

Turning down sound to turn to talk: Muting and muffling auditory objects as a resource for displaying involvement

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English abstract

The paper examines how participants in interaction modify their current soundscape. It is shown that ambient sound need not in itself pose an impediment to interaction but that participants, by adjusting it, signal that it now retracts from the degree of involvement that is appropriate for unfolding talk. It is proposed that muting or muffling auditory objects, i.e. devices that produce sound when in use, serves as a participant resource for displaying their interpretation that unfolding talk makes relevant a higher degree of involvement than did previous talk. The data are in British English and Danish.

Keywords: Conversation Analysis, British English, Danish, auditory objects, involvement.

German abstract

Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht, wie Interaktionsteilnehmer die sie umgebende Geräuschkulisse verändern. Die Analyse zeigt, dass Hörbares in der Umgebung der Interaktionsteilnehmer (z.B. Musik, Haushaltsgeräte) an sich kein Hindernis für die Interaktion darstellt. Durch das Verändern des Geräuschpegels (Leiser-, Stumm- oder Abschalten von Geräten) signalisieren Interaktionsteilnehmer vielmehr, dass die Geräuschkulisse in einem bestimmten Moment die als angemessen wahrgenommene Gesprächsbeteiligung behindert. Dieses lokale Anpassen von "hörbaren Objekten", also von Geräten, die, wenn eingeschaltet, Musik oder Geräusche produzieren, dient Interaktionsteilnehmern als interaktionale Ressource: Teilnehmern signalisieren damit, dass sie die momentane Interaktion anders wahrnehmen als das Vorhergehende, und dass jetzt ein höherer Grad an Gesprächsbeteiligung relevant ist. Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht dänische und englischsprachige (britische) Daten.

Keywords: Konversationsanalyse, Britisches Englisch, Dänisch, "hörbare Objekte", Gesprächsbeteiligung.

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Without taking a stand on how having the audio entertainment system on and conversing with a passenger may affect the driving, e.g. as a possible distraction (Nevile 2012), we see that neither the music nor the general hum of the car pose any evident challenges to the participants' talking about a matter related to their journey.

Excerpt (2) comes from a Danish home help visit (Figure 2). A pensioner and her home help have just discussed a buddleia in the pensioner's garden, when the home help starts the vacuum cleaner. Sound from the vacuum cleaner (VAC) is indicated with hyphens (-), and the quieter sound emitted when the engine is starting up or winding down with full stops (.).

Excerpt (2): Home help TH/V3/HH/1-1: 0:08:42.6

- 01 VAC: ...[.....-----
 02 PEN: [Meneh: Det (der lidt ked a') det a' at
 Buteh: *It (a little bit sorry about) that is*
- 03 VAC: [1----- (1.2) -[-----
 04 PEN: [1jeg har ikke fået rydde:h [bladene (a' haven)
 that I haven't cleared the leaves (from garden)
- 05 VAC: [2-----[-----
 06 PEN: [2 har jeg gjort alle de andre [år
 that I have done all the other years
- 07 HOM: [Dem ta'r ormene da.
 Those the worms surely take.
- 08 VAC: -(0.5)-[-----[-----
 09 PEN: [Jahm' det ser farligt[ud.
 Yes but it looks horrible.
- 10 HOM: [Hva' me' alle myrene (da
 What about all the ants
- 11 VAC: [-----
 12 HOM: [ka')de ikk' (ta')dem da,
 (then can)they not (take) them then,

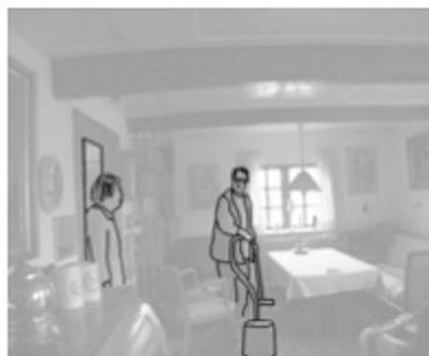


Fig. 2: The home help and the pensioner converse while the vacuum cleaner is on.

