

Resumptions as multimodal achievements in conversational (story)tellings

Abstract

This paper addresses a recurrent participant's problem in everyday interaction: how the speaker of an extended, multiunit, (story)telling turn is able to resume their telling after its progressivity was temporarily halted due to an intervening course of action. It investigates resumption as an interactional practice whereby tellers use special devices to make it known to their co-participants that what comes next is not a continuation of just-prior talk, but a return to a previously suspended (story)telling sequence. Using video recordings of mundane interactions in English as data, the study discusses some of the regularities involved in how these special devices are used and identifies a systematic, multimodal practice for resumption. The study focuses on resumptions prefaced with the discourse markers 'but' and 'anyway', which seem to be used interchangeably in this sequential position but also exhibit subtle differences in terms of their interactional import. Further, video data reveals that simply focusing on the verbal features of resumptions would provide a somewhat narrow view of how they are accomplished in co-present interaction. Resuming a suspended line of telling involves the teller's complex and systematic – but also, situated – use of verbal, prosodic as well as embodied resources.

Keywords: Conversation analysis; conversational storytelling; multimodality; resumption; *but*; *anyway*

1. Introduction

This paper investigates resumption as a multimodal achievement within (story)telling sequences in English everyday interaction. Resumption here refers to a particular interactional practice where a speaker returns to his/her telling after its progression was temporarily put on

hold in favour of an intervening course of action. Returning to an on-hold course of action poses an interactional problem for interlocutors, because, as has been widely established by conversation analytic research (e.g. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 2007), each utterance is, by default, built upon and understood in relation to the talk of a just-prior utterance. Resumptions are a solution to a practical participant's problem, as they provide interlocutors with systematic means to make it known to their co-participants that what comes next is *not* a continuation of just-prior talk or the start of some new course of action, but rather, a return to a previously halted, unfinished course of action. Within the framework of conversation analysis, this study provides a close examination of resumptions in their interactional and sequential context. It focuses on a recurrent linguistic format identified in the data, namely, resumptions prefaced with the discourse markers *but* and *anyway*. However, video data reveals that simply focusing on the verbal features of resumptions would provide a somewhat narrow view of how they are accomplished in co-present interaction. Resuming a suspended line of telling involves the teller's complex, concurrent and systematic – but also, situated – use of verbal, prosodic as well as embodied resources.

The sequential environment where resumptions seem to be particularly prevalent are conversational storytellings and other types of extended tellings, that is, descriptive or explicative turns consisting of multiple turn-constructual units (TCUs). These are typically produced by one primary speaker, or 'teller', while co-participants align themselves as 'recipients' to the telling (Jefferson, 1978). However, as shown by prior research, storytellings in conversation are rarely produced as single, unbroken turns, with one speaker and passive listeners. Rather, they are interactively and socially collaborative achievements where both teller and recipient(s) take an active role in their beginning, sustaining and ending (Lerner, 1992; Mandelbaum, 1993). It is therefore not surprising that stories often come to be interrupted or otherwise diverted from during the course of their telling, which may happen in a number of ways, for various interactional reasons, such as providing/asking for more information, initiating repair, joking or teasing, or even orienting to a problem or event outside the ongoing talk. Even though these temporary suspensions vary considerably in terms of, for example, the actions they implement and who initiates them (teller or recipient), what they all have in common is that when there is such an occurrence, it momentarily halts the progression of the telling but does not terminate it: the suspended telling will be resumed. In her paper on side sequences, Jefferson (1972: 318-320) makes a distinction between 'resumption' and

‘continuation’ as two different return options with different techniques and components. She argues that by using ‘continuation’, the speaker treats just-prior talk (of the intervening sequence) as something that can be smoothly and unproblematically integrated into subsequent talk (of the resumed telling sequence), thus deleting the intervening sequence from the surface of the interaction. In contrast to continuation, ‘resumption’ marks that there is a problem in accomplishing the return. It is specifically designed to treat the intervening talk as something that cannot be smoothly integrated into the ongoing telling activity but rather needs to be moved away from, and that this is achieved using special devices which she calls “attention getters” (i.e. items like *Listen* or *Hey you know*), though without specifying or exploring such items systematically beyond a few data examples. This study addresses the systematic, and at the same time situated, ways in which tellers employ such special devices in order to accomplish a resumption of a previously suspended line of telling.

Many pragmatic studies have shown that the English discourse markers *but* (e.g. Schiffrin, 1987: 176-7; Redeker, 1990: 373) and *anyway* (e.g. Ferrara, 1997: 350; Lenk, 1998: 99; Takahara, 1998) have a basic “resuming” function in common where they signal a speaker's return to some prior, unfinished topic of talk. While there is to date very little CA-based research that would systematically examine either of these markers being used for resuming prior talk, several studies have briefly discussed them in connection with other matters or other functions. For example, in her study on the different conversational uses of *but* in American English interaction, Y.-Y. Park (2001: 157-9) also discusses “topic resumption” as one context of its use, whereby the speaker uses *but* to return to a point, topic or referent that was left incomplete in prior talk. Jefferson (1981: 54-56) describes the use of *anyway* as a “current-speaker’s independent shifter object” which the speaker uses to alert his recipient to an upcoming topical shift within his/her talk, while Sacks (1992, Vol II: 567-8) terms it as a “right-hand parenthesis” whereby the speaker returns to business prior to the immediately preceding talk. More recent CA studies to touch upon the matter include I. Park’s (2010) analysis of *anyway* being used in a slightly different function, i.e. as a sequence-closing device in order to move past a conversational impasse, and Koenig (2006: 53), who describes its use as a “pre-return” device following a question-initiated, intervening sequence within a multiunit turn. Some conversation-analytic work also exists on the use of equivalent resumption markers in other languages, such as Dutch (most notably, Mazeland & Huiskes, 2001, on the conjunction *maar*, ‘but’; see also Mazeland, 2007) and Swedish (Ottesjö, 2005, on *iallafall*, ‘anyway’).

This study augments prior research on the functions of *but* and *anyway* in English interaction by providing a systematic and detailed, CA-based sequential analysis of their use in service of a specific action, namely, resumption of a previously suspended (story)telling turn.

A typical resumption in the data is prefaced with the utterance- or turn-initial discourse marker *but* or *anyway*, which seem to have similar functional and sequential properties, and as noted by Schiffrin (1987: 164-66), in their “resuming” function, often seem to be interchangeable. However, as will be shown, they also exhibit a subtle interactional difference: while *but* appears to be a more “neutral” marker signalling disjunction or contrast on a sequential level of discourse organisation, *anyway* seems to have the additional function of dismissing just-prior talk as tangential to the main line of telling. In the majority of cases, the initial resumption marker is followed by a *recycle* of the last suitable telling component from pre-intervention talk. By recycling, the teller “back-connects” (Local, 2004: 377) to that point in the story where the ongoing telling sequence came to a temporary halt; (s)he does not simply continue the story by providing a new story component, but first repeats that story component which contained the suspended action and thereby reinstalls it into the present interactional context (see also Wong, 2000). In the data, the recycle can be an exact or almost word-for-word lexical repeat of prior talk, but it can also take on other forms, as will be shown later. After the recycle, the teller produces the next component of telling, which contains some new information that moves the telling forward so that it recognizably ‘continues’ (Mazeland & Huiskes, 2001).

As many prior studies have proposed, resumption is a ‘teller’s practice’, meaning that it is overwhelmingly the speaker of the suspended telling who resumes their own telling after an intervening course of action. It should be noted that getting to a point where it is possible to resume a suspended telling – that is, where the intervening sequence has been closed and no new actions are inserted – is not a task for the teller alone, but requires collaborative interactional work and negotiation between the teller and co-participants. However, the main focus of this study is on *the teller’s practice*, that is, on how the teller uses multimodal resources to resume their previously suspended telling once the intervening course of action has been collaboratively dealt with and closed. Based on the data, a recurrent multimodal practice for resumption is identified across different types of intervening sequences within tellings, with the linguistic format of *But/Anyway (+ recycle) + next component of telling*, which is frequently produced with disjunctive prosody when compared to the teller’s just-prior talk

(typically, with a noticeable rise in pitch and volume), and which is frequently accompanied by the teller's brief gaze aversion and other embodied cues.

