9. The fact that Mathew may have produced what might qualitatively appear as an impoverished possible topic initial does not account for the fact that Jenny does not topicalize it, for it is not bereft of topicalizable features. That is, although it might seem, as a qualitative matter, insubstantial, it is, nevertheless, topicalizable.

10. This extract is briefly introduced elsewhere (Button forthcoming a) though the points made here move beyond Button’s observations.

11. This is not the place to provide an extended elaboration on topic nominations. It can be noted, however, that they can take the form of sequence initials that are oriented to the generation of topic. Their decisive feature seems to be whether or not the sequence initial utterance can provide for extended talk over a number of turns, or just provide for the immediate next turn. Thus in the example that follows in the text, the next speaker could respond in one of two forms. She could respond minimally with a positive or negative item or she could respond elaboratively. In the latter case she could display an orientation to a prior turn as a topic-nominating turn. A minimal answer, however, could curtail the topic potentiality of the prior turn. Topic nomination is given more comprehensive coverage elsewhere - Button and Casey (forthcoming). See also Casey (1981).

9. On stepwise transition from talk about a trouble to inappropriately next-positioned matters

GAIL JEFFERSON
University of Manchester

1. Introduction: disjunctive movement from a troubles-telling

In one of his unpublished lectures (April 9, 1976, p. 9) Harvey Sacks proposes that some topics (he mentions “embarrassing” and “controversial” topics) pose a particular sort of problem for conversation. To get off them and to go anywhere else from them, one has specifically to do “getting off of them.”

In the course of an SSRC-funded project focusing on conversations in which various troubles are talked about, it became clear that talk about a trouble poses the sort of problem for conversation considered by Sacks. Indeed, it appears that a primary orientation to a troubles-telling is that from it, there is nowhere else to go; that getting off a troubles-telling is tantamount to getting out of the conversation itself.

That is, a massively recurrent device for moving out of a troubles-telling is entry into closings. Following are two prototypical instances, in which the entry into closings is offered with a reinvocation of prior arrangements. (See Schegloff and Sacks, 1973:317; and for a consideration of a phenomenon similar to that of fragment (2) lines 2–3, see p. 313; and G. Button, forthcoming a; forthcoming b.)

(1) [JG:1(S):X15:8]

1 P: ‘huh But I think it’ll iron itself out,
2 M: I sure hope so.
3 P: \textsc{I'll see you Tuesday.}

(2) [Rahman:B:1:(11):5]

1 A: Never mind it’ll all come right in the end,
2 J: \textsc{Yeh. Okay you go and get your clean trousers on =}
3 A: \textsc{Yes.}
4 J: \textsc{ehh hahh(h)I'll see (you in a few) minutes}
5 A: \textsc{See you then}
As it happens, these two conversations, and many others, do rapidly terminate. However, as Graham Button’s work on close-sequences shows (forthcoming a, b), entry into closings does not automatically provide for termination, and further (and substantial) conversation can emerge. What is being noticed here is the orientation to a troubles-telling as constraining subsequent introduction of other matters, that orientation exhibited by the recurrent phenomenon of post-troubles-telling entry into closings.

Another troubles-telling exit device may be seen as a close associate of entry into closings. It involves reference to getting together, a matter that can entain the making of arrangements. The making of arrangements is an activity recurrently associated with, and strongly implicative of, conversation closure.

(3) [Frankel:HB:LL:12]

1 J: So: m-everything’ll be good and=
2 P: =That’s good.
3 J: +M: maybe’t hh maybe next weekend if you
4 and Freddy want to come up,

(4) [W:PC:III:1:3]

1 S: Oh: God we had the (.). police round all (0.2)
2 nigh, hh it was hectic. hh hh So: I hardly got
3 ((beep beep)=
4 any work done.
5 beep beep beep 13 X))
6 S: So: consequently I didn’t get any work done hardly.
7 (0.6)
8 S: Anyway.
9 (2.0)
10 D: + So you think– Can you come out for a drink tonight.

The matters in fragments (3) and (4) that are introduced following a troubles-telling may be characterized as initial references to matters which in fragments (1) and (2) are being reinvoked to provide for entry into closings.

Whereas the recurrent device for moving out of talk about a trouble, that is, entry into closings, and its related activity, reference to getting together, exhibits an orientation to such talk as drastically constraining the introduction of other matters, there is a device that stands in strong contrast. This device, in effect, provides carte blanche for subsequent talk. Nevertheless, it may be seen to exhibit an orientation to the problem posed by a troubles-telling for movement to other matters. This device is the conversation restart.

In his discussion of problematic topics cited earlier, Sacks proposes that a prototypical way to do getting off a problematic prior topic is to produce something that specifically marks that a new topic is going to be done; something that proposes “let’s start a new topic”; for example, “So what have you been doing?”

Just such a device is recurrently used as a way to move out of talk about a trouble. Such a device may be characterized as not merely proposing to start a new topic, but as proposing to start the conversation afresh; thus the name “conversation restart.” Following are two instances.

(5) [JG:II:(a):3-4]

1 M: But anyway I figure that maybe he can, hh give me
2 something to uh (.). you know bring this down.
3 Cause God I can’t afford to you know. (0.2) get
4 like that?
5 (0.3)
6 S: “Ye:ah”
7 (0.6)
8 M: + hhh’ch How are you,

(6) [W:PC:1:(1):3]

1 J: I mean it’s not good enough. ((-)
2 M: ’hhhh’ It isn’t. It isn’t.
3 J: No:::
4 M: +'hhhh And what’ve you been doing this last week

In effect, a new conversation is begun with a “How are you”-type utterance; an utterance that massively occurs, and may be said to have its home just after the greetings that start off a conversation. Thus, other matters will not occur as a next topic to a troubles-telling, but as a first topic in a distinctive, freshly started conversation.

A close associate of the conversation restart is the introduction of pending biographicals, which may be characterized as a specific version of the restart’s “How are you”-type inquiries.