Home helps and pensioners often engage in talk of no institutional relevance while the home help is engaged in practical tasks (Heinemann 2007) and here we see that the sound produced by the vacuum cleaner does not impede on the conversation that the participants have about the pensioner's garden.

Excerpts (1) and (2) illustrate that interaction can unfold unproblematically despite any ambient sounds emitted by objects in the environment. There is no indication in the excerpts that these sounds impinge on interaction: the participants do not, for example, adjust their talk and employ resources such as prosodic marking (M. H. Goodwin 1996), repair initiation and lengthier turns (McKellin/Shahin/Hodgson/Jamieson/Pichora-Fuller 2007) to ensure being heard and understood. Moreover, the participants do not in any way orient to the sounds as possible disruptions. This may be because the sounds have been introduced to the soundscape already earlier: the turning on of 'auditory objects', i.e. devices that produce sound when in use, is systematically organized in relation to ongoing talk, occurring typically at points where participants have brought a previous interactional activity to a close collaboratively, and where the upcoming action of turning on has been explicated either verbally or through embodied actions (Rauniomaa/Heinemann 2014).

Excerpts (1) and (2) also illustrate that interaction can unfold unproblematically despite at least one participant being simultaneously engaged in a task, namely steering a car or vacuum cleaning. Indeed, research within ethnomethodology and conversation analysis has demonstrated that participants may manage multiple activities concurrently, or at least orient to such a possibility (see Haddington/Keisanen/Mondada/Neville 2014). Moreover, it has been argued that participants may, on occasion, prioritize some talk over other talk and activities: Toerien and Kitzinger (2007:655), for instance, discuss how a beauty therapist delays the progressivity of threading a client's eyebrows in favour of letting the client continue topical talk, thus giving "precedence, not to the physical tasks for which she is officially paid, but to the relational tasks of not coming off as rude, overly hurried, or not listening properly". Similarly, Nishizaka and Sunaga (2015) show how volunteers giving footbaths and hand massages to evacuees affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake prioritize the development of topical talk by suspending massaging movements. Schegloff's (1998:536) seminal study on 'body torque' likewise illustrates how interactants display their current involvement in more than one activity and at the same time indicate a ranking of these activities, through "divergent orientations of the body sectors above and below the neck and waist". Schegloff further demonstrates that participants may display different degrees of involvement in the currently prioritized activity through body torque. Schegloff (1998:551) notes that in torqueing the body, rather than turning fully around, a participant may display an orientation to the "lesser-ness" of an interactional engagement, indicate a less "stable commitment" to the talk otherwise engaged in (Schegloff 1998:562), or embody a "limited commitment to the talk being launched" (Schegloff 1998:573).

The present study builds on this previous work to examine the relationship between ambient sounds and participants' displays of involvement in talk. We investigate cases in which participants turn off or lower the volume of two different auditory objects, an audio entertainment system (i.e. car radio or CD player) and a vacuum cleaner. We first introduce the data that form the basis for the study. In the first analytic section, we then establish that though participants may mute or muffle auditory objects in contexts where they also display having trouble hearing or understanding one another, such trouble alone do not account for the adjustments, nor do displays of such trouble necessarily result in any

adjustments. In the second analytic section, we explore cases in which participants do not display any problems of hearing or understanding but nevertheless mute or muffle auditory objects. We argue that by muting or muffling these objects, and by thus adjusting the surrounding soundscape, participants may signal that an ambient sound, which has otherwise been no impediment to interaction, now retracts from the degree of involvement that is appropriate for on-going or emerging talk. In this way, muting or muffling an auditory object becomes a participant's resource for displaying their interpretation that on-going or emerging talk makes relevant a higher degree of involvement than did previous talk.

