend to whatever matter has been introduced. As the actions projected in the directives are also the actions that potentially may lead to closure the accounting activity is integral to the directive. For example, “go and get some tea” (Extract 14, line 16) and “go an’ sit in a nice com:fy chair” (Extract 15, lines 7-8), and such.

A further observation is that each of the accounts again incorporate materials that are of an external, constraining type; namely, the watching of a TV programme by Sue, anger and upset (as displayed by Craig) and Sue’s sleepiness, respectively. In these examples (particularly the latter two) the talk is delivered with a whisperiness, softness or croakiness which builds it as a tender display of care for
the other participant. These aspects of delivery, together with the provision of accounts, the familiar reference to Sue (in extract 13, line 3) and the reference to a future call that they will share (Extracts 13 and 14, lines 4 and 14) once more adds to the argument that there are elements which display a caring approach towards closing. As before, all of these activities are combined in ways that display a reluctance to close. The directive design enables one participant to provide a warrant to close for the other. It enables a participant to orient directly to a need or a desire of the other to pursue an alternative activity and so produces the talk as other-attentive, and thus caring, by virtue of its very design.

Discussion

I have now illustrated three designs of close-initiating turns that include accounts to provide a warrant to close. These accounts are included with announcements and within interrogatives and directives which initiate the possible closure of the call. We have seen that this is done in sometimes an elaborate and careful way by the inclusion of a range of materials. It seems most reasonable to conclude that as accounts can be observed in many pre-closings in the corpus, they hold some interactional import for the participants. The accounts appear to be a key resource in building a very caring approach to closing, particularly if we construe closing as a potentially problematic and delicate activity.

We have seen that these accounts employ materials that appear to be of an external, constraining, exigent type. In other words they are events or happenings, the occurrence of which are introduced or reported as outside the control of participants and so any move to close is projected as being for no other reason than that the call has to end, rather than it being the ‘wish’ of either participant. The materials are organised so as to construct the speaker as reluctant to leave the call. We see many materials used (for example, the start of TV programmes, sleepiness

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23 I remind the reader that ‘caring’ is a characterisation of the discursive activity rather than the attribution of a disposition to participants.
of participants, an ensuing mealtime, having to do some work or finish a task, to name but a few) that are personally circumstantial for one or other of the participants but which are constructed as 'unavoidable' and out of the control of the co-present participants. Even the watching of a TV programme (which is repeatedly used across the corpus in accounts for closing) whilst not unavoidable per se, is built in a way that emphasises the constraining nature of TV timings. Schedules are publicly accessible to all and programme starts take place at a certain time and not at the behest of individuals, so accounts around these are built to emphasise this constraint, thereby constructing it as unavoidable.

In those cases where the most direct announcements are made about leaving the call (Extracts 1-5), these include expressions such as “I’ve got to” suggesting its unavoidability. These more direct pre-closings often are accompanied by familiar address terms and references to future calls which serves to soften what otherwise might be construed a direct wish to stop conversing with the other party.

In the less direct forms (interrogatives and directives) it is the very design that performs particular work. They allow for displays of other-attentiveness, particularly with respect to the needs or desires of another. This other-attentiveness builds the speaker as not wishing to leave the call and the recipient as being required to attend to something. Much work is done then to show a reluctance to leave the call, largely via the use of accounts, which are constructed so as to emphasise constraint and thus unavoidability.

The accounting that takes place is managed such that the responsibility for potentially closing a call is on the one hand shared, via the collaborative work taking place, but on the other, is also presented as being outside the control of current participants. This attends to delicate relational business since it averts any negative inferences that may occur if a participant just announced their intention to go or just moved straight to terminal exchanges without providing a warrant for the ending of the call.
Given that participants have a choice of varying designs available to them to propose closure, and that some designs are self- and others are other-attentive it is relevant to compare designs for this aspect since the design contributes to the management of the closing as caring about one’s fellow participant. On the one hand the syntactic design of pre-closings is very much secondary to placement in terms of the action they perform in the closing sequence (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). In terms of sequence organisation they each perform a similar action; they either propose closure via an announcement or offer to close via an interrogative or directive form. However on the other hand, in this data we have seen that announcements are usually self-attentive and interrogatives and directives are usually other-attentive, so there is another layer of discursive activity to consider in order to appreciate any other psychological business that may be being managed in the closings.

The announcement format attends to the speaker’s (announcer’s) accountability and produces the closure as something reluctantly done and in that way can be considered caring. Of the 117 pre-closings which use an account in the APS corpus (51 calls) 32% used an announcement. 68% of them used either an interrogative or a directive (interrogatives 47%; directives 21%). This tendency towards those designs that allow for displays of other-attentiveness, underpins further the notion that participants manage the closing in such a way as to show ‘care’ for their interlocutor. Particularly in the interrogative design the agency for closure is offered to the recipient and the account is built around the recipient’s interests and wishes. It is produced as in the service of the recipient. Furthermore, it constructs the speaker as having knowledge of and rights to comment upon these interests and wishes. An interrogative also introduces a strong sense of optionality as to whether they indeed proceed to close. In the directive format there is less optionality built into the format but directives can be and often are resisted by the recipient who declines the option to close. Once more the account is produced as in the service of the recipient, with the speaker displaying knowledge about and concern for the interests of the recipient. Notably in both the
interrogative and directive formats the speaker’s own desires and interests are not treated as a relevant part of the closing; he or she does not have to attend to their own (possibly problematic) accountability. This is of course in contrast to the announcement-type format. The ‘possibly problematic’ aspect relates to what a suggestion to close might index. It might indicate boredom, ‘better’ things to do or even pique. In performing the action of offering to close in the way they do parents avoid such inferences, instead providing reasons based on the materials stated by the young adults. Of course in offering to close parents may also be servicing their own requirements of closing the call (because it cannot go on forever, because they have talked for long enough, because they have other things to do). However it is notable that they do so in a way which avoids them saying any such thing, but instead use materials supplied by the young adults to offer a warrant to close.

Participants select some of these formats over others though each of the three formats display caring in varying and sometimes the same ways. Indeed several formats may be used in any one closing section as was highlighted in the closing section shown earlier (page 66-67). A consideration of who is speaker and recipient in these is discussed in a later chapter (Chapter 6) in the context of collaboration and asymmetry.

Finally, we have observed that relative to the standard closing, these pre-closing episodes are structurally similar and so participants rely on standard sequential and turn-taking machinery for the negotiation of the close. We have however also observed the pervasive use of additional materials to manage this in a particular way.

Comparative Aspects

In this chapter I have referred to the at times unique ways of negotiating a close, so in order to explore what is unique or otherwise a number of comparisons have been made and are reported below.
Instances of pre-closing

When comparing the closing sections in the APS corpus with those in the Holt corpus the instances of pre-closing before closing actually occurs are greater in number than in the Holt corpus.

Table 1: Showing the number of instances of 0,...,9 pre-closing episodes (prior to the final episode) in each of the Holt and APS corpuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number (N) of pre-closing episodes prior to the episode resulting in closing</th>
<th>Holt Corpus – number of calls containing (N) episodes</th>
<th>APS Corpus – number of calls containing (N) episodes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL CALLS REVIEWED</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notably 78% of the Holt calls reviewed has none or just one pre-closing episode before termination while none of the APS corpus has this few; in contrast, in the APS corpus 75% of reviewed calls has either three or four pre-closing episodes before termination. Though some of the Holt calls were of a monotopical sort in that there was a particular reason for calling (as opposed to calls where the reason

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24 I excluded for the purpose of this comparison those calls which were clearly 'professional/business' calls and looked at those which had 'social business' as a main matter as these approximated more closely to those in the APS corpus.
for calling is principally a chat or catch up) the number of episodes before closing still cluster around 0 or 1 in the Holt calls and around 3 and 4 in the APS calls. So though the above figures may be slightly skewed by the inclusion of such calls in the sample, the overall trend remains the same.

**Use of accounts**

A scrutiny of the closings in the Holt corpus revealed that though there were occasional references to events which might mean the end of a call; for example, a film which participants may wish to watch in the extract below, these items were not actually formulated so as to account for a close. Indeed these particular materials were actually the recycling of something which Les mentions at the beginning of the call. Thus it was not possible to find accounting of the type found in the APS and APC data sets in the Holt calls.

**Holt:** X(C)1:2:7

Les: Yes. hhh Uh \(\uparrow\) by the way that film's on now if you want to watch it Ch[annel is]it
Mum: ((channel is)it)
Les: \(\uparrow\) Channel Four
Mum: \(\downarrow\) Right
Mum: Okay love
Les: \(\uparrow\) Take y
(0.2)
Mum: \(\uparrow\) Bye lo\(\downarrow\)ve,
Les: \(\uparrow\) Bye lo\(\downarrow\)ve,
Mum: \(\uparrow\) Bye bye
Les: Bye bye

It was the case that reasons for closing were occasionally produced as matters-in-passing and they were not produced as an account in the manner we have observed throughout this chapter. Note above how the film is re-introduced with a "\(\uparrow\) by the way", which suggests an only cursory orientation to its status as a reason (account) to close. Notably it is not a matter which has been picked up in the way in which materials are picked up and reformulated into an account by participants in the APS calls we have viewed. Such items remain as latent materials available to participants as a possible reason for why a close may take place but they are not formulated so as to explicitly treat these as accounts for closing. It is worth noting too that Les mentioned this film at the beginning of the call and is reminding Mum in case she
may wish to watch it. This could of course be a more subtle way of introducing such things and making them available without making them as explicit as we see in the data sets which include Sue and Craig. The differences I have highlighted may or may not be bound up with the inclusion of a potentially ‘challenged’ speaker. I now consider the six calls I have access to from the CTS corpus25.

These calls replicated to some extent the context of the calls in this current corpus except in that the young adults were not diagnosed as having a learning disability. I looked for the presence of accounting activity in those calls and identified accounting in pre-closing turns in all six of the calls. Below are two extracts from these calls.

**CTS21**

1. Gran: (1.5) \textit{WELL i’m going to have to go:=}
2. =cause we’w- (.) >gotta go ter the shops<
3. (0.8)
4. Gran: got [nothing to eat in this house."
5. Soph: [ah: 00:]

**CTS29**

1. Mum: (0.6) \textit{i’m going to have to go:=i- don’t know,}
2. Sophie’s< \textit{ crying at something,=i need ter (.)}
3. find out what the matter is.
4. Pen: oo::h: ga[iw::d
5. Mum: [.HHHH HHHHH. “i know,”

In CTS21 we see an announcement about going (at line 2) followed by an account for having to leave at line 3. At line 5 we see an addition made to this account and at line 6 we see Sophie’s response; firstly in overlap she responds to Grandma’s utterance that she’ll have to go as she has to go to the shops and then in the clear she responds again, though in this case it is not clear whether the “oo:;” responds again to the fact that Grandma has said she has to go or to the latter item that Grandma has nothing to eat in her house. The important observation to be made

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25 Readers are reminded that this corpus was used courtesy of Clare Jackson. The corpus contains calls between young women and girls and their friends and families; the calls used here were family telephone calls between young adult children and a parent or a grandparent.
here though is the orientation by Grandma to account for the possible upcoming close.

In CTS29 we again see an announcement about leaving the call (at line 2) followed by an account for why Mum must leave, namely that Sophie is crying and Mum needs to investigate why. Penny responds with an exclamation possibly in anticipation of what may be wrong with Sophie. Once more however we see that there is an orientation by Mum to account for the possible upcoming close of the call.

It is interesting too that Grandma’s and Mum’s turn (at line 2 in the respective extracts) refers to ‘having’ to go as if this is something not especially desired but nevertheless necessary. Furthermore Mum in CTS29 talks of ‘needing’ to find out what the matter is, which again suggests something outside of her control that has to be attended to rather than continue with the call. These observations introduce some rather interesting orientations by participants in the context of closing which are also found in the closings in this current study. Interestingly all of the six calls viewed contained accounts similar to those above and thus similar to those in the current study.

A count of the use of accounts in all four of the corpuses revealed the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevalence of accounting activity</th>
<th>% of calls which incl. accounting activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APS corpus (51 closing sections)</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APC corpus (22 closing sections)</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holt corpus (41 closing sections)</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTS corpus (6 calls)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notably the Holt calls had the lowest prevalence of accounting and as already stated these materials were implicit of a possible close rather than made explicit as an
account to close. The APC corpus calls included accounting activity but at a lower rate than those in the APS calls (note these both involve a young adult with a learning disability). This can be explained partly by the fact that some of these calls were monotopical calls (predominantly making specific arrangements) rather than calls that had no particular goal and were simply for a chat. All of the CTS calls included some accounting activity though the number of calls reviewed was much smaller in number and so across a larger sample it is possible this would decrease.

These comparisons make it possible therefore to consider that what we are observing in the use of these accounts is less about the issue of disability and more about the issue of relationality. At the very least it suggests that these two things are very much intertwined.

The common properties in the calls that use accounts as described throughout the chapter are that the calls are:

- between participants that are in parent-child (young adult) relationships
- between participants who are living separated by distance
- calls are typically for a chat rather than for resolving a particular matter

Thus it is possible that it is these factors that are determining the use of accounts for closing rather than it being potentially related to issues of disability. This is something that will be considered throughout forthcoming chapters as well as here, with a view to understanding if such issues are attributable to the inclusion of someone with a potential interactional challenge or whether such issues are generic issues bound up with relationality.

Comparisons made so far produce the following observations.

- Pre-closings in the current data sets (APS and APC) exhibit systemic organisation, they are collaboratively produced but also exhibit asymmetrical participation with much more work completed by adults.
• Whilst issues of disability may be bound up with generic issues about relationality it may be the case that elaboration and explicit-ness may be a feature of talk involving people with learning disabilities.

In the following chapter I examine and discuss other types of affiliative materials found in the pre-closings in this study, and again similar comparisons will be made between this and other corpuses.
Chapter Four – Managing relationality: Affiliative practices in pre-closings

Introduction

In the previous chapter we saw how accounts were introduced within pre-closing turns in a way that constructed participants as reluctant to leave the call. We also saw that in building the turns in this way participants were, by very practical means constructing themselves as caring for the interests of the other. In this chapter I explore the high concentration of other types of materials introduced into the pre-closing episodes, which also contributes to this discursive work. These resources are drawn upon recurrently by participants and represent a range of affiliative practices which provide something of a ‘buffer’ at the point where the trajectory of the call is towards closure. As such they not only contribute to the building of a caring closedown of the call, but they appear to delicately manage and sustain the relationality between participants by invoking aspects of their ongoing relationship. Specifically these materials include the elaborate construction of future individual and joint activities; there is explicit ‘checking’ about the potential trajectory of the call; there are explicit references to next calls and next meetings and there is a high concentration of endearment terms and of intonation and voice quality that hearably displays ‘care’.

These resources, though not alien to the closing arena (cf. Schegloff and Sacks, 1973; Pavlidou, 2002), are included in such high concentration and with considerable elaboration in the calls considered here, that they warrant scrutiny. This chapter explores the work these resources are doing and shows how this work is related to the work done by accounts. These affiliative resources can be found both as a supplement to the accounts and in place of them. This chapter explores how these various resources manage the relationality between participants. It explores how these resources complement the idea of ‘reluctance’ built through the accounts, and how they are combined in several closing episodes, to produce a
closing which displays ‘care’ for the other on behalf of the speaker. This allows for a re-specification of what it is to be ‘reluctant’ and ‘caring’. In this chapter I suggest that these are live and dynamic activities as evidenced by and through the materials we see occurring in these closings.

In this chapter, for analysis purposes I group the affiliative practices into three main sections:

- the elaborate construction of future individual and joint activities
- explicit checking about the trajectory of the call and references to next calls and meetings
- use of endearment terms and of intonation and voice quality that hearably displays ‘care’.

Despite my grouping them in this manner, it is notable that participants may draw upon a combination of any or all of these in any one closing section. For this reason many of the following examples are illustrative of more than one of the above practices. The practices will therefore be highlighted within a dedicated section but reference will also be made to the other materials that are evident there too. These types of materials are common in mundane telephone closings (cf. Schegloff and Sacks, 1973; Pavlidou, 2002) but in the closings in this study they are found in very high concentration and are often very explicitly and elaborately produced.

As with the previously explored accounting activity, these materials often appear as or within pre-closing turns. As such, their occurrence is within the structural norms of closing turns as set out in the standard closing. In other words they represent (as did the accounts) insertions within the standard closing structure and in particular within the pre-closing turns. These additional affiliative materials also appear and are constructed over several successive such turns. Their appearance then is not quite so regularly patterned as with the accounts which were included in varying turn designs. Furthermore, the inclusion of these materials sometimes produces a temporary move out of closing as the materials become the overriding project.
rather than the closing. To illustrate something of the structural aspects I consider the following two examples.

In the following extract we see previous talk being concluded (lines 1-2) and we see Dad delivering a fairly regular closing down-type utterance; a reference to their next meeting on Saturday. Sue then responds with an affirmation (though a hearably flat-sounding one) and Dad then (at line 6) delivers a typical passing turn which is not immediately taken up (line 7). He adds more at line 8 about their future plans, after which Sue makes further enquiries. This serves to move the call out of closing as they discuss in more detail what exactly they’ll be doing.

Contrast this with the extract below (a later extract from the same call). Dad again issues a fairly regular utterance associated with closing; a re-statement of when they’ll next meet, and Sue responds with a confirmatory “yes,”. The next turn at talk could thus be a place where either participant might begin terminal exchanges or where we might see further passing turns before such exchanges. At line 4 Dad begins his turn with such an utterance (oka:y.) but again continues beyond that to comment further on the upcoming weekend and to wish Sue well for a barge trip she is to engage in before the upcoming weekend. Each of these matters are prefaced with “and uhm” suggesting that these are a continuation of the initial turn at line 1. Thus we see a succession of pre-closing utterances one after another,
constructing rather elaborately what Sue has to look forward to and also including Dad’s ‘well wishing’ for that.

In this latter example the trajectory of the call continues towards closing and after a few more pre-closing exchanges they eventually say goodbye.

In these closings then we can once more recognise fundamental structural features of the standard closing and how its apparatus allows for movement towards or out of closing. We see pre-closing turns being delivered (including extra materials as highlighted above) which constitute an offer to close and we see that the respondent (Sue in both of the above cases) either declines the offer by engaging in further talk (as in the first example) or accepts with some form of affirmation (as in the second example). So once more we are seeing that these closing sections draw upon standard turn-taking machinery and the sequence organisation of closings to manage the business of closing. However it is the introduction of extra materials into these closing sequences that manages other business that is explored hereafter in this chapter.
Elaborate construction of future individual and joint activities

In the following four examples we see an orientation to a future activity; either something that Sue is due to engage in with other family members or individually. We see these activities introduced or re-introduced into the closing sections as a fairly standard means of orienting to closure; by restating arrangements or wishing someone well for an upcoming event, as a means of 'summing up'. Thus in themselves these are not unusual materials to see in closing sections. For example, in many of the Holt calls, social arrangements are the main topic of conversation and so arrangements and plans are commonly reiterated in the closing stages of the call. However in the calls in this current study, it is the elaborate construction of these future activities in the calls that is notable. I will first consider common features of the following examples, in particular the incidence of such materials, and then I will go on to look at the materials themselves and what action they may be accomplishing over and above that of closing.

Extract 1
APS038-D0706
1 Dad: so- so i’ll see yer sat’dee,
2 (0.4)
3 Sue: ye:s,
4 Dad: oka:y. an d u:hm
5 (1.5)
6 Dad: <we’ll have some fu-> an ‘av a gre:at time
7 on that barge alri:ght,
8 (0.3)
9 Sue: ye:s.
10 Dad: an uhm a say’it looks like your in fer some
11 good weather which is brillian:tit.
12 (0.7)
13 Dad: o’ri:ght,
14 Sue: yes=
15 Dad: =i love you,
16 Sue: ↑love ↑you,
((Terminal exchanges))

Extract 2
APS048-G0607
1 Gran: >alright then,< i’ll see you on saturday.
2 (0.4)
3 Sue: yes=
4 Gran: ri:ght ↑BAh↑BYe, fer ↑Now,
5 Sue: what time yer com[ing,
6 Gran: ↑".hhhh"
7 uh: >w’ll it be abou—< (0.1) we’l’lea:yve about
8 eleven i spose=like (0.2) the nor:mal time we come,
if we were< goin for a pic:nic:. 

Sue: we'll, we're going home aren't >we?

Gran: we're going Home YES: an i'll bring you a drink, .hh an some grapes to eat in the car.

Gran: alright,

Tokey ↓oke ma ↓love=

((call moves out of closing again when Sue asks a further question))

Extract 3
APS038-D0706
1 Sue: yea:h,
2 Dad: yea:h.
3 (1.3) ((audible breathing))
4 Dad: so i'll ↑see you sat'day mor↑nin,=
5 Sue: ↓o↑key=
6 Dad: alright,
7 (.)
8 Dad: .hh and uh: (.) we'll have a good time this weekend= lets hope the weather stays nice eh:,
9 (0.5)
10 Sue: and can i'ave something to- (0.5) <something ter nibble o:n,>=
11 Dad: =we- me an you er going to cook some dinner aren't we,
12 hhhhh.
13 (0.3)
14 Dad: ay'e?
15 Sue: shall we do a'tch- (.) chinese fry, up,
16 ((talk continues about what they'll do))

Extract 4
APS023-D2105
1 Dad: Oka:y,
2 Sue: Yeah,
3 Dad: Alright, ↓darlin'.
4 (0.9)
5 "ave a nice time, tonight, (.) enjoy, the (.) show.
6 Sue: ↑Yeah.
7 Dad: "Alright" apparently there's some ↓real rubbish on agen heh heh heh heh heh heh
8 Sue: Rubbish ↓agen,
9 Dad: Some re:al funny ones yeah.
10 (1.2)
11 Dad: Yeah.
12 (2.0)
13 Dad: Oka:y, lov:ey?
14 (0.3)
15 Sue: Yeah.=
16 (2.0)
17 Dad: =I ↓love you.
18 Sue: Love you:=

In each of Extracts 1, 2 and 3, we see a parent or grandparent providing a possible warrant to close in the form of a reference to when they and Sue will next meet. These can be seen in Extract 1, line 1; Extract 2 line 1 and Extract 3 line 4. In all
three cases Sue responds with an affirmative ‘yes’ or ‘okay’. At this point in each of these extracts then there is an opportunity for the call to move towards closing, either through a further passing turn (or alternative form of offer to close) or a move to terminal exchanges. We can see examples of both of these. In Extract 1, line 4 Dad delivers a further ‘pass’ (“oka:y.”) and in Extract 3 at line 6 an “alright.”. In Extract 2 Gran delivers a “ri:ght” and continues with a terminal utterance (“BAh’↑BYe, fer ↑Now,”). However rather than the calls immediately continuing on a closing trajectory we see additional materials appended to Dad’s turns (Ext. 1, line 4 and line 10; Ext. 3, line 8) and we see a move out of closing in Extract 2 when Sue seeks further clarification of the time Gran will arrive. In Extracts 1 and 3 we can see that the additional materials (in bold) are added as a continuation of the turn using “and u:hm” or a variant of this utterance (“an uhm”, Ext.1, line 10; “and uh:” Ext. 3, line 8). In Extract 2 after an inserted sequence which clarifies the arrangements, Gran adds a little something extra to the plans for bringing Sue home at line 12 in bold). Interestingly these details are also prefaced with an “an” (abbreviated “and”), again producing these as appended (and therefore ‘extra’) details about the upcoming events. Although, at first glance, Extract 4 looks somewhat different to the previous extracts; it does not begin with a reference to a next meeting but with some well-wishing from Dad for a show Sue is going to watch that evening; it has many features in common with the other three. There are extra materials appended to Dad’s wishes for Sue to enjoy the show. In particular he orient to the nature of the acts that will be performing as “↓real ru:bbish” (here part of the show’s playful attraction) and “some re:al funny ones” in line 10. This serves to reinforce the enjoyable nature of the show and builds it as something that Sue might look forward to.