This study provides a close sequential analysis of *but* and *anyway* prefaced resumptions as a practice for returning to a previously suspended (story)telling. But more importantly, it also provides a holistic approach to the description of resumption practices in co-present interaction by widening the perspective from specific linguistic forms into the multimodal features of interaction. The role of embodiment in the accomplishment of resumption is so far largely uncharted (but see Sutinen, 2014). With this approach, the study also contributes to the growing field of multimodal interaction research (e.g. Streeck, Goodwin & LeBaron, 2011; Deppermann, 2013; Rasmussen, Hazel & Mortensen, 2014) by examining resumptions as locally produced, complex constructions made up of a range of multimodal resources (cf. Mondada, 2014; Hayashi, Mori & Takagi, 2002; Li, 2014). This is to say that while the examined resumptions exhibit certain linguistic, prosodic and embodied regularities, they are, at the same time, *situated* practices, dependent on the local contingencies of ongoing talk and coordinated action of multiple participants.

2. Data and method

The data consist of 7 hours of naturally occurring, video-recorded, everyday interactions in Australian, American and British English, extracted from the Oulu Video Corpus of Spoken English and Finnish (University of Oulu) and examined using conversation analysis (e.g. Sacks et al., 1974; Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). This method allows for a fine-grained, microanalytic approach to studying resumption in its interactional and sequential context, as a situated and emergent phenomenon. The analysis started out by locating all instances within extended tellings in which participants return to an intervened-upon telling sequence, and then identifying and delimiting resumption as an interactional phenomenon (as opposed to e.g. return by ‘continuation’). The next step involved examining what kinds of regularities might be found in the ways that tellers resume their on-hold tellings in the data. Based on this preliminary analysis, a recurrent, linguistic resumption pattern of *Discourse marker + recycle + next component of telling* was identified, with two of the most frequent markers of resumption in the data being *but* and *anyway*.¹ The data yielded 16 occurrences of resumptions prefaced with *but* and 13 occurrences of resumptions prefaced with *anyway*. These resumptions were then examined in more detail with respect to their prosodic and embodied delivery.

In the data examples, talk has been transcribed according to conventions developed by Gail Jefferson (2004). Transcription of participants’ embodied conduct is based on conventions developed by Lorenza Mondada (e.g. 2014; see Appendix for details).

¹ Other English markers in the data that have also been shown to signal a return to prior talk in previous studies, though as markers of ‘continuation’ rather than ‘resumption’, include *so* (studied in several papers by Bolden, e.g. 2006 and 2009), and *and (uhm)* (Local, 2004). See also Jefferson (1972: 319) on *and* and *so* as components of ‘continuation’.

3. The multimodal accomplishment of *but* and *anyway* resumptions in conversational (story)tellings

In this section I present detailed analyses of four data examples from the collection, which most prominently show the regularities involved in how the primary speaker of a conversational storytelling (or other type of extended, explanatory or descriptive) sequence mobilizes multimodal resources for resuming their telling after its progression was temporarily halted by an intervening course of action. Even though this paper mainly focuses on the accomplishment of resumptions rather than on the intervening actions preceding them, the chosen examples further show the robustness of the identified resumption practice by demonstrating its systematic use across different types of interventions. In section 3.1, I will discuss resumptions prefaced with the discourse marker *but*, and in section 3.2, resumptions prefaced with *anyway*.

3.1 Resumptions prefaced with *but*

This section presents two examples of resumption where the teller uses the same multimodal practice for resuming a previously suspended, extended (story)telling sequence. However, the intervening courses of action that precede the resumption emerge, and are dealt with, differently in the two examples. The first one is an unproblematic, ‘routine’ case of resumption, where the intervention is brief and treated by the participants as an incidental sideline that can be quickly and collaboratively closed. The second example represents a more problematic case, in which the intervening course of action develops into an expanded repair sequence involving repeated interruptions by a recipient.

3.1.1 Resumption after a brief intervening sequence: resuming ‘being a teller’

In the first example, there are three participants present: Robert and Rukmini are sitting at the kitchen table, and Guy (Robert’s roommate) is standing in the middle, facing the stove, making tea (see Figure 1A). Prior to this extract, the participants have been talking about the weather, and why windy weather makes the air feel colder. Robert has offered to give a scientific

explanation of the phenomenon and has received a prompt (albeit jokingly produced) from Guy to do so. In the extract below, we can see a part of Robert's attempt at an explanation.

(1) Oulu Video Corpus, 012: The chill factor (<T:00:07:33>)

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01 ROB:      Like u:m, (0.5)#(if you're) just standing out, (·) in the air,
               #Fig.1A
02          and like there's no wind?
03          (0.3)
04 GUY:      Yeah.
05 ROB:      The:n, like all the heat, is gonna make the air right around
06          you warmer?
07          (0.3)
08 GUY:      Yep.
09          (0.5)
10 ROB:      And the:n, (0.9) you won't lose (·) heat as much? Cause, like,
11          (1.0) like w- when water's going down $the drain$?
          guy:                                     $POINTS AT SWITCH$
12          $@#(0.6)$ +(0.5)
          guy:      $FLICKS OFF SWITCH$
          rob:      @LOOKS AT SWITCH-->
               +POINTS AT SWITCH-->
               #Fig.1B
13 ROB:      Hey+@::, hh (h) Δyou (h)remem&bered.+ Hh
               -->+POINTS AT GUY-----+
               --->@LOOKS AT GUY--->
          ruk:      ΔLOOKS TOW. STOVE--->
          guy:      &TURNS TOW. RUK--->
14 GUY:      ↓I'm #$_really Δbad [at turning off$Δ &this].
15 ROB:      [Hhh hehe]
               #Fig.1C
          guy:      $POINTS AT SWITCH-----$
          ruk:      --->ΔLOOKS AT GUY-----ΔLOOKS TOW. STOVE-->
          guy:      --->&TURNS TOW. STOVE-->>
16 RUK:      Oh, Δoh yeah.
               -->ΔLOOKS AT ROB-->>
17          +(0.3)
          rob:      +RESUMES "TELLING POSITION" OF HANDS

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18 ROB: But #@like u:m,
 #Fig.1D
 -->@LOOKS DOWN--->
 19 (Tsk) @you know like if you're trying to push water or
 somethi:ng,
 -->@LOOKS UP, UNFOCUSED--->
 20 ROB: a:nd, if there's a lot @ahead of you:, it's harder to push?
 -->@LOOKS AT GUY-->>

In lines 01-11, Robert is trying to explain about the “chill factor”, and Guy and Rukmini are aligned as recipients to his multiunit, explanatory turn. However, he momentarily suspends the progression of his telling as his attention is drawn by Guy’s embodied actions in lines 11 and 12: Guy, who has just finished boiling water for the tea, *points* at the stove switch and then turns it off. The context for the point becomes apparent in what happens next. Robert visibly orients to the switch and then to Guy (line 12, Figure 1B; line 13) and responds verbally with *Hey, you remembered* and with laughter (lines 13 and 15). After Robert’s response, the intervening sequence expands briefly as Guy gives an account for his interruption to the unknowing co-participant, Rukmini (line 14; Figure 1C). Guy’s interruption is designed to be brief and is also treated by the participants as such: it is quickly and collaboratively closed. After a minimal acknowledgement token from Rukmini (line 16), Robert initiates resumption (line 18).