(7) [NB:IV:14:7]

1 E: ’hlllllll But hell if it costs five hundred bucks
2 I’m gonna get— we:ll,
A weak and general characterization of the range of troubles-telling exit devices displayed in the foregoing array is that they are **topically disjunctive**. Whatever happens after a troubles-telling does not emerge from it, is not topically coherent with it, but constitutes a break from it. Another feature that can be observed across the array may be characterized as **interactional cohesiveness**. Specifically, the one who proposes to depart from talk about a trouble does so with talk that is other-attentive. Whether blandly conventional – “I’ll see you Tuesday” and “How are you” – or designed for this particular recipient – “Okay you go and get your clean trousers on…” and “Janet did you get my annive:rsary card” – the talk that breaks from a troubles-telling exhibits attention to the coparticipant.

This recurrent other-attentiveness may constitute a special warrant for the activities that follow a troubles-telling. In effect, a breaking away from talk about a trouble exhibits deference to it by preserving the interactional reciprocity that is a feature of such talk.

In the current corpus of troubles-tellings there are only two cases of talk that break away from a troubles-telling but are not other-attentive; that is, self-attentive disjuncts.

(9) [Frankel:TC:11:17-18]

1 G: I mean there wasn’t nuh- anything that didn’t happen. that could’ve happened.
2 S: Right

First, each of these instances may be seen to be exhibiting a version of a special warrant for the introduction of other matters after a troubles-telling. It happens that each of the only two self-attentive disjuncts in the current corpus are introduced with superlative assessments; something being characterized as “very very X.” In fragment (9), “something very very: cute happened last night,” and in fragment (10) “I met a very, very, n:nice guy.”

Second, in fragment (10), in the lead-up to the self-attentive new topic, are features that may be seen to orient to the appropriate post-troubles-telling procedures. There is a version of a restart (in this case, not the “How are you”–type utterance, but another object that recurs, and may have its home, at conversation openings, a report of “how I came to call you”), and an exhibit of other-attentiveness in the making of the call (where the reported encounter may be a crucial item on the agenda of this call).

Thus, all of the disjunctive exits from a troubles-telling in the current corpus may be seen to be orienting in one way or another to the problematic character of a troubles-telling for the introduction of new topics. A question raised by the foregoing array and its characterization is, what sort of talk would be specifically inappropriate after a troubles-telling? The following two fragments are offered as instances of such talk. In these cases a matter is introduced following talk that has not
(11) [Rahman:B:2:(14):8]

1  G:  I was gonna take it in for you and get the
2         ticket. =
3  L:  =Oh no- it doesn't matter Gwe-ah actually I think
4         it's one on Vera's ticket anyra-te I think it's=:
5  G:  =O h : : : :
6  L:  =in the name of Manners=
7  G:  =Oh ye- hhhh \heh \heh 'eh:-:
8  L:  =|( but I'm not)su' re, but one of them are=
9  G:  ='hhhhhhhh This i s th-
10  L:  =|( you know,|=  So- I'll take them all in,
11         and uh:mm |=
12  G:  =Ye:s:: : \M,   (0.3)
13  L:  =check them
14  G:  =I'm gonna do some spaghetti an d (.) n-eh:mm
15         meatballs for tea for this lot now,
16  L:  =Oh lovely.
17  G:  =Cause they didn't have u they only had fish
18         fingers and chips for dinner,

(12) [TCI(b):16:59-66]

1  J:  I went with uh:mm (.) Pay one day, ahnhd hht was
2         really wierd. 'hh I went in there because she
3         wanted to get some clothes for her little (;)
4         girl. =
5  L:  =Ye-ah,  
6  J:  =for her doll for Christmas. 'hhhhhh And so we
7         go i:n: and she starts looking through them and I
8         start looking through them:
9         . ((ca. 65 lines omitted re finding all sorts of
10         nice gifts for her own children))

74  J:  Oh I came outta there and here I was only going in
75         with her and I came out with almost nine dollars hh=
76  L:  =Yhhh-hhhhhhh \h u \h \u :e h
77  J:  =Worth of st(h)u(h)u(h)u(h)u(h)\u:hhuh-huh-buh \h hh Just
78         those thi(h)i(h)ngs. "hhhh \r^2 \he:hhh hh.
79  L:  =O h : : : :
80  L:  \b:o:y, 'h, hhhhh and I, charged it=
81  L:  =W m : : : :
82  J:  =and if Jack "ever finds out I'm gonna be

84  L:  =murdered. \h h: \h hh   \h h::h:hu:h huh=
85  J:  =\h heh-heh-heh-heh
86  L:  =\h hh \h Right on the spo:t. uh-huh \h heh huh=
87  J:  =\h hh
88  L:  =khnhnh-hhhh-hhhh

... ((ca. 20 lines omitted re managing it so that
Jack won't find out, by being first to pick up
the mail))

111  J:  But I thought well I'll go ah:a:d, and, 'hh and pay
112         for it when it comes and he'll never kno:w,=
113  L:  =Ye:h, =
114  J:  =\(we, got anything) \heh-heh-huh=
115  L:  =\h heh heh ehhuh\h
116  J:  =\h \h uhhhh hhhhh \h hh
117  J:  =Except when Christmas co:mes a-a-) and \h hhhh=
118  J:  =\(Oh \h Y e a h \h h)
119  L:  =he says where'd you get all thahhheh hh, hh hh=
120  J:  =\h hh \h hh \h Santa Claus, hhheh-heh
121  J:  =\h h h h \h Santa Claus, hhheh-heh
122  J:  =\h \h \h Santa
123  J:  =\h hh\hSanta
125  J:  Clause brought it. (in his sle:d)=
126  J:  =\h hh \h hh \h hh \h hh
127  L:  =\h Y e : a h, \h \h hh
128  L:  =\h hhhhehheh stableh
129  J:  =\h i? ;i :\h i? (I found a recipe: that I'm
130  J:  =gonna try:,
131  L:  =\h \h \h \h \h \h
132  L:  =\h \h \h \h \h \h
133  L:  =\h O think,
134  L:  =\h...
135  J:  =\h Oh hu:mm
136  L:  =\h It's u h !, for popcorn balls that you make it
137         with 'hh-' hh you melt butter: an,:d minute
138  L:  =\h marshmellow=
139  J:  =\h Oh:::
140  L:  =\h And then you' a d d] just one package of
141  L:  =\h raspberry flavor Jello.
142  L:  =\h...
143  J:  =\h hh \h Oh::: : : ... You just sprinkle that in there.