2. Data

We draw on two sets of data. One set comprises 14 hours of video recordings of native and non-native speakers of British English travelling in a car (Habitable Cars corpus, courtesy of Eric Laurier, University of Edinburgh). The second set comprises 13 hours of video recordings of interactions in the Danish home help system, where elderly people are visited in their home by caregivers. All data have been collected with informed consent from the participants and in accordance with relevant ethical guidelines.

The two sets of data differ on a number of parameters: the interactional contexts (casual everyday; institutional), languages (English; Danish), settings (car; house) and number of participants (2-5; 2). The auditory objects are also different: Whereas the audio entertainment system is turned on because of the sounds that it produces and may be left on without further manipulation, the vacuum cleaner emits sound as a by-product of being used and is typically operated when on. The sound produced by the audio entertainment system can be regulated, both in terms of content and loudness: the medium can be changed, e.g. from the radio to a CD, and the volume can be increased or decreased. By contrast, the vacuum cleaner produces more or less the same type of sound at the same level when on, and changes only really occur when the on/off button is pressed and the vacuum cleaner emits a slightly quieter sound when starting up or winding down.

Despite the differences in the data sets and the auditory objects, we base this study on an observable commonality: though participants in both contexts may have no problems interacting when the respective auditory objects produce sound (as in Excerpts 1-2), they nevertheless relatively regularly adjust their soundscape by either muting or possibly muffling the objects.² In both contexts, such adjustment of the soundscape may be relevant for reasons that are extrinsic to interaction; in the car, for instance, the driver may turn off the CD player when stopping to fill up the tank, and in the home help visits, the home help may turn off the vacuum cleaner when changing electrical outlets. In both data sets, however, we find a number of instances in which participants mute or muffle auditory objects (13 in the car data and 11 in the home help data) and in which this cannot be di-

² It is sometimes difficult to deem whether an audio entertainment system is turned off or its volume lowered. While it is possible that muting and muffling have different interactional implications, the present data do not allow us to explore them in any great detail. However, see Excerpt (10).

rectly accounted for by extrinsic reasons such as the progression of driving or cleaning. It is these 24 instances that form the basis for our analysis and suggestion that, in altering the soundscape, participants orient to particular interactional contingencies. Building on seven illustrative cases where participants adjust ambient sounds and comparing them with one case (Excerpt 7) where sounds are not adjusted, we hope to demonstrate that – like the body torque described by Schegloff (1998:537) – the muting or muffling of auditory objects is treated by participants as a resource for displaying increased involvement and hence that "its deployment by participants at particular moments, or its redeployment, may properly be understood as an orderly component of the organization by which certain trajectories of talk are methodically achieved by the participants".

3. Increasing involvement in the context of evident trouble

Perhaps the most obvious interactionally intrinsic reason for why people on occasion mute or muffle an auditory object is that the sound produced may be so loud as to infringe on the possibilities for interacting. In our data, we find instances that can – at least initially – be explained in this way; participants mute or muffle auditory objects in contexts where trouble of hearing may be foreseen or explicitly expressed. Excerpts 3-6 all illustrate such situations.

In Excerpt (3), a home help is vacuuming a pensioner's living room and has just opened the door to the adjoining hall to continue vacuuming there, when the pensioner enters the living room from another adjoining room (Figure 3a). While the home help and pensioner are in a state of incipient talk (see Schegloff/Sacks 1973) as long as the home help is in the pensioner's house, their co-presence does not automatically entail re-engagement in talk; after all, the pensioner may simply be passing through the room or looking for something. Nonetheless, the pensioner here explicitly solicits re-engagement (see Szymanski 1999) with *Ve du hva'* ('You know what', l. 2). The symbol ■ is used to indicate the approximate moment when the home help presses the on/off button of the vacuum cleaner.