However, before resuming verbally, Robert returns his hands into their pre-intervention “telling position”. While gesturing a lot in support of his explanation, the base position of his hands is where the forearms are lifted up in front of him at an angle of about 90 degrees, with palms open and fingers loosely extended (Figure 1A). During the intervention sequence, his hands are doing something else: his right arm is resting on the table while he points at Guy and at the stove switch with his left hand (Figure 1C). Robert’s resumption of the telling position of his hands (line 17; Figure 1D) functions as a pre-component to the subsequent verbal resumption utterance and contextualizes his subsequent talk as telling-related rather than intervention-related (cf. Streeck & Hartge, 1992, on the pre-speech onset of a “palm-up” gesture as contextualizing an upcoming telling in spoken Ilokano; see also Goodwin, 1984).

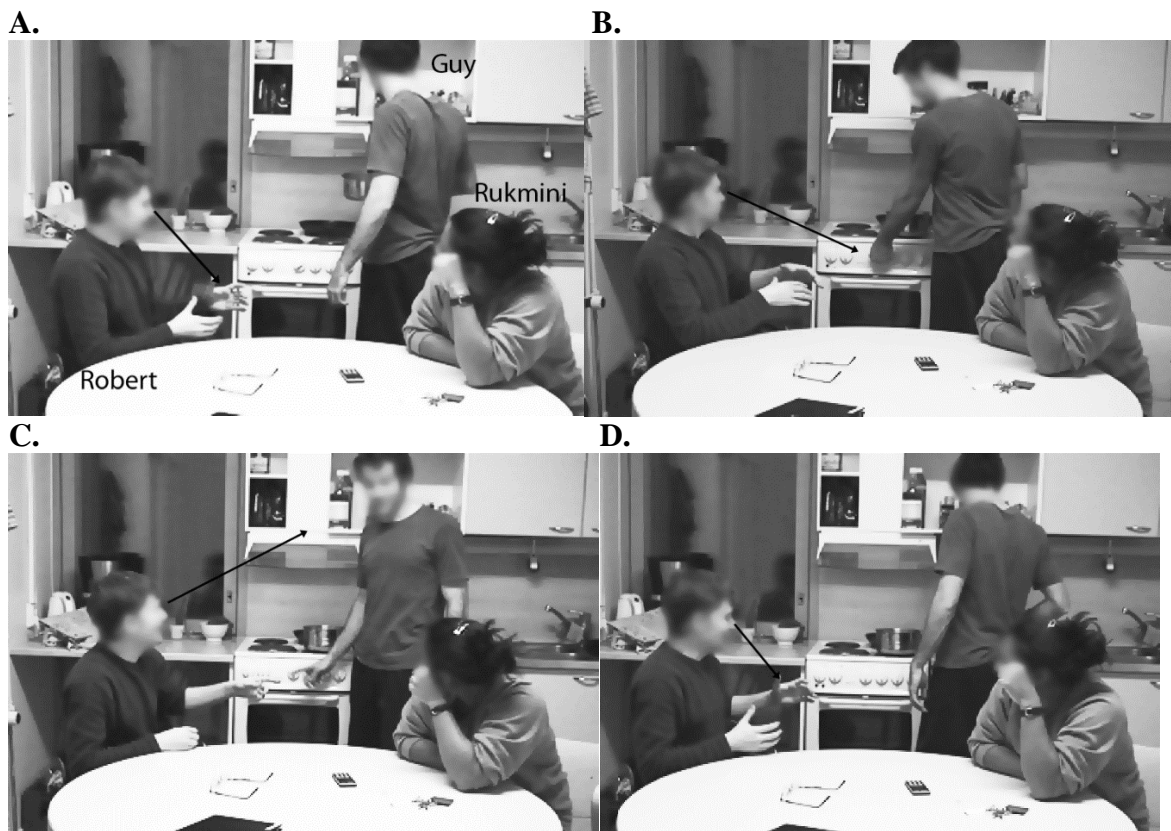


Figure 1. Participants' embodied orientations before, during and after the intervening sequence.

Robert prefaces his verbal resumption with an utterance-initial *But* (line 18). Even though *but* is grammatically defined as a contrastive conjunction (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1985), in this particular sequential environment it does not signal a pragmatic contrast in the propositional content between two clauses; rather, as a resumption marker, it signals contrast on the level of sequence organization, marking a disjunctive relationship between prior and upcoming talk (cf. Mazeland & Huiskes, 2001). *But* is followed by linguistic components perhaps signalling some slight hesitation as to where to go next with his telling (*like u:m*). After the initial resumption marker, Robert does not pick up the line of argument he started in line 11 but formulates a new one instead by only recycling the key component of his original analogy (*water*), and by changing the analogy from water “going down the drain” to “pushing” water:

11 *like w- when water's going down the drain?*

.....

19 *you know like if you're trying to push water or somethi:ng,*

It is the recycled key word and the reformulation that actually locates the point at which the telling was intervened upon, and from which it can now be picked up and further continued. After the initial *But* followed by the reformulation, Robert continues his suspended telling with a recognisable next component of telling from line 20 onwards.

The prosodic delivery of Robert's utterances in lines 18-19 functions as a further cue in marking them as a resumption of the main line of telling. His utterance in the intervening sequence (*Hey, you remembered*) is produced with a widened pitch range and a generally higher pitch level than his pre-intervention talk. But when Robert resumes, there is a noticeable, disjunctive shift when compared to his just-prior talk, as he reverts back to the pitch level of his pre-intervention talk, and the intonation contours of the utterances in lines 11 and 19 match quite closely, thus making the recycled utterance hearable as a 'continuation' of story talk rather than a continuation of the talk of the intervention sequence.² Local (1992) has made similar observations about the matching of pitch level and loudness when continuing after self-interrupting talk or intervening talk by a co-participant (see also Kärkkäinen, 2012). In my data, such prosodic matching seems to be typical in data examples with relatively brief intervening sequences followed by a *but* prefaced resumption, where an unfinished syntactic construction from pre-intervention talk is repeated and completed in the recycle.

It is also noteworthy that when Robert initiates the verbal resumption, he withdraws his gaze from Guy by briefly glancing down (line 18, during *like u:m*). At the beginning of the recycle, he lifts his gaze back up (line 19), thus reassuming his gaze direction from before the intervention (which was alternating between unfocused looking and looking at Guy). This seems to be a recurrent feature in my data: the teller often briefly averts their gaze away from the recipient(s) when initiating, or right before initiating, resumption. While some experimental studies have claimed that gaze withdrawal during interaction relates to issues of speech planning and can be explained in terms of a need to reduce cognitive overload and emotional arousal caused by mutual gaze (e.g. Argyle, 1988[1975]), other studies based on detailed analyses of natural interaction have proposed the possibility that gaze withdrawal may have an interactionally relevant function (see Goodwin, 1981, in particular). In a more recent study on

² It should be noted that the prosodic analyses presented here are based solely on the analyst's auditory impressions on the data and not on detailed acoustic measurements.

gaze patterns in dyadic Italian conversations, Rossano (2012) argues that at possible sequence completion, mutual gaze withdrawal constitutes a bid for closing the current course of action and for displaying an understanding of the current interactional project as complete. In Example 1 above, Robert's gaze withdrawal can be seen to display an alignment with what is initially a recipient-proposed bid for sequence closure: Guy, the initiator of the intervening sequence, is also the first one to withdraw – not only his gaze but his entire body – from the other participants and to turn back towards the kitchen counter, thus resuming his pre-intervention bodily position. Rukmini quickly follows by withdrawing her gaze from Guy and returning it to the teller (line 16; Figure 1D). Only after this, the teller withdraws his gaze and also reassumes the pre-intervention position of his hands. In so doing, he re-adopts a “distinctive teller's position” (Goodwin, 1984: 229), that is, a situated but distinctive bodily configuration that is recognizable and publicly available to his co-participants as a visible display of doing “being a teller” (to modify a particular phrase of Sacks', 1992, Vol II: 215-221), or rather, in this particular sequential position, a visible display of *resuming* being a teller.