... ((ca. 30 lines omitted re the recipe))

175  L:  So I thought oh that'd be fun I think I might, let
176  J:  LeAnne do it. You know... and help her.
The utterances that are located as disjunctive and self-attentive introductions of new topics with no particular warrant for their introduction here and now are, in fragment (11): “I'm gonna do some spaghetti and (. ) n-eh::m meatballs for tea” (lines 15–16) and in fragment (12): “I found a recipe: that I'm gonna try:” (lines 130–131).

The bland introduction of such matters may exhibit/propose the topical non-problematicness of the prior talk, that is, may exhibit/propose that any next topic is appropriate here and now.

It is just this sort of blandly self-attentive topical disjunct that in the current corpus is absent from, and may be generally constrained from, the next position to a troubles-telling.

2. Stepwise transition from a troubles-telling

Whereas exit from a troubles-telling is for the most part done by means of other-attentive topical disjuncts, there is an alternative troubles-exit device; one that is not disjunctive and thus does not abruptly boundary off the talk about a trouble, but that gradually disengages from it over a span of talk. This device operates in what Harvey Sacks talks of as a stepwise fashion. He proposes:

A general feature for topical organization in conversation is movement from topic to topic, not by a topic-close followed by a topic beginning, but by a stepwise move, which involves linking up whatever is being introduced to what has just been talked about, such that, as far as anybody knows, a new topic has not been started, though we’re far from wherever we began. (lecture 5, spring 1972, pp. 15–16)

Several instances of stepwise transition out of troubles-tellings are evident in the current corpus. Of those, three have been selected that have in common a particular sort of work this device can accomplish.

In one of his discussions of stepwise movement, Sacks notes that it can be exploited to introduce otherwise “unconnected” matters: “If you have some topic which you can see is not connected to what is now being talked about, then you can find something which is connected to both, and use that first” (lecture, February 19, 1971, pp. 15–16).

Just such a procedure may be used in the two following fragments to arrive at matters that may not merely have no particular topical connection, but that may be inappropriate next topics to a troubles-telling.

(13) [NB:IV:10:18-21]

1 E:1→ If I'd just gone down there and spent my
2 Thanksgiving like, Tillie wanted me to, why

On stepwise transition

3 I would of had no problems, and hell with the
4 Thanksgiving dinner. I'm through. I'm not gonna
5 do anything anymore.

(0.6)

7 L: [Yeah.
8 E: [I'm n- ... I'm not gonna plan things anymore. I
9 mean this is ridiculous, course I know Mister
10 Cole's sick, let's God let's hope he gets well, but
11 'hhhhh I know the problem hhh you know, hh
12 L: What does he ha:ve.
13 E: 'hh Oh he's got this gallbladder, and uh, they-
14 he's vomiting and everything they took him to the
15 hospital and I don't know how long he's gonna be
16 in or what the t- well he's gonna be eighty four:
17 (1.0)
18 L: Yea:n. Well-
19 E: 'And he's quite a playboy, you know,
20 L:4→ Yeah, you just got to be carefn-see. 'hh Dwight
21 only has- one gall bladder?
22 (1.0)
23 E: Mm hm,
24 L: He had- and then he has to be careful what he eats,
25 he can't eat anything greasy or anything you know,
26 E: Mm hm.
27 L: God what a man. He was out there this morning and
28 he- they have these great big olive trees all over
29 you know,
30 E: Mm hm,
31 L: And the wind was so bad that the-the-the- the
32 branches were hitting the house, and God, (0.3) uh,
33 I got up about well, it was about eight o'clock,
34 E: Mm hm,
35 L: and here he's up there sawing those off, you
36 know.
37 E: Mm:: wonderful.
38 L: [M an he's ]( )-
39 E: [God he's about sixty seven or
40 eight.
41 L: Yeah. Sixty seven.
42 E: God love him.
43 L: But man, I mean they really, they've really got ul-
44 oh: God what a house. You have no idea.

((ca. 11 lines omitted re the house))

56 E: 'hhhh eh: Is the swimming pool enclosed with the
57 glass bit?=  58 L: No::, it's uh: out:ts- (. ) eh no outside the big
59 (. )
60 E: [Mmhm,
61 L: [uh:::] glass doors.
62 E: [Ah: hah,
On stepwise transition

Most roughly, although each fragment starts up in the course of a troubles-telling, at its end a coparticipant is reporting a very good time. In fragment (13), starting with a troubles-teller’s “I’m through. I’m not gonna do anything anymore,” the talk somehow arrives at a point where the coparticipant is reporting “I never had so much fun in my life.” In fragment (14), starting with a troubles-teller’s “But eh-it’s terrible to keep people alive and you know, and just let them suffer day in and day out,” the talk somehow arrives at a point where the coparticipant is reporting “Oh: we (. . .) just had a (. . .) beautiful time.”

Whereas in fragments (9) and (10) a shift from a troubles-teller’s “I mean there wasn’t nuth-anything that didn’t happen. that could’ve happened” and “Ah::: (0.2) it’s not worth it to be on my feet” to a coparticipant’s “something very very: cute happened” and “I met a very,v very, n:nice gu::y” occurs disjunctively, as the introduction of a new topic, in fragments (13) and (14) the report of a good time is worked in such that, as Sacks has it, “a new topic has not been started, though we’re far from wherever we began” (lecture, April 9, 1971, p. 9).

The latter pair of fragments exhibit features in common; features by which the “somehow” arrival at a report of a good time may be seen to be systematically achieved.

Following is a rough sketch of a series of moves that can be located in each fragment. Across the series, a troubles-telling may be seen to be itself moving away from the trouble per se, and the movement provides a resource that is taken up by the coparticipant and turned to the introduction of otherwise inappropriate materials.
(1→) The fragments start up in the course of a troubles-telling at a point that might be characterized as *summing up the heart of the trouble:* In fragment (13) lines 1–9, “If I’d just gone down there and spent my Thanksgiving like, Tillie wanted me to, why I would of had no problems ... I’m not gonna plan things anymore. I mean this is ridiculous,” in fragment (14) lines 1–13, troubles-teller’s “But eh-it’s-it’s terrible to keep people alive ... etc.” through troubles-recipient’s “Honey you’ve got to get ahold of your (I know).”