Excerpt (3): Home help TH/V3/HH/1-1: 25:53.4

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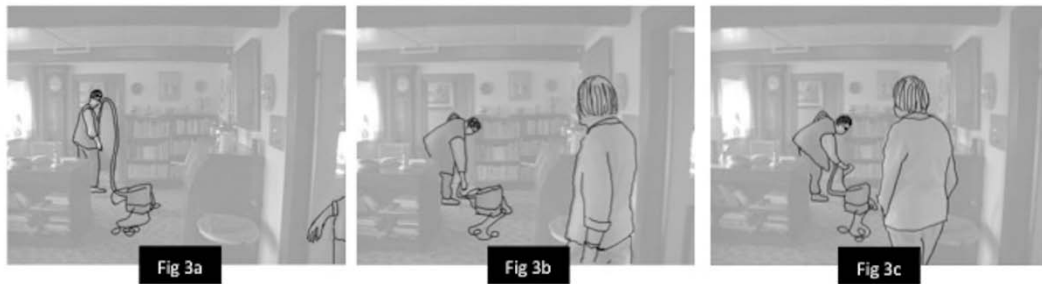
01 VAC: --[-----#----- (0.8) -#[----- (0.2) -
02 PEN:  [Ve' du # hva'ǀ      # [Jeg ringe' u'
           You know whatǀ      I called to
           fig                #3a                #3b

03 VAC: [-----#-■.... (0.3) .#[.....
04 PEN: [# Jeg vi' ringe u' #påeh      #[e- te' hjemmehjælperen,
           I wanted to call to eh      to the home help (office),
           fig    #3c                #3d                #3e

05 VAC: . (0.5) .#[..... (0.5) .[.....
06 PEN:      #[i går.          [>Fordi jeg ku'
           yesterday.          >Because I couldn't
           fig                #3f

07 VAC: [.....
08 PEN: [itt' huske hvornår jeg'h' hatt' hjemmehjælp.<
           remember when I had had homehelp.<

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figs. 3a-c: The home help has been vacuuming the floor and is just about to move into the adjoining hall, when the pensioner enters the room. While the home help disentangles the cord, the pensioner walks towards her.



figs. 3d-f: The home help presses the on/off button on the vacuum cleaner, straightens up and turns towards the pensioner.

Upon entering the living room, the pensioner is relatively far removed from the home help, who is moreover at this point preparing to move the vacuum cleaner into the adjoining hall and has her back towards the pensioner. The 0.8-second pause in line 1 suggests that the home help has neither registered the pensioner entering the living room, nor heard her talk. Nevertheless, from the pensioner's viewpoint, the home help's turning to and bending over the vacuum cleaner (Figure 3b) could project that she is about to turn it off, and the pensioner initiates talk for which she solicited attention. However, it appears that the home help oriented to the vacuum cleaner to disentangle the cord (Figure 3c), rather than to turn the device off. The pensioner restarts and repairs her turn, thus indicating her orientation to her talk being produced in overlap (see Goodwin 1981; Schegloff 2002). Both the attention-soliciting *Ve' du hva'* and the fact that the pensioner restarts her turn in the face of no uptake suggests that she at this point foresees some trouble in being heard. The fact that the home help turns off the vacuum cleaner after the pensioner's restart (lines 3-4, Figures 3d-f) indicates that she, too, orients to the sound emitted by the vacuum cleaner as a potential hindrance for hearing the pensioner.

While the participants may here orient to potential hearing problems, we suggest that there is more at stake: Whereas the pensioner initially formulates her statement (l. 4) in the past tense ('I called'), the restart is formulated in the past progressive ('I wanted to call'), by which the pensioner portrays the to-be reported event as either not having happened or as having met with some difficulties (see Sacks 1992; Schulze-Wenck 2005). The pensioner's restart thus projects that the talk she is about to deliver will involve a reporting of some trouble that she has

had (and that might as yet be unresolved).³ We further suggest that it is in orientation to this projected troubles-talk that the home help mutes the vacuum cleaner at this point and, in doing so, displays her increasing involvement in the talk launched by the pensioner. The home help's display of increasing involvement is further evidenced by her straightening up and turning towards the pensioner.