3.1.2 Resumption after an expanded intervening sequence: using prosody and embodiment as resources for a quick exit

The following example discusses the accomplishment of resumption in a sequential environment where a recipient initiates an intervening sequence that is related to, but does not straightforwardly continue the trajectory of, the main telling sequence (cf. “oblique interventions” by Koenig, 2006, and “side sequences” by Jefferson, 1972). Here, the transition from the intervening sequence back to the suspended telling is achieved less smoothly than in Example 1, that is, only after several delays. Sophie (a Canadian) has just initiated a story about an American politician visiting a Canadian TV show, prompted by just-prior talk where the participants have been discussing and joking about Americans' alleged ignorance about Canada and its culture. During Sophie's telling, one of the recipients, Mary, asks for further clarification about the details of the story on more than one occasion (lines 06, 14 and 19), which repeatedly suspends the progression of the telling. We will mostly focus on the segment of talk after the last interruption in line 19.

(2) Oulu Video Corpus, 001: Ice castle (<T:00:09:30>)

01 SOP: you know, considering the governor of Texas actually thought
02 tha:t, our parliament? (0.5) <wa:s actually:>,
03 this big ice castle.
04 MAR: Hhhhhe-he °()°
05 SOP: [I swear].
06 MAR: [You mean Bush]?
07 SOP: No no [2no no] [3no].
08 MAR: [2No]. [3The new][4governor],
09 SOP: [4The guy] who's,
10 JAS: The new [5governor].
11 SOP: [5in] now. I don't remember the name,
12 but he actually like, (1.1) he said it on TV, there was this
13 speci[al (that this) Canadian ()-]
14 MAR: [fAn ice castlef]? Hehe[2hehe]
15 SOP: [2Yeah], like an ice c- cause,
16 they were talking @about um, this- this guy from, um,
@LOOKS AT JAS--->
17 a Canadian TV show, (.) was doing this special on #America, and
#Fig.2A
18 he came to Texas, [and he was-]
19 MAR: [This wasn't @t]alking to #Americans though.
sop: @LOOKS AT MAR-->
#Fig.2B
20 (0.7)
21 SOP: Pardon?
22 MAR: This wasn't talking to Americans=
23 SOP: =Is that the name of a show: or:,
24 MAR: Didn't you tell me in Canada, they had a show called Talking
25 with Americans?
26 SOP: No.
27 JAS: Hehehe. They should.
28 (0.6)
29 SOP: There's a special,
30 MAR: [Oh],
31 SOP: [that was] about like, (1.3) the guy went to talk to
32 [2Ame]ricans,
33 MAR: [2Mhm],
34 SOP: from all over the States. (.) But it's not like, (0.5)

35 [° () °]
36 MAR: [Oh], it's not like a re[gular pro-]
37 SOP: [a weekly],
38 MAR: [²O:h²],
39 SOP: [²a regular²] [³program³].
40 MAR: [³I- I thought it³] was (tha:t).
41 SOP: No.
42 MAR: [Hehehehe]
43 SOP: [It was a special], it was like,
44 MAR: [₂He(h)]
45 SOP: [₂a one] hou- +one hour special, or something like that.=
46 SOP: =.Hh @\$#But it was-\$ they- they \$@#had
 #Fig.2C #Fig.2D
 -->@LOOKS AT JAS-----@LOOKS AT MAR-->>
 \$POINTS AT JAS--\$ \$RESUMES "EXPLANATORY
 GESTURING" (PUOH) -->>
47 SOP: th- the ↓governor of ↑Texas,
48 SOP: and actually doing like this promo for Canada. (H) To help save
49 our parliament building.

Mary's question in line 19 launches an expanded repair sequence caused by a misunderstanding between Mary and Sophie about the TV show. The resulting confusion is dealt with and finally resolved in lines 20-45. Sophie's sequence-closing utterance in line 45 (*or something like that*) is immediately followed by resumption (lines 46-47). There is no gap between Sophie's utterances in lines 45 and 46, which are latched: the in-breath before the resumption utterance occurs right after the last lexeme of the repair sequence. It may be argued that after several interruptions to her telling, Sophie hurries past a potential transition-relevance place after sequence closure in order to reclaim the floor for finishing her telling and to prevent any further interruptions from recipients. She prefaces her resumption utterance with *but*, followed by some signs of initial hesitation (*it was- ; they- they had th- the governor*), and then recycled elements from pre-intervention talk, namely, the protagonist of the story (*the governor of Texas*) and the adverb *actually*:

01 *the governor of Texas actually thought that,*
.....

46 *they- they had*
47 *th- the governor of Texas,*
48 *and actually,*

As in the previous example, *but* does not express a contrast in the propositional content between two adjacent utterances but signals a sequential disjunction between just-prior, intervention-related talk and subsequent, telling-related talk. After the initial resumption marker followed by the recycle, Sophie continues her story from line 48 onwards. The start of her resumption utterance is produced with a clear rise in pitch and amplitude when compared to just-prior talk (i.e. to the sequence-closing utterance in line 45), and the recycled part is prosodically stressed, so that the first emphatic stress falls on the word *had* (line 46) and the second one on *the governor of Texas*, produced with a widened pitch range and with a high local pitch peak on *Texas* (line 47). In the data, such a clearly marked rise in pitch and amplitude often occurs especially when the teller resumes after an expanded intervening sequence.

Furthermore, as in the previous example, here the teller also uses gaze and gesture as resources for resumption. During the storytelling sequence, Sophie is mostly gazing at Jason (with only occasional glances to Mary), and she punctuates and emphasizes her talk with what Müller, Bressemer and Ladewig (2013) have described as the “Palm Up Open Hand” (PUOH) gesture, where her right arm rests upright on the table, on its elbow, with the palm of her hand open and fingers loosely extended, facing up and doing a slight up-and-down, rhythmic, baton-like motion (Figure 2A). After Mary’s question in line 19, Sophie turns her gaze to Mary and stops this “explanatory gesturing” by retracting her hand to her face (Figure 2B).

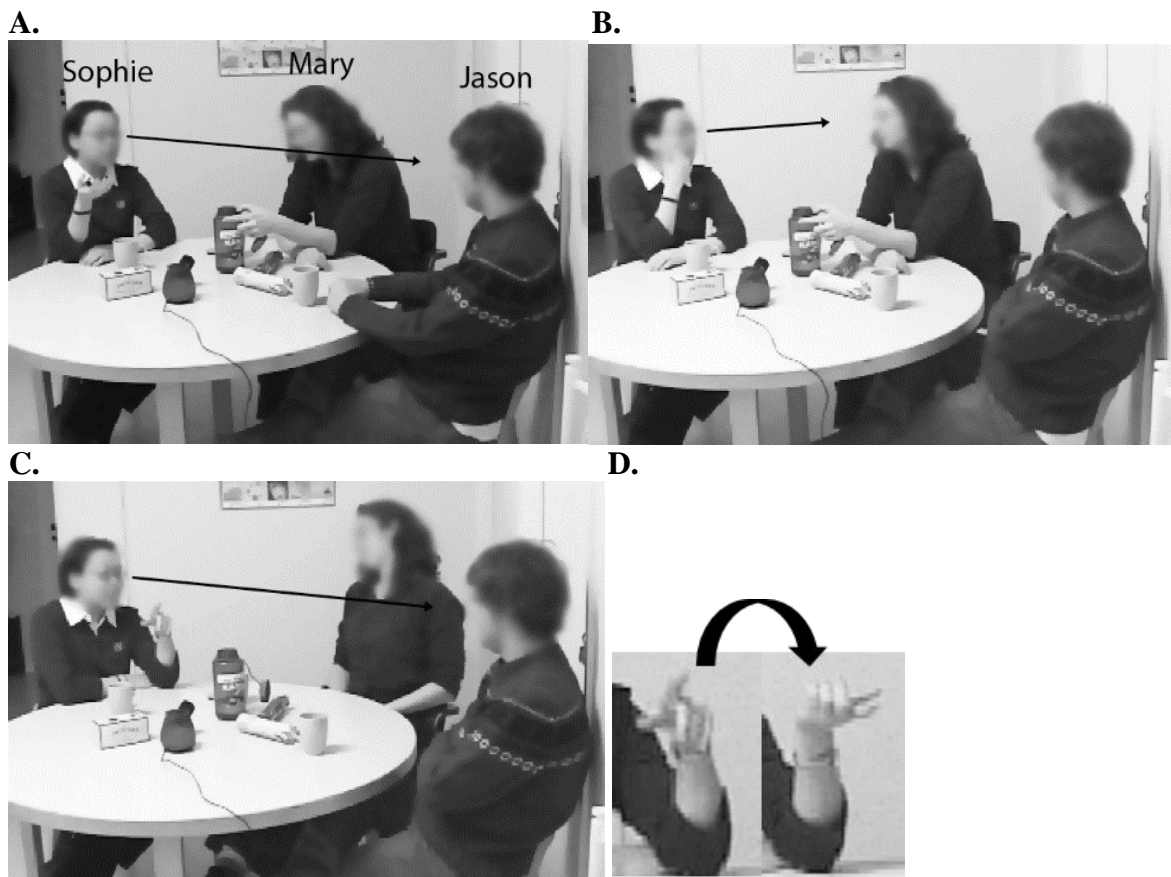


Figure 2. Sophie resumes her gaze and explanatory gesturing from pre-intervention talk.