(2→) *The troubles-teller turns to matters that,* although on-topic with and part of the trouble, are not at the heart of the matter, but are ancillary: In fragment (13) lines 9–11, “course I know Mister Cole’s sick ...” (In this case, Mister Cole’s illness stands as a possible obstacle to the problematic Thanksgiving dinner that is being produced, in part, to reconcile a rift between the troubles-teller and her husband.) In fragment (14) lines 14–15, “I’d kind of liked to gone out there but I was afraid of the fog I was gonna drive him in ...” (In this case, the troubles-teller’s husband’s mother is dying and he has flown out to be with her; troubles-teller is accounting for not having driven him to the airport.)

It is possible that the combination of (1) summing up the heart of the trouble and (2) turning to ancillary matters constitutes a recognizable movement by the troubles-teller toward closure of the troubles-telling. If that is so, then the recurrent and perhaps most appropriate sequel to troubles closure is projected; that is, termination of the conversation itself. Although there are other options, that is, the troubles-recipient can find some other-attentive pending biographical with which to sustain the conversation, or might hope that the troubles-teller will produce an other-attentive restart, such as inquiring into the troubles-recipient’s circumstances, a most local and elegant resource is taken up.

(3→) Perhaps specifically at a point where the talk is recognizably moving toward closure of a troubles-telling, the troubles-recipient produces talk that *topically stabilizes the ancillary matters:* In Fragment (13) line 12, by reference to Mister Cole’s illness, the question “What does he have’; in fragment (14) lines 17–19, by reference to the fog constraining the troubles-teller from driving her husband to the airport, “Oh it was terrible coming down even this morning.”

Whereas each of these utterances can be seen to be working on behalf of a telling in progress and its teller, fragment (13)’s “What does he have’” soliciting further talk, and fragment (14)’s “Oh it was terrible ... etc.” warranting the troubles-teller’s disinclination to drive in the fog, each of them *potentiates further talk by the troubles-recipient.*

The ancillary stabilizer of fragment (13) is a question. In various lec-
tures Harvey Sacks proposes that it is not merely that a question sequentially implicates an answer, but that following the answer, the questioner has the right/obligation to talk again (to comment, to ask another question, etc.). That is, a question projects not only a next slot occupied by talk of the answerer, but a post-answer slot in which the questioner will talk.

The ancillary stabilizer of fragment (14) “Oh it was terrible coming down even this morning” invokes the relevance of the troubles-recipient’s own experiences, via which she was enabled to make such an observation.

So far, then, it can be observed that a troubles-recipient may be taking up an opportunity to topically stabilize a troubles-telling at a point where it has moved away from the heart of the trouble but has not yet arrived at closure of the telling (such closure being potentially problematic for further conversation or for the introduction of other materials), that is, to sustain conversation at some distance from the trouble per se, and, further, to potentiate talk by the troubles-recipient.

(4→) *The troubles-recipient produces a pivotal utterance;* one that, though recognizably on topic, has independent topical potential: In fragment (13) lines 20–21, by reference to the troubles-teller’s report of Mr. Cole’s gallbladder condition, “Well see, ’hh Dwight only has- one gall bladder” (Dwight being a member of the couple with whom the troubles-recipient has just spent a vacation); in fragment (14) lines 28–29, by reference to the troubles-teller’s report of last night’s unbelievable fog, “That’s why well we didn’t get home till two o’clock.”

In each case the pivotal utterance constitutes the talk potentiated by the ancillary stabilizer. In fragment (13) it occupies the post-answer slot projected by the prior question, and in fragment (14) the troubles-recipient’s own experience, invoked by her warranting of the troubles-teller’s fears, now begins to emerge.

Thus, move (3), the ancillary stabilizer, may be seen as a possible move toward some other matters, and move (4), the pivot, as a possible emergence of those matters. In move (3) each fragment is strongly other-attentive. The inquiry of fragment (13) constitutes a display of special interest; the warranting of the troubles-teller’s fears in fragment (14) constitutes an affiliation with her.

What may be an initial move from a troubles-telling toward other matters, then, is produced with the interactional cohesiveness of the transparently disjunctive shifts considered earlier. In like manner, the strong other-attentiveness observable in this pair of fragments may constitute an orientation to the problematicness of the shift now under way.
(5→) Thereafter, matters that may specifically constitute the target of a series of moves are arrived at. In fragment (13), someone with a similar condition having been mentioned, he is focused upon, “God what a man” (line 27); his activities vis-à-vis the house are mentioned (lines 27–36): the house itself is focused upon, “God what a house” (lines 44), with its various facilities, including the swimming pool (lines 56–68), and mention of the swimming pool leads to mention of nude swimming (lines 70–77) about which the assessment is produced, “Oh:: God we had, we, I never had so much fun in my life” (lines 83–84).

In fragment (14) the arrival at the target matter is achieved rapidly once the fact that “we didn’t get home till two o’clock” is introduced, with the report of the event that accounts for that late arrival (lines 38–42), about which the assessment is produced, “we (.) just had a (.) beautiful time” (line 44).

In these two fragments, as Sacks proposes, the coparticipants are “far from where they began,” but there has been no point at which someone has started a new topic. Rather, there has been a “linking up” of two unconnected topics via materials related to both.

3. An exploration of a single problematic instance

A third instance of stepwise transition from a troubles-telling will be elaborately considered. Its features are remarkably similar to those of fragments (13) and (14) but at a point they part company. Specifically, the sort of material that, in fragments (13) and (14), have been identified as the possible target of some prior stepwise movement; that is, the report of a very good time, is produced, not by the troubles-recipient who has done moves (3) and (4), but by the troubles-teller.