In addition to muting or muffling auditory objects when they foresee trouble with hearing, participants also make such adjustments when trouble is already evident. Also in these cases, participants, through muting or muffling, seem to display appropriate, here increased, involvement in on-going talk. In Excerpt (4), a home help has been vacuuming a pensioner's living room for some time, with the pensioner standing by. The two have conversed sporadically and the pensioner has stated that she needs to train herself to wear reading glasses. The excerpt begins when the home help, who regularly wears glasses, states that she has to learn to wear contact lenses (l. 1). This initiates the sequence of talk during which the home help eventually turns off the vacuum cleaner.

Excerpt (4): Home help TH/V3/HH/3-1: 29:23.2

- 01 VAC: [-----
 02 HOM: [>Jeg ska' te' < u' å' lære å' >gå me' kontaktlinser,<
 >I have to< start learning to >wear contact lenses,<

 03 VAC: -(0.4)-[--(1.1)-[-----
 04 PEN: [Nå,
 Oh,
 05 HOM: [>Ar'men det' fordi< når vi ska' på ferie,
 >Well that's because< when we're going on holiday,

 06 VAC: -(0.7)-[----- (0.6) -[-----
 07 PEN: [Ja
 Yes
 08 HOM: [å' ska' ud å' svømme.=
 and are going swimming.=

 09 VAC: [1-----
 10 PEN: [1=M' det sku' itt' være så galt si'r de jo.
 =But that shouldn't be so bad they say.

 11 VAC: [2-----
 12 HOM: [2Nej det har jeg hørt det' derfor (vi ve' bestille)
 No that I have heard that's why (I would order)

 13 VAC: [3----- (3.2) -#[-----
 14 HOM: [3denne her gang her, #[Der' jo kun seks uger te' jo,
 this time here, There's JO only six weeks to go JO,
 fig **#4a**

³ This turns out to be the case: the pensioner reports her repeated trouble with contacting the home help office to find out when the home help was coming. In the extended sequence (not shown here), the home help attends to these reported troubles, first by explaining exactly when the pensioner will receive home help and then by writing down several phone numbers for the home help office.

- 15 VAC: - (0.5) -# [-----#-----
 16 PEN: # [Ja hvor a' det nu i ska' # hen da,
 Yes where is it now that you are going then,
 fig **#4b** **#4c**
- 17 VAC: - (0.7) -# ■. (0.6) .# [.....[.....
 18 HOM: # [Hva'r?
 What?
 19 PEN: [Hvor ska' i hen?=
 Where are you going?=
 fig **#4d** **#4e**
- 20 VAC: # [1.....
 21 HOM: # [1=>Jahmen vi ska' jo derne' igen hvor
 =>Well we are JO going down there again where
 fig **#4f**
- 22 VAC: [2.....[.....
 23 HOM: [2vi var for to [år si'en.< te' Mauritius.=
 we were two years ago.< Mauritius.=
 24 PEN: [Nå ja ja.
 Oh yes yes.



Fig 4a

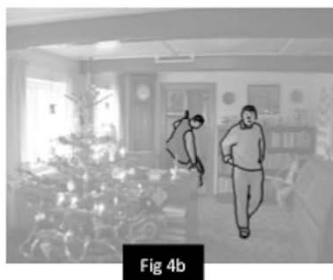


Fig 4b



Fig 4c

figs. 4a-c: The pensioner moves away from the home help and the home help lifts the vacuum cleaner into the hall. The pensioner begins to turn towards the home help while still walking away.