A few points are of note before we explore some of the extracts in more detail. Firstly these materials are introduced as extra details; as elaborations of plans. They are in most cases (Extracts 1-3) introduced with continuers, suggesting they are supplementary to the main action (which in these particular examples is the restatement of a next meeting as a means of orienting to a possible close now).
They are also produced with details that emphasise both sharing aspects of the future plans and how these are enjoyable activities to which participants may look forward. When the reference is to something Sue will do alone (as in Extract 1’s barge-trip and Extract 4’s watching a song contest), note how Dad even more elaborately constructs these things, in particular drawing out for Sue the aspects that may produce enjoyment. In the case of the barge-trip he emphasises how the projected good weather is a “brilliant” prospect and in Extract 4 he orients to the nature of the acts within the show as something to look forward to. In so doing Dad displays an attentiveness to and concern for Sue’s enjoyment and he does so just at a point where this may be called into question by the possible termination of the call. So we can view the introduction of these additional materials as contributing to the building of a caring disposition in much the same way as the accounts did in the previous chapter.

I will now look at Extract 1 (repeated below for convenience) in more detail to explore further the nature of the business that may be being managed with the additional materials highlighted here.

Extract 1
APS038-D0706
1 Dad: so- so i’ll see yer sat’dee,
2 (0.4)
3 Sue: ye:s,
4 Dad: oka:y. and u:hm
5 (1.5)
6 Dad: <we’ll have some fu-> an ‘av a gre:at time
7 on that barge alri:ght,
8 (0.3)
9 Sue: ye:s.
10 Dad: an uhm a say’it looks like your in fer some
11 good weather which is brilliant.
12 (0.7)
13 Dad: o’ri:ght,
14 Sue: yes-
15 Dad: =! love you,
16 Sue: ↑love ↑you,
((terminal exchanges))

We see in line 1 a commonplace way of opening up a closing; with a reference to a next meeting, prefaced here with a “so”, which produces it as a juncture in the talk where the business of the call may have been concluded and therefore it may be
indicative of a potential closing environment. In line 4 Dad’s “oka:y.” in turn-initial position would suggest that this is the trajectory that the call is taking, but he goes on to add extra materials about the upcoming weekend, as well as well-wishes for Sue’s upcoming barge trip. At line 6 there is emphasis on the fun that the two will enjoy, and a sharing aspect is introduced with the use of “we’ll” have some fun. Dad also begins his well-wishes for Sue’s upcoming barge trip in line 6. Note the audible emphasis on “gre:at time” which constructs this as something which has the potential to be very enjoyable and so as something to look forward to. The reference to “that barge” puts particular emphasis on the trip to which he is referring but also by referring to it as “that” barge he indicates that this is something they both know about. This displays very practically that Dad is tuned into what is occurring in Sue’s world and also that he is attentive to her enjoyment of this. Both of these aspects then manage the closing in an affiliative manner. The introduction of a ‘something to look forward to’ at this point enables the focus to shift away from the potential close of the call and towards what will take place beyond this conversational episode. The addition of extra details in lines 10-11 builds the trip up even more in this way, and Dad in line 11 even highlights for Sue the impact of potentially good weather for the trip, using a strong positive adjective with intonational emphasis (“brilliant”). It is possible that Dad’s injection of these extra materials beginning at line 4 and his continuance at line 10 is associated with Sue’s minimal uptake in line 3 and line 9. These are both audibly rather flat-sounding utterances, which are hearably misaligned with the enthusiasm that Dad is producing. Whether this is what prompts such additional materials however is secondary to this discussion (though salient to the discussion of asymmetry in Chapter 6). It is the action of constructing these things as positive events to look forward to with enthusiasm that appears to be the predominant activity.

Such activity centres around the construction of a picture of what a future event might be like and in the following excerpt from Extract 2 we see Gran adding to the ‘going home’ picture by adding extra very detailed aspects of the car journey that will be part of this trip home. This level of detail could be viewed as superfluous to
the summarising of arrangements of which it is part, and so suggests that it is managing more than just arrangement-making. It constructs the next meeting between Gran and Sue as a something to look forward to and the extra details elucidate the ways in which it might be enjoyable, just as Dad did in the previous example.

Excerpt from Ext.2
APS048-G0607
11 Sue: well, we're going home aren't we?
12 Gran: we’re going home yes. an I’ll bring you a drink, hh an some grapes to eat in the car.
13 (0.9)
14 Gran: alright,
15 (key doke ma love)
16 ((call moves out of closing again when Sue asks a further question))

A further notable feature of many of these elaborations is Sue’s engagement in the activity. She demonstrably collaborates in the ‘painting’ of these pictures either through prompting extra details via questions or by adding something of her own to these. Consider the following example (an excerpt from Extract 3).

Excerpt from Ext.3
APS038-D0706
4 Dad: so I’ll see you sat’day mor’n,
5 Sue: d’kay
6 Dad: alright,
7 (.)
8 Dad: hh and uh: (. ) we’ll have a good time this weekend=
9 lets hope the weather stays nice ay:e,
10 (0.5)
11 Sue: and can I have something to- (0.5) something ter nibb:le
12 o:n,>=
13 Dad: =we- me an you er going to cook some dinner aren’t we,
14 hhhhh.
15 (0.3)
16 Dad: ay:e?
17 Sue: shall we do a’tch- (. ) chinese fry, up,
18 ((talk continues about what they’ll do))

At line 11 we see that Sue engages with talk about the “good time” to be had this weekend by adding an additional aspect to the picture. Note that she appends this with an ‘and’, as we saw others doing in previous examples. Here she frames this extra detail as a question thus providing a prompt for further details to be added by Dad. This question format may of course explain the elaboration in this particular case, but note how Dad invites Sue to continue building a picture of what they are going to do in line 13. They continue with the construction of the ‘good time’ so
much so that the call moves out of its closing trajectory. The injection of these extra materials thus provides a strong opportunity to move out of closing in favour of doing this affiliative sort of work. It is interesting that the re-introduction of a next meeting or next event has the effect of continuing the call in many of these instances whereas the restating of arrangements and the like generally provide a warrant to close down a call in closings in general, because the restating or summarising of arrangements suggests that the main business of the call has now been transacted. This once more suggests that other affiliative business, as well as the business of closing is being transacted by the introduction of the materials seen here.

The main actions of referring to when one might next meet a co-participant or of wishing someone well for an upcoming individual event is inherently affiliative. Such actions display an orientation to and an involvement with the affairs of the other. Thus they contribute to the maintenance of the relationship to which the participants are party. However, the materials we have seen above, appear to complete this affiliatory work in a most elaborate way. In instances where there is a reference to a next meeting, participants display an enthusiasm to be in the company of the other and to engage with them in upcoming joint activities. In those instances of well-wishing for an upcoming individual event participants display concern and care for the life and the interests of the other and an engagement with what they may find enjoyable. They also display a knowledge of and an orientation to comment on what the other (usually Sue) may find enjoyable.

We see detailed and elaborate descriptions of these future joint or individual activities being worked up enthusiastically (displayed audibly through intonational emphasis and positive assessments; for example “which is brilliant.” in Extract 1, line 11). We also see further explication of what is enjoyable and what is to be looked forward to. A great deal of this sort of work is carried out in the closing stages of these calls, and we have seen how often this produces a move out of closing as the discussion becomes the main activity rather than that of closing. At
the same time it appears that these constructions shift the focus from the upcoming close and towards events that are to be enjoyed in the future. These events are constructed as a 'something to look forward to'. To some extent this can be seen to mitigate against the close now as participants focus on enjoyable things they have to do even after the call has closed. These constructions allow for a little detour on the path to closing in which parties produce positive assessments about future events in a little flurry before the close, enhancing the caring nature of the close, by attending to and affiliating positively with the others interests. At the same time such little crescendos of caring activity provide something of a buffer against the imminent close.

Explicit ‘checking’ about current calls & References to next calls

This section considers further materials which are used to pursue interactional goals of the kind we have already seen in the previous section and the previous chapter; the preparation of a ‘soft-landing’ for a possible close. I will look at two types of materials in this section which are distinct in nature but are related in the sense that one manages the trajectory of the current call and the other orients to a next call. So firstly we will examine turns in which we see participants check very explicitly whether the call is moving to close or whether the other has something more to add. What we see then are akin to passing turns in the action they perform. That is, they offer the possibility to either close or to continue, by offering the floor to the other to add anything more they wish to. However in the cases we see below these turns make very explicit that this is an opportunity to close, in contrast to tacit turns (for example 'okay' or 'oright') that can be seen to indicate this opportunity in the archetypal closing shown earlier.

Secondly, in this section I consider how references to next calls are rather elaborately done. As well as making reference to the next time they will talk, participants overtly express their keenness to engage in a next conversation.
The following extract contains an example of both of these practices.

Extract 5

Firstly, in line 1 we see Mum asking very explicitly whether Sue intends to leave the call, and in particular she uses a rising pitch and intonational emphasis on the “\textsuperscript{\textup{\textdagger}going}” and “\textsuperscript{\textup{\textdagger}go}”. Note too how this is latched on to the initial part of the turn. The “\textsuperscript{\textup{\textdagger}Alright \textless \textup{\textdagger}then.\textgreater}” could serve as a close-initiating passing turn even without the additional phrase, and yet Mum appends more. This not only checks very explicitly the possible trajectory of the call but it also very explicitly offers optionality about whether Sue is going to go. This is thus a very explicit variation upon a standard passing turn.

Secondly, in line 4 we see a reference to the next time the two will speak. It is not unusual to see such references in the closing environment. However in line 4 we see extra emphasis on the talking and the timing of the talking and in line 5 we see Mum add an extra comment on how much she will look forward to that next call. Note how this is closely latched onto the initial part of the turn in line 4. This could be seen as mitigating the impending close, by orienting to this next conversation as something to look forward to, even after this one has ended. We also see a term of endearment used here, and a further explicit check of “\textsuperscript{\textup{\textdagger}Alright-ness}” tagged on to the end of the turn. This is hearable as a checking-type “\textsuperscript{\textup{\textdagger}Alright}” by virtue of its elongation and questioning intonation. Note it is different to that which is used in Mum’s next turn in line 7. This “\textsuperscript{\textup{\textdagger}Alright}” is of the tacit type typically used in passing turns to initiate a close.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{26 The subtleties of the distinctions made here are discussed and justified in the following chapter. I thus request readers’ patience with related comments at this point.}
The way in which both kinds of extra materials are added (explicit checking and referencing the next call) suggests once more that business over and above that of closing, but clearly associated with the closing, is being enacted here. It is possible that this business is to do with managing leave-taking when participants are separated on a regular or ongoing basis. In such cases the stakes can be quite high in terms of when they will next speak. This may produce a tendency in such cases to be explicit about leave-taking and about when participants will next speak. We have seen in the previous chapter how participants account for why they are leaving now and the work we are seeing here may well be building upon that. I will now feature several more examples in order to unpack a little more of what it is that these additional materials are managing.

Extract 6

1. APS005-M0505

```
((Sue has reported that a TV programme is starting now))
1  Mum: tis lit?
2  Sue: ye:s
3  Mum: o'kay.
4  (0.9)
5  Mum: hh RI:gh T;
6  (1.0)
7  Mum: shall we say a proper ba'bye now then,
8  (1.4)
9  Mum: ye:s
10 Sue: ye:h
11   Mum: >are you ready to go,<
12 Sue: o::n:e:
13   ((Sue beginning a countdown that they often do in closing))
```

In Extract 6 (above) we see mum responding to Sue's reporting that a TV programme in which she is interested is starting. Mum at line 7 asks if they should say goodbye, with emphasis on the “proper” as closing has been derailed a few times prior to this point. There is little uptake from Sue, and Mum pursues this offering a candidate “yes”. Sue then confirms, but Mum checks once more with a quickly delivered “>are you ready to go,” at line 11. This provides a prompt for Sue to begin a counting process that Mum and she often engage in; they count to three and then say bye at the same time before hanging up. Thus even when it appears
clear after a first question (line 7) that the two are going to say goodbye, we see an additional very explicit check by Mum that Sue is ready to go.

In the following two examples (Extracts 7 and 8) we see a slightly different way of checking about the trajectory of the call. In both cases there is a juncture where a closing might be opened up and in both cases we see very explicit checking of whether the other participant has anything else to add. In Extract 7, lines 1 and 2 we see Sue and Gran concluding some prior talk. Then we see a micro pause and Gran taking an in-breath presumably ready to talk. After another short pause Gran delivers what amounts to a very explicit ‘passing’ turn. In it she invites Sue to add anything else she might wish to add to the conversation and in fact after some hesitation and pauses, Sue begins a further sequence of talk. Gran marks this as a juncture of some sort in the talk with the discourse marker, “RI::ght” which she delivers with initial increased loudness and elongation, which makes this rather pronounced. To this she adds her question, which performs the same action of inviting any unmentioned mentionables as a more standard passing turn might do (as illustrated in the standard closing). Instead of a more tacit passing turn then we see this very explicit offer to continue conversing or not.

Extract 7
APS020-G0505
1    Sue:  yeah,=
2    Gran:  =>yeah.<
3         (.)
4    Gran:  .hhh
5       (0.1)
6    Gran:  RI::ght what else 've you got: tell me. ?anything?
7         (1.5 including an audible sniff)
8    Sue:  "uhm::" 
9       (2.1)
10   Sue:  "uh:mm::", granny,=
11   Gran:  =yep
12         (1.9)
13   Gran:  i'm listening,
14   Sue:  'y'know that cake shop, 
               ((talk continues))

Extract 8
APC043
1    Cra:    uh: (.)(#sigh deet)
2    Mum:    eight sleeps.
3         (.)

115
Mum: you're quite right,
(.)
Mum: it's not very long really is it, hh.
Cra: "no."
Mum: "no:.
(0.1)
Mum: okay, ma sweetheart:,
(0.1)
Cra: "yeh-."
(1.8) ((TV audible in background))
Mum: "anything, else,
(1.0) ((breathing audible))
Cra: (ner nat dit.)
(0.2)
Mum: heheh heh heh heh he
.HHH okay ba'bye then [peepet.
Cra: (aw aren det me on wen'day,)
((talk continues about why Mum can't get Craig on Wednesday))

In Extract 8 (above) we see a similar though somewhat shorter question at line 14. It too comes at a point when there is a possibility to open up a closing. Craig and Mum are concluding their talk about how long it is until Craig comes home (eight sleeps; that is, after eight more nights at college). At line 10 Mum delivers a pre-closing turn of the type found in standard closings ("okay," and Craig responds to this with an affirmative. Craig’s response would suggest that he has treated Mum’s turn as a question and the slightly upward intonation at the end of "okay," and "sweetheart;" may have contributed to this. However Mum’s turn at line 10 is also hearable as a more tacit pre-closing turn27 which might at that point have produced a reciprocal turn from Craig to indicate he has nothing else to add. Craig does not however respond to the turn in this way and this (combined with a rather lengthy pause) makes relevant Mum’s more explicit turn at line 14. Here she performs the action we also saw above in Extract 7; a turn which explicitly offers the floor to Craig to add anything that he wants to add; a very explicit form of a ‘passing’ turn. As it is, Craig declines to add anything at this point (ner nat dit.”) but then begins further talk as Mum begins to deliver a terminal utterance (line 19). In Extracts 7 and 8 then we see turns that very explicitly offer the floor to Sue and to Craig. These appear as extra checks about the trajectory of the call; specifically whether they are to continue or to move to close.

27 See footnote 25 (p.113)
In Extract 9 (below) we see another form of explicit checking being performed by Mum. Although 'okay' is commonly used in closings as a stand-alone turn to indicate that the speaker has nothing else to add (a 'pass'), we see it here being used as an enquiry. That this is made hearable as an enquiry is largely indicated by its intonational contours but also by its positioning. Here it is hearable as a tag question, tagged on to mum’s turn at line 5. Its intonational contour is strongly questioning and is different from those ‘okays’ that appear as tacit passing turns. They are characterised by rising-falling pitch whereas this is falling-rising. Thus it gives to this a ‘checking’ quality – in this case the explicit checking of ‘okay-ness’. It would seem that it is received as such by Sue too, who responds with an affirmative.

Extract 9
APS002-M2804

1 Mum: (h)alr(h)ight ma darlin’ .h you can go off and do the-
2 >the next thing< th’t you’re >supposed to be doin’<
3 when we’ve just said cheerio~
4 Sue: =yeah~
5 Mum: =so° ↑I’LL TALK to you later in the week then
6 (0.4)
7 → Mum: ↓otka:y:?=~
8 Sue: =ye:s,~
9 Mum: take care- =<are you at college tomorrow,>
10 Sue: Yeah~
11 Mum: =HAVE Fun. (.) have fun at college to↑mor tomorrow and be a
good girl,
12 (0.3)
13 Sue: ye:a:h:
14 Mum: al↓ri::ght ma ↓dar:lin’
{(moves out of closing with more talk from Sue)}

We have seen then in Extracts 5-9, some examples of very explicit checking:

• of whether others are going to go or are ready to go (Extracts 5 and 6);
• of whether others have anything else to add (Extracts 7 and 8);
• and examples of more general (though still explicit) checking that is tagged on to what has been said (Extract 9). A further example of this can also be found in Extract 10, line 12 below. In both extracts this checking is tagged on to a reference to a next call, as if to check receipt and/or understanding of this arrangement.
The second type of activity I set out to explore in this section is the referencing to next calls, which are rather elaborately done. Extracts 10 and 11 (below) example this activity, as does Extract 9, an excerpt of which is repeated below for convenience. Note how in this excerpt the “I’LL TALK” is punched up in terms of both volume and pitch and “later” and “week” are both emphasised. These aspects of the delivery serve to foreground who will next be calling and when this will be, in rather an elaborate way.

Excerpt from Extract 9
1  Mum: (h)alr(h)ight ma darlin’ .h you can go off and do the-
2   >the next thing< th’t you’re >supposed to be doin’<
3   when we’ve just said cheerio=
4   Sue: =yeah=
5  Mum: =so° I’LL TALK to you later in the week then
6   (0.4)
7  Mum: ↓o↑ka:y;?= 
8  Sue: =ye:s,

In the final two extracts of this section (Extracts 10 and 11) we see similar emphasis and elaboration surrounding the matter of next calls. In Extract 10 (below) we see Mum at line 7 delivering a terminal exchange in response to Sue’s at line 6. Mum adds to this the arrangements for the next call which, as was the case above, places emphasis on the ‘talking’ and the timing (later in the week). At line 8 Sue makes reference to the next time they will meet which in this case is at least a week away (it is also interesting how precise this description of timing is and Sue makes more than one attempt to formulate this precisely). Mum responds to this with an assurance that she and Sue will speak many times before then. Not only is this the second reference to next calls in this sequence but it is also quite elaborately formulated and delivered. Mum places emphasis on the fact that they will speak many times (“>LOTs<”) before their next meeting which she also refers to and emphasises, when she refers to “then”. It is possible that Mum’s inclusion of this reference to how much they’ll speak before their next meeting, is designed to mitigate against the fact that their next meeting is over a week away and this provides an interactional indication into the business that is being managed by these recurrent references to next meetings and their elaborate description and delivery that we have seen. Such observations support the idea that, as noted
previously above, these matters appear to have import for participants when there
exists regular or ongoing separation.

Extract 10
APS029-M2706

1 Sue: "eastenders is starting mummy," [sl:ri:ght,
2 (0.3)
3 Mum: we'll say ba'bye then my darling:<
4 (0.2)
5 Sue: "Bye love talk to you later in the week<'
6 Mum: [see youu,-
7 (.) >week on Saturday,=see you [a'week on s]<aturda[y:
8 Sue: [y e a ::h ]
9 Mum: speak to you'm- >LOts< before then ↓OfKa:y:?
10 Sue: ye::l:
11 Mum: [and ↓Don't ↑Worry:, ↑don't worry about all those
12 things you've been telling me< about, ↓we'll sort them,
13 (0.3)
14 Sue: okay,y.
15 Mum: ↑Okay ↑love ↑Ba'by::e,
16 Sue: ba'bye:e
17 Mum: >bye love<
18 Sue: >bye<

Extract 11
APS034-G1206
(Gran has just said she's going now to make a cup of tea))

1 Sue: okay[.]
2 Gran: [Alri:ght, un (..) you'll ring me on wednesday will yer?
3 (0.3)
4 Sue: ye::s,
5 Gran: yeah that ↑ll be nice, ↓h ↓ll look forward to yer ringing
6 me sweetheart.
7 (0.2)
8 Sue: ↓h ye::s,
9 (0.1)
10 Gran: Alright?:
11 (0.5)
12 Gran: BA'bye for no:w,
13 Sue: [by:e
14 (Call continues for several more turns before closing))

In Extract 11 we see even more being made of a next call. In line 2 Gran refers to
their next call, asking if Sue is going to call on Wednesday. The delivery of this is
hearable as a suggestion. Sue appears to respond to its meaning in this way
replying with an elongated "ye::s,"; the delivery sounding less like a response to a
straight forward question and more like something she is 'considering' outloud and
agrees it's a good idea. Gran continues along this trajectory with her assessment of
the possible call saying it'll be nice and she'll look forward to Sue phoning her. She also adds a term of endearment to this making it an even more affiliative utterance. Thus we see once more a very elaborate way of doing 'making reference to a next call'. It is done very elaborately and as with the painting of the picture of a next meeting discussed in the previous section of this chapter, it is constructed as something of an event to look forward to. This is actually expressly said here in the talk (in line 5).

A further example of where this is expressly said is in an earlier example (Extract 5) an excerpt of which is repeated here. Here we see it spelled out that these next calls are something to look forward to. This gives a very strong indication that this is very much the nature of the business being managed here. The 'looking forward to a next call', either implied by the elaborate detailing of these or by a speaker expressly saying that they are looking forward to it, displays once more a keenness to engage with the other in further conversations. It also projects a focus onto next calls as positive events, which serves to mitigate a possible closing now.

Furthermore, the idea of 'looking forward to a next call' constructed here, builds the current closure as 'temporary' and possibly 'not desired', and so the closure is built almost as an interruption or pause in their ongoing series' of conversations.