The troubles-recipient has been working toward another sort of talk that may be constrained from occurrence in the next position to a troubles-telling, the blandly self-attentive type of material instanced in fragments (11) and (12). In various ways, however, the environment is so nicely ripe for the introduction of otherwise inappropriate materials that such talk is produced by the troubles-teller, preempting and delaying the introduction of the matter toward which the troubles-recipient has been moving.

(15) [Rahman:1:4-6]

1 G: And [Danny] didn’t get in so I didn’t go: typing
2 last night,=

On stepwise transition

3 L: =Didn’t y ou:
4 G: 1\[No: I ca - I thought well I can’t leave=
5 L: h:
6 G: =him for two hours if I’m if he’s crying when I’ve=
7 L: h: No.
8 G: =left him for one.
9 (.)
10 L: Oh: dear me.
11 G: So: I euh you know as I say I didn’t get
12 to t y p i n g .
13 L: [Oh:::::::: you’re well tie’d dow n aren’t you.
14 G: Well I am
15 rea :ly: “Yah,”
16 L: “Ye: h,”
17 G: Yes: you know cause he do doesn’t he it hates being in=
18 L: ye : a: h:
19 G: =on his ow:n for some pec uliar reason and I mean=:
20 L: ye : h?
21 G: =he always kno(h)we: where I’m going a nd, okh! hh
22 L: [Yes::
24 G: [[you know approximately what time I’ll be=
25 L: “Ye: s”]
26 G: 2→ Cause Norman said in the morning would I take him
27 to Saltern and I said well uh’hh hh don’t know
28 the roads are so ba-ad I(h) mi(h)ght not (. ) make
29 t:
30 L: 3→=No?: No- Were they very ba:d. Owen i.e, ( )
31 G: ... h mh, no it
32 wasn’t it’s just that you can’t go: so fast=:
33 G: [you know you-you You kn ow you just have to be that=
34 L: N o ::::
35 G: =little bit more ca:reful.
36 L: 4→ I think it’s that little bit
37 G: wa:rner tonight isn’t it
38 G: “Oh it is it’s not so bad it’s:::]=
39 L: “It’s not=
40 G: [=it’s not t quite ;as severe, tonight, no:::
41 L: 1\[M m : ... No, but it’s
42 G: it’s eh (.) melted, but I th- if it freezes tonight
43 it’ll be wo:rs e tomar o mor ning I think,
44 L: only thing, ye:s,
45 G: [Ye: h,
46 L: Well I think I’ll stay in bed in the mor ning
47 G: Ye: h[hh]
48 L: hAH=:
49 G: =I do n’t bl a:me you?,
50 L: [hh hhh hhh hhh] [hh h hh h h
51 G: (5→)
52 G: You should have come on Tue:sd:ay,
On stepwise transition

and is similar to the technique considered earlier; that is, to the other-attentive disjunct that topically breaks away from, and/but preserves the interactional cohesiveness achieved in a prior troubles-telling.

The prior troubles-teller, unlike the introducers of reports of good times in fragments (13) and (14) who have worked to disengage from the relevance of a troubles-telling, may be orienting to the prior talk as still troubles-relevant. Consequently an orientation to its topical problematicness is appropriate, where, however, somehow the context has become ripe for just such a report. And the “somehow” can be understood by reference to the work done to that point by her coparticipant.

Then, what is the work done by the coparticipant in aid of? It may be a matter of terminating a troubles-telling yet sustaining a state of conversation; that is, the troubles-recipient finds that she has nothing in particular to say, but wishes to remain in conversation, and thus works to avoid closure of the troubles-telling and its recurrent entailment, closure of the conversation, by producing a series of moves that will gradually disengage from the troubles-telling and provide at least a context in which other matters might simply emerge.

However, various features of the data suggest that something rather more pointed is being done. Specifically, it is possible that from an identifiable place in the course of the troubles-telling, the troubles-recipient is working toward the introduction of a particular item; an item that has been brought to mind, occasioned by something said in the course of the troubles-telling, but that is inappropriately introduced then there, or even upon conclusion of the troubles-telling, that is, the blandly self-attentive item that is eventually produced, “We didn’t go to have our hair done” (line 74). The argument that will be developed is that this item is occasioned by the report within the troubles-telling, “I didn’t go: typing last night” (lines 1–2, reiterated at lines 11–12).

To start off with, the phenomenon proposed to be occurring in fragment (15) is not uncommon, and can have its consequences manifested then and there. For example, in the following fragment, the utterance in which the occasioning item has occurred is intersected by that which it has occasioned.

(16) [GTS:11:2:64]

| 1 R: The cops don't do that, don't gimme that shit I live in the Valley. |
| 2 | (0.5) |
| 3 K: The cops, over the hill. There's a place up in Mulholland where they've - where they're building |
those housing projects?

6 R: → Oh have you ever taken them Mulholland time trials? 'hh You go up there with a girl . . .

In the following two fragments the occasioning item appears in close proximity to the utterance in which the occasioning item has occurred. In the following fragment, one participant has momentarily gone "off line" to talk to her child.

(17) [TCI(b):16:41-42]

1 L: → Honey you have to put a shirt on with that .
2 ( .)
3 L: Not just that, that.
4 J: → 'rnh Oh. Shirt, t'hh I have a red
5 shirt.
6 (0.2)
7 L: Uh huh.
8 J: [Si:::ze,hh (0.3) fou:r?]

(18) [SEL:2:1:5:12]

1 T: But uh then when I found out the water was off, and I saw everything just (drooping) its head, even
2 the dahlias,
3 B: Uh huh,
4 T: I thought well good lord, I can't let the yard do
5 that, so-
6 B: [Saying-]
8 B: Saying dahlias, I just cut some fresh dahlias at my
9 neighbor's this evening, and had fresh flowers m-
10 all fixed up for you.

The relationship between the occasioning item and that which it occasion can be rather less concrete as, for example, in the following fragment.

(19) [BH:IA:17:ST]

1 B: Don't they have those new snaggies, or, you know, non-snaggies?
2 S: Mesh? 4 K: I'm gonna get me ( )
5 S: → If you, uh, if you, uh put them, they run up, they
6 don't run down.
7 B: Oh boy!
8 S: → But if you, you know rip it here it runs up — and
9 then it doesn't run down.