Fig 4d

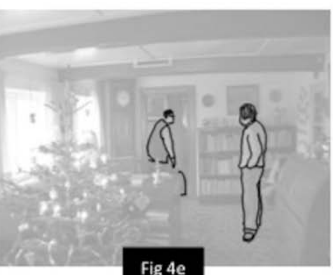


Fig 4e

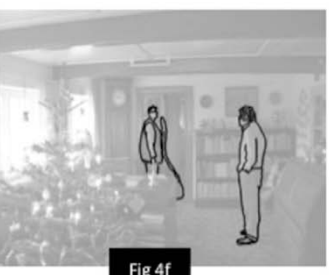


Fig 4f

figs. 4d-f: The home help presses the on/off button, straightens up and turns toward the pensioner.

The pensioner's change-of-state token *nå* (Femø Nielsen 2002), through its prosodic features, invites elaboration (see Maynard 2003), and talk then ensues where the home help gives her upcoming vacation as a reason for wanting to wear contact lenses and the pensioner comments on the issue in more general terms (lines 5-14). By line 14, the topic is potentially exhausted, as evident by the 3.2-second lapse and the participants' physical disengagement from each other (Figure 4a). The home help, however, then states that there are only six weeks until her vaca-

tion. The pensioner seems to interpret this as an invitation to re-engage: she begins to turn back towards the home help and produces an inquiry about the destination of the home help's vacation (l. 16, Figures 4b-c). When the pensioner produces the inquiry, the home help is lifting the vacuum cleaner, which is still running, across the doorstep into the adjoining hall. This activity might cause additional noise to the surroundings and make more claims, physically, on the home help's attention. Both of these factors could explain why the home help apparently has trouble hearing what the pensioner has said, when they have up until this point been perfectly able to interact with the vacuum cleaner running. Certainly, the home help indicates through both her bodily and verbal actions that she has encountered a problem of hearing: firstly, the pensioner's inquiry is followed by a 0.7-second gap; secondly, the home help orients her body to the vacuum cleaner and turns it off (Figures 4d-f); and thirdly, the home help initiates repair with the open-class repair initiator *Hva'r?* ('What'; see Drew 1997).

At the face of it, the home help appears to mute the vacuum cleaner simply as a solution to a problem of hearing. However, as in Excerpt (3), there are indications here that the muting and the repair are oriented to other issues as well: both participants treat the home help's upcoming vacation as something that is – or should be – part of their common ground. When the home help states the time until her vacation (l. 14), she does not formulate this as news, produces twice the particle *jo*, which serves to index the stated as part of the participants' common ground (Heinemann/Lindström/Steensig 2011). The pensioner, in turn, confirms her knowing state with *ja* ('yes', l. 16) and then inquires where the home help is going. Also here she orients to the details of the home help's vacation as something she ought to know: the inquiry is formulated as a request to be reminded through the particles *nu* and *da* (here translated as 'now' and 'then' to render their reminding quality). The home help, rather than simply providing the specifying phrasal response 'to Mauritius' (see Thompson/Fox/Couper-Kuhlen 2015) that would fit the pensioner's wh-question, produces a more elaborate turn that specifically works to remind the pensioner of the facts. Finally, the pensioner receipts the response as being a reminder, by producing the realization marker *nåja* (Emmertsen/Heinemann 2010) early, i.e. before the home help utters *Mauritius*. In turning off the vacuum cleaner, the home help may thus orient to other matters than the hearing problem she subsequently indicates by initiating repair. Specifically, in adjusting the soundscape, the home help can be seen (and heard) to increase her involvement – and to do so when her co-participant expresses trouble remembering information that has apparently been provided before. In Excerpts (5) and (6), we see how participants in the car data similarly mute or muffle the audio entertainment system in situations where there are evident or foreseeable problems with hearing and where, additionally, emerging or on-going talk may make relevant displays of increased involvement.

In Excerpt (5), Liz is driving a car, with her daughter (Lucy) sitting in the front and her son (Noel) and another girl (Dawn) sitting in the back. They are talking about a schoolgirl whose mother has recently passed away and here specifically deal with the cause of death. As the excerpt begins, the car is standing still at a junction, and the audio entertainment system is on, playing music. The symbol ♪ represents relatively lower volume of music than 🎵, and the symbols ▼ and ▲

indicate the approximate moment when the volume button is manipulated (to turn the volume down and up, respectively).