When Sophie resumes, simultaneously with *but*, she briefly withdraws her gaze from Mary, and returns it to Jason (line 46). At the end of the utterance, she switches to alternating her gaze between both recipients, which is the typical gaze pattern in three-party conversations (Argyle, 1988 [1975]: 159). In this case, then, the teller's gaze withdrawal is not an unfocused look-away but, rather, a gaze shift from one participant to another. Furthermore, in concert with the resumption utterance *But it was--*, Sophie not only shifts her gaze to Jason but also does a brief pointing gesture towards him with her left hand (Figure 2C). By shifting gaze and pointing, she thus quite markedly and visibly withdraws from her engagement with Mary and shifts to an engagement with another participant. After this, Sophie flips her hand from a palm-down to a palm-up orientation (Figure 2D) and resumes the explanatory gesturing, namely, the use of the Palm Up Open Hand gesture, from pre-intervention talk (Figure 2A), although this time done with the left hand. Thus, in order to navigate her way out of an expanded intervening sequence, Sophie mobilizes a complex array of multimodal resources, including vocal features (the hurried in-breath at a potential TRP and the subsequent resumption utterance and its emphatic

prosodic delivery), gaze shift and pointing, to accomplish a return to the on-hold main line of telling.

The examples discussed above demonstrate how, after two different types of intervening sequences, the teller accomplishes the transition back to the suspended main line of telling by using the same multimodal practice: the linguistic format of *But + recycle + next component of telling*, produced with disjunctive prosody when compared to the just-prior talk of the teller and accompanied by gaze withdrawal and the re-adoption of the “telling position” of the hands upon resumption.

3.2 Resumptions prefaced with *anyway*

In this section I present two examples of the multimodal accomplishment of *anyway* resumptions. It will be shown that *anyway*, similarly to *but*, signals a sequentially contrastive relationship between just-prior and upcoming talk, but it also marks relevance relations within the telling sequence. It is both prospectively and retrospectively oriented, at the same time marking upcoming talk as relevant and important to the current speaker’s interactional project while dismissing prior talk as tangential to it.

3.2.1 The dismissive anyway

The next example illustrates another case of resumption after an expanded, recipient-initiated intervention sequence. In the extract below, Lynne is telling two other participants (Rebecca and Gwyneth) about her recent experience of queuing for a taxi after a night out with friends. Rebecca is her primary recipient because of their physical proximity and their direct visual access to each other (Figure 3A), while Gwyneth, who is not visible in the camera at this point, is standing further away, engaged in another activity (preparing dinner in the kitchenette). In lines 01-06 below, Lynne is reporting a conversation between herself and the man who was in charge of managing the taxi queue, when Gwyneth cuts her off by asking a question in order to clarify a detail relating to the story (line 07).

(3) Oulu Video Corpus, 007: Saturday night (Tape 1, <T:00:12:12>)

01 LYN: An:d, I was like, ↑just roughly like, ↑how long (0.2)
 02 do you think #t(h)his i(h)s gonna take.
 #Fig.3A
 03 A:nd he said look, (0.3) I don't know love. U::m,
 04 (1.0)
 05 REB: Hehehe[hehehehehe].
 06 LYN: [.tsk But, [2there's-]
 07 GWY: [2↑You know], ↑↑what was this @+fo:r?
 lyn: @LOOKS T. G-->
 reb: +LOOKS T. G-->
 08 LYN: &T- a taxi rank.
 &TORQUES BODY TOW. GWY-->
 09 #(0.5)
 #Fig.3B
 10 LYN: [Like],
 11 REB: [In] Wilmington.
 12 LYN: In Wilmington.
 13 (0.4)
 14 Like waiting w- where the taxis would come and get you.
 15 >And there was just people everywhere-
 16 There ↑wasn't even a line.<
 17 (0.4)
 18 But [there wasn't (any)-]
 19 GWY: [Well it sounds like] Hobart, that's what happens in
 20 Ho[2bart].
 21 LYN: [2Oh], <it is> [3t(h)e::rrible].
 22 GWY: [3People in there walking] ho:me,
 23 [4because-]
 24 LYN: [4SO MANY] PEOPLE go out in &Wilmington,&
 -->&WITHDRAWS FROM BODY TORQUE&
 -->@LOOKS AT REB-->
 25 so I don't know how they justify not having,
 26 (0.8)# @&\$>Any&#way, so he's like<, @&oh\$ #well,
 #Fig.3C #Fig.3D #Fig.3E
 -->@LOOKS AWAY-----@LOOKS AT REB-->>
 &HEAD JERK&
 \$"BRUSHING AWAY" GESTURE-----\$

27 there's &twenty-five taxies that have been booked befo:re
 --->&
28 you:? A::nd, we'd been standing there about ten minutes
29 but I had not seen one taxi.

Gwyneth's question in line 07 initiates an intervention sequence in which Lynne and Rebecca first both orient towards Gwyneth and respond with answers (lines 08-14; Figure 3B), after which the sequence expands as Lynne decides to provide some further details about the chaotic situation at the taxi queue (lines 15-18). This prompts some further comments from Gwyneth, and the sequence builds into a jointly constructed complaint between Lynne and Gwyneth about the unavailability of taxies on weekends (lines 19-25). This talk, however, comes to a rather abrupt end: perhaps partly due to a lack of any further recipient uptake, Lynne abandons the complaint talk in mid-utterance and moves on to resume her story instead (from line 26 onwards).