On stepwise transition

10 B: → Oh say! I've got something I want you to do.
11 running, up, running down, that reminds me.

Recurrently, the fact of occasioning is not announced; the occasioned materials are simply presented as an appropriately introduced next matter.

(20) [SEL:2:1:8-3]

1 B: → I still haven't my dishes done, I'm right in the
2 middle of doing them, but I stopped to call you.
3 J: → Well I worked
4 on my medicine cabinet again, I'm so mad at that
5 painter.

(21) [Rahman:C:1:(16):8]

1 J: → I've been cleaning ◊ bedsrooms and things so:
2 I: [Yes I've done the bedrooms and the ◊ living rooom,]

(22) [Frankel:TC:1:1:26] ((re their respective boyfriends))

1 G: → He'll be down here for Christm as .
2 S: [lhh] Good. maybe we can
g et together for dinner.
3 G: Mn-hm?
5 ( .)
6 G: [Su:re.
7 S: [/{ }] hhh You know Michael's in the midst of
8 → moving this weekend.

(23) [MC:II:36-37]

1 W: → You know very often Lila I—I come across uh, a
2 library in a- at an estate sale, 'hh where I get uh
3 on a whole pile of Masons uh books from Masons
4 you know and,
5 L: [Really,]
6 W: Oh yeh Oh I've got the most COReous things. 'hh I
7 have Masonic poems that are just out of this
8 world!
9 L: [Really?
10 W: Books of poetry I mean you never never see them in-
11 in library shelves any where.
12 L: [We::ll.
13 W: Just— just absolutely beautiful. I'll show you one
can become stabilized as a topic in its own right, then perhaps the matter of the missed hair appointment can be introduced then and there (cf., e.g., fragments [20] and [21]), or when the topic has run its course as in fragments [22], [23], and [24].

The troubles-teller, however, pursues the troubles-telling, and the coparticipant aligns as a proper troubles-recipient with an expression of sympathy, “Oh: dear me.” (lines 4–10). With such an alignment of the coparticipant, the troubles-teller again offers the report, perhaps specifically not to be treated as news and as a possible topic in its own right, but for its relationship to and conveyance of the trouble. Indeed, the coparticipant, now aligned as a troubles-recipient, can be seen to be producing just the sort of response the report was, from the first, pursuing, “Oh::: you’re well tied down aren’t you” (line 13).

However, summary assessments appear to be indicative of closure for a topic, and are recurrently deployed prior to various forms of topic shift. So, for example, the following fragment, taken from an institutional setting, a suicide prevention center, instances a dramatic use of the close-implicature of the summary assessment. In this case it is used prefatory to interruption of the conversation.

(25) [SPC:10:3:9] (re M’s possibly suicidal child)

Across the array, materials that are introduced immediately or at a bit of a distance, announced as occasioned or simply presented as an appropriate next matter, can be seen to have been occasioned by some prior talk. That relationship was proposed between “I didn’t go: typing last night” and the far-distanced “We didn’t go to have our hair done.”

Features of the intervening talk tend to support the possibility. Specifically, it appears that the troubles-recipient, who can have just had something brought to mind, is through and through attempting to provide for its introduceability.

For one, upon initial mention of “I didn’t go: typing,” the recipient moves to stabilize it topically, first with a news receipt, “Didn’t you” and, upon the confirmation, with an emphatic and prolonged “Oh:::” which may specifically be competing with troubles-teller’s return to talk about the trouble (see lines 1–5). If the matter of the missed typing class
summary assessment, "Well I'm glad to hear he's doing reasonably well," which is followed by the announcement of something to say (line 23).

(28) [Frankel:TC:1:1:24–25]

1 G: But, he does feel that (1.0) you know, (.) he's proud of the fact that he got into the finals... hhh and he doesn't care if he doesn't make the finals and go on 'huh', to Berkeley or wherever. =
2 S: → RG:light.  
3 G: =huh and then-
4 S: → RG:light.
5 (.)
6 G: So he's doing alright.
7 S: → RG:light.
8 (.)
9 G: become a Harvard attorney I mean he doesn't care about that, at all. 
10 G: Ye:ah
11 S: → Two twenty Joey.
12 (0.4)
13 S: → h hh Twenty after two.
14 (.)
15 S: → 'hh Well I'm glad to hear he's doing reasonably well.'
16 G: Ye:ah,
17 S: → 'hh What was I gonna tell you.

In the following fragment a flurry of assessments is followed by an enormously elaborate summary assessment (lines 12–21), itself followed by a return to a matter talked of much earlier in the conversation (line 24).

(27) [NB:IV:10:46–47]

1 L: And then coming home I bought, they had tangerines ten pounds for a dollar, so I got ten pounds and-
3 L: =I got some casaba and then I bought uh, uh Edna back a box of dates cause you know.
4 E: → 'Oh that's nice.
5 L: She-
6 E: → 'That's nice Lottie,
7 L: =She fed the cat, and
8 E: → (0.4) That's beautiful
9 L: [And-and who did you go to.

Earlier it was noted that the ancillary stabilizer utterances in fragments (13) and (14) (and fragment [15] can be included as well), which may constitute initial moves toward a topical shift, are produced with the interactional cohesiveness of the transparently disjunctive shifts. The summary assessments, which are recurrently used as pretopical-shift devices, are strongly other-attentive. It is beginning to appear that display of interactional cohesiveness is a general technique for the management of topical rupture.

In fragment (15), then, upon the reintroduction of the proposed occa-
sioning item (indeed, intersecting it in its course, see lines 11–13), the troubles-recipient produces an item that recurrently precedes a shift (and as may be the case in fragments [25]–[28], a shift that can have been pending across some greater or lesser portion of the coparticipant’s talk).

Thereafter, as the troubles-teller continues on about the trouble, for a spell the troubles-recipient’s talk consists, in toto, of a flurry of acknowledgment tokens (line 16, line 18, line 20, lines 22 and 23, and line 25). This flurry ceases as the troubles-teller moves into the ancillary topical talk, whereupon the next utterance by the troubles-recipient is the ancillary stabilizer question, “Were they very bad, Gwennie” (line 30).