Excerpt (5): Habitable Cars death and spiderman 00:00:00

01 MUS: [♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪]
02 NOE: [can you (--)].
03 MUS: ♪(0.6) ♪ [♪♪♪]
04 LIZ: [you can whe[n there's a<
05 LUC: [↑how did ↓her mum die?
06 MUS: ♪(0.3) ♪ # ♪(0.5) ♪
fig #5a
07 MUS: [♪♪♪]
08 DAW: [I think she had b- a brain tumour as well.
09 MUS: ♪(0.3) ♪ [♪♪♪♪♪♪
10 LUC: [↑WHAT.
11 MUS: # ♪(0.4) ♪ [♪♪♪
12 DAW: [I thINK SHE HAD A BRAIN # TUMOUR AS WELL-luh.
fig #5b #5c
13 MUS: ♪(0.3) ♪ # ♪(.) ♪ [♪♪♪
14 LUC: [a brain t#umour, what's □THA:t # hh.
fig #5d #5e #5f
15 MUS: [♪♪♪♪♪♪[♪♪♪
16 LIZ: [like< [it's like a cancer in your brain.
17 DAW: [(uh,)
18 MUS: ♪(0.5) ♪ [♪♪♪♪♪♪
19 LUC: [°ah::°.



figs. 5a-c: The front-seat passenger, Lucy, poses a question to Dawn behind her, and the driver, Liz, looks at Dawn through the rearview mirror. After Dawn has answered, Lucy initiates repair and turns towards the back. While Dawn carries out the repair, Liz shifts her gaze towards the centre console.



Fig 5d



Fig 5e



Fig 5f

figs. 5d-f: Liz brings her hand to the controls of the audio entertainment system, turns down the volume and brings her hand back to her lap. Lucy initiates repair, this time addressing Liz.

Through employing resources such as gaze and posture, the participants orient to the side-by-side and front-to-back configuration in which their participation is currently possible (see Goodwin/Goodwin 2012; Laurier et al. 2008; Mondada 2012; Neville 2012), with a sequence of conversation developing between Liz and Noel and another between Lucy and Dawn (lines 2-8, Figure 5a). The careful establishment of relevant participation frameworks does not pre-empt trouble, however. In line 10, Lucy initiates repair on Dawn's turn, and they both treat the problem to be one of hearing: Lucy initiates the repair with an open-class repair initiator *what*, which she produces in louder voice and during the production of which she turns her upper body between the front seats, towards the back, and raises her hand closer to her ear (Figure 5b; see Mortensen 2012, 2016; Rasmussen 2014). Dawn carries out the repair by repeating the problematic turn (*I think she had a brain tumour as well-luh*, l. 12) and also raising her voice (see Curl 2005) and turning her head from left to centre, in Lucy's direction (Figure 5c).

It is in this context, where repair is being carried out on an apparent problem of hearing, that Liz comes in to modify the soundscape. Liz has had her hand on her lap, and there is a mobile phone between the front seats, with a cord running up to an earpiece that she has in her ear (see Figure 5a). As Dawn is carrying out repair on her prior turn, Liz shifts her gaze from the street ahead to the centre console of the car (Figure 5c) and begins to lift her hand towards the audio entertainment system. The cord first gets in the way, but Liz brings her hand around it, reaches the controls of the audio entertainment system and shifts her gaze back to the road soon after the end of Dawn's turn (Figures 5d-e). She then turns down the volume of the audio entertainment system and brings her hand back to her lap.