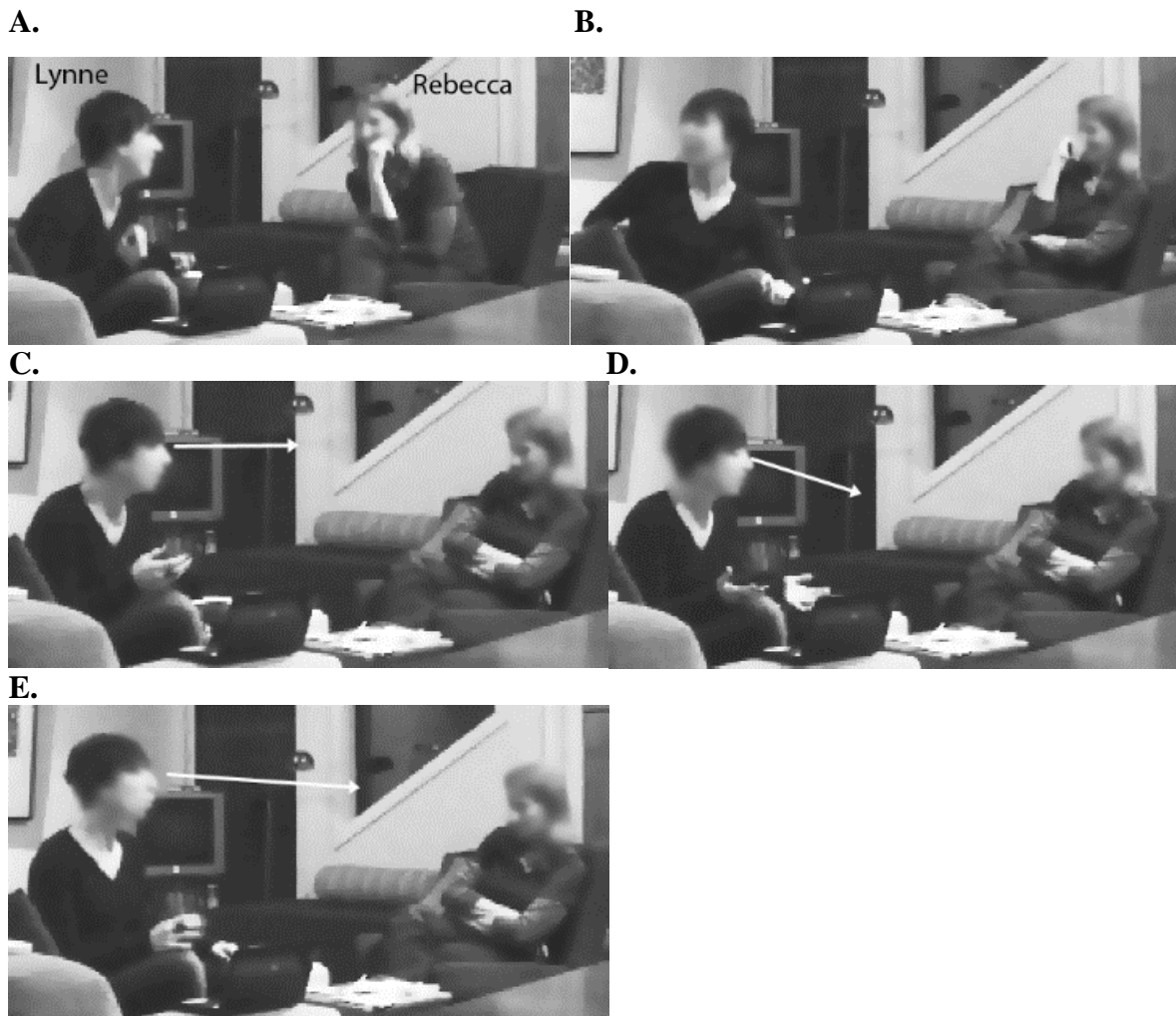


Figure 3. Lynne and Rebecca before, during and after the intervening sequence.

Lynne prefaces the resumption with the discourse marker *Anyway*, which is uttered with a slightly higher pitch and volume than the last few words of her sequence-closing utterance in line 25, making it hearable as disjunctive to just-prior talk. The initial resumption marker is followed by a recycle – or rather, a rephrasal – of the last telling component from pre-intervention talk, which in this case is the beginning of the line from the reported speech (the man in charge of the taxi queue answering Lynne’s question):

03 *And he said, look, I don’t know love. Um,*
 06 *But, there’s-*

.....

26 *so he’s like, oh well,*
 27 *there’s twenty-five taxis that have been booked before*
 28 *you?*

There are some variations in the lexical choices (e.g. *say* vs. *be* and connectives *and* vs. *so*) and verb tense (past vs. present) in the recycle when compared to the pre-intervention utterance, but the key items *he* and the unfinished syntactic construction starting with *there's* are repeated in the recycle. Lynne uses the next-time referent pronoun *he* when referring to the taxi queue manager in the recycle. As personal pronouns usually substitute their referent more locally, such incongruent, and thereby marked use of a “locally subsequent reference form” further contributes to the utterance’s interpretability as a resumption (Schegloff, 1996: 450 ff.). On the last utterances of the recycle (*Oh well, there's*), the pitch level rises noticeably higher than in the initial parts of the resumption: Lynne alters her voice slightly when reporting the speech of the taxi queue manager. After the recycle, Lynne completes the unfinished syntactic construction from the first saying and thus continues the story with the next component of telling from line 27 onwards.

Furthermore, Lynne’s production of the resumption utterance is accompanied by some noticeable bodily shifting. Just as we saw in previous examples, here the teller also briefly averts their gaze away from the recipient when she initiates resumption (line 26; compare Figures 3C and 3D). Moreover, while uttering *Anyway*, Lynne simultaneously does a quick head jerk and a gesture where both of her forearms are lifted up in front of her, with palms open, spread apart and facing each other, with fingers extended (Figure 3D). She holds this gesture and gaze until moving on to the actual reported speech (*oh well, there's*), where she briefly but quite noticeably lifts up her head and straightens her upper body from its forward-leaning posture, and turns her gaze back to Rebecca while also releasing the resumption gesture (Figure 5E), after which she re-adopts her pre-intervention bodily configuration.

The gesture Lynne uses co-verbally with *Anyway* is very similar to the rapid “brushing away” gesture described by Müller et al. (2013: 719) in German discourse, which, they argue, is used co-verbally for rejecting topics of talk, although they do not provide any examples of the gesture being used in its interactional context. This type of “brushing away” gesture seems to accompany the resumption marker *anyway* recurrently in the data, in 9 out of 13 cases. There is some degree of variance, for example, with respect to the hand shape and force of the movement, and to whether the gesture is done with one hand only or with both hands. But common factors for these different variations are that 1) the gesture is brief and sharp, that is, it is a quick, outwards-oriented lateral (or vertical) shake; 2) the palm of the hand(s) is open

with one or more fingers extended; and 3) it is produced in concert with *anyway* (see Figures 4A-C for different variations in the data). Streeck (2009: 192) has also commented in passing about the iconicity of similar type of gesturing with *anyway*, where the hand figuratively “moves the prior topic aside” so that the old topical path can be resumed.



Figure 4. Hand gestures used co-verbally with *anyway*.

In addition, in the majority of cases, *anyway* is accompanied by a brief and sharp head jerk, as in all of the resumptions represented in Figures 4A-C. The combination of head movements and the hand gestures in the above examples together resemble the multimodal composition of a “shrug”, as described by Streeck (2009: 189-190), who argues that these components display disengagement, that is, the speaker’s distanced, less-than-committed stance towards what is being said or done. This type of bodily movement and gesturing used co-verbally with resumptive *anyway* gives visible evidence of its dismissive undertone – that is, that what came before is retroactively brushed off as tangential, peripheral information with respect to what comes next, that is, a resumption of the teller’s suspended, main interactional project.

Interestingly, none of the *but* prefaced resumptions in the data are accompanied by such gesturing.

3.2.2 Resuming after a self-digression

Example 4 is a case of an *anyway*-prefaced resumption after a self-digression within the storytelling sequence. Unlike in the previous examples, there is no clearly recognisable interruption to the in-progress telling at the level of talk, e.g. in the form of recipient questions or comments, or self-repair initiations, but the teller uses other means to mark her own talk off as a digression within the main storyline. Prior to the extract below, Gwyneth has been telling Lynne and Rebecca about her past experiences of doing some radio hosting as part of her media studies as an undergraduate. At the beginning of the segment (line 01), Gwyneth initiates a story about one particular night when she brought her friends into the studio with her.