Excerpt from Ext 5

4 Mum: all right i will (.) talk t'yer tomorrow night.=
5 =i'll look forward <to it ma darling> alright?
6 Sue: yea

All of the extracts we have seen in this section illustrate either the explicit checking that we see in the closing sections, or the elaborate way in which references to the next call are constructed, and in some extracts we see both of these things. As with the materials we saw in the previous section, we might consider what it is that these materials contribute to the closing. Once more we can conclude that these are rather affiliative materials, in terms of speakers making it very explicit that recipients have a chance to add any unmentioned mentionables before closure, or indeed that they have the option not to close at that particular point at all. We also see how much emphasis is given to the references to the next time participants will
talk, and particularly the displays of keenness to do so through overt expressions of how much they are looking forward to it. These all add a very affiliative and thus caring dimension to the closings. However a final set of such materials are now explored before this dimension is fully discussed.

Endearment terms & Audible displays of care

In this section I consider the use of endearment terms and audible displays of care, in particular focussing on what they contribute to the business of closing. Extracts 12 and 13 (below) are used to illustrate these materials but such materials can be seen to be pervasive throughout many examples in this and the previous chapter. Similarly readers might also note that although the following two extracts illustrate the materials under discussion in this section, these extracts also contain illustrations of the materials discussed in the previous two sections (for example note the explicit checking that we see in line 4 of extract 12, and the wish, “have happy dreams”, for the next thing that Craig is to do, which is going to bed, in line 10).

Extract 12
APC002
1 Mum: okay ma sweetheart,
2 (0.3)
3 Cra: aw'ight
4 Mum: time to sleep?
5 (0.2)
6 Cra: ( )
7 Mum: okay, na- night. then, ((whispery voice))
8 (0.2)
9 Cra: ye'ba:ch
10 Mum: have happy dreams=
11 Cra: yeah
12 Mum: bah by:e: ((whispery voice))
13 (0.3)
14 Cra: aw'i:gh'

Extract 13
APC045
1 Mum: [hhh.
2 Cra: ={arigh}
3 (0.2)
4 Mum: {ba'bye
In Extracts 12 and 13 (lines 1 and 12, respectively) we see Mum refer to Craig using a term of endearment. Note too how in each case Mum prefaces the endearment term with a 'my' ("ma") thereby invoking a relational aspect when using these terms. Craig is not simply a sweetheart but her sweetheart. Also in these extracts we see Mum using a whispery voice in lines 7 and 12 of extract 12 and in lines 9 and 11 of Extract 13. These introduce a soft and intimate aspect to the delivery. These two extracts provide very simple examples of the types of material being explored here, both of which serve to soften the utterances in which they appear.

Utterances which include endearment terms are pervasive throughout the calls involving Sue and Craig, particularly in the closing sections. We see terms of endearment used in the following excerpts from extracts in the previous chapter. In this environment they appear to go some way towards mitigating the close by softening the delivery of announcements to go and offers to go. It is notable that in each of the examples below that the term of endearment occurs at the precise point that closure (the potentially 'problematic' action) is proposed. At the point that a potentially disaffiliative action ("going", in all three of the following) is introduced, via either an announcement or an interrogative, we see the use of an endearment term immediately afterwards (as in APS023 and APS012) or just before (as in APS037). This to some extent mitigates the potentially problematic action of proposing closure and the disaffiliating effect which that may produce.

Furthermore, although the speakers using these terms are suggesting call closure...
the endearment terms used index their ongoing relationship as intimates\textsuperscript{29} and so soften the suggestion to effectively discontinue the conversation at this point.

\textbf{APS023-D2105}

Dad: \textit{Right. >well I’m going to go now< darlin’. >cus I’ve got lots of < teeth to make.}

\textbf{APS012-M1505}

Mum: well do you \textit{\uparrow \text{want. to} \downarrow \text{go sweetie.}} and get \{yer s\}upper\textsuperscript{=}

\textbf{APS037-G3006}

Gran: =no neh mi:nd. (.) .h \textit{\tOKa:y, Then, Ducky,} \textit{i’m \downarrow \text{going now}}

We see them also in the well-wishing activities we saw earlier and in those utterances which refer to next calls. Indeed they are interspersed with all of the materials we have explored in this chapter. In these environments, they appear to enhance the effects of the materials which are already doing affiliative work. So as well as wishing others well for upcoming events or emphasising how much one is looking forward to speaking with the other at some next time, which indexes a relationality between the two through the rights and responsibilities to know about and be able to comment on aspects of their lives, the relationality is also invoked in the use of endearment terms which indexes their intimate relationship. There appears no pragmatic reason for a person reference term to be used, since there are only two parties to these calls so selection of speaker is not at issue. Similarly the terms are introduced in the middle or at the end of the turn and so are not a summons to attention to the interlocutor. This would suggest that their use is towards the management of some ‘relational’ activity.

\textbf{APS023-D2105}

Dad: \textit{Alright, ↓ darlin’.}

\textit{(0.9) \‘ave a nice time, tonight, (.) \textit{enjoy, the (.) show.}}

\textbf{APS034-G1206}

Gran: \textit{yeah that ’ll be nice, \textit{.h i’ll look forward to yer }\textbf{ringing me sweetheart.}}

\textsuperscript{29} Schegloff (2004:64) says of address terms “the particular name selected may display a claim of relative status, intimacy, solidarity or membership in some class which entitles use of a such a form of address,.....”
Mum: all right i will (. ) ta:lk t'yer tomorrow night = =i'll look forward <to it ma darling> alright?

These terms are thus used pervasively in the closing sections of these calls, alongside many of the other materials I have also explored. In this environment and alongside these other materials, they mitigate the close and also enhance the other affiliative practices that we see occurring.

I have said rather less about the audible displays exampled earlier, though these are also pervasive in these environments and also enhance the affiliative work being done. They soften in a very hearable way the delivery of both pre-closing and terminal exchanges, displaying, via their whisperiness and breathiness, a sense of intimacy and 'tenderness'.

Although I have attempted in this chapter to group the varying resources into types for purposes of analytic clarity, participants appear to draw freely upon any or all of these resources to bring about the closing in a particular way. They thus represent something of a 'tool-box' of resources that can be drawn upon to manage the business of closing in an affiliative and thus caring way.

**Managing relationality and constructing caring**

It is clear from the closing sections shown in this chapter, as it was in the previous chapter, that these closings draw upon standard turn-taking machinery and the sequence organisation of closings to manage them. We see pre-closing turns offering up the possibility of closing or continuing. We see too in this chapter, as we did in the previous that a range of other materials are introduced into the closing that are not always present in standard closings. In these examples these other materials occasionally become the focus of the business, rather than the business of closing, which is of course exactly what the closing machinery allows for. For analytic clarity I grouped these materials into three sets although it is possible to see materials from one or more of these groupings being used in any one closing
References to joint and individual future events, in these closings appear to be more than simply the restating of arrangements. Extra details are introduced and appended about the upcoming event, and in particular such details emphasise the sharing aspects of what they'll do, what it is that is likely to be enjoyable about it, and what it is therefore that positions it as something to look forward to. It also produces participants as keen and enthused about being in the company of the other. We also see examples of a speaker wishing the other well for an upcoming individual activity and once more the enjoyable aspects are foregrounded and elaborated upon. Such positive referencing of next meetings and well wishing for upcoming activities could be viewed as intrinsically affiliative as they display an orientation to engaging with, and in, the life and the affairs of the other. They thus contribute to the maintenance of the relationship to which the speakers are party. Well-wishing in particular shows a concern and care for the life and interests of the other and displays also a knowledge of and a right to comment upon what the other (usually Sue or Craig) will find enjoyable. The focus too on a 'something to look forward to' mitigates against a possible close now.

The explicit checking that takes place in these closing sequences, overtly calls into question the trajectory of the call and in particular if recipients are ready to close. Furthermore, recipients are expressly offered the chance to add more in much the same way as a more tacit 'passing' turn might offer the floor to the other to add any unmentioned-so-far mentionables, but the way in which it is done here is to explicitly ask if they have anything else to add. The activity then that passing turns are built to do, is done rather more explicitly here, through questions, about readiness to go and about whether there is anything else to add. What this also spells out very explicitly is that there is optionality about these things. We also have seen very elaborately done references to next calls, including utterances that expressly build the next call as a 'something to look forward to'. These appear to
mitigate a possible close of the current call by projecting a focus onto a next call, which is being ‘looked forward to’. This produces participants as keen to be engaging in calls with the other in much the same way as the elaboration of upcoming meetings between participants, produces a speaker as keen to be meeting and sharing time with the other.

The endearment terms and soft intonation and voice quality that we also see pervasively through the closings exampled in this and the previous chapter, index the intimate relationships between participants and foreground the relationships to which the participants are party. More notably though these occur at the specific point where there is a potentially ‘problematic’ action; that of offering or suggesting closure of the current conversation. These materials thus appear to both mitigate the close, particularly when used with announcements and offers to close, and enhance the other affiliative activity, when appended to intrinsically affiliative actions such as wishing the other well for activities and displaying knowledge of what they enjoy.

The affiliative materials we see here appear to be additional resources that can be drawn upon to produce a caring closing. In Chapter Three we saw how accounts were producing a caring approach to closing and this chapter has shown another range of materials that do similar work as outlined above. Rather than these materials being mutually exclusive we often see them used together to bring about a caring close. The identification of these materials enables us to see how in practical and interactional ways caring can be displayed. This makes it possible to re-consider the nature of caring as a psychological disposition, and opens up the way to viewing it as a ‘live’, dynamic and practical range of activities as displayed here, by and for participants. This discussion is one which will be resumed in the final chapter.
Comparative aspects

As in the previous chapter I now consider whether what we are seeing is generic to conversation or specific to the Sue and Craig calls, by comparison with other corpuses which contain talk between familiars. Taking each of the groups of materials in turn, I find that although talking about future joint plans and well-wishing for future individual activities are not uncommon in closing sections in all of the corpuses, they are less elaboratively done. In both the Holt calls and the CTS calls there are cases of making or restating arrangements, and wishing well with upcoming events in the others' lives, but participants do not elaborate upon or draw out specifically the aspects that are deemed to be enjoyable features of whatever is being undertaken. Such elaboration is very explicitly done in the Sue and Craig corpuses.

In terms of the next category of affiliative materials identified – that of explicit checking and references to next calls and meetings - certainly the latter of these appear in the Holt and CTS corpuses as they do in the Sue and Craig calls. These are a common feature in closing sections. However whereas in the Sue and Craig calls we see overt expressions of how much one is looking forward to the next call from or to the other, and there is a great deal of emphasis placed on the specific timing of these next calls, this is not a feature of the Holt and CTS corpuses. There are indeed references to next calls but these are once more not so elaborately or explicitly done as those in the Sue and Craig calls. Returning to the matter of explicit ‘checking’ of readiness-to-go or of anything-else-to-add in all of these corpuses, there is not a tendency to such explicit checking in the Holt and CTS calls. Indeed participants use many tacit possible pre-closings in these latter corpuses, which will become evident in Chapter 5 when these are explored in more detail.

Endearment terms were found in all of the corpuses, but in particular in the Sue, Craig and CTS calls there were many very intimate terms used (sweetheart and darling for example). Similarly the audible displays (of breathiness and whispering,
for example) were found in the Sue, Craig and CTS calls, though not in the Holt. What the first three corpuses have in common provides a possible insight into the use of these materials and what they are managing. Each of these sets of calls involve parent-child relationships where the child is a young adult, in contrast to the Holt calls where the callers are of an older generation though some calls are between parties to a parent-child relationship. The callers, in the former, are typically separated by distance and are young adults living away from home, in contrast to the Holt calls, where the parties to the talk are also separated by distance and in a parent-child relationship, but are separated in terms of being ‘established’ geographically apart, over a longer term. This is a subtle but important distinction, since some of the practices we see occurring in the young adult calls may be specifically managing something about this particular separation. I would argue that these affiliative materials are specifically targeted at managing the relationality between these participants who at a relatively young age are living away from home. This is not to suggest that in the Holt calls, participants are not managing their relationships across distance, but they appear to use just some of the affiliative practices we have considered here and not the ones I have latterly talked of (intimate endearment terms and audible displays). These terms and displays rather more overtly invoke the intimate relationships of which the participants are part.

All of the affiliative practices discussed in this chapter appear to do work of a relational kind. They are introduced into closing sequences and display caring about the other, as has been explicated above. It can be argued that the stakes are high in closing a conversation with an intimate, living at a distance and certainly the affiliative work we witness here appears to mitigate the close and affiliates with the co-participant. However we have seen that this work is done variably within the different corpuses. Whilst we have seen similar practices taking place in those calls which include a young adult with a learning disability and those which do not, we have also seen that in the former the features are much more elaborately and explicitly done. It could be the case that the stakes are higher for managing
relationality in closings when one party to the talk is a potentially ‘vulnerable’ young adult. It is possible that the additional elaboration and explicitness reflects a concern and orientation to making what is going on understandable. That is, these could be turns which are recipient designed for someone with potential communication difficulties. Here I simply suggest some possibilities that I will consider again later in this thesis. Certainly however the comparative observations in this chapter contribute significantly to the ongoing debate about whether these noticeings are generic to conversation or specific to talk which involves young adults with learning disabilities. We can clearly see that relational work is being done here, but as to what we might attribute the elaboration and explicitness in the Sue and Craig corpuses, this will remain an open debate until my final chapter.

30 In the sense of having a diagnosed ‘disability’.
Chapter Five - Tacit pre-closings

Introduction

Previous chapters have explored how very explicitly it is spelled out by participants in this study that the trajectory of the call may be towards closing, through a variety of materials inserted into pre-closing turns. In Chapter 3 we saw the insertion of accounts. These were embedded in pre-closings of varying designs. The various pre-closing designs and their contents expressly announce or ask about the possibility of closing and so are very explicit forms of pre-closing. In Chapter 4 we saw the inclusion of a range of other affiliative materials that either checked explicitly about closure or projected a possible close by elaborate reference to next events and meetings. We saw that the closings were managed in a very particular way, through the use of extra materials, as explicited in the previous chapters.

This chapter will turn to a consideration of those pre-closing turns which contain often short, rather more tacit indications that the trajectory of the call may be towards closing. A particular focus will be on how single words such as ‘okay’ and ‘alright’ are hearable as orienting towards closing and how they are responded to. This will be explored by considering similarities and differences between the comparative data sets outlined earlier. These more tacit turns (specifically the close-initiating turn and the response to it) will be explored in this chapter in terms of their lexical content and their prosodic delivery. This avenue of inquiry arose from an initial noticing that in some calls lexical content was matched with the prior turn and in others it was not. In some calls prosodic delivery was very marked and in others it was not.

This chapter will explore a range of data sets, initially to understand something of the nature of these tacit turns, but also in pursuit of one of the broader objectives of this study; to consider whether there are differences in such turns in the data sets which involve a young adult with a learning disability and those that do not.
Each of the data sets to which the author had access contained a different number and in some case different type of call (in terms of participants and whether the call was a monotonical 'business' call or call for a chat). In order therefore to generate an equitable sample for cross-comparisons the following procedure was followed.

There are mother and child telephone calls to children living away from home, in all 4 data sets (CTS calls, Holt calls, APC calls and APS calls). These were thus the ones singled out for attention as they provided some consistency of context. Of the six calls from the CTS corpus, five of these are mother–child (young adult) calls. Thus five calls were also selected from each of the other corpuses. The sample thus comprised:

- five (from six) calls of mother-child (young adult) from the CTS calls
- five (from seven) calls of mother-child (older adult) from the Holt corpus;
- five (from nine) of the mother–child (young adult with a learning disability) from the APC/Craig calls;
- five (from thirty-six) of the mother–child (young adult with a learning disability) calls from the APS/Sue calls.

Initially I worked with the sound files to identify those turns which were hearable as being possibly closing implicative. Subsequently I worked with the transcripts to see more of the turn-taking and the shape of the talk that includes the more tacit indications of possible closing activity in which I was interested. The analysis began with observations of target turns that were hearable as closing implicative.

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31 To select five at random from the Holt, APC and APS calls the following procedure was followed. For each call within each set of calls, a random number between 0 and 1 was generated. Within each set of calls these were sorted into order (by random number) and the first five calls were selected for the sample. In this way every call had an equal chance of being selected for the sample regardless of material content.
Explicit and Tacit pre-closings

We have seen many examples throughout Chapters Three and Four of explicit pre-closings. In Chapter Three we saw announcements used to explicitly express an intention to go, whilst interrogatives and directives were used to offer to go. In each case it was made clear that these were closing-initiating turns. Such turns are designed to allow the move to close to be either accepted or declined. In Chapter Four we saw speakers explicitly 'checking' whether the other had anything else to add as a means of opening up a closing, observing that these appeared to be an explicit form of a typical passing turn; offering the floor to the other should they have anything else to add. These explicit forms of pre-closing activity then can be contrasted with those more tacit forms of initiating a possible close. The archetypal closing illustrates this tacit form:

1  →  A: Alright
2      B: Okay [honey
3  →  A: [bye dear=
4      B: =bye

Note that nowhere in this sequence is an explicit request or offer made. Tacit forms consist of short utterances (alright, okay) that indicate that a speaker has nothing else to add and offer the floor to the other should they have any unmentioned 'mentionables' (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Schegloff and Sacks also point out that in order for these tacit utterances to work in this way, they are positioned in a closing-relevant environment - such an environment might be when a current topic has been concluded. This would provide for a possible next action of either proceeding with other topical talk or of closing the conversation. In this analysis I look specifically at those turns that are in this closing environment.
I observe turns which follow the close down of topic and thus initiate the closing, and I also observe the responses to these. Let us consider what makes these turns possibly closing implicative. First, as already stated, the matter of positioning (after a close of topic) is paramount to an utterance being heard as a closing implicative turn (Goldberg, 2004:260 refers to this as “selective positioning”). Second, participants orient to the word ‘okay’ as possibly indicating a shift of some sort, typically a shift of topic or shift of action/activity (Beach, 1993). So the lexical choice of ‘okay’ (or the functional equivalent ‘alright’ - Beach, 1993) orients to these as pivotal places where closing may be one of a number of relevant next activities. Third, such turns have certain prosodic features that project them as closing implicative (Cooper-Kuhlen, 2004; Goldberg, 2004). It is the latter two elements which I will be examining across the tacit turns in my four data sets; that is, I examine the lexical choices and prosodic patterning in the passing and return passing turns in the four corpuses. These two aspects became the focus for comparison as a result of some initial observations which are reported upon and developed in the following section.

Lexical ‘matching’

In the Holt and the CTS calls a first possibly closing implicative turn is responded to using a lexically matched utterance. Typically this will involve the use of ‘okay’ and/or ‘alright’.

32 The practices by which such a closing domain is established is discussed by Bolden (2007, 2008b) who observes how the prosodic features in the close down of a current topic can indicate that it is a possibly last one. The scope of this current study does not allow for a consideration of how such environments are established. I focus specifically on the possible pre-closing turns which occur when this environment exists.

33 Beach (1993) also identifies that these may be used to close down a topic as well as a conversation, and it is the latter of these that is the analytic focus here. He also observes that ‘okay’ works in this way because it has backwards and forwards functioning it may not only be a response to a prior (backwards functioning), but it also forward-projects a shift to a next activity (for example that of terminal exchanges and closure).
Extract 1
Holt:X(C)1:2:7
1 Mum: I'm not bothered with that at all. It's just in-
2 (0.2) just that (.) I shouldn't bother if I wasn't
3 coming love,
4 Les: No I know.
5 Mum: No, he-hu
6 (0.5)
7 (M): *(0.5)
8 Les: → [Ok kay then my lo:ve=
9 Mum: → =Ok-ks↓:y
10 (0.5)
11 Les: We've got the ku-
12 Mum: [I'll be ↑seeing ↓you then.↓

Extract 2
Holt:SO88:1:11
1 Les: → ↑y|h|{[.y|h |h|h|.[uh uh uh]|'.h! [h
2 Les: [hh! [hhhh|h
3 Mum: e-huh
4 Les: uh hu[h↓:huh
5 Mum: → [Ok:ay love
6 Les: → .hh ↑Ok:ay
7 Mum: I'll be seeing you ↓soon
8 Mum: Yes ↑bye love
9 Mum: Let me know th[e (. ) exact]}↓[da{te,

Extract 3
Holt:X(C)2:2:5
1 Les: [Yes.
2 Mum: → [That'd be marvelous. ↑okay ↓lo{ve
3 Les: → [↑Okay↓:y,h
4 Mum: Be ↑seeing you,
5 Les: .hh Yes ↑have a good↑ journey=

Extract 4
CTS23
1 Pen: is that alright,
2 Mum: yeah-
3 Pen: {(*hhhh.*)}
4 Mum: [alright then.
5 Mum: → alright then mum.
6 Pen: → alright then mum.
7 Mum: we enjoy yer tea=
8 Pen: =((cough))thank ↓you, what ↓did you↓ have for tea tonight
9 Mum: ["okay"]
10 Mum: uh we: ha:::d toma:::to (. )crumble
11 .)
12 Mum: it was nice actually
13 Pen: [wierd]
14 Mum: tomato: and ba:sil cru:mble
15 Pen: sounds nice though=
16 Mum: =yes it was very nice
17 Pen: >{(ses weird)<
heh

alright i'm off then.

alright then=

=mum is everyone alright yeah

Extract 5

CTSS50

1 Mum:  
2 Pen:  
3 Mum:  
4 Pen:  
5 Mum:  
6 Pen:  
7 Mum:  
8 Pen:  
9 Mum:  
10 Mum:  
11 Mum:  
12 Mum:  
13 Mum:  
14 Pen:  
15 Mum:  

(oo)oh brilliant

Hhhhhhh.
yeah that sounds good.

I:n:1:weg,

ick. (sounds like physically stretching)) okay mum.

(alright, [i'll send you an email with (two

on them) probably=

=alright then

(or) i'll give you a ring and tell you

what my results are=

okay then, alright

(right) mum.

Extract 6

CTSS51

1 Mum:  
2 Mum:  
3 Mum:  
4 Mum:  
5 Mum:  
6 Mum:  
7 Mum:  
8 Mum:  
9 Pen:  
10 Mum:  
11 Mum:  
12 Mum:  

huh okay, I have to go and go and get Jenna

[an:

"oh:"

people who aren't speaking to me

okay

> alright, then,=<

> alright. then=<

=alright;

[okay

( 

[i love you

i love you

In all the above examples, we see tacit possible pre-closings being used34 (as indicated by arrows). It is worth noting here that in all cases the conversations continue beyond these sets of turns, sometimes minimally but occasionally extensively. This highlights their function as passing turns (i.e. to offer and accept/decline closure at this point). They illustrate the use of such tacit forms to open up the possibility of closing and even though the passes are often effectively 'accepted' by a next turn, participants do not always move to terminal exchanges as the archetypal example closing would suggest, but they engage in a number of such

34 These have been identified as such by listening to the soundfiles for intonational content too and not by looking solely at lexical content, since 'okay' and 'alright' are used in other contexts and do not always project closing.
sets of possible pre-closing turns. We see that the responses to almost all of the
pre-closing turns highlighted above contain reciprocal lexical items which closely
mirror the prior.