From the point of the proposed occasioning item, the troubles-recipient’s activities can be characterized as in various ways promoting an opportunity to produce the proposed occasioning item.

Further, features of the item’s introduction (lines 70–76) tend to support the possibility that it was occasioned by and has been pending since that much earlier point in the course of the troubles-telling. These features become available as features by comparison with another fragment considered earlier, in which a blandly self-attentive report is introduced in virtually identical fashion, that report can be seen to have possibly a similar history to that of fragment (15); that is, can have been occasioned by prior talk and can have been delayed in its introduction.

The fragment in question is fragment (12). At one point in the talk, one of the participants is reporting some impulse-buying of Christmas gifts for her children (lines 1–78). Somewhat later, the coparticipant introduces a recipe she has found (lines 130–131). For one, it may specifically be a Christmas candy. The description of the recipe yields a red sphere analogous to a Christmas-tree ornament (see lines 136–144). Second, it is reported to have been seen at the time of discovery as a possible coproject with her own little girl (see lines 175–176).

There is, then, a discoverable relationship between the materials produced by one participant, the buying of Christmas gifts for her children, and those subsequently produced by the other, the finding of a Christmas project for one of her children. Were it not for the sizable delay between the two items, this fragment could stand as another instance of an occasioned item for which the fact of occasioning is not announced, the occasioned materials simply presented as an appropriately introduced next matter (see fragments [20]–[24]).

A comparison of details from fragment (12) and fragment (15) yields a series of identical components produced in an identical order by which the proposed occasioned-and-pending matters are introduced.

(12) [Detail]

J: 0→ 'hh tSanta Claus brought it. (in his sle:d).
L: 1→ 'hn 'h'hh 'hn-hh
J: 2→ 'Y e↓ 'a h .
L: 3→ 'beh huh 'hehhh "(I found a recipe:

(15) [Detail]

G: 0→ I jumped (.) e shat about three feet in the air
L: 1→ 'Y e↓ 'O h:
G: 2→ =I think the heh heh
L: 3→ 'hh Eh::m, we didn’t go to have our hair done

(0→) A little joke is made.
(1→) The current speaker starts to laugh. The onset of laughter by a current speaker can initiate a “laughing-together,” with the coparticipant joining in (see Jefferson 1979:80-3) and can lead to an expanded joke-laughter series via re-reference to the joke (see Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff forthcoming) as, for example, occurs at an earlier point in fragment (12).

(12) [Detail 2]

J: + and if Jack ever finds out I’m gonna be murdered.‘
L: + 'hh 'hh
J: + 'h'hh-hh 'heh-hh 'heh-hh 'bhh-hh "Right on
L: + 'hu:h 'huh 'h'hh-hh 'huh

That is, at the current focal point in fragments (12) and (15), the current speaker has potentiated further activities by reference to the topic in progress.

(2→) Just after the onset of the current speaker’s laughter, a point at which a coparticipant can join in a laughing-together, as in fragment (12) detail 2:

J: hh 'hh
L: 'heh 'heh

the coparticipant in each of the focal fragments produces an acknowledgment token:
By starting to speak after the onset of laughter, a coparticipant can be
recognizably (and consequentially) declining to join a laughing-together
(Jefferson 1979:83–6), and thus, for example, declining to take up the
topical expansion potentiated by the prior speaker.

Further, acknowledgment tokens, as has been seen, can be accom-
plice to topical shift. A recurrent phenomenon is the production of a
token just prior to a shift, as in the details, for example, from fragment
(2) and fragment (28):

(2) [Detail]
A: Never mind it'll all come right in the end.
J: → \[Yeh. Okay you go and get your clean trousers on\]

(28) [Detail]
I: I a-always feel it's best to get it all over at
the same ti.me y\ou know,
N: \[Well y e : : s.\]
N: → Ye:s. And-and who did you go: to.

(3→) The acknowledgment token is, indeed, followed by a topical
shift, but not immediately. It is immediately followed by a “floorholder”

Floorholders can be used for a range of tasks, one of which may be
systematically being produced in the materials under consideration.
Most roughly, such an item as “uh” can be used to mark a “getting back
to” some prior talk. For example, it frequently appears among a set of
devices used to get back to interrupted conversation. Following is a
single, representative instance.

(29) [TCI(b):16:15–17](J is listing items purchasable via
gift parties which turn out to be cheaper in the shops))

1 J: → That's all, most two and a half mo::re,
2 P: → \[YEHHHAHEHHHHH.................\]
3 L: → \[Oh\]

A multistage process by which the interrupted talk is returned to
includes a return to interaction with a little laugh by reference to the
 interruption (line 23), which is reciprocated by the coparticipant (line
24), followed by the floorholder “Uh::m,” which precedes and may
specifically mark a “getting back to” the interrupted topic (lines 25 and
27–28).

Another sort of getting back to may be seen in the following two
fragments in which some new matter is explicitly announced as having
been pending. The latter fragment has already appeared as an instance
of the pretopical-shift work of the summary assessment.

(30) [HG:28]
1 H: be:h huh,
2 \[0.2\]
3 N: ‘hhh
4 \[0.5\]
5 N: A::nywa::y,
6 \[\]
7 H: → eh-eh ‘hhhhhhhh Uh::m,
8 \[\]
9 N: (u-What::)=
10 H: → ‘k’k There’s something else I was gonna say.

(31) [Frankel:TC:1:1:25]
1 S: ‘hh Well I’m glad to hear he’s doing reasonably well.
2 G: Ye:ah,
3 S: → ‘hh Uh::m what was I gonna tell you.

Some materials that are proposed as having been intended to be
placed somewhere and having found an appropriate place to occur here,
are prefaced with the floorholder. If this object works as these materials
suggest, that is, exhibits that the matters now being introduced have been pending, then in fragments (12) and (15) it may operate to introduce a new topic, not, as earlier proposed, as any next topic, but specifically as a topic that has been pending.

In these two instances, just how these particular topics came to be pending topics may be accounted for in terms of an earlier occasioning and a delay until an appropriate opportunity for introduction.