(4) Oulu Video Corpus, 007: Really nice guy (Tape 2, <T:00:09:15>)

```

01 GWY:      But it @was quite funny cause one night,
02           I had dinner with a group of friends,
03           (0.4) who: had all agreed that they would come into the
04           studio with me,
05 LYN:      Okay.
06 GWY:      A:nd, @you know, kind of chat and talk, you know,
              @LOOKS AT REB--->
07           during this: >graveyard shift<.=
08           =And #one of them [was a] professional actor,
09 REB:      [°Mhm°],
              #Fig.5A
10 GWY:      ((swallows)) .tsk who:,
11           >was working with the Melbourne theatre company<,
12           $and he'd been in a few different shows £like #((name of
show)).
              $CYCLIC GESTURE--->
                                      #Fig.5B
13           He was the policeman in$ ((name of show)).
              -->$
14           (0.6)

```

15 GWY: Ba:*ld, (0.3) £guy.
lyn: *LOOKS UP--->

16 LYN: ↑O::h @yea*h?
gwy: -->@LOOKS AT LYN--->
lyn: -->*LOOKS AT GWY

17 GWY: .tsk \$Any£way\$#,
\$BRUSH-AWAY GEST. x2\$
£FLASHES EYEBROWS
#Fig.5C

18 (0.3) You remember ((name of •†show))?
lyn: •NODS
reb: †SHAKES HEAD--->

19 GWY: @Haha†+haha[haha]
20 REB: [I (could have it) over +there].
gwy: @LOOKS AT REB--->
reb: -->†
+LOOKS OVER HER SHOULDER----->+LOOKS AT GWY-->>

21 GWY: Alright.@
-->@

22 £.hhh£ @£&\$Any#way,
£CLOSES EYES, TURNS HEAD TOW. LEFT£
@LOOKS DOWN--->
£FLASHES EYEBROWS
&HEAD JERK x2--->
\$BRUSH-AWAY GEST.--->
#Fig.5D

23 GWY: a really& nice guy, Luke\$.
-->&
--->\$

24 And u:h,
25 (0.3) so @he was #@professionally trained as an actor,
-->@.....@LOOKS AT REB--->
#Fig.5E

26 and all the others were kind of artists,
27 and photographers and stuff but,
28 .hh not people who:.,
29 (0.8) regularly perfo:rmmed in front of other people.

Lines 02-08 show an initial background segment of the story. One of Gwyneth's friends at the scene was a professional actor, which turns out to be important information for the later climax of the story (omitted from the transcript). Starting from line 10, Gwyneth digresses from the main trajectory of her telling to introduce details about some of the work that her actor friend has done in an effort to establish him as a potentially identifiable referent for the recipients. At the level of talk, there is no immediately recognisable suspension of the ongoing telling: grammatically, Gwyneth's utterances in lines 10-11 are a seamless continuation of her just-prior talk in line 08. However, her prosodic and embodied delivery of lines 10-15 suggests that she orients to her own talk as a digression from the main line of telling. She delivers most of this talk with parenthetical prosody, i.e. with lower voice, faster tempo and a narrow pitch range (Local, 1992) as well as creaky voice quality. Further, her use of a cyclic gesture (lines 12-13; Figure 5B) in this context may be seen as a visible display of "cranking up" the search for collaborative identification (cf. Ladewig, 2011) in order to bring it to a successful completion as soon as possible. Throughout the digression, she keeps gazing at Rebecca, apparently anticipating a possible recognition from her rather than the other recipient, Lynne. Perhaps this is why, when Lynne responds affirmatively (*O:h yeah?*), Gwyneth does not at first seem to acknowledge her response; she moves on to initiate resumption instead (line 17) but then delays this course of action and explicitly voices her surprise (line 18), thus expanding the digression further. After it becomes evident that her primary addressee, Rebecca, does not recognise the referent (lines 18 and 20), Gwyneth produces a final sequence-closing *Alright* (Beach, 1995), withdraws her gaze away from the recipients by looking down, and re-initiates resumption (line 22).

The teller uses *Anyway* not only to mark the resumption but also to retroactively dismiss her just-prior efforts to accomplish a collaborative referent recognition as not important for the progression of the main storyline. The marker is followed by a final, sequence-closing assessment (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992) in line 23, after which Gwyneth seems to be unsure how to proceed next with her telling: first, she utters a marker of continuation (*And u:h,*) but, after a brief pause, produces a recycle of her pre-intervention talk (line 25) before moving on with her telling.

08 And one of them was a professional actor,
 ...
 25 so he was professionally trained as an actor,

Even with slightly different wording, the recycled utterance is quite a close repeat of the utterance in line 08.

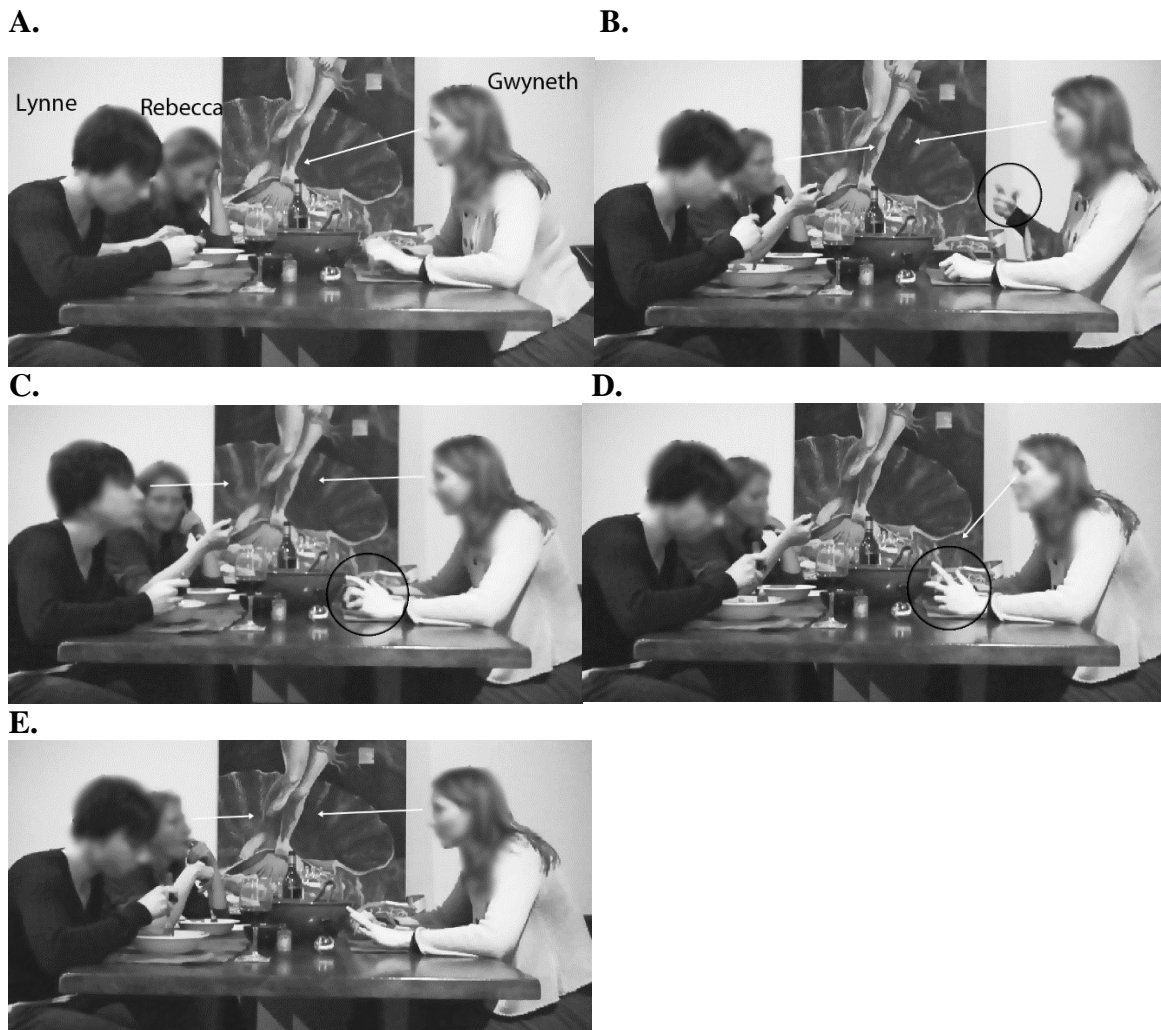


Figure 5. The teller's gaze and gestures during digression and resumption.