Examples 1-6 come from the Holt and CTS corpuses. Now consider the examples
below which come from the Craig and Sue corpuses. Here we see no such
mirroring.

Extract 7

APC043
1 Mum: >an yer gonna have a week on your own< as well because
2 i’ll be working the next [week.
3 Cra: [([yeh-<])
4 Mum: .h o:kay so it’ll be a bit boring for you, but then
5 after that it’ll be christmas time.
6 (.)
7 Cra: [*nkay-<]
8 Mum: hh.((nasal outbreaths)) [O:]KA:y?:
9 Cra: >yeh-<
10 (.)
11 Mum: o:kay, ((breathy))
12 Cra: (y’alri-)
13 Mum: >yep.<
14 Cra: uh: (.)(eigh deet)
15 Mum: eight sleeps.
16 (.)
17 Mum: you’re quite right,
18 (.)
19 Mum: it’s not very long really is it, hh.
20 Cra: "no."
21 Mum: "no:"
22 (.0.1)
23 Mum: okay, na sweetheart:,.
24 (.0.1)
25 Cra: "yeh-<
26 ([1.8] {TV audible in background})
27 Mum: i:anything, else,
28 ([1.0]) {breathing audible})
29 Cra: (ner nat dit.)

Extract 8

APC042
1 Mum: is matt still there.
2 Cra: >yeh-<
3 Mum: >good.<
4 (.)
5 Mum: >good.<
6 (.)
7 Mum: o:kay then, hh. .hh[[h ({nasal breathing})
8 Cra: [yes-.
9 Mum: i’m gonna go out and see lu- louise later so i’ll ring you
10 tomorrow o:kay:=
11 Cra: =>yeh-<
Mum: yeh.

Mum: Okay then poppet.

Cra: yeh.

Mum: Bye Bye!

Cra: yeh.

Extract 9

AFC024

Mum: [yeah h.]

Cra: okay well if it's raining or something 'en we might

have to go bowling or something like [that

(yeah)

Mum: okay.

Cra: [() ( () ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )]

Mum: we'll see what the weather's [like.

Cra: [yeah]

Mum: [()]

Cra: =yeah=-

Mum: =Alright!=-

Cra: ={(right)}

Mum: >I'll see you later then.<=

Cra: =yeah=

Mum: =we'll see you on saturday=

Cra: [>see y' on dat'day<

Mum: [.hhhhhh

yeah I'll tel- i'll give you a ring on thursday night shall I?

Cra: yeah

Mum: =oKA:y?=)

Cra: ={(the uh) (.) (}

Mum: (1.1)

Mum: .hk is [who?

Extract 10

AES002-M2804

Mum: sue concentrate on m- me darlin' 'just for a sec

Sue: yes.

Mum: (h)al(h)ight ma darlin' h you can go off and do th-

>the next thing< th't you're >supposed to be doin'<when we've

just said .cheerio=

Sue: =yeah=

Mum: =so' I'LL Talk to you later in the week then

(0.4)

Mum: =oKA:y?=)

Sue: =yes=

Mum: take care- =<are you at college tomorrow,>

Sue: yeah=

Mum: =Have Fun. (. ) have fun at college to morrow and be a

good girl,

(0.3)

Sue: =eah:

Mum: al(h)ight ma darlin'=

Sue: =guess what I'm gonna [do,

Mum: [>what're you doing< ((whispery))

(0.3)

Sue: i'm gonna save all the magazines til I go 'ome with da:dddy

that's what I was thinking
Mum: oh heh heh heh heh O(h)k(h) [(h)(h)ay- ]
Sue: [i cu' save] all the magazines
Mum: til I go 'ome.
Sue: so I can buy one each moment,
Mum: okay you're goin ter save all the requests all yer-
Sue: yeah when I go one wi daddy.
Mum: all right then petal. [.h
Sue: its gonna be.
Mum: o:#kay.
Mum: i'd better <let you go> we keep sayin we're gonna go
Sue: and then >we carry on don't we<
Mum: [ye::s
Mum: an you got to go off the phone.
Sue: .h 'Alright ma ;darlin'
Mum: rgod bless
Sue: god bless.
Mum: angels protect
Sue: angels protect.

Extract 11
APS018-M2605
Sue: ho:me with me,
Mum: aw::right ma ;darling,:i'll see if i can find it if i can't,
Sue: we'll go and find it ourselves on saturday afternoon.=ye:ah?
Mum: yes.
Mum: al:right then ;babes. {.hh}
Sue: okay,
Mum: al:right. I::'ll say a big nah night then.
Sue: nah night mummy,=
Mum: =nah night darling.

Extract 12
APS041-M0607
Sue: [i need to show you something on the internet.
Mum: *ck:ay, ;you' ll be able to ;show me that on saturday
Sue: won't you,
Mum: tal:right?
Sue: .h so go and get those tablets then sweetie pie cause that's
Sue: very important isn't it:
Mum: [yea:::h.
Sue: tal:right,
Sue: ((speaking to someone else away from phone))
Sue: do you think I should let go; shall I let go: (1.3) does that
Sue: mean: can I play ma music,
Sue: (1.4)
Mum: tal:right,
Sue: [i've got ear ache from those=
Mum: its me[: that you need
Sue: [got earache I have
Sue: from the staff shout:ing in ma ear:
Mum: o:::h i doubt if that's >what it is ma< darling
21 [you seem to do an awful lot of]
22 Sue: [the staffs been talking ] too high
23 Mum: yes alright.
24 alright ma darling then. i think it’s time for me to
25 go. ”don’t you”
26 Sue: (i love you lot"
27 (. )
28 Sue: =i love you=
29 Mum: =an I love you my darling

The lexical ‘matching’ noted in Extracts 1-6 above from Holt and CTS calls is rare in the Sue and Craig calls. In these often lengthier closing sections we do sometimes see responses using an ‘appropriate’ alternative item (for example Craig or Sue may use ‘alright’ after Mum has used an ‘okay’ and vice versa). These could be viewed as functionally equal alternatives (Beach, 1993), and indeed these two alternatives are used in the archetypal closing shown earlier. It is interesting, though, that given a choice of alternatives, the participants of both the Holt calls and CTS calls predominantly use the same alternative as the preceding turn, whereas Craig and Sue do not. As Extracts 7 to 12 illustrate there is very little such patterning. Only in Extract 9, lines 13 and 14 and Extract 11, lines 6 and 7 (shown below), do we see anything like the reciprocal turns that we see in the Holt and CTS calls and even these are not particularly close approximations to the prior turn.

From Extract 9:
13 Mum: R1IGHT;
14 Cra: =(aright)

From Extract 11:
6 Mum: alright ma darles. (.hh)
7 Sue: okay,

What might this lexically matched patterning be doing in those calls in which it is present and why is it so prevalent in two sets of calls and not in the others? As I have already noted, in all the corpus es even after such exchanges, there is still much pre-closing activity before eventual close. So the observed distinctions between the Holt and CTS calls and the Craig and Sue calls do not reflect faster closing. However they do appear to provide a more immediate indication of ‘alignment’ in the trajectory of the closure than occurs in the Craig and Sue calls. In
these latter calls it seems necessary to pursue such 'alignment' more explicitly and by varying means. Even though in all the sets of calls we see extra mentionables being introduced after episodes of pre-closing activity (just as provided for in the standard closing form), in the Holt and CTS calls we see further occurrences of these lexically matched exchanges after these extra matters have been mentioned and/or resolved. In the Craig and Sue calls we do not see such patterning, though we do see the close being initiated by means other than tacit passing turns or by additions to tacit turns. It is to these that I will now turn.

The alignment towards closing that we see so neatly done in the Holt and CTS calls appears to be something that is pursued over a number of differing types of turn, in the Craig and Sue calls. There are numerous instances where a tacit close-initiating turn is used by the parents but such turns are not responded to with an expected and aligning 'okay' or an 'alright' but with a 'yes'. Consider Extract 8 (shown below).

It contains two examples of this.

**Extract 8**

APC042

1  Mum: is matt still there.
2  Cra: >yeh-.<
3  Mum: >good.<
4  
5  Mum: >good.<
6  
7  Mum: okay then, hh. hh[hh ((nasal breathing))]
8  Cra: [yes-.
9  Mum: i'm gonna go out and see lu- louise later so i'll ring
10 you tomorrow o1ka:yœ=
11 Cra: =>yeh-.<
12 Mum: yeh.
13 
14 Mum: O1Ka:yœ then poppetœ
15 Cra: yeh.
16 Mum: :Bye :Byeœ
17 Cra: yeh.

At line 7 we see a passing turn from Mum at a point after previous talk has been concluded (line 5). She issues a standard passing turn, with falling intonation on the
second syllable (which gives a conclusive sound and follows broadly the patterning identified in the literature as closing-implicative\textsuperscript{35}). However, instead of Craig mirroring this with the same lexical item ('okay') he responds with a 'yes'. In her next turn Mum moves from the tacit use of okay to an overt reference to going out (accounting for why she may have to end now) and also makes reference to a next call to Craig. (lines 9-10). As described in Chapters 3 and 4, such constructions are explicitly close-initiating.

In Extract 7 (lines 19-29) we see a similar occurrence.

From Extract 7:

\begin{verbatim}
APC043
19  Mum: its not very long really is it, hh.
20  Cra: *no.*
21  Mum: *no;.*
22           (0.1)
23  Mum: okay, ma sweetheart;
24           (0.1)
25  Cra: *yeh-.*
26           (1.8)  {(TV audible in background})
27  Mum: *anything, else,
28           (1.0)  {(breathing audible})
29  Cra: (ner nat dit.)
\end{verbatim}

We see Mum in line 23 delivering a tacit possible pre-closing, which in line 25 is met with a "yeh-" from Craig. We then have a lengthy pause which may contribute to Mum's re-issue of a close-initiation but equally this pursuit may be to make more explicit that she is initiating a close. We saw in the previous chapter how such turns were used to make very explicit that this is potentially a passing turn; an opportunity to add more talk or not. Thus in both of these examples we see more explicit types of turns being used to pursue close initiation after a first more tacit turn has been responded to in a way which suggests little alignment with the prior attempt.

In the Sue calls stand alone tacit turns are used only very rarely. Often we see Mum appending extra utterances which make explicit the orientation towards closing. In

\textsuperscript{35} Goldberg, 2004 identifies that a rising-falling intonational contour is typical in such turns and whilst this particular turn lacks a marked initial rise it has the falling intonation that gives a conclusive, summative sound.
the examples below (for example Extract 10, line 34) there are utterances which could stand alone as tacit possible pre-closings, but Mum appends extra talk to these either in the transition space or in a next turn.

From Extract 10:

```
31 Mum: a little then petal. \(\cdot\)h
32 Sue: [cus that's how it's- that's how
33 it's gonna be.
34 Mum: \(\cdot\)kay\#.
35 \(0.4\)
36 Mum: i'd better <let you go> we keep sayin we're gonna go
37 and then >we carry on don't we<
38 \(0.4\)
39 Sue: \{ye: :s
40 Mum: \{an you got to go off the phone.
41 \(\cdot\)h \(\cdot\)Allright ma \(\cdot\)darlin'
42 \(\cdot\)god bl\: ess
43 Sue: god bless.
```

In Extract 10 we see an 'okay' at line 34 which (though not strongly marked with closing intonation) could serve as a passing turn in the sense that it has the backwards and forwards functionality which Beach refers to. It could be both a response to Sue's summing up of "that's how it's gonna be" and also may forward project a move to another activity; in this case possible closure. There is no immediate take up of this as the latter possibility however, and we see Mum then adding a more explicit move to close at line 36 in the manner of those we have observed in previous chapters. Another close initiation using a tacit form appears at line 41, and in this instance Mum appends a closing felicitation which further serves to explicate that this is a move towards close. We see similar activity from Mum in the following example from Extract 11 (below). After one set of possible pre-closings in lines 6 and 7 (which are incidentally a 'reasonably' close match) we see Mum begin with what might be a further tacit possible pre-closing, but to this she appends a more direct announcement of her intention to go (\(\cdot\)I'll say a big nah night then.) This again would suggest that Mum does not rely solely on these rather more tacit utterances to initiate a close, but she appends a little something else to make explicit the possible trajectory towards close, particularly after instances where there is not a clear indication that there is alignment with this move towards
closure. As we observed above a clear, early indication of alignment with at least the idea that the call may be moving towards close could be shown by using matched lexical items. It may therefore be the absence of such matching that produces a more explicit subsequent attempt at closing initiation.

From Extract 11:
APS018-M2605
6 Mum: al:right then :babes. (.hh)
7 Sue: oka:y.
8 Mum: al:right. i'll say a big nah night then.
9 Sue: nah night mummy,=
10 Mum: nah night darling.

From Extract 12:
APS041-M0607
22 Sue: [the staffs been talking ] too high
23 Mum: [yes] &al:right:
24 [alright ma darling then. i think it's time for me to]
25 [go. *don't you<=
26 Sue: [i i love i\ beauty you lol=]
27 (.)
28 Sue: =i love you:=
29 Mum: =an I love you my [darling

In the above example from Extract 12 we see Mum at line 24 appending an extra reference to the possible trajectory of the call. The initial part of that turn could stand alone as a possible close initiating turn, but in the following transition space Mum adds a very explicit indication that she thinks it time to go, although she softens this with a tag question which solicits Sue's view on this. Although in this example the explication does not come after a specific tacit turn has 'failed' to get an 'aligning' response, it is significant that up to this point there have been several pre-closing episodes that have then moved back out of closing. Mum does not rely purely on a tacit turn to initiate close in this instance but adds something more to make this a more explicit and possibly more 'forceful' attempt at closure.

One of the fundamental roles of passing turns is to project different conversational trajectories – moving to close or allowing new topic talk. They are designedly open in a way that allows either of these possibilities. In a sense they 'test the water' with respect to whether the recipient wishes to talk more or close. This is delicate business where the closing might occasion inferences about the motives and
interests of the parties as was indicated in previous chapters. One of the features of these tacit utterances is that although they are conventionally associated with closing they do not express an explicit intention to close that must be dealt with. Instead they do a little ‘fishing’ to see whether both participants are ready to close. In the above examples from the Craig and Sue calls however we see the use of more explicit turns to concretise intentions about closure, by announcing intentions to go or by asking about them. We see different practices being used to explore participants’ ‘alignment’ about the trajectory of the call.

In Extracts 1-6 from the CTS and the Holt calls we saw matched lexical choices displaying alignment over the closing trajectory of the call. These indications of alignment lessen the participants’ ‘uncertainty’ about the trajectory of the call. In the absence of matched lexical items the uncertainty over the trajectory of the call remains. This may be why we see more explicit constructions being used (in a subsequent turn to a tacit turn or in the transition space after a tacit turn) to lift the uncertainty. At this stage this is a tentative analysis of the significance of these matched turns (which occur in the CTS and Holt calls but are absent in the Sue and Craig calls) and further work is planned to consolidate this. Such an analysis though is consistent with the previous two analytic chapters. It shows pre-closings being more explicitly built in the Sue and Craig calls. In these calls when tacit forms do not elicit a matched response, indicating alignment with closing, other materials are introduced which make the potential move to closing more explicit.

**Prosodic delivery**

In this section I will consider the role of prosodic delivery in building tacit turns in a way that projects possible closure. Closing-implicative delivery has been characterised as including *some* or *all* of the following features:

- high-pitch onset (relative to speakers’ prior turns);
- rising-falling pitch contour;
- sound stretching; and occasionally,
• a preceding in-breath.

(Couper-Kuhlen, 2004; Goldberg, 2004; Bolden, 2007, 2008b)

I will consider the role of these features in the four sets of calls. One feature common to many of the calls was the presence of a rising-falling pitch contour in close-initiating turns. Such contours can be analytically captured using pitch traces available through software such as PRAAT.\(^{36}\) Pitch traces are derived from the analysis of a sound in the following way. The sound is represented as a range of pitch values measured on a vertical pitch scale (in Hertz). The values are measured at equally spaced intervals on a horizontal time scale and the resultant values are shown as a continuous trace in much the same way as one would derive a curve from a range of values on a graph. Indeed a pitch trace is fundamentally a graph showing the pitch contour of a sound as a function of time. They can be used to view the overall shape/contour of a sound or turn (specifically a tacit pre-closing turn in this current analysis). The contour is a graphical representation of what in Jeffersonian transcription we might note with upward or downward arrows (↑ or ↓ or ↑↑ or ↓↓ etc.). Pitch traces allow for a more detailed scrutiny of the specific shape of a sound or turn and enable comparisons to be made across various sounds or turns. It is to this use that they have principally been put in this current analysis. However later in the chapter I also draw upon particular measurements provided in the traces to illustrate marked changes in the pitch of individuals’ consecutive turns.

I will begin with the CTS calls. Here, the pitch changes across turns are relatively minor. In particular in the CTS calls the tacit turns (such as alright and okay) are delivered in a fairly subtle, non-astounding way. In other words there is not much prosodic ‘spin’ put on these utterances and yet they are apparently treated by the recipient as possibly closing-implicative. Moreover, as Figures 1 and 2 show the pitch traces of the two speakers in two consecutive turns have a similar overall shape. Figure 1 shows Mum’s possible close-initiating turn followed by Penny’s

\(^{36}\)The PRAAT program enables a range of analyses of which pitch contours is one. The program was created by Paul Boersman and David Weenik within the Institute of Phonetic Sciences at the University of Amsterdam (Homepage: http://www.praat.org)
response in Figure 2. Note how the basic pitch contour (the shape of the pitch trace) is rather similar for each speaker. In Penny's response (Figure 2) the trace is more defined in places (for example at the beginning of 'alright') suggesting a slightly more 'punched up' delivery, but viewed in terms of overall shape of the turn it is striking that these are quite closely matched. 37

Figure 1 (CTS51- Speaker: Mum)

Figure 2 (CTS51 - Speaker: Penny)

37 The traces would suggest that Penny uses a wider pitch range during speech than Mum does - this might account for what appears to be more pronounced pitch in parts of the trace. Ideally the pitch ranges of individual speakers can be painstakingly averaged out over many utterances to take account of individual voices, but for the purposes of this initial examination of prosodic delivery an awareness of these potential variations is sufficient, since it is the overall shape/contour of the turns that are of current analytic interest.
We can make similar observations in a second CTS call. Figures 3 and 4 show Mum and Penny once more delivering some tacit possible pre-closing turns. Again Mum initiates (Figure 3) and Penny responds (Figure 4)

**Figure 3** (CTS50 – Speaker: Mum)

![Pitch contour graph for Mum's turn](image)

Again it is possible to see that the pitch contours of the two consecutive turns have a very similar overall shape. In Penny's turn we see a little more variability throughout the turn but the overall shape of the utterance is again very similar to

**Figure 4** (CTS50 – Speaker: Penny)

![Pitch contour graph for Penny's turn](image)
the prior. Note too that Penny's turn is said more quickly. In each case the traces are drawn across approximately 0.9s, and Penny's turn can be seen to take up less of that timeframe. This makes it all the more interesting then that given basic differences in speaker delivery the basic shape of the turn is still similar. Such similarities might suggest then that as well as the matching of lexical choices we saw in the preceding section, it is possible that speakers also match prosodic delivery to indicate an alignment with the move towards close. It is possible too that responses to a prior passing turn may be similar in overall shape (in terms of pitch contour) but are slightly more pronounced ('punched up') as we have seen in Penny's responding turns.

An examination of some of the Holt calls in my sample support this to some extent but a confounding factor is that in those examples above, the wording of the utterances, particularly in terms of the number of words used, were evenly matched, which is not true of those in the Holt calls included in my sample. Nevertheless I examine two such calls for comparative features.

**Figure 5 (Holt:5088:1:11 - Speaker: Mum)**

(Note: The beginning of Mum's turn is overlapped by Leslie's laugh which created sound interference. This could not be accurately smoothed – resulting in the outlandish pitch trace for Mum's cut off 'Oka-')
A first glance at Figures 5 and 6 provides rather a different picture to the comparisons made above and some of this may be due to the turns having differing lengths and contents. However a closer look at the overall shape of each, (discounting the explicable turbulence at the start of Mum's utterance), suggests there are some similar features. Note the falling-rising contour on the last syllable despite the fact that these are on differing words ('love' and 'kay'). The upturn at the end of 'love' appears somewhat sharper as there appears to be some sound-stretching on the 'kay' (indicated by the time taken – almost half of the 0.98s is taken up by that last syllable). Nevertheless, the overall pitch profile (falling-rising contour) of the last syllable is quite similar. Note too Les's more pronounced pitch in the responding utterance. Again, some features may be due to her individual pitch range but nevertheless she covers a range between approximately 180 - 400 Hz in this utterance whilst Mum's spans between approximately 170-300 Hz. This suggests that the response is being raised in pitch relative to the prior.

The following two pitch traces (Figures 7 and 8) appear to have very little in common. Mum's turn (Figure 7) appears rather disjointed (though note that it is not so hearably so in the soundfile). Leslie's turn (Figure 8) is extremely exaggerated. Note that the pitch range is considerably higher than Mum's prior turn and indeed
higher than previous examples of Leslie’s turns. Though the shape of these two look quite different, this may be partly due to the fact that there are a different number of words in the turn as we saw in the preceding examples. Note however that the last syllable of each has a similar falling-rising contour, so some similarity exists. However notably the latter is in a very much higher pitch range.

*Figure 7 (Holt:X(C)2:2:5 – Speaker: Mum)*

![Diagram showing pitch contour for "o", "kay", and "love" in a speaker's turn.](image)

*Figure 8 (Holt:X(C)2:2:5 – Speaker: Leslie)*

![Diagram showing pitch contour for "o" and "kay" in a different speaker's turn.](image)

Such observations bear some resonance with what we have so far observed in both the CTS calls and the Holt calls. The similarity of the pitch contours are rather more
obvious in the CTS calls (in those there was similar word patterning too which contributes to this), but the pitch contours in the Holt examples are not without some similarity, principally on the last syllable. In all of them the similar pitch contours contained in the responses comprise a somewhat 'punched up' version of the prior. As with the lexical matching, to be sure that what I observe here in a few examples are indicative of a strong trend for prosodic matching, we would need to examine many more examples, and so once more these can be seen as tentative observations only, at this point.

Let us now consider the prosodic delivery of the Craig and the Sue calls. In the Craig and Sue calls we have already seen that we rarely get the lexically matching turns seen in CTS and Holt. Earlier in this chapter however I highlighted two examples, which contained second turns that were reasonably close approximations (lexically and functionally) to the first. I repeat them below for convenience together with the pitch traces of each of the turns.