Thus, by reference to fragment (15), a detailed examination of the talk following a candidate occasioning item (“I didn’t go: typing”) and of the talk preceding the introduction of a candidate occasioned item (“We didn’t go to have our hair done”) tends to support their respective candidacies.

In contrast, then, to fragments (13) and (14), it appears that the troubles-recipient in fragment (15) is not in the first place working toward a report of a very good time. Rather, the target of the work in this case may be the arrival at an appropriate environment for introduction of the occasioned material.

Such an environment might consist of the sort of light conversation that precedes the blandly self-attentive, occasioned-and-delayed “I found a recipe: that I’m gonna try” of fragment (12). And indeed, just such an environment may have been arrived at with the troubles-recipient’s little joke in fragment (15), “Well I think I’ll stay in bed in the morn:ning” (line 48), a joking solution to the projected hazards the morning might bring.

A story-recipient offers a similar device in fragment (12), in which a joking solution to the husband’s discovery of the impulsive gift-buying and occasioned matters await introduction, that is, that the husband be informed that the gifts were brought by “Santa Claus.hhheh-heh” (fragment [12], line 123).

 Whereas in fragment (12) the joking solution is expanded into a little joke-laugh series, the expansion at some point intersected by the story-recipient’s introduction of her occasioned-and-pending topic, in fragment (15) a similar trajectory may be under way but it may be curtailed in a particularly interesting way.

Specifically, in fragment (15) the joking solution, with its reference to avoiding, missing out on the projected hazards of tomorrow morning, may itself occasion a matter for the troubles-teller, that is, bring to mind the recent occurrence of the troubles-recipient’s having actually missed an event, the movie that turned out to be such fun.

In purposefully achieving an appropriate environment for the introduction of her own occasioned materials, the troubles-recipient has inci-
Indeed, the laughter appears to be "caught by surprise" by the precipitous introduction. Note the little hiccuping inbreath "hkh" that follows the onset of the "Hey" and is the terminal particle of the prolonged string.

Thus, detailed examination of this segment yields a competition for a slot that may constitute a first appropriate opportunity for the introduction of new topics after a troubles-telling.

Fragment (15), then, may be characterized as a manifestation of the consequence of a convergence of two distinct aspects of topical talk: that (1) some topic-types are open to immediate introduction of any next topic whereas others, such as a troubles-telling, are closed, that is, constrain what sort of talk properly comes next, and (2) topics may be occasioned in the course of ongoing talk. Whereas topics occasioned in the course of a closed topic-type are properly delayed until an open environment is achieved, topics occasioned in the course of an open topic-type can be introduced immediately.

A systematically based hazard, then, for matters occasioned during a closed topic is, as in fragment (15), that the deployment of an open topic to arrive at the introduction of the occasioned matter can incidentally provide an environment ripe for introduction of other matters and, as in this case, can itself occasion other matters. Inasmuch as those matters are properly introduceable immediately, there is the possibility (again manifested in fragment [15]), of a preemption and still further delay of the introduction of the matters occasioned during the course of the closed topic.

Notes

1. For a consideration of this fragment see the unpublished lecture of Harvey Sacks, SS 158X, February 19, 1971, pp. 17–18.
2. So, for example, in the unpublished lecture 2 (revised), spring 1966, p. 9. Sacks refers to the questioner's "reserved right to talk again, after the one to whom he has addressed the question speaks."
3. The proposal of Dwight's similar condition, that he only has one gallbladder, may be discarding facticity for local aptness; that is, if it is so that he "only has one," then what he problematically only has one is probably a kidney.
4. Each of the pivotal utterances may be seen to be exhibiting a spurious fittedness to the talk from which it is departing. In fragment (13) there is the factually wrong but topically apt identification of a similar complaint, "Dwight only has one gallbladder." In fragment (14) there is the utterance-initial proposal of a strong relationship to the prior talk. "That's why . . ." that the relationship obscured as the utterance develops into a report of this speaker's circumstances, "well we didn't get home til two o'clock." And in fragment (15) the fragile topical relationship is augmented by a lexical echoing, that is, the prior utterance's "that little bit more careful" echoed by "that little bit warmer."
5. This fragment is taken from G. Jefferson (1978a:220). (Some consideration of
the phenomenon can be found in this chapter.)
6. The oriented-to power of such an object as “Uh::m” and its capacity to mark
such an activity as “getting back to” was initially noted by Graham Button in
his consideration of bids to move out of a closing sequence back into a state of
conversation (forthcoming a; forthcoming b).

PART IV
The integration of talk with nonvocal activities

Although most of the chapters in this book (and in the literature of
conversation analysis more generally) report on studies of audiotape
recordings of interaction, it does not follow that conversation analysts
are therefore uninterested in or content to ignore the possible signifi-
cance of nonvocal activities. Indeed, the widespread use that has been
made of recorded telephone calls as a focus for analysis recognizes a
major methodological advantage precisely in the fact that the interac-
tants themselves cannot see each other. The analyst can thus proceed to
the study of audio recordings without having to worry about how non-
vocal activities may have been involved in any particular sequence. The
same obviously cannot be said of interactions where the participants are
copresent with one another and, for investigating these, videotapes and
films can provide a much fuller record of what occurred. As the relevant
technologies become more sophisticated and more readily available,
then, research in conversation analysis is likely to pay more attention to
issues that can be addressed with reference to an audiovisual data base,
and the chapters in this part reflect some of the directions such work is
taking.

The range of practical, ethical, and technical problems associated with
the use of video recordings for analytic purposes cannot be discussed in
detail here (but see, for example, C. Goodwin 1981a). One that becomes
quickly apparent, however, from the chapters here is the difficulty of
publishing visual records of the data in such a way as to permit readers
easy access to the activities about which observations are being made.
Anyone who has ever attempted to produce a detailed description of
some sequence of bodily movements will know only too well how
daunting a task it is. And anyone who has been present at oral presenta-
tions where video-recorded fragments were played and replayed will
appreciate the sorts of losses that are inevitably involved in attempts to
represent the data in other ways. The authors of this book are deeply