Prosodically, the resumption in line 22 signals a clear disjunction to Gwyneth's just-prior talk (*Alright* in line 21). It is uttered with more amplitude and with a widened pitch range and a clear rise-fall pitch contour, with the highest pitch peak on the first syllable. In her study on the prosodic characteristics of *anyway*, Ferrara (1997: 356) found that, in a resuming function, *anyway* often has a "dramatic and attention-getting" pitch contour with an initial rise followed

by a sharp fall, which closely corresponds with the pitch contours of both *anyways* in the example (the second one being delivered slightly more emphatically than the first one in line 17).³ With the exception of only a few cases, the majority of the *anyway* resumptions in the data are produced with such a dramatic, or at least a noticeable, prosodic shift upwards, when compared to the just-prior talk of the teller. In terms of embodied delivery, both *anyways* in the example are produced as “shrugs”: they are accompanied by the brushing-away gesture discussed in connection with Example 3, with the second one being a more emphatic version of the first, including a more prominent gestural form (compare Figures 5C and 5D) and an eyebrow flash as well as two emphatic head jerks. Furthermore, the teller keeps her gaze averted until the beginning of the recycle at line 25, where she finally returns her gaze to the recipients (Figure 5E).

The two examples discussed above show the teller using the same multimodal practice for resuming a suspended line of telling after two different types of intervening sequences: the linguistic pattern of *Anyway (+recycle) + next component of telling*, produced with a noticeable shift upwards in pitch and loudness levels (more so in Example 4 than in Example 3), and accompanied by a brief gaze withdrawal and a distinctive hand gesture used co-verbally with *anyway*, which seems to be systematically absent from *but* prefaced resumptions in the data.

³ I have not counted these two *anyways* as separate occurrences but as part of one occurrence of a(n eventually) successful accomplishment of resumption.

4. Discussion and conclusions

This paper has identified a recurrent, multimodal teller's practice used for resuming a suspended line of telling in everyday English interaction, namely, the linguistic resumption utterance in the form of *But/Anyway* (+ *recycle*) + *next component of telling*, accompanied by the teller's brief gaze withdrawal and delivered with disjunctive prosody, typically in the form of a noticeable rise in pitch and loudness levels (in 20 out of 29 cases), when compared to just-prior talk of the teller. This systematic practice is frequently accompanied by further, situated uses of resources by the teller, such as pointing or head jerks as discussed in connection with the data examples. The findings support prior pragmatic and CA-based research by suggesting that in the examined sequential position, *but* and *anyway* seem to share the same basic function of marking a return to a prior telling by the same speaker. However, whereas *but* seems to be a more neutral marker, signalling disjunction or contrast on a sequential rather than any substantial referential level, *anyway* appears to quite markedly signal relevance relations between prior and upcoming talk. There seems to be a dismissive undertone in *anyway* that is lacking in *but*: it retroactively indexes just-prior talk as tangential to the main storyline. This finding is further supported by the specific type of dismissive hand gesture, often paired with a quick head jerk or tilt, used recurrently in conjunction with *anyway* in the data (in 9 out of 13 cases); none of the *but* prefaced resumptions are accompanied by such a gesture.

Furthermore, even though a recurrent prosodic pattern was identified for resumptions in the data, that is, a noticeable rise in pitch and volume when compared to just-prior talk, the data show that the prosodic qualities of resumptions are still adaptable to their local environment: in some cases where the intervening sequence is brief and is followed by a *but* prefaced resumption (cf. Example 1), it was shown that the resumption utterance may simply be delivered with a prosodic contour that matches that of the intervened-upon utterance rather than with a noticeable shift upwards in pitch and loudness. The recurrent prosodic pattern for resumptions discussed here contrasts with Local's (2004) findings on the prosodic qualities of *and u(h)m* used for *continuing*, rather than resuming, prior talk. He claims that in this sequential position, *and u(h)m* is not produced louder than surrounding talk and has a relatively level pitch (2004: 392), making what comes next hearable as a continuation of current talk rather than a return to prior talk. This provides further support for the early proposition made by Jefferson

(1972) about the distinction between continuation and resumption as two different mechanisms used for returning to a suspended activity. Whereas continuation seems to be the unmarked option both verbally and prosodically, resumption is then clearly the marked option.

Moreover, quite systematically, the resumptions in the data also involve the use of embodied resources. Apart from the dismissive hand gesture used recurrently in connection with *anyway*, the most consistent embodied resource in the data is the brief aversion of gaze around resumptions: in 23 out of 30 resumption occurrences, the teller withdraws gaze from recipients by looking away right before or during the resumption utterance, or in some cases, by shifting gaze from one recipient (who initiated the intervention) to another. The majority of these gaze withdrawals are only brief look-aways, held on average for 2 seconds (ranging from 0.5 to 6 seconds) before gaze is returned to the recipient(s). In the remaining 7 occurrences where no such gaze shift occurred, the “contextual configuration” (Goodwin, 1981) of the ongoing interaction at that moment was such that normal rules of mutual gaze did not apply: for example, the teller (and/or other participants) was occupied with another, simultaneous but independent activity alongside talk (e.g. eating or writing) which occupied their gaze at the moment of resumption. This suggests that gaze withdrawal at resumption is a recurrent phenomenon.

Despite these regularities, when resuming suspended tellings, participants dynamically and flexibly adapt their use of different resources to serve the situated needs of each interactional occasion and its moment-by-moment progressivity. In a ‘routine’ case of resumption where the intervention is brief and unproblematic, a more economical use of resources may suffice to mark the return (Example 1). However, in more problematic situations, where the intervening sequence becomes expanded and thus begins to threaten the sustained relevance of the main line of telling, accomplishing resumption may require more interactional effort, which is manifested through a more emphatic use of resources (Examples 2-4). Furthermore, while in some situations the body may be the primary resource in achieving a particular action, conversational storytelling as an activity is predominantly linguistic. Consequently, the verbal and prosodic delivery is what ultimately makes the resumption of a suspended telling recognizable as such, and without which it cannot be accomplished. However, the systematic involvement of the body in the accomplishment of resumption in the data clearly shows that it cannot be ignored if we are to uncover the complex mechanisms involved in how participants

in co-present interaction deal with interruptions and negotiate the closings of sequences and returns to previously halted courses of action. As observed by Hayashi et al. (2002: 113), talk and embodied conduct “provide a mutually elaborating framework of interpretation in which they reflexively elaborate each other's meaning.” Based on the present findings, it is argued that linguistic and embodied resources may be doing different kinds of work in resumptions within (story)tellings. While the linguistic and prosodic delivery of the resumption marks subsequent talk as disjunctive to just-prior talk by explicitly tying it to some earlier bit of talk which was suspended but will now be resumed, the workings of embodied resources are more subtle. In most of the resumptions in the data, embodied cues seem to signal shifts in the teller's orientation to and engagement with the talk and their co-participants. They supplement and reinforce the verbal resumption when used co-verbally, or foreshadow an upcoming one when used pre-verbally.

Finally, as discussed in connection with some of the examples, when tellers resume their suspended tellings, they seem to re-adopt a distinctive, recognizable, multimodal configuration that constitutes a visible display of doing ‘being a teller’. That is to say, doing ‘being a teller’ is not merely a question of producing recognizable story components such as a story preface, a background segment, a climax and an ending, but it involves a complex array of multimodal resources besides talk, including a distinctive prosodic contour and bodily configuration (i.e. an embodied “telling position”), which become recognizable and make sense for the participants in the context in which they are produced. Whether these resources are entirely situated, or whether it is possible to identify some systematically occurring configurations of doing ‘being a teller’ across different contexts, is a matter for future research.

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APPENDIX. Conventions used for transcribing embodied conduct

(based on Mondada, 2014)

- * * Each participant's actions are delimited between two identical symbols
- + + and are synchronized with correspondent stretches of talk.
- *---> The action described continues across subsequent lines
- >* until the same symbol is reached.
- *--->> The action described continues after the excerpt's end.
- reb Participant doing the embodied action is identified in small characters when (s)he is not the current speaker.
- fig Image; screenshot
- # Indicates the exact moment at which the screenshot has been taken.

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