From Extract 9:

13 Mum: R↑↑IGHT;=
14 Cra: =(aright)

If we look at the pitch traces of these two particular turns (figures 9 and 10, below), we see that the pattern is quite different. Aside from the variation in pitch range which is a consequence of different speakers' voices (Craig's voice is hearably much lower than Mum's), the two contours have a very different shape. Mum's is a more defined pitch contour whilst Craig's turn (figure 10) appears very 'flat' and 'monotone'. These are in contrast to those we have seen above which had at least some 'matching' and it was also usually the case that the second of the turns was the more defined.
The same observations can be made of an example involving Mum and Sue.

From Extract 11:

6  Mum:  al:ri\right then \, i\,s\,i\,b\,a\,b\,e\,s. (.hh)
7  Sue:  oka\,y,
Figure 11 (APS018-M2605 – Speaker: Mum)

In Figure 11, we see that Mum's turn has a relatively defined pitch contour, whilst below (Figure 12) we see that the pitch of Sue's turn, whilst showing some definition is still 'flat' compared with Mum's. Sue's responding turn has little similarity of pitch contour with the prior (though note that the turns are markedly different lexically which contributes partially to this).

Figure 12 (APS018-M2605 – Speaker: Sue)

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38 The spiky parts of the pitch trace indicate some sound interference that could not be accurately erased or smoothed.
The similarities that we saw in participants’ lexical choices and turn-shapes in both the CTS calls and the Holt calls do not appear in either the Craig or the Sue calls. It is worth noting that we do see some lexical matching in the Sue calls when the call closings move into felicitations before terminal exchanges. For example, from Extract 10 above:

40 Mum: [an you got to go off the phone.
41 Sue:  h 'Alright ma [darlin'
42 Sue: god bless.
43 Mum: :angels :tect
44 Sue: angels protect.

Note the matching in lines 42 & 43 and lines 44 & 45. These lexically matching turns would indicate some alignment towards the close but such indication seems to occur once the trajectory towards closing has been more explicitly established. I have already suggested that this is established rather more seamlessly through the use of tacit passing turns in the Holt and CTS calls but has to be pursued more explicitly in the Craig and Sue calls. One way in which I suggested that this is done is through the use of an explicit form in a next turn. A second way was to add something more in the transition space of the turn in which the initial tacit pass occurs. For example we observed the following turn by Mum in Extract 11:

Mum: all right. i'll say a big nah night then.

Mum at the start of the turn uses a tacit form and then in the transition space adds an announcement which makes it more explicit that it is a possible close initiation.

Another way in which turns can be built to initiate a move to some other activity (a move to close for example; or, more specifically, moving to terminal exchanges) is by a shift in amplitude/pitch (Goldberg, 2004). We see this occurring in the Craig calls in particular. Consider the following extract - in particular lines 11, 13, and 22. The pitch traces for these three utterances are shown in Figures 13, 14 and 15 respectively.

From Extract 9 (APC024)

8 Mum: we'll see what the weather's [like.
9 Cra: [yeah
10 (.)

154
11 Mum: "TAHKA:: y?="  
12 Cra: =yeah=.  
13 Mum: =RIGHT:,="  
14 Cra: ={right}  
15 Mum: &i'll =see you \later then,<=  
16 Cra: =yeah=  
17 Mum: =\ll see you on saturday;  
18 Cra: =\see y\on dat\day<  
19 Mum: =.hhhh  
20 yeah I'll tal- i'll =give you a ring on thursday night shall I?  
21 Cra: yeah  
22 Mum: TAhka:y \then,=  

Figure 13 (APC024 – Speaker: Mum)

Figure 14 (APC024 – Speaker: Mum)
Figures 13, 14 and 15 illustrate extremely marked pitch changes – with ranges very high compared to surrounding talk. For example, Mum's turn at line 8 (we'll see what the weather’s like) begins at a pitch of 308 Hz and rises to a maximum pitch of 373 Hz. We can see from figure 13 above that Mum's next turn at line 11 (↑O↑↑KA::y?=) begins at approximately 330 Hz and rises to in excess of 550 Hz. Mum's talk in line 20 (I'll ↑give you a ring on thursday night shall I?) is within the range 288 Hz to 404 Hz, whilst figure 15 shows that her “↑o↑↑ka:y ↑then,” at line 22 ranges from 350 to 500 Hz. The turn shown in figure 14 is also within a higher range. These turns are strongly and hearably marked. It is possible then that Mum is using these increases in pitch to index a possible change of activity here (possibly that of closing). I have already noted that increases in amplitude/pitch are common in closing environments particularly in pre-closing turns. However, the increases identified here are much more marked. Intonation by definition is not explicit; yet here the exaggerated changes work as a powerful display of 'doing closing'. I suggest that Mum is using this very marked prosody as an additional resource to project that this is a close-initiating turn, and that a shift is taking place; towards closure.

I will make one further observation using Figure 15 above. The turn ends with a slightly upward move. This is a characteristic which is recurrent in many turns from
Craig’s and Sue’s Mums. This gives them a kind of questioning or ‘checking’ quality that I have already noted in this chapter and the previous one. This turn design might invite precisely the kinds of responses that we see from Craig and Sue – that is a ‘yes’ rather than a lexically-matching ‘okay’ or ‘alright’. This highlights an important issue. Even those turns which are designed as tacit indications of a possible closing are being built in a more explicit manner in the Craig and Sue calls. Furthermore they invite a type of alignment (in many cases a ‘yes’) that is more overt than that which is almost ‘invisibly’ done in the Holt and CTS calls with a lexically and prosodically matched response. The general pattern is similar to that observed in previous chapters with features such as accounts and additional affiliative materials. Here the passing turn is prosodically built as a more overt offer to close.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have attempted to unravel something of the subtle interactional role of tacit pre-closing turns. I have examined this aspect in the Sue and Craig data sets and compared these with the Holt and CTS calls. In previous chapters I established that in the former corpuses there is a strong tendency towards participants, particularly parents/grandparents, making explicit that the trajectory of the call is towards closing. Here I have examined the data for tacit activity too. A number of interesting findings have emerged.

In the Holt and CTS calls:

1. We observed lexical matching of passing turns and return passing turns.
2. We also observed prosodic matching, in terms of overall turn shape, of passing turns and return passing turns. Furthermore, return passing turns appeared to be intonationally ‘punched up’ versions of the passing turn.

I have suggested that the lexical and prosodic matching of the tacit turns in the Holt and CTS calls suggests ‘alignment’ and since the action being performed in those
turns is an offer to close, that alignment concerns the potential trajectory of the call. Furthermore the 'punched up' second turns suggest some sort of enhanced 'agreement' or alignment with the prior. It is notable how relatively seamlessly some sort of alignment is indicated by this matching in the Holt calls and in the CTS calls.

In the Craig and Sue calls:

1. We do not see such patterns of lexical or prosodic matching.
2. We see tacit turns being used but these are often appended with extra materials or with subsequent turns that make more explicit that the action being proposed is possible closure.
3. We see the more strongly defined contours (in terms of pitch) used in the first of the turns rather than the second. (We see Craig’s Mum in particular using significant shifts in amplitude to mark possible shifts of activity.)

Overall, in the Craig and Sue calls we see something of a ‘messier’ picture of closings. This contrasts with the somewhat smoother, gradual ‘aligning’ towards closure that I outlined in relation to the Holt and CTS calls. In the Craig and Sue calls we see more turns, extra materials, greater explicitness and additional prosodic resources to transact the business of moving towards closure that is achieved in such a subtle and understated way in the Holt and CTS calls. These additional practices might be produced towards managing any ‘uncertainty’ about the trajectory of the call. What parent participants in the Craig and Sue calls appear to do is to reduce ‘uncertainty’ by:

- using fewer tacit turns
- adding extra, more explicit materials to the tacit turns (for example, by appending an announcement about ‘going’)

That what we are seeing in the lexical and prosodic matching is indeed alignment towards closure is a little tenuous in the sense that unless closure immediately ensues, we cannot assume that that was what they were aligning upon, but certainly the matching appears to indicate some sort of alignment – an alignment possibly with the action of the prior – the possible close-initiation – the opening up of the possibility of closure.

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• using exaggerated prosody to project a change of trajectory (possibly towards closing).

We see then a strong contrast between having fairly subtle and 'neat' pre-closing episodes as opposed to the more complex and 'messier' pre-closing episodes in the Craig and Sue calls. Although ultimately the conversational task of closing is accomplished this sometimes requires more explicit turns, extra materials, and exaggerated prosodic features to assist in accomplishing them. Extra work is thus needed to make the 'messy', less so – to make the disorderly, orderly.

One final observation concerns the patterns of use of tacit turns. In the Holt and CTS calls either participant might use a tacit turn to open up closing. However, in the Craig and Sue calls only the parent/grandparent uses tacit turns. This may, in part, be due to the fact that Craig and Sue are less active in opening up closings in general. We do see Craig's Mum using tacit pre-closing turns though we rarely see Sue's mum using these alone – they are sometimes included in a turn which also has other elements that serve to suggest or offer closure. In other words they are relied upon less as a fundamental way of opening up closure. This is an issue which will be developed further in the next chapter which will consider patterns of collaboration and symmetry/asymmetry in the closing of calls.
Chapter Six – Collaboration and Asymmetry

Introduction

In the preceding three chapters I have described a range of resources that speakers insert into pre-closing turns to open up the possibility of closing whilst managing the closing in a particular way. These included accounts, a wide variety of other ‘affiliative’ materials (for example, the elaborate construction of future joint activities), and also more tacit and prosodic features. I have shown the way in which all of these contribute to the overall management of the close as something done reluctantly, with care for the other.

This chapter explores the levels of collaboration in using these resources and in the management of the close in a caring way. I compare these aspects across the other data sets to which I have access. Furthermore I consider how symmetrically or asymmetrically the closing work is done with a view to addressing one of the broader concerns with which I started; does family telephone talk which includes a young adult with a learning disability look any different from any other family telephone talk? In what senses, if any, is disability ‘live’ in this interaction? Much of the interactional research conducted into varying kinds of ‘disordered’ talk concludes that in talk which includes someone with a diagnosed disability, the interactional business may be asymmetrically distributed. Following this lead, this chapter will explore asymmetries of different kinds in this current collection of calls.

Let us start by returning to the standard closing sequence. This contains four turns, comprising two sets of adjacency pairs.

1. A: Oright
2. B: Okay [honey
3. A: [bye dear=
4. B: =bye

Using this basic form participants collaboratively negotiate whether a close is imminent or whether more talk will ensue.
One of the insights of basic conversation analytic work is to show that at a fundamental level collaboration is intrinsic to the orderliness of conversational turn-taking and sequence organisation (cf., Schegloff, 2006; Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson, 1974; Sacks, 1992). In the previous three chapters I have documented the way in which a further layer of discursive ‘action’ was being performed via extra materials inserted into the basic closing sequence. I will consider then, whether this discursive action is collaboratively produced and whether this is symmetrically or asymmetrically done.

Collaboration in the following sections then is considered to be the joint engagement by participants in the discursive action; that which is over and above the fundamental collaboration present in conversational turn-taking. In other words, I consider whether participants jointly engage in the activities we have seen so far, that are doing relational work. So I consider whether there is collaboration in the use of accounts and in the deployment of other resources (for example, elaboration of future arrangements, endearment terms, explicit checking etc.), all of which are drawn upon to complete the relationship sustaining work which is prevalent in the closings.

Collaboration in accounting for closure

The following extracts contain examples of where participants collaborate in accounting for a possible close (thereby constructing the close as something done reluctantly).

Extract 1 APS023-D2105
0 (4.5)
1 Dad: Right.
2 >well
3 I’m going to go now< darlin’.
4 ->cus I’ve got lots of< teeth to make.
5 Sue: Yea::h
6 I’ve got to finish ma cards off=

Extract 2 APS024-D2405
0 (2.7)
1 Dad: >Right
well
I’m gonna go now,
cus I’ve got a load o’ work to get done alright,<n
Sue: I’ve got to watch Eastenders [it’s on i]n- (0.2)
in a minute.=

In both of the above extracts we see Dad using an account for why he is going to leave the call in his close-initiating turn (at line 4 in both cases). Furthermore we see Sue collaborate in this activity in her response. She adds to the accounting activity by issuing her own account for closing, stating what it is that she must go and do. Thus, after an account for closing has been offered by one party, the other issues an account, thereby indexing some alignment towards the closure, through the reciprocal provision of an account. Sue’s orientation towards collaborating in the provision of accounts is in strong evidence in the following extract.

Extract 2a APS024-D2405 Extended version of Extract 2 above

Dad: >Right well I’m gonna go now, cus I’ve got a load
Sue: I’ve got to watch Eastenders [it’s on i]n- (0.2)
in a minute.=
Dad: [uh m: :,]
Sue: no it’s not it’s only uh: m: (0.6) quart to seven.
you’ve got [an’th- three quart]er- you’ve got
forty fi:ve mi:-
Sue: [what’s on no:w? ]
Dad: =an ne:we’ll be on at the moment.
(2.5)
Dad: No I don’t know what’s on at seven.
(1.2)
Dad: but you’ve got plenty o’ time:
(0.5)
Sue: >I’ve got Hollyoaks,< (.) to wa:ch.

This extract (an extended version of extract 2 above) suggests a strong orientation by Sue to finding an alternative account for closing when Dad initiates a repair on her first attempt. When Dad points out that “Eastenders” isn’t on straight away, which has the potential to invalidate Sue’s initial account for closing, Sue replaces her account with a very similar one which repairs what it is that she has to go to watch. Rather than constructing this as simply a discussion of precisely what is on television at a given or future point, it is constructed (partially by the intonation used) with emphasis on the programme and the activity (the watching). If this were simply a correction of what is on television, it may be in a different form; perhaps a
straight statement about the programmes that are on rather than Sue’s actual engagement with it (the watching). Constructing it in this way confirms its role as an account rather than simply a piece of information about programming. Furthermore the use of “I’ve got” in line 18 retains the alignment with Dad’s original expression, though it also serves as an expression of ownership which seems to point to the ownership of a “something to do” that contributes to the accounting in the closing. Thus, in working at generating an alternative account, in presenting it in a similar way and in it being of a similar type of account (a television programme that she intends to watch that is on now) Sue shows an engagement with the notion of accounting and her collaboration in it.

Furthermore the additional accounts that we see Sue produce in the extracts, would suggest that the first account has been received as such, and so she collaborates in the accounting activity in a relatively subtle way – by adding her own account too. In providing her own account in this slot, Sue does something conventionally aligning. By offering her own account she displays an understanding of Dad’s account and the kind of item it is, and second-produces a similar item that has the property of accounting for her own leaving the call. This works by ‘cancelling out’ the kind of obligation that Dad orients to (that has Sue wishing to continue but having to ‘let her down’ gently). It is then a very psychologically ‘fitted’ and thus subtle move. Notably, there was no invitation to provide an additional account, the conversation episode was not in any way incomplete without it (as for example might be the case if it were an omitted second part of an adjacency pair). The additional account is also delivered immediately after the prior turn, with no hesitation or lapse that might suggest trouble, and which might therefore have attracted an additional account. Its occurrence therefore could be deemed an orientation to collaborate in this relationship sustaining work, on the grounds of its otherwise “unnecessary” inclusion. The production of additional accounts in responding turns is thus one way in which collaboration is seen to be actively displayed in situ. The activity appears from these examples to be distributed between participants – both are contributing accounts in a subtle,
sequentially appropriate and psychologically relevant manner. However there is a notable asymmetry here in that the first account, and the close-initiating turn in which it is embedded, is provided by the parent. This is most often the case. Whilst there are instances where Sue and Craig offer up an account these are not issued in the way in which parents do here. As shown in Chapter Three what we do see (from Sue in particular) is the issuing of what I have termed latent accounts. That is, she describes a circumstance that may be relevant to the end of the call yet she does not formulate it as a ‘fully-fledged’ account. She does not build it, then and there, as a reason for terminating the call. Instead we see Mum forming this into either a question or a directive about closing, using the described circumstance as an account for closure. Some examples of this type will appear later in the chapter. Here though I highlight it in the context of the collaboration that is involved in producing pre-closings that contain an account; collaboration which encompasses warranting the close and constructing it as reluctantly done.

In Chapter Four we saw many instances where rather than accounts being drawn upon as a principal means of sustaining relational aspects in the talk, there was a high concentration of alternative affiliative materials, also doing this kind of work. We see collaborative involvement in their use as illustrated below, but we see parents predominantly drawing upon them, and so the issue of asymmetry presents in the use of these materials too.

**Collaboration in the use of alternative affiliative resources**

Collaboration in the use of alternative affiliative materials varies somewhat amongst the various sets of materials indentified in Chapter 4. We see some collaboration between participants in the (elaborate) construction of individual and joint future activities as something to look forward to, but we see endearment terms, intonation and other audible displays, the explicit checking of the intention to go and references to next calls, done principally by parents and grandparents. I examine initially the elaborate construction of individual and joint future activities.
Construction of future activities

In Extract 4 below we see an account used in Dad’s pre-closing turn in lines 1-2 and a further account in line 3. In a subsequent turn (line 4) we see Dad package the two previously produced accounts into an extended account for possible closure.

Extract 4 APS023-D2105 Extended version of Extract 2 above

1  Dad: Right. >well I’m going to go now< darlin’, >cus
2           I’ve got lots of< teeth to make.
3  Sue: Yea::h I’ve got to finish ma cards off,=
4  Dad: =Okay >you finish yer card,< I’ll >finish ma teeth,<
5                          and I’ll >see, you in the morning at ‘alf. nin:e,<
6                           =we’ll go an’ av a nice 4day- out alri:ght;
7                          0.5)
8  Sue: An w-’all have a little wa:lk arou:nd,

In that same turn (line 5) we see Dad orienting to an up and coming outing that he and Sue will undertake. Note that this is quite elaborately done. It is not unusual to see future arrangements appearing in pre-closing turns but the elaborate construction of this upcoming event as something to look forward to is more unusual. (As we have seen such elaborate constructions are not present in the Holt or CTS corpuses). In terms of collaboration in this activity, note how Sue engages in the picture that Dad is painting by asking about something which elaborates upon what the outing is going to comprise. Although on the surface this is a request for more information about the upcoming outing it serves to elaborate further and thus engage collaboratively in the action being performed here – that of projecting a focus onto an upcoming meeting between the two that is constructed as something to be enjoyed. Sue collaborates in the developing of an account of this upcoming pleasurable activity.

In the following extract we again see Sue collaborating in the picture of their upcoming weekend, that Dad is developing.

Extract 5 APS038-D0706

1  Sue: yea:h,
2  Dad: yea:h.
3       (1.3) ((audible breathing))
4  Dad: so i’ll ↑see you sat’day mornin,=
5  Sue: ↓okKay=
6  Dad: alright,
Dad: .hh and uh: (. ) we'll have a good time this weekend=
lets hope the weather stays nice ay:e,
Sue: and can i'ave something to- (0.5) <something ter nibb:le
o:n,>=
Dad: =we- me an you er going to cook some dinner aren't we,
Sue: shall we do a'tch- (. ) chinese fry, up,

Again it would be possible to treat Sue’s turns as enquiries about exactly what the weekend will comprise. Note however the way in which it goes beyond this and enables an elaborate spelling out of the event ahead, and in so doing builds it up as a ‘something to look forward to’. Sue’s enquiries at line 11-12 and line 17 are instrumental in working this up into something enjoyable and enabling Dad to respond to these enquiries and elaborate upon the upcoming meal they will prepare together. Notably Sue does not simply ask if she can have something to eat. She repairs from what might have been such a straightforward question to a somewhat more colloquial way of asking about having some food. (Note also the elongation of this rather more colloquial reference to the act of eating which hearably gives it a different quality to that of a straightforward, matter-of-fact question). This would suggest that this is not to be heard as a straightforward question but one which is designed to invite more discussion and more elaboration on this topic, which then ensues. Sue does thus appear to collaborate in the activity of building up the elaborate projections of ‘something to look forward to’.

However, having established that collaboration can and does occur in the activity of building a picture up of a ‘something to be looked forward to’ we also see occasions when there is little engagement by Sue in these activities — in those instances we see much more work done by parents to discursively produce future events as something to look forward to.
In Extract 6 we see little activity by Sue towards building up future events as foci for participants and we see Dad build the 'something to look forward to', and the close, almost single-handedly. Sue does not produce affiliative, co-ordinated nexts, on lines 2-3, 8-9 and 14, of the kind we saw in Extracts 4 and 5. The 'yes's she provides in these slots do not hearably pick up the momentum to close or to move the conversation in another direction. After such a minimal response by Sue to Dad's pre-closing in line 1, we see Dad taking his time over his next utterance (both 'oka:y.' and 'u:hm' are elongated). Following a hearably lengthy pause, Dad adds more to forward the idea that Saturday is something to be looked forward to as he adds a further '<we'll have some fu->', the ending word of which it seems reasonable to assume is the start of the word 'fun'. Dad then switches to focus on Sue's upcoming barge trip and he constructs this too as something enjoyable to be looked forward to. Note in particular the emphasis on 'gre:at' and 'time' and the elongation of 'great' on line 6.

Thus we have seen examples where Sue collaborates in the picture that is being built for her (Extracts 4 and 5) and an instance (Extract 6) of where there is little or no collaboration from Sue in such discursive practices. In all cases there is asymmetry though this is more marked in the latter example. In Extracts 4 and 5 the asymmetry presents in the way in which it is Dad who leads the talk of the

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40 The issue of what kind of thing 'yes' is in these environments is a tricky one and is not one that will be solved in the scope of this project. Here they appear to display agreement without picking up the action implications of the prior.
upcoming event, drawing out some of its pleasurable aspects, and Sue adds to this via her enquiries. In Extract 6 it is Dad who builds the picture for Sue's upcoming week with hearably minimal responses (and also therefore no 'material' input) from Sue. Asymmetry it seems then is endemic in the above materials, but in varying levels. What is notable is that however asymmetrically this interactional work is done, the building by participants of these elaborate pictures of future events and meetings is a recurrent feature in the pre-closings. This suggests that it is the interactional task that holds import for participants (in this case the refocusing on future events) rather than by whom it is predominantly accomplished. This is significant to conclusions I draw in my final chapter, regarding the joint accomplishment of conversational tasks and the shared nature of interaction.

Terms of Endearment

Other affiliative materials that we see being recurrently drawn upon in pre-closing turns are only used by parents and others and not by the young adults. This represents complete asymmetry in one sense and yet it is possibly unsurprising given the parent-'child' relationship. For instance, we do not see the young adults use terms of endearment. References by the young adults to their interlocutors are limited simply to the family relational name - that is, Mummy, Daddy or Granny\(^\text{41}\) - or to the name of that person when aunts or cousins are party to the call. Yet we see very many cases of the use of terms of endearment for the young adults from parents and grandparents. It is possible to view this as something not too unusual. The asymmetry in this respect may be related to the parent-child nature of the talk and the incumbent roles of carer and cared for, though this is something that could only be pinned down by further study across more data sets and so outside of this current study. Having acknowledged this however, it is in the contribution that the

\(^{41}\) These particular forms of reference could be seen as terms of endearment in the sense that they are 'softer' forms of 'Mum', 'Dad' or 'Gran'. However, on the basis that these are the names that are consistently used for these participants throughout all of the calls (and not just in closing environments) I consider these are the 'standard' names by which the young adults refer to these participants.
terms of endearment make discursively, to the closing activity that the observations of asymmetry are more relevant.

Below we see several examples of terms of endearment used by parents or grandparents.

Extract 7 APS023-D2105
Dad: Right. >well I'm going to go now< darlin'.

Extract 8 APC002
Mum: o'kay ma sweetieheart,

Extract 9 APS027-M2206
Mum: alright >ma love.< I'm gonna go now.

Extract 10 APS048-G0607
Gran: alright, then ducky,

All of the above utterances are hearable as closing implicative, whilst some include an explicit announcement about leaving the call (for example Extract 7), but all include a term of endearment which, as has been discussed previously (Chapter 4), serves to soften the closing implicative utterance. I also noted previously the proximity of these terms to the action of suggesting closure, which suggests that their use is linked to these actions and they potentially mitigate the suggested close. These 'powerful' and particularly-positioned little terms are used recurrently by parents and grandparents, but as stated above are not used by the young adults. This illustrates once more that the discursive work in closing is not symmetrically shared and often more work is done by parents and those other than the young adults.

Explicit checking about the call trajectory
A similar pattern is observable in the use of materials which explicitly check whether the trajectory of the call is indeed towards closing. Two examples of this are shown below.

Extract 11 APS025-M2306
1 Mum: alright <then.>=are you going to go?
2 (0.2)
3 Sue: yes
4 Mum: all right i will (.). talk t'yer tomorrow night.
Sue: yes

Extract 12 APC002
1 Mum: okay ma sweetie, (0.3)
2 Cra: aw’right
3 Mum: time to sleep?
4 (0.2)
5 Cra: ( )
6 Mum: okay, na-night. then, ((whispery voice))
7 (0.2)
8 Cra: ye’ba:h

In Extract 11 and 12 we see each of the Mums explicitly checking that Sue and Craig, respectively, are agreed that it is time to close. In Extract 11 this is made very explicit by Mum’s question in line 1 about Sue’s intention to go and in Extract 12 Mum orients specifically to the end of the call by asking whether it is now time for Craig to go to bed (sleep). This form of explicit ‘checking’ is something which we observe from parents but not from the young adults. There is thus an asymmetric distribution of the use of such explicit ‘checking’ turns. Additionally, such turns (as exampled in line 1 of Extract 11 and line 4 of Extract 12) are indicative of a level of asymmetry related also to the discursive work they perform. These turns use an interrogative form to initiate a possible closing, and in so doing the authority for the close is specifically given to the recipient, through the optionality inherent in questions. However like all interrogatives, they may be delivered to indicate preference (towards closure) and may include in them a candidate answer (as we see in Extract 12 line 4). Thus turns formulated in this way appear to simultaneously give authority to the young adults to accept or decline closure, but in being delivered in a way in which closing may be the preferred response, they potentially might ‘limit’ the response. These forms of explicit checking, then, display asymmetries in terms of the discursive management of the closure as well as in distributional terms, that is, they are used solely by parents.

One of the young adults displays a very different means of checking about the trajectory of the call. In Extracts 13 and 14 (below) we see Sue asking other’s opinions of her intentions and conduct (Extract 13) and her sleepiness (Extract 14).
Sue: Do you think I should go and watch it?

Mum: You’re ver- if you want to, you can. that’s [fine that’s-<]

Extract 14 APS015-M2005
1 → Sue: Can we go now. because- ((said away from phone)) do I look sleepy?
2 ((inaudible talk in background))
3 Sue: She said I look sleepy:)
4 Mum: Alright. look, we’ll catch up another, time. then sweetheart. alright, don’t you go, worrying.

Sue’s checking is about the trajectory of the call but it involves her checking whether she ‘should’ or ‘can’ leave the call to go to do something. This introduces an additional facet to the notion of asymmetry in that here we are seeing an orientation to whether she is ‘allowed’ to leave the call. This is interesting in the consideration of who has rights and responsibilities to suggest closure and who exercises these across this and other corpuses. Such considerations figure in the later discussion, whilst here I continue examining the patterns of collaboration in the discursive work in which participants engage.

Thus far we have seen that there is collaboration and yet asymmetric participation in accounting activity and also in the use of alternative affiliative materials. We can see that this asymmetry exists in a very practical sense such as the number of turns taken by parents and also in the sophistication of the turns such that much of the discursive work is undertaken by parents and those other than the young adult calling home. Thus far then we have seen asymmetries in:

- number of turns taken by respective participants
- the production of initiating actions in the turns
- the complexity of the actions done in the turns
- the provision of accounts for the other’s closing, reflecting their interests
- the way that actions formulate other’s mental states (wanting, needing etc)

42 It is quite striking that Sue does not assume primary rights here. There is something both sophisticated (Sue may have learned to rely on others in various ways interactionally) and also naive about it. This will be worthy of study in its own right though this will have to be outside of this existing study.
• the management of the disaffiliative nature of the action (for example, using terms of endearment and formulating ‘something to be looked forward to’)
• the delivery of turns which fail to build on the action implications of the prior pre-closing turn (for example, using ‘yes’ as we saw in Extract 6 pp.166-7)

Below are two extracts which clearly illustrate the asymmetric distribution of turns that occur in many of the pre-closing episodes as well as other asymmetries related to the amount and nature of the discursive work completed by the parent. In Extract 15 we see much work done by Mum.

Extract 15 APS015-M2005
1 Sue: What time is it?
2 Mum: Uh:mn: let’s have a look.
3 (0.8)
4 Mum: Mum: makes it about- >it’s about< quarter past nine mu
5 lo:v:e.
6 (3.8)
7 Mum: Are you wanting to go: ↓ma ↓darling,
8 (2.3)
9 Mum: It’s ↑okay to say that you want to ↑go y’↑know,
10 (2.9) —
11 Mum: ↓I’ll talk to you for as ↑lo:ng >as you li:ke,< but if
12 you- (.) feeling rather ti:red, and you want to go an get
13 comfy, and watch telly, (0.6) you’ve just gotta ↓say.

Mum responds to Sue’s question as a straight forward enquiry about the hour, but after no uptake from Sue, Mum treats this as a possible indication from Sue that she may wish to leave the call and enquires whether Sue wishes to close. Again there is no uptake and so Mum reassures Sue that it is okay to say that she wishes to leave the call and expresses her own willingness to talk further if Sue so desires. Mum then goes on to provide an account for Sue should she wish to leave. Some notable features of this example are that Mum’s turns become progressively more explicit and elaborate and they build upon something reported by Sue, making it, to some degree, collaboratively accomplished. It finishes with some ‘socializing’ work about Sue being able to say she wants to go if she is tired and so is strongly focused on Sue’s wants and needs. Thus the asymmetry extends beyond simply the distribution of turns. The discursive action is also asymmetrically built with the major part of it completed by Mum.
In Extract 16 which is taken from the same call there is again a noticeable asymmetric distribution of turns.

**Extract 16 APS015-M2005**

1  Sue:  >If I drop to **sleep** on this phone right. nobody'll wake me up, then I’ll be! (0.8)
2  Mum:  Well I just think if you **sit** there an’ you’re gonna get cold aren’t you.
3  Mum:  (0.9)
4  Mum:  ↑You ↑need to go an’ sit in a nice **comfy** chair, go an’ sit on the **setttee** in the living room.
5  (0.7)
6  Sue:  <Yeah> then...
7  Mum:  and watch the **programme**, that you want to watch, then get into bed.
8  (0.3)
9  Mum:  >an ‘aw[nic:s] e]arly, night. ((whispery voice))

Sue again offers up something which could indicate that she may wish to leave the call, but then many (somewhat lengthy) turns are taken by Mum to work this up into an account for closing which is delivered as a set of practical steps that Sue might take upon closing the call.

These two extracts are indicative of the asymmetry in the distribution of turns between participants, but perhaps more significantly they also orient to another ‘layer’ of asymmetry – that which relates to the way that one party is so elaborately attentive to, and constructs, the wants and needs of the other. Here we see Mum commenting on what is ‘good’ for Sue’s well-being which suggests something of an asymmetry related to one person’s right and/or knowledge to comment on what is good for another person. (Note however that I raise this as a tentative observation for further exploration rather than suggesting that an asymmetry exists and that there is strong evidence for making such a claim). Fundamentally what we see is that rather than making quite explicit an intention to close (as we have seen in those cases where people announce they are going to go) Sue delivers a question or commentary about something that may necessitate closing the call, and this appears to be received as such by Mum who then works to make this more explicit.
as a possible reason to close, citing Sue’s ‘wants’ or ‘needs’ as part of that reason, whilst also reassuring Sue that it’s fine.

Thus there are asymmetries in the sheer number of turns taken by Mum; in the formulating of accounts on behalf of Sue after she has produced a ‘latent account’ (in Chapter 3 we observed many such reformulations particularly in the context of accounts which appeared with interrogatives and directives); and in the discursive work being done to manage the call closing as something reluctantly done (due to the lateness of the hour in Extract 15 or to Sue’s sleepiness in Extract 16). Furthermore, we see further asymmetry reflected in Mum turns which display a knowledge of and right to comment upon Sue’s ‘wants’ (Extract 15 line 7) and ‘needs’ (Extract 16 line 6). This is not something which we see done by Sue for Mum. This is also true of the calls between Craig and his Mum. We have previously observed instances where she attends to his needs of tiredness or hunger but we do not see reciprocal activity from Craig. We thus see a great deal of interactional effort by parents, to turn what could be considered quite a clumsy attempt at a possible pre-closing into a less clumsy and more transparent close-initiation. At the same time we see a regard being displayed for the welfare of the other though this is noticeably in favour of the young adult rather than the parent.

Thus far then we have seen that there is collaborative effort in bringing about the close of a call in a general turn-taking sense. There is some collaborative effort in the use of accounts and there is some collaboration in the construction of future activities as ‘something to look forward to’. However we have also seen that much of the work both practically and discursively is done by parent figures, and in particular most of the affiliative practices described in chapter 4 and highlighted again above were predominantly done by parents. The tacit turns we saw in chapter 5 also suggested a marked asymmetry, with parents supplementing tacit pre-closing turns with additional utterances, or using follow up turns to make more explicit that the turn is a close-initiating turn. Before attempting any discussion of what these
patterns of collaboration and asymmetry might suggest I examine the patterns that can be observed in my comparative data sets.

**Comparative Aspects**

All participants in all of the data sets can be seen to engage collaboratively in closing, by virtue of the fundamental turn-taking machinery upon which such sequences rely. We see collaboration in closing sequences which bear a close resemblance to the standard closing and in others which are rather extended and somewhat variant versions of a standard closing. It is in the latter that we see differing patterns of collaboration and asymmetry.

In particular in the Sue and Craig calls we see that many more turns are taken up by parents or grandparents and that these turns tend to be more sophisticated in nature, in order to ‘fashion’ the talk into something structurally resembling a standard closing. We have seen parents use a wide range of close-initiating designs (particularly when accounts are embedded in such turns) and they also insert many more materials into closing sequences to accomplish other discursive work. Notably in the Sue and Craig calls parents take the lead in these activities illustrating a greater asymmetry in the interaction than we see in the calls in the CTS and Holt data sets.

In the CTS and Holt calls we see a more symmetrical distribution of turns and find that commonly it might be either party that initiates closure. Furthermore turns by parties in the CTS and Holt calls do not appear as asymmetrical in terms of their complexity/sophistication as we see in the Sue and Craig calls, as in the former we do not see one party completing ‘extra’ closing work on behalf of the other. We do however see some of the additional materials (accounts and alternative affiliative materials) being inserted into the closing episodes, though in the case of the Holt and CTS calls this might be done by either party, rather than predominantly by parents. This gives a general picture of the differing patterns of collaboration and
asymmetry. I will now consider patterns emerging specifically in the discursive practices of producing accounts and introducing alternative affiliative materials.

We saw instances earlier in this chapter where Sue collaborates with Dad in the accounting activity by adding her own contribution about why the call may need to end now, in her responding turn. This is not something that we see from Craig and we do not see return accounts being used by respondents in the CTS calls. (The Holt calls did not contain accounting activity of the sort seen in other data sets so I will not consider collaborative patterns for this particular activity here). In the Craig and CTS calls the accounting is responded to with a straightforward acknowledgement (acceptance) of the offer to close or the introduction of further topic talk (decline) of the offer to close, rather than with a ‘return’ account. For example:

**APC045**

1  Mum:  an I’ve got to go  
2  and rescue my supper, I’ve [s’ill got s=]  
3  Cra:  [m u : m m y,]  
4  Mum:  some supper in the oven> [((sniff))]  
5  Cra:  [m’mny

Here we see Craig’s Mum announcing she has to go (line 1), providing an account (line 2), whilst Craig appears to start up further talk (lines 3 and 5, in overlap).

**CTS23**

1  Pen:  *kay* i’m gonna go in a minute mum cus i need  
2  the toilet  
3  hh(hh)hh.  
4  Mum:  alright then, love.

Here Penny announces she is going to go as she needs the toilet and Mum responds with a straightforward acceptance of this move to close and the account therein. Note too that Penny (the young adult) is the one initiating the close using an account, in much the same way as parents in the Sue and Craig calls do. Mum’s response would suggest that she has heard this as a close initiation and she does no more work than to accept this and the appended account. We can contrast this with the attempts to close we have seen from Sue where she simply states a circumstance that may require closure. This invites a more complex/sophisticated turn from Mum who incorporates the material into a question or directive that
addresses Sue’s needs or desires. The asymmetry in the work done to fashion these into a closing episode is very apparent in such exchanges.

A further contrast is enabled by the following example. Here we see some very interesting responses from Penny to Mum’s announcement and account. Initially at line 4 we see an exclamation which appears to align with mum’s assertion that something is the matter.

**CTS29**

1  Mum: i’m going to have to go, >i don’t know< Sophie’s
crying at something. i need to find out what the matter
  is.
4  Pen: oo::h:: gaw::d.
5  Mum: .HHHH HHHHH. i know.
6  Pen: no probs.
7  Mum: sorry?
8  Pen: no probs I said. i’ll er:mm:=
9  Mum: okay
10  Pen: =[ring] you later on then.

At line 6 we then see Penny offering a ‘reassuring’ acceptance of the announcement to go plus the account. She says that having to go and attend to Sophie is not a problem, which displays a ‘condonement’ of Mum’s closing move for the reason she has given. This is not something we see Sue or Craig doing. Work to reassure the other that it’s fine to go is usually done by parents/grandparents by working up the account on their behalf or sometimes by more explicit means such as we saw in the following excerpt (line 3):

**APS015-M2005**

1  Mum: Are you wanting to go? *ma *darling,
2  (2.3)
3  Mum: It’s *okay to say that you want to *go y’*know,
  (2.9)
4  Mum: *I’ll talk to you for as *lo:ng >as you *li:ke,
  (0.6) you’ve just gotta *sa:y.

Thus, we see a much more asymmetric distribution of the work done to account for and accept closing moves, with much more work done by the parents, in the Craig and Sue calls, though we see a less-overt collaboration in the production of accounts evidenced by Sue’s contributions to the accounting in her responding turns.
We have seen some collaboration from Sue in constructing future events as a 'something to look forward to' though we have also seen that most of the construction is done by parents/grandparents. Mum also constructs things which Craig is going to do at college in a way which builds them as enjoyable and worth looking forward to. This is not something which we see in the Holt or the CTS calls. We do see sequences where arrangements are made and sometimes these become rather detailed (in terms of practical detail such as timings etc) but these are not constructed in such a way as to foreground explicitly the enjoyment which is to be had, as we see in the Craig and Sue calls. Moreover, the discussion of such matters appears to be equally shared between participants. Thus whilst forthcoming events are talked of in all four data sets, not only is the nature of the construction of future events quite different but also there is a very marked asymmetry in the discussion/construction of these. It does appear that this elaborate building of future events is something which belongs to those calls which involve Sue and Craig and is something which is predominantly done by parents with some participation from the young adults.

In terms of the use of endearment turns, we have seen a similar pattern occurring across the Craig, Sue and CTS data sets. In all of these we see endearment turns being issued by parents/grandparents when referring to the young adults. The young adults on the other hand use only relational terms (Mum, Dad, Granny, Grandma) to refer to their interlocutors. This would seem to suggest that any asymmetry here orients to the younger participant as child or grandchild rather than it being anything to do with asymmetry arising from the diagnosed disabilities of the younger parties in two of the data sets. In the Holt calls there is no such asymmetry. We see Mum using Leslie's christian name or an endearment term and we see Leslie using a relational name (Mum) or an endearment term. Here then endearment terms are used by either participant. Notably though this mother and daughter are of a different generation. Leslie is a grown up woman who has a family of her own. This might be why we get a more 'equal' occurrence of endearment terms. Furthermore the endearment terms they use are of a more
'grown-up' sort. We do not see these participants using terms such as 'sweetheart', 'darlin' or 'poppet'—these do seem to be terms that might be used for younger children (and young adults). It does seem then that asymmetry in the use of these terms by participants might be linked to the 'parent-(younger) child' relationship and possibly the 'carer-cared for' relationship rather than it being to do with the fact that some of the young adults have learning disabilities. These may be more 'regular' asymmetries as exist in parent-child relationships, although an additional influence may come from the fact that these are young adults living away from the family home. I discuss this further below.

In the previous chapter we observed asymmetric patterns in the use of tacit closing-initiations. In the CTS and Holt calls either participant might use a tacit turn to open up closing, but this was not true of the Craig or Sue calls, where only parents used these. This may of course, in part, be due to the fact that Craig and Sue are less active in opening up closings in general. We do see Craig's Mum using tacit preclosing turns though we rarely see Sue's mum using these alone—rather they are sometimes included in a turn which also has other elements that serve to suggest or offer closure. In other words they are relied upon less as a 'mainstream' (for these calls) way of opening up closure. When they are used there is often a need for subsequent turns, extra materials, greater explicitness and additional prosodic resources to transact the business of moving towards a close. This work is done by parents which once more highlights significant asymmetries.

Thus a number of patterns exist in terms of activities and who performs them in the closings reviewed:

In the calls which include a young adult with a diagnosed disability:

- parents\(^43\) take more turns and more sophisticated/complex turns to fashion a closing
- parents produce accounts in varying designs (with some contribution from young adults)

\(^43\)The term parents is used here to represent both parents and grandparents.
• parents produce accounts for the young adults
• parents reformulate ‘latent’ accounts into ‘candidate’ accounts
• parents construct an elaborate picture of forthcoming activities as a ‘something to look forward to’ (with some contribution from young adults) – this is a different ‘action’ to simply making arrangements
• endearment terms are used by parents for young adults but not vice versa
• tacit turns are used only by parents and they often require supplementary turns and effort to make these more explicit
• parents at times produce overt reassurances that it’s ‘okay to say you want to go’.

In the calls in the comparison data sets:
• endearment terms are used by parents for young adults but not vice versa
  (in the CTS calls that is – a differing pattern, as detailed above, applies to the Holt calls)
• both parents and young adults provide ‘reassurance/condonement’ of the move to close (for example, saying ‘no probs’)
• parents and young adults produce ‘reassurance/condonement’ when they ‘align’, through ‘matched’ utterances, when tacit turns are used.

The asymmetric engagement in all of the practical and discursive activities explored in the Craig and Sue corpuses is very striking. They are even more striking when considered alongside the comparative data sets used here. Certainly the patterns of collaboration and asymmetry appear consistent with those found in studies by Charles Goodwin and others, albeit in differing conversational tasks. It is plausible that all of this additional activity we see in these closings is in the spirit of being a “generous interactional partner” (Solomon, 2004) when interacting with someone with a diagnosed challenge. However it has also been shown that many of the activities in these closings, though asymmetrically done, are in the service of the other participant in ways that attend to the ‘parent-child’ or ‘carer-cared-for’ relationship. They are consistent too with a discursive psychology of caring; the
construction of which I have evidenced throughout these analytic chapters. An everyday notion of caring\(^{44}\) would support that some level of asymmetry is likely to be present if we consider that these interactions are between parents who ‘care' for a child as part of their parental role. This is supported by the fact that some similar patterns can be observed in the CTS calls too. Such asymmetry perhaps might be expectable therefore as it is in the nature of the parent-child relationship. However there exists a key difference in how explicitly parents in the Craig and Sue calls open up the possibility of closing.

All of the current discussion however rests on an assumption that parents in the Craig and Sue calls are ‘in the driving seat’ simply because they do much of the work in practical and discursive terms, though as we have seen they ascribe the agency for the close to the young adults. But rather than this being about assisting the young adult in producing a ‘satisfactory’\(^{45}\) closing episode because their own attempts (for example Sue’s production of ‘latent’ accounts) are a little more clumsy, could it be that what is happening is that Craig and Sue are simply negotiating their way through the talk in the same way as anyone else might?

Often people say they have to go when a ‘something else to do’ is calling them. Not everyone accounts for this. We see Craig and Sue exercising their ‘right’ to decline the close as anyone might. When Dad paints a picture of a ‘something to look forward to’ and Sue joins in, this often has the result of bringing the call out of closing. We might see Sue’s action as a deliberate exploitation of the closing sequence structure to carry on talking. The lack of ‘alignment’ in the use of tacit pre-closings may not be an issue of requiring more explicitness as we see parents

\(^{44}\) From the Oxford English Dictionary

Care:
- noun 1 the provision of what is necessary for the welfare and protection of someone or something.
- verb 1 feel concern or interest. 2 feel affection or liking. 3 (care for/to do) like to have or be willing to do. 4 (care for) look after and provide for the needs of.

\(^{45}\) In the sense of a consensual, agreed-by-all close which is brought about via the closing machinery – hence parents ‘pre-occupation’ with fashioning it in this way.
provide, but simply a case of not aligning in the close. Perhaps the parents are not ‘in the driving seat’ even though they do the majority of the practical and discursive work. The asymmetry may arise as much (if not more) from the pre-occupation of parents to produce the closing in a caring and consensual way as from the young adults requiring some sort of assistance in fashioning a ‘satisfactory’ close. It seems to be about each bringing to bear their own way of accomplishing conversational tasks as is consistent with them as individuals and in line with their ‘role’ in the relationship they share. It is worked out between them on a turn-by-turn basis.

The emerging pattern is one of asymmetric participation which might be explained by the fact that one of the individuals has a diagnosed disability or that that individual is a child of a caring parent. A number of issues have arisen in this current discussion which does more to raise further questions than provide answers. The following chapter will develop this discussion further and will consider whether asymmetry should be bound up with assumptions about ‘competence’.
Chapter Seven – Creating order from ‘disorder’

Introduction

This final chapter draws together the themes that have developed throughout preceding chapters. It considers what this has added to an understanding of the business of closing and, in particular, what constitutes a ‘warrant’ for closing. It considers what this study has contributed to developing a discursive psychology of caring. By focusing upon the closing sequence and its interactional machinery, it has been possible to consider the nature of caring and suggest that it can be reconsidered in procedural terms; by considering the discursive activity injected into the standard closing sequence. Each of the analytic chapters (3 to 5) examined resources that were drawn upon by participants to bring about a caring close.

In Chapter 3 we saw the introduction of accounts using three prevalent pre-closing designs. Accounts appeared:

- with an announcement indicating that the speaker has to close the call
- with an interrogative about the wish or requirement of the other to close
- with a directive to the other to close.

Through the use of, and particular nature of the accounts (that is, by using materials that built the close as unavoidable and outside participants’ control) participants constructed themselves as ‘reluctant’ to leave the call. This produced the closing as something done reluctantly and thus caringly.

In Chapter 4 we saw a range of alternative affiliative resources which also produced the close in a caring way. The chapter explored the work these resources were doing and shows how this work was related to the work done by accounts. Specifically these materials were:

- the elaborate construction of future individual and joint activities
- explicit ‘checking’ about the potential trajectory of the call
- explicit references to next calls and next meetings
• high concentration of endearment terms and of intonation and voice quality
  that hearably displays 'care'.

These resources were drawn upon recurrently by participants and represent a range
of affiliative practices which provide something of a 'buffer' at the point where the
trajectory of the call is towards closure. As such they not only contribute to the
building of a caring closedown of the call, but they appear to delicately manage and
sustain the relationality between participants by invoking aspects of their ongoing
relationship.

Chapter 5 considered the use of tacit pre-closings and focused upon the alignment
that was indicated through 'matching' lexical items and prosody. This varied greatly
between those data sets which included a young adult with a learning disability (the
Craig and Sue calls) and those which did not (the CTS and Holt calls). We saw a
strong contrast between having fairly subtle and 'neat' pre-closing episodes as
opposed to the more complex and 'messier' pre closing episodes in the Craig and
Sue calls. In the latter, although ultimately the conversational task of closing was
accomplished, this sometimes required more explicit turns, extra materials, and
exaggerated prosodic features to assist in accomplishing them.46 Extra work was, it
appeared, required to make the 'messy', less so -- to make the disorderly, orderly.

The final analytic chapter, Chapter 6, considered the complicated ways in which
asymmetry and collaboration manifest in practice. A number of patterns were
found in terms of activities and who performs them in the closings reviewed:

In the calls which include a young adult with a diagnosed disability:
• parents47 take more turns and more sophisticated/complex turns to
  'fashion' a closing
• parents produce accounts in varying designs (with some contribution from
  young adults)

46 A follow-up study is intended which will consolidate these
preliminary findings, to see whether the striking contrasts 'hold'
across a larger sample and further datasets.
47 Refers to both parents and grandparents.
• parents produce accounts for the young adults
• parents reformulate ‘latent’ accounts into ‘candidate’ accounts
• parents construct an elaborate picture of forthcoming activities as a
  ‘something to look forward to’ (with some contribution from young adults) –
  this is a different ‘action’ to simply making arrangements
• endearment terms are used by parents for young adults but not vice versa
• tacit turns are used only by parents and they often require supplementary
turns and effort to make these more explicit
• parents at times produce overt reassurances that it’s ‘okay to say you want
to go’.

In the calls in the comparison data sets:
• endearment terms are used by parents for young adults but not vice versa
  (in the CTS calls – a differing pattern, as detailed above applies to the Holt
calls)
• both parents and young adults provide ‘reassurance/condonement’ of the
  move to close (for example, saying ‘no probs’)
• parents and young adults produce ‘reassurance/condonement’ when they
  ‘align’, through ‘matched’ utterances, when tacit turns are used.

There was thus notable asymmetric engagement in all of the practical and
discursive activities explored in the Craig and Sue corpuses.

In this concluding chapter, as well as bringing together and discussing the above
analytic findings, I make observations about how taking an interactional approach
can develop an understanding of interaction and disability that celebrates
accomplishments rather than highlights deficit. This chapter discusses several
themes which have emerged which have the potential to challenge traditional views
and some of the current views about disability. It considers what we may draw
from the findings in terms of how we approach interaction, when interaction
includes someone with a diagnosed communicational ‘impairment’.
Unpacking ‘warrants’ to close

The central topic of this programme of work has been the closing sequences of two corpuses of telephone calls. A basic observation of this study has been that these closings broadly follow the standard structure as first described by Schegloff and Sacks (1973). However what has been striking in the current materials is the way that further elements such as accounts and alternative affiliative materials (construction of future activities and terms of endearment, for example) are incorporated into the basic sequence. The studies in this thesis have examined the discursive work they perform, and in the process they also uncover something more of the nature of what Schegloff and Sacks refer to as ‘warrants’ for closing.

In tacit pre-closings (such as those seen in the standard closing used throughout this thesis) the warrant for undertaking closure is established by the offer of the floor to the other participant, who declines the offer to add more. We have seen through this study that in the Sue and Craig calls there is less reliance on such tacit passing turns and return passing turns, which have as their warrant to close, the establishing or ‘agreeing’ that neither has anything else to add. Rather we have seen a wide range of very elaborate designs of pre-closing that employ as their warrant to close, the interests of the other. We have seen that these interests are often constructed by parents for the young adult (their child); often a warrant is provided by the parent, built around a potential ‘need’ or ‘want’ (these are the actual words used) of the young adult. Parents can be observed to draw upon circumstances mentioned by the young adult, and to ascribe a ‘need’ or a ‘want’ to the young person thereby providing a warrant to close, constructed around their interests.

These particular features of the Sue and Craig calls illustrate two aspects of the provision of warrants for closing, which are highlighted by Schegloff and Sacks. First, they are illustrative of how the interests of another can be drawn upon to provide a warrant to close. Indeed here we see that these interests can be built for
another, based upon the smallest of mentionings, (for example, recall how a request about what time it was, provided the materials for a warrant to close based upon Sue's tiredness). Second, the calls in this study are illustrative of how participants may draw upon 'conversationally developed materials' (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973:310) in warranting closure; that is, materials that have previously been mentioned, often early in the call, may be drawn upon to warrant its closure (for example, if it is mentioned that someone was doing something before the call occurred then a warrant to close might be constructed about their returning to that something). In the Sue and Craig calls we see many examples of the use of conversationally developed materials to provide a warrant to close. Indeed, often we see the immediate take-up of such materials to construct a warrant to close (consider the case of 'latent' accounts in the Sue calls in particular, and how they are built into 'candidate' accounts which provide a warrant to close). The closings in this study then, in terms of the provision of warrants are very much in line with observations made by Schegloff and Sacks. The study has however enabled a greater insight into the sequential unfolding of the construction of a warrant to close and also the discursive actions to which warrants might also contribute (as we see, for example, when an account provides a warrant to close).

There is one recurrent pattern though in the closings in this study, which appears at first sight to be at odds with Schegloff and Sacks' observation that making reference to the interests of the other may be employed by both the 'caller' and the 'called' as a warrant to initiate closure. In the closings in this study this particular mode of providing a warrant to initiate a close is invariably employed only by the 'called'. In this material it is almost always the young adult who makes the call to parents at home and it is always the parents who construct a warrant to close based upon the young adults' interests. Based purely upon the recurrence of this pattern in this study one might take the view therefore that making reference to another's interests, is a 'called'-technique for providing a warrant. However, rather than this pattern being at odds with Schegloff and Sacks observation, it actually concurs with their acknowledgement that the formulation of the parties as 'caller' and 'called' is
but one formulation of the parties. Schegloff and Sacks express caution about this formulation of the parties noting that it may be contextually varied. In this study I have provided empirical evidence that this is indeed the case. In the context of asymmetrical relationships (for example, parent-'child', carer-'cared for' or even parent-'vulnerable' young adult), we might expectably see warrants based upon the interest of the other, coming from the parent or carer. It would seem then that there are also relational bases for distinguishing which parties may use certain techniques for providing warrants to initiate a close, and that these bases may in certain contexts override the basic caller-called distinction. Thus I have been able to give an extended, empirically grounded description of the use of warrants which principally orient to the interests of another, and have shown a particular context in which this is asymmetrically done.\footnote{This is consistent with my previous discussions (Chapter 6) around asymmetry and highlights precisely how powerful that asymmetry is.}

I now return to the matter of how materials stated some time earlier\footnote{Note that it is not the mention of earlier materials itself that warrants the close but the kind of materials; for example, a warrant to close might be a suggestion that a participant return to whatever they were doing before the call occurred. That ‘whatever’ may have been introduced or elicited at some point earlier in the conversation.} in a conversation are reintroduced as part of warranting a close. I noted above that in this current study we see participants doing this very thing; parents and grandparents draw upon materials from earlier in the call to warrant the initiation of a close. What we have also seen in these data are many instances of the immediate take up of an opportunity by parents to offer a close in response to materials initially introduced by the young adult. The introduction of these materials potentially provides a prompt for an offer to close to be made, which is then done by a parent or grandparent. Very often these offers to close take the form of directives and interrogatives. Schegloff and Sacks note that these are purely syntactic forms, since it is in their precise placement that they become offers or invitations to close. They draw a distinction between the grammatical characterisation of these forms as, for example, imperatives or commands, and the actual action they are performing in a particular position; that of offering to close. I
agree that placement is key, but observations of these forms of offer in this current
study would suggest that as well as being invitations to close, they literally are an
instruction to future action. Consider for example two instances we saw in Chapter
Three. When Sue expresses her tiredness, it is suggested by Mum that she go to
find a comfy chair in front of the TV. When Craig displays upset, Mum tells him to
go and find someone to talk to as he is sad. These are offers to close but they are
also directives as to actions that the young adults should perform next. Again it
becomes possible to consider that in certain contexts (here, where the parties to
the talk are parent and child/young adult), a ‘dual’ action is accomplished by the
pre-closing – an offer to close and a directive for a next action. It is crucial to
understand the sequential placement of the turn if one is to appreciate the action
that the turn is performing. However this current analysis alerts us to the fact that
these slots in pre-closing sequences have the potential to allow for the inclusion of
materials that attend to other practical actions alongside that of closing.
Specifically, we have seen parents simultaneously issuing a directive to a ‘child’
(young adult) to perform a specific practical action, whilst at the same time
providing a warrant for and offer to close.

Through the greatly extended closing episodes in this study we have seen how robust
and yet flexible the basic closing structure is. It can accommodate moves out of close,
repeated offers to close, as well as a range of other materials which attend to other
discursive and relational business associated with closing. The pre-closing turns within
the standard closing structure can be populated with a range of different types of
material related to closure and to managing it in a particular way, which serve to
‘swell’ the basic closing sequence. In the Chapters above we have considered:
Accounts for closing (alongside announcements, interrogatives and directives);
Elaborate constructions of future activities;
Explicit checking about the trajectory of the call (and participants’ ‘readiness’ for
closure);
Explicit references to next calls and meetings; and
Terms of Endearment.
As well then as being important slots in the sequential organisation of closings, for the opening up of closings, and for the warranting of the same, pre-closing slots are shown through this study to be rich sites where other interactional (discursive) work might be performed.

**Towards a discursive psychology of caring**

In this study warrants for closing are regularly provided in an explicit form – through an account for closing. This account addresses the ‘why that now’ question posed in a conversation analytic consideration of closings. However, it also does something over and above that, which is to manage relational issues. It was shown in Chapter 3 how accounts can be built to display caring.

Whether closing is an accountable matter per se or whether what we are seeing is towards the discursive construction of a caring closing, is partly answered by the comparisons that have been done with other data sets. The Holt calls for example contained little or no accounting and yet closing was accomplished ‘properly’\(^{50}\), which would suggest that closing is not necessarily an accountable matter. Furthermore this would suggest that the pervasive use of accounts and other materials in the closings in this study is towards another pursuit within the environment of closing and its machinery. In the discrete interactional environment of closing it is possible to examine any additional materials for the discursive work they perform. Moreover, it is in such an environment that relational issues are brought into question by preparations to close a call. Such preparations might indicate that one party no longer wishes to speak to the other, and so materials are introduced into these sections to avert any indication that a caller may leave the call for any other reason than that they ‘have’ to. Such an environment then is ‘ripe’ for the attribution of psychological states. As we have

\(^{50}\) Schegloff and Sacks (1973) denote impropriety as brusqueness, pique and such.
seen, parties to the talk show a strong orientation to this through the placement of an account just where closing is proposed as a next action. Furthermore through various designs, which emphasise the constraints of one or the other, as well as a sensitivity to these constraints, participants construct themselves as reluctant to close. This study, (particularly with reference to Chapters 3 and 4) has shown what ‘reluctance’ and ‘caring’ might look like in action. The inclusion of accounts as well as other affiliative materials have shown ‘reluctance’ and ‘caring’ to be live and dynamic activities, which can be discursively constructed and collaboratively produced, albeit through the sequential organisation of conversational tasks; in this case of closing.

This study has thus contributed to a ‘third generation’\(^1\) of discursive psychology in which conversation analysis provides for a turn-by-turn unfolding of ‘standard’ conversational tasks (in this case, closing) and from such bases we can scrutinise interaction for materials and practices that transact some other psychological business and for the way in which such work is distributed (for example, asymmetrically). It has shown empirically how psychological dispositions, such as ‘reluctance’ and, more broadly, caring can be built, and has explored these “as social practice, rather than mental expression” (Edwards, 1999:288). Through the identification and scrutiny of the specific materials in these closings and a consideration of the patterns of collaborative and symmetry/asymmetry I have provided a strand of what a broader discursive psychology of caring might look like, as social practice; an initial study of the social psychology of caring.

\(^1\) Generation One - the classic work on repertoires and actions, using many open ended interviews; (see Potter & Wetherell, 1987)
Generation Two -looking at fact construction, accountability, the organisation of descriptions in naturalistic materials of various kinds, which is also an analysis of discursive action of course; (see Edwards and Potter, 1992)
Generation Three - the full meeting of CA with DP. The use of the sequential, turn by turn unfolding of talk and the way in which the attribution of psychological states are embedded within (such as we have here). (see Edwards, 2005; Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007; Wiggins & Potter, 2008).
Relationality, Disability and Asymmetry

In analysing the range of practices used in these closing sections to manage the closing in a particular way, it was hoped to uncover something more about talk which includes someone with a diagnosed disability. We have seen practices ranging from the use of simple (and often ‘tender’) terms of endearment to the production of accounts (embedded in varying turn designs) for why a call might end now. Though the various practices explored vary in their practical complexities and delivery, all contribute to the discursive construction of caring. As such they can intrinsically be seen to orient to relational work taking place in the talk as well as to the delicate action involved in closing a telephone call; that of heading off a display of wishing to leave the call, as a result of pique or boredom and, instead, to build a display of reluctance to leave the call. However as well as viewing these discursive practices as actions that are designed to be relationship sustaining, we might also view them as indicative of talk which includes someone with a diagnosed learning disability (based on the composition of the participant pairings).

Comparisons conducted with pairings which did not include a young adult with a learning disability, yielded some commonalities however which suggested that issues of relationality and disability are very closely meshed together in the talk. It is likely that many of the practices we see are as much about the talk being between carer and ‘cared-for’\(^{52}\) as it being between carer and ‘diagnosed learning disabled’ young adult. Furthermore it is likely that what we observe also relates to the regular, ongoing spatial separation of participants since again this is a common feature of the interactional pairings in all the corpuses. The relational work we see is thus likely to be managing the separation aspect too. Though separation itself is

\(^{52}\) The participants here are actually also parent and child in each case but I hesitate to attribute the findings purely to the parent-child relationship. It is perhaps more fundamentally a ‘Carer’-‘cared-for’ relationship. These latter categories are reflective of the findings in this study as well as being practically applicable to the participants in the study.
not talked of, ‘getting together’ in the future is very much talked about, and is often a major pre-occupation in the talk. Thus we might reasonably associate the inclusion of some of these materials with the fact that there are periods of prolonged separation between participants, since this would make relevant the elaborate construction of a next meeting or a next call and the construction of a ‘something to look forward’ that we have observed. However, these are much more elaborately done in the Craig and Sue calls than in the CTS calls, which also contain as participants young adults who live regularly apart from parents. In the case of all of these, the stakes may be high when closing telephone conversations with an intimate, living away from ‘home’ and certainly the affiliative work we have previously seen appears to mitigate the close and affiliate with the co-participant. However we have seen that this work is done variably within the different corpuses. Whilst we have seen similar practices taking place in those calls which include a young adult with a learning disability and those which do not, we have also seen that in those calls which include a young adult with a learning disability, the work is much more elaborately done and is more explicitly spelled out. It is possible then that the stakes are higher when trying to manage relational aspects in closings when one party to the talk is a potentially ‘vulnerable’ young adult. Perhaps it is indicative of an ‘enforced’ separation (at a specialist residential school/college), which is not overtly articulated but is oriented to by efforts to mitigate the present separation which is being brought about through call closure. Again this would not then be attributable to the fact that they each have a learning disability per se but that separation may be ‘undesirable’ – certainly many of the additional materials inserted into closing sequences might suggest this. The marked elaboration and explicitness in the Craig and Sue calls which singles them out as different from the CTS calls may be associated in some way with some participants’ learning disabilities, but at no time is there an overt reference to this. In the main what we see is parents caring about their offspring, being supportive and protective of their wants and needs, and also maintaining their relationships across distance. Much of what we have seen in the materials inserted into the closing sequences can thus be

53 In the sense of having a diagnosed ‘disability’.
attributed as belonging to a discursive psychology of caring in the first instance, rather than alluding to issues brought about by the inclusion of participants with learning disabilities.

I remain cautious however and acknowledge that whilst I have opted for an explanation (for the inclusion of the many additional materials) which is about doing relational work rather than an explanation that foregrounds the presence of someone with a diagnosed learning disability in the talk, there may be alternative arguments. For example, the explicitness might be reflective of designs of talk which are for a particular ('special') recipient. That such a recipient might be a person with a potential challenge however cannot be automatically assumed. A particular recipient might equally be a lover, an adversary, a student; all of whom may give cause for a speaker to be explicit in the designs of their turns. Only by considering more data and more 'contexts' in which such explicitness can be observed, might we fully unravel what this may be about. This will be one of my endeavours after this current study.

As well as much elaboration and explicitness, I have also noted the patterns of collaboration and in particular the asymmetric distribution of turns and the way in which parents/grandparents do much of the delicate closing work and orient to the interests of the young adult in so doing. As already suggested such asymmetries might be about the carer-cared-for, nature of the relationships or the parent-child, adult-'minor', nature of the relationship and so on. Since however, asymmetries are observed in research of many differing kinds of diagnosed impairment (see for example, Goodwin, 1995,2003a,b,2004,2006; Shakespeare, 1998; Ochs et al., 2004; Wilkinson, 2003) it has to be a consideration that the asymmetry we see is associated with the fact that the talk includes a potentially 'impaired' speaker. Given though that here we have observed that much of the asymmetry arises from the inclusion of what can be considered additional materials rather than some sort of absence in the closing activity, this is more suggestive of work done towards
building a disposition (of caring) to sustain relationships, rather than work done to remedy some sort of interactional difficulty.

We have observed that in this study closing sections are often lengthy, have many pre-closing episodes before closing and often young adults mention a circumstance without an upshot (as was highlighted in the discussion of ‘latent’ accounts in Chapter 3). This is something that might be considered a clumsy attempt at providing a warrant to close, and we have seen parents ‘tidy’ these sections up, with extra enquiries about the trajectory of the call and with offers to close. This may be just as much (if not more so) about the parent-child asymmetry in the relationship and even the parents’ ‘desire’ to conclude satisfactorily, as about the fact that the young adults don’t propose closing as often, and not in the same way. The overwhelming evidence for such a position is provided by the fact that parents often give the agency to the young adult and cite the young adult’s interests as a warrant to close, which means that their own accountability (which may be potentially problematic) is sidelined; a matter which will be discussed further below.

There is thus much evidence to suggest that much of the additional work observed in the closings and the way in which it is asymmetrically done, is geared towards sustaining intimate relationships across distance, perhaps also in the face of it being ‘undesirable’ that there is ongoing separation, rather than it being to do with issues of impairment. However, I remain open to the possibility that some of the additional work we see, particularly in terms of its explicitness is designed for special clarity (or as I said in Chapter 5, to remove ‘uncertainty’). This would suggest an orientation to the potential at least that there may be lack of clarity or uncertainty and this may be associated with diagnosed challenges faced by one of the parties to the talk. It may be that what we are seeing in the extra materials examined in these closings, is participants’ attendance to relational aspects and potentially to aspects associated with ‘disability’. Ongoing study of these closings and other parts of the calls (perhaps of instances where there is interactional
‘trouble’) may assist in teasing apart these two aspects further. Currently however there is much more evidence to suggest that the materials are attending to relational aspects than to issues of disability.

A matter of competence?

To have commenced this study with some sort of pre-conception about the competence/incompetence in interaction of the various parties to the talk, based on the diagnosed disability of the young adult participants might have produced some rather different conclusions. We might have explained away the asymmetric patterning as indicative of a lack of competence on behalf of the young adults who have to be supported in their closing endeavours by much more work by the parent participants. It would not have been in the spirit of empirical inquiry however and would have ‘bought’ into (without evidence) aspects of other approaches that attribute differences in individuals to differences in how they are ‘wired’ or differences in how they think and consequently in how they behave, including how they participate in interaction.

I have thus attempted to steer away from making claims or judgements about competence, since in the first instance, it is a matter for participants in an interaction (Rapley, 2004) rather than a matter for the analyst. But, in order to be able to gain a perspective on competence then, an analyst might begin by observing patterning of the sort I have reported throughout this thesis (in particular, aspects of explicitness and asymmetry) as a way of perhaps considering competence in a grounded way. However the previous section (“Relationality, disability and asymmetry”) has illustrated precisely how difficult it is to show that some noticed patterning is a product of individual competence. This was the case even though careful comparisons were conducted with talk where there is no diagnosed ‘disorder’ and thus no potential competence issues. As we have seen there are often alternative candidates to explain the occurrence of certain patterning (asymmetry, for example). Furthermore we have seen little evidence of
conversational ‘trouble’ in the closings which again might have highlighted that competence is at issue in the talk. However we might argue that a practised interactant (for example parents/carers), might head off trouble, thereby orienting to potential competence limitations on behalf of one of the parties. Attributing interactional competence to respective parties to talk is thus a difficult endeavour.\textsuperscript{54} The endogenous approach taken here, has highlighted some features (for example, the parent/carer delivery, via very explicit turns, which occurs in the Sue and Craig calls) which we might conclude are a possible orientation to potential competence problems, even though in the study participants make no actual reference to matters of competence.

What we have seen is that the closing sections are very busy and are populated with many extra materials, but participants rely on the conversational machinery of closing to offer, accept, decline closings and more generally to negotiate an ‘amicable’ close. We have seen much evidence to suggest that these closings are done differently to others (for example, the standard closing and those in other data sets) but it is not possible to say that this is related to the relative competence of the parties. If we were to buy into the idea that the young adults in these calls were somehow ‘incompetent’ in accomplishing closure, since many more turns are taken to reach closure, there are many pre-closing episodes and the closings are asymmetrically achieved, then we could equally say that the young adults are ‘competent’ in not doing closure (thereby extending the call and enabling more talk as many ‘competent’ telephone partners also do). In other words we might view that they are exploiting available conversational resources to accomplish not closing, and thereby leaving the closing work to parents. Thus an examination of the talk in terms of competence becomes rather circular because in interaction not doing something is as significant as doing something and both might be indicative of competence. The assignment of competence to individuals is not something that this study sets out to do, but such a discussion is included here to illustrate that in undertaking a study of interaction, the matter of competence should not be a

\textsuperscript{54} And is perhaps an unnecessary one as I will argue later in this chapter.
consideration for the analyst but is something that may or may not be displayed as a matter for participants. This serves to highlight the distinction between taking an interactional approach and taking some of the more traditional approaches touched upon in Chapter 1. An interactional approach enables an exploration of that which is jointly accomplished; rather than looking at what an individual can or cannot do, it focuses on what individuals engaged in interaction jointly can and do do (Schegloff, 1999). Rather than focusing on 'a lack of' something, it looks at what is there. Within the context of understanding more about talk which includes someone with a diagnosed impairment, an interactional approach has highlighted features of joint accomplishment rather than uncovering features of individual 'challenge'. Furthermore it has highlighted interactional activities that might be considered quite mainstream (for example, the maintenance of relationships across distances, caring for offspring away from home, negotiating closure in the face of non-monotopical calls which could otherwise go on ad infinitum) rather than features which set this apart as talk that includes young adults with learning disabilities. The elaboration and explicitness in some pre-closings are particular features which single these closings out as rather unusual and I have talked of how these help to reduce 'uncertainty' in what is intrinsically an 'uncertain' activity – that of closing – of testing the water to see if all parties are agreed to close.

Since we see these elaborate and explicit turns occurring after previous offers to close have not been taken up by the young adults, we could view these as occasions when parents, in particular, draw upon more 'forceful' moves towards closing rather than ones which leave the closing more open to decline. Thus they are fundamentally a feature of the negotiation of closing which is pursued through a number of turns, which may range from hedged 'optional' offers to close (for example, using interrogatively-designed offers), to those which are inclined somewhat towards a more immediate close (for example, using announcements about going now). Once more though, whilst we see such explicit resources in the closings of calls which include a young adult with a learning disability we cannot explain the use of one design of closing offer over another by reference to the
‘abled-disabled’ composition of the participant group since the closing sections are a joint venture negotiated on a turn by turn basis. Furthermore parties to the talk do not orient directly to matters of competence though they do orient repeatedly to caring about the needs and/or desires of the other.

**Disability in interaction**

To a large extent then I have been able to show in these data that talk in closings with these young adults does look quite different from standard talk in closings and from that in other data sets. However it has not been possible to attribute such findings to matters of disability. The asymmetries noted could equally be attributed to factors associated with the relationships to which the participants are party since the discursive work done largely by parents and grandparents orients to an engagement with, displays an awareness and protectiveness of, the interests and desires of the other.55

On the one hand then closing sequences may not have been the best site for a consideration of how disability might present in talk, since closings are a site ripe for relational work (as noted by Bolden, 2005,2006 and Pavlidou, 1997,2002). I might then conclude that examining such a site has merely uncovered the predictable. On the other hand however this is all that we have seen (relational work) in the face of the fact that these calls include young adults with learning disabilities, which would suggest that this site has been an appropriate place to look as we have established the predictable.

However we cannot ignore the additional intricacy (many movements in and out of closing), the elaborateness and the explicitness with which these closings are done, but it remains open whether this is about disability per se. The data scrutinised

55 That this ‘other’ may be a young person who might potentially be a ‘vulnerable’ young person, may be a further consideration, but one which can only be speculated about, since this is never made relevant by participants.
here does not support such a contention. For these families, disability does not figure in their actual talk. They each bring to the call their respective interactional skills and closing is accomplished, in a caring way. That it is done differently from a standard form can be duly noted (since that would be useful for how others approach talk with someone with a particular diagnosed challenge) but as to noting any attribution to one reason or another related to individual participants’ that is somewhat redundant. That is not to suggest that studies of disability and how they figure in interaction are not viable or valid, just that conclusions perhaps should be limited to how the talk is done and what it accomplishes in that particular format. In this way we avoid attributing any differences automatically to matters of disability, and remain faithful to that which is grounded in the data. To do anything else, would be to undermine all of the parties’ skills in interaction, because the responsibility for accomplishing conversational tasks is a joint, shared one.

Post-analysis ‘dilemmas’

Many of the ‘dilemmas’ with which I end this particular study relate to matters associated with the above. I have tried to account for the differences in the closings in this study and the patterns of collaboration and asymmetry observed, in terms of whether they may be as they are because they include a young adult with a learning disability. This somehow presumes that the interchanges may be recognisable as belonging to a particular ‘type’ of talk; a type of talk that includes someone with a diagnosed disability. Related to this; I have been asked on several occasions, about the age of the young adults as if this is something which can be brought to bear on the talk; as if this talk might belong to a particular type of talk that includes a young(er) child. Is there any such thing as age appropriate talk, the use of which to anyone other than someone of that age could be considered patronising? How far can we presume that because of the composition of the parties to interactional groups that that talk should look like something of a particular ‘sort’ of talk? It is easy to see distinctions between institutional talk and talk between familiars but what of talk within differing groups of familiars. It may
be easy to distinguish 'baby' talk from 'grown up' talk since the language used might be fundamentally different (for example using 'baby-like' names rather than actual names; cf. 'choo-choo' rather than train). It is less easy however to distinguish points throughout the life-cycle when talk could be recognisable to be of a particular 'sort'. Which brings me to the dilemma – whether a consideration of the age of these young adults is at all relevant. I would argue that such a consideration brings to bear, issues of competence once more; it appears to buy into the idea that these young adults should have a set of skills appropriate for their age and that parents should 'treat' them in an age appropriate way. But how can we legislate for what that talk might look like and make judgements about what is appropriate? Participants may draw on similar conversational resources to clarify something arising from a mishearing due to a speech disorder as well as something arising from a mishearing due to high levels of background noise. Participants may use the same resources to explain complex issues, whether it is to a young child, someone who has limited knowledge of something, someone who is hard of hearing and so on. Conversational resources are there to be exploited and can be drawn upon as any single interaction 'dictates', as conversations sequentially unfold and as participants choose. How then as an analyst might one arrive at a classification for what talk with young adults of a certain age or certain diagnosis might look like in order to adjudge what might be considered 'normal' and what might be considered 'unusual' or even 'patronising' (in the sense of treating the young adults as younger children) - I suspect (post-analysis) that one cannot. Within this current study there could be no more different talk than that of Craig's but are we to say that that belongs to a type of talk that is 'dyspraxic talk' when we see that Craig and his Mum use conventional conversational practices of repair to accomplish their talk? Their interaction illustrates how any participant might manage a mishearing or a misunderstanding. That there is the potential for there to be more 'repair' in their talk is one of the findings of this study as are the innovative ways in which they jointly work at achieving a shared 'understanding' (or intersubjectivity). This is to be the subject of a follow-up study after this current one, because they appear to have a 'unique' way of jointly accomplishing conversational tasks. Again, I re-iterate
how much this study has illustrated that an analyst can really only look at how things are done and what interactionally and discursively this achieves, rather than trying to adjudge why it may look different to other talk.

A further unexplored area which is something of a dilemma is that in considering the way in which parents orient to the interest of the young adults, this also averts attention away from their own (potentially problematic) accountability. I have analysed the data in a way which has emphasised parents actions (in talk) as in the service of the young adults and have not explored the view that parents are also exploiting resources provided by the young adults in order to end the call, though they cite the others' interests in so doing. This does not invalidate the caring work being done, since it remains that parents orient to the others' interests, but post-analysis, it appears that there is a 'gap' in the consideration given to parents' actions. For the analysis to be robust, I cannot speculate about the motives of the parents here, and can only report on how the parents present their offers to close; that is as done in the service of the young adult. However it is important to at least acknowledge that in performing the action of offering to close they may also be servicing their own requirements of closing the call (because it cannot go on forever, because they have talked for long enough, because they have other things to do). They do so in a way which avoids them saying any such thing, but instead use materials supplied by the young adults to offer a close, using those materials as an account (and warrant) to close. Having acknowledged this aspect of parents' actions, I still conclude that the actions are consistent with a caring closing, since the designs of the pre-closing turns (particularly in the interrogative form and the directive form) are built such that the offer to close can be declined if the young adult so wishes. In the announcement form of pre-closing design parents account for why they are going and so they do orient to their own accountability. Thus whilst there is the possibility of considering a possibly 'manipulative' reverse-side, to parents' discursive actions in these closing sequences when they don't factor in their own interest in the closure, it remains that it is in the power of all participants to draw upon any and all resources available to them in offering and
accepting/declining closure. Furthermore the young adult participants frequently avail themselves of opportunities to decline the offer to close and to continue the conversation, which is a testament in the first instance to the robust machinery of closings and in the second instance to the way pre-closings are discursively designed to allow for this in these particular closings. An interesting avenue of enquiry outside of this current study, may be to look at how the various designs are ‘combined’ within lengthier closing sections and whether for example, the more ‘optional’ designs (for example, interrogatives) are initially employed, followed by more ‘forceful’ offers to close (for example, announcements) after there have been several moves already, in and out of closing.

A further remaining question relates to whether what we sometimes see is ‘actual’ reluctance and whether we can infer it? In particular in looking at how there is little alignment in lexical choices and in prosodic delivery (as in chapter 5) we might conclude that the young adults are displaying ‘reluctance’ to close, in a quite literal way by their actions of not ‘aligning’. However whether we can equate this lack of aligning or the lack of take up of offers to close that occur in some of the closing sections, with reluctance, is rather speculative without consolidation from the data. This remains a consideration that could be followed up, though it may be that this is difficult to pin down in terms of ‘actual’ reluctance related to closure. Rather it may only be possible to illustrate a reluctance to take up the action of a prior turn.

‘Duality of involvement’

Here I specifically address the issues associated with my own involvement as both participant and analyst. In Chapter Two I considered the practical issues involved in my dual role, in terms of data collection and analysis and my efforts to preserve integrity of findings, in this dual role. Here I take a more reflexive look at what this has meant for the outcomes of the analysis and the way in which it contributes to how disability might be considered.
There is a tension associated with how one role might influence the other and ultimately the research outcomes. However, there is also something of a synergy to be found in having a profound appreciation and everyday involvement in the context (in almost an ethnographic vein), and yet having a set of analytic tools that provide for transparent demonstration of findings rather than relying on individual interpretations or 'second-hand' recounting. It has been possible to benefit from a unique insider perspective and yet be able to provide materials that are scrutinisable by all for any researcher 'interference'. This has largely been provided through the analytic tools of CA and DP, which have the power to make transparent any phenomena, and would have therefore uncovered any aspects in the talk which might have 'falsely' produced the findings.

My dual role and the reflection it enables, has provided me with a unique perspective. I knew very well from experience the feelings with which, at least I as a participant, entered into these calls and post-analysis I can see something of these practically displayed in the data. That is not to say that before the study I could have or would have tried to characterise my disposition as caring (indeed a consideration of my 'disposition' did not figure at all), but I did always enter into these calls knowing the import for both participants in terms of managing a relationship across a distance. However what I did not expect to find was that this was indicated so obviously by the materials that were included in the closing sequences. This is not to suggest that I set out to understand this particular thing, just that post-analysis, when reflecting on the findings, I find myself able to confirm that they provide a very close match with my actual experience of engaging in these calls. I find myself on very strange ground here, engaging in reflections that err on both sides of the traditional-discursive divide, but would add that this is something which has occurred post-analysis. It was never a goal to explore aspects of the experience of engaging in these calls except in so far as this was alluded to in the talk. However it is interesting that post-analysis the empirical findings which have come out of the analysis can be verified (triangulated even) in this way, and that this has been enabled by my taking a participant–analyst role.
Finally, an advantage of my personal involvement has been the possibility to feed back findings to participants. This can sometimes be difficult in terms of making contact with them or being able to discuss findings in lay terms. The latter will remain a challenge but it is greatly aided by the fact that I am a member of the family, as this can be an ongoing and possibly less formal activity. Now, three years on from my data gathering, I find myself sometimes using more announcements about going (and of course providing an account!) knowing that this is a more direct way of achieving closure, though when calls are a little troublesome (due to some upset being talked of) I opt for gentler, more optional offers to close. Of course I used to do this anyway without even considering it—such is the ‘taken-for-granted’ nature of interaction!

Creating order from ‘disorder’

We have seen in this study many examples of where order is created in interaction in the face of at least one party to the talk having a diagnosed ‘disorder’. This is largely due to the robustness of conversational resources and in particular the closing sequence, but also to the joint efforts of participants. We have also seen that the issue of ‘disorder’ is assimilated into what has been shown to be the more salient issue of sustaining intimate family relationships across distances, possibly in the face of that separation being undesirable. Here there is a distinct absence of any orientation to disorder or disability. What we see are families getting on with what families do; making plans, looking forward, and generally ‘chewing the fat’. Labels of disability appear to have no place here. Doubtless the parties to the talk know of these. After all it was a criterion for their selection as participants. However in the practical everyday context of talking on the phone it doesn’t seem to matter—the family ‘business’ gets done regardless, and in the manner in which it does in talk which does not include anyone with a learning disability. The asymmetries we see are not alluded to, and since they are a matter for participants rather than analysts, we can conclude that they are simply a taken-for-granted...
feature of the joint and intricate effort in the execution of these particular family calls.

This research contributes to our knowledge of what it is to be part of a family and suggests that 'family life' and the maintenance of family relationships is fundamental, and may be of special import when young people live away from the family home on a regular basis. The research shows that this applies equally to families which have as a member, a young person with a diagnosed learning disability. In the spirit of inclusion of people with learning disabilities, this research has illustrated that it is the power of all parties, 'abled' or 'disabled', to collaborate in family activities such as making future plans and also in particular in making choices about whether a call closes now or carries on for a while longer. We have seen how this relies at times on the generosity of conversational partners and so a message from this research might be that since these interactions draw on generic conversational resources to build caring and meaningful discourses, it is within everybody's power to be such a partner.

Furthermore the pinning down of specific practices, has contributed towards a consideration of a discursive psychology of caring, which draws upon conversation analytic principles for an understanding of closing sequences and on discursive psychology for an understanding of the (at times, delicate) psychological business being managed. Whilst contributing to an understanding of warrants in closing and identifying practices that illustrate at least a part of what a discursive psychology of caring might comprise, the research has shown that to combine these two traditions provides for some new perspectives on learning disability and on maintaining family relationships. These perspectives emphasise achievement and accomplishment through the sharing of conversational and discursive effort (albeit asymmetrically), and move away from more traditional views that disability is about deficit. It places issues of disability as social rather than individual. The study contributes to what we know about how families approach disability. For families containing young people with learning disabilities it appears that any issues of
disability that might exist are assimilated into regular family practices. Though the research has singled out issues of disability for consideration, direct orientation to them in the talk is noticeably absent. In the context of family phone calls then any issues appear to be rather invisible. This is not to trivialise or sideline the challenges faced by families who have as members, young adults with learning disabilities, since in other social contexts challenges can be very evident (for example in education and more general social inclusion). However, in the context of the everyday, regular family activity of holding and closing a phone conversation, any (potential) challenges appear to be dissipated through joint (though often asymmetric) effort. Finally, the research has highlighted specific practices through which anyone might communicate with young adults with ‘moderate’ learning disabilities (different practices emerge in cases of more profound learning disability, see Antaki et al., 2007, 2008; Finlay et al. 2008) and so there are lessons to be learned for how people generally communicate with people with learning and communication difficulties – here it has been shown to be by conventional conversational means with some extra ‘care’ (delivered through various practices) and with some ‘generous’ effort.

More generally, research in the field of interaction and disability of this kind could be influential in how we think about disability. Since it is in the nature of interaction to be orderly at all points (Sacks, 1992), the responsibility for accomplishing that orderliness is within the hands of all members. Similarly those aspects of interaction that are challenging can be viewed as everybody’s challenges and not just those who have a diagnosed ‘disability’. This could mean rethinking the practice of labelling individuals on the strength of their competences, though it has to be acknowledged that without some sort of assessment and diagnostic process it would be impossible to gain an appreciation of an individuals’ additional needs and to provide support. It is an unfortunate by-product of such processes that people are subsequently categorised in terms of their disabilities and that that identity can often become the prevalent thing which determines many of their life processes, such as their education and their ongoing social lives (Gillman et al., 2007).
A simple example of this appears in how the term 'diagnosis' is used to describe the classifying of the set of challenges faced by individuals – it is indicative of a medicalised view of learning disability, one that is somewhat legitimised because of its affiliation to respected professions (Rapley, 2004). An unfortunate by-product of this though is the attribution of challenges at the level of an individual which can produce an over-riding (and often unwanted and potentially harmful) identity. Thus there is merit in considering other complementary perspectives towards assessment and ‘diagnosis’ rather than relying purely on clinical ones; potentially these might consider challenges as belonging to collectivities of people (rather than attributing them solely to the individual at the centre of diagnosis) and may avoid the stigmatising effect that may be produced if only a psychologised and medicalised view is taken.

The potential for any interaction to be a ‘challenging’ one is always present. However the need to attribute challenges as belonging to one participant or another is not. The identification of a potential interactional challenge is relevant where identifying a potential ‘challenge’ assists all parties to the interaction to be mutually supportive and to be a "generous interactional partner" (Soloman, 2004:265). Creating order in talk can be viewed as an endeavour for all who enter an interaction. If there is a muddle or a misunderstanding who is to say that it is because of someone’s (in)competence in interaction? Since interaction involves more than one participant, whose is the muddle? It is possible to move to a view that considers competences as interactional achievements shared across a set of people (in a classroom, among a group of friends, within a family). Such a view indexes the move from an approach that considers ‘disability’ to be a matter of individual (in)competence towards one that considers the conversational procedures through which rich and equal communication may be interactionally sustained. More broadly, this has live practical implications for how (and where) the assessment of ‘deficit’ is done and how intervention and support are perceived and understood.
References


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Cambridge: Cambridge University Press


Mencap www.mencap.org.uk accessed April 2008


PRAAT software homepage http://www.praat.org accessed October 2007


Appendix A.

The Jefferson Transcription System
The Jefferson Transcription System

[Compiled from Edwards (1997) and Jefferson (2004)]

Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are positioned in alignment where the overlap occurs, as shown below.

\[ S1: \text{there is an overlap here} \]
\[ S2: \]

Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech. They mark hearably significant shifts — though often other symbols (full stops, commas, question marks) may adequately indicate this. As with all these symbols, the aim is to capture interactionally significant features, hearable as such to an ordinary listener—especially deviations from a common sense notion of ‘neutral’.

Side arrows are not transcription features, but draw analytic attention to particular lines of text. They are usually positioned to the left of the line.

Underlining signals vocal emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis, but also indicates how heavy it is.

Capitals mark speech that is obviously louder than surrounding speech (often occurs when speakers are hearably competing for the floor, raised volume rather than doing contrastive emphasis).

‘Degree’ signs enclose obviously quieter speech (i.e., hearably produced—as quieter, not just something or someone audible in the distance).

Asterisks precede a ‘squeaky’ vocal delivery.

Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 4 tenths of a second). These are placed on a new line if not assigned to a particular speaker.

A full stop in brackets denotes a micropause, which is hearable but too short to measure.

Double brackets may contain additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. context or intonation.

Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation. One colon is used per syllable-length.

Aspiration (out-breaths); used proportionally as for colons.

Inspiration (in-breaths); used proportionally as for colons.

Commas are used as a continuation marker, speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation, as when enunciating lists.

Question marks signal stronger, ‘questioning’ intonation, irrespective of grammar.
Yeh.

Periods (full stops) mark falling, stopping intonation ('final contour'), irrespective of grammar, and not necessarily followed by a pause.

bu-u-

Hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound.

>he said<

'Greater than' and 'lesser than' signs enclose speeded-up talk. They are also used the other way round for slower talk.

solid.= =We had

'Equals' signs mark the immediate 'latching' of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval. They are also used where an unbroken turn has been split between two lines to accommodate another speaker on the transcript page.

heh heh

Voiced laughter. This can have other symbols added, such as underlinings, pitch movement, extra aspiration, etc.

uh uhm

These denote how to spell 'er' and 'erm' the Jefferson way.

sto(h)p i(h)t

Laughter within speech is signalled by h's in round brackets.

`croaky#

croaky voice is signalled by surrounding the croaky word(s) with # symbols

`smiley`

talk that is audibly said in a 'smiley' voice is signalled by surrounding the words with £ symbols
'Creating order from disorder' – A study of interaction in the case of a young adult with a learning difficulty

Applicants: Professor J Potter, A Patterson

Department: Social Sciences

Date of clearance: 13 April 2005

Comments of the Sub-Committee:

The Sub-Committee agreed to issue clearance to proceed subject to the following condition:

- That the investigators confirmed that the 3 family members of the participant who would be involved in the project were aged 18 or over, and did not belong to a vulnerable group.

Confirmed
LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY
ETHICAL ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE

RESEARCH PROPOSAL
INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

Title: 'Creating order from disorder' – a study of interaction and learning difficulty
Applicant: Professor J Potter, A Patterson
Department: Social Sciences
Date of clearance: 19 January 2006

Comments of the Committee:
The Sub-Committee agreed to issue clearance to proceed subject to the following condition:
• That the Participant Information and Consent forms were printed on separate pieces of paper, to
  ensure that participants retained contact details for the investigators.
Appendix C.

Participant Information and Consent Forms
The purpose of the research is to investigate how interaction is managed in conversations involving young adults with a learning disability.

The data collected will comprise a series of everyday telephone conversations between the young adult and family members.

These will be recorded digitally via the equipment with which you have been provided and will be collected at your convenience and by arrangement, by the researcher.

These will then be transcribed as conversations, and participants' actual names will be omitted in all analysis of the conversations.

Help with recording equipment or on any other matter related to the research at any point is available by contacting Anne Patterson (Tel: 01332 874520 or e-mail: a.e.patterson@lboro.ac.uk OR asian.aep@tiscali.co.uk)
CONSENT FORM

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

I have read/had read to me, and understand the above information 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 stage for any reason, 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.

I understand that although data may be shared with other researchers, my identity will be protected and data will be made anonymous for this purpose.

I understand that I can seek help and guidance on the use of recording equipment or on any other matter related to the research at any point.

I agree to participate in this study.

Your name ___________________________________________

Your signature __________________________________________

AND/OR  Parent's Name_____________________________________

Parent's Signature_________________________________________

Signature of investigator _____________________________ Date ________
Revisions to terms of consent

I understand that in order for the researcher to write up her work in a way which reflects her own role as researcher and as participant, it may not be possible for my identity to be absolutely protected.
I understand that any risks associated with disclosure of the researcher's identity are extremely small and are unlikely to affect me in any adverse way.

I agree to these revisions to the original terms of consent.

Signed.....................................................................................