Lucy, Dawn and Liz all initially treat the repair as simply an indication of Lucy having trouble hearing what Dawn says, but the problem persists: in line 14, Lucy initiates a new repair sequence, this time identifying *a brain tumour* as the trouble source and the problem as that of understanding, *what's that* (see Svennevig 2008). This time, Lucy addresses the question to Liz by looking at her throughout the repair-initiating turn (Figures 5e-f), and Liz carries out the repair by providing a definition (l. 16). With a subdued and slightly lengthened *ah* (l. 19), Lucy receipts the definition as being new information and orients to the information as delicate and in no need of further elaboration (see Maynard 2003).

While Liz' adjustment of the soundscape seems to address, first and foremost, problems of hearing and understanding, we find evidence in what follows that Liz, by muffling the audio entertainment system, also orients to the rather delicate

Excerpt (6): Habitable Cars death and spiderman 00:00:16

From line 21 onward, Dawn begins to whistle to the music still playing on the audio entertainment system, introducing her own alteration to the soundscape (see Frick 2013 on singing around sequence closure). Lucy, in turn, shifts her gaze towards the centre console and brings her hand to the controls of the audio entertainment system to turn the volume up (Figures 6a-b). Both Dawn and Lucy thus display their understanding that not just the repair sequence, but the overall sequence of topical talk has been brought to a close (see Rauniomaa/Heinemann 2014). When Lucy is manipulating the controls of the audio entertainment system (Figure 6c), however, Liz re-opens topical talk about children who have lost their mothers (l. 23). As such talk is resumed, Lucy quickly turns the volume down again (Figure 6d).

Lucy muffles the audio entertainment system at a point where there are no explicit problems of hearing (i.e. no repair), but it could be argued that she foresees such trouble in the light of earlier repairs. It could also be argued, however, that in turning down the volume at a point when her mother re-opens talk on the matter

of death, Lucy displays her understanding that such a topic requires increased involvement than other types of talk and that she may display such involvement, among other things, by adjusting the soundscape. In a sense, then, Excerpts (5) and (6) also show how routine, everyday engagement with an auditory object, here muffling it at suitable moments, may serve as a means of socializing children into appropriate interactional practices and how children may adopt such practices to their growing repertoire of displaying involvement in interaction (see Fasulo/Lloyd/Padiglione 2007; Goodwin/Cekaite 2013; Kent 2012; see also Rauniomaa/Heinemann 2014 on how an adult turns on a CD player to disrupt an ongoing quarrel between children).

Excerpts (3-6) illustrate how the muting or muffling of auditory objects can occur in contexts where problems of hearing may be foreshadowed (Excerpts 3 and 6) or made explicit (Excerpts 4 and 5). While it therefore may seem that the muting or muffling is done simply because the participants find themselves interacting in a noisy environment where they have trouble hearing one another, our data in general and Excerpts (3-6) in particular indicate that in adjusting the soundscape participants also display their increased involvement in emerging talk, thus at the same time displaying their understanding of that talk as making such increased involvement relevant. That participants are doing more than merely solving hearing problems when adjusting the soundscape is further supported by the fact that evident hearing problems do not automatically result in such adjustments. In Excerpt (7), for instance, there are clear problems of hearing and repair is initiated twice. Despite having direct (and primary) access to the object that produces the problematic sound (cf. Excerpt 3), however, the participant who initiates repair does not turn it off.

Here, a pensioner and her home help are in the pensioner's living room. The home help has turned the vacuum cleaner off while the two have talked about a former neighbour of the pensioner. This talk having reached possible completion, the home help has just turned the vacuum cleaner on again (see Rauniomaa/Heinemann 2014) and the pensioner has moved into the adjoining hall. In the hall, the pensioner bends over a table and picks something up, then turns back towards the home help and, while beginning to close the door, says something (Figures 7a-b). Though she displays her understanding that the pensioner is talking to her, by straightening up and directing her gaze to the pensioner, the home help indicates her lack of hearing, by producing the open-class repair initiator *HVA'R* at high volume (l. 4; Figure 7c).

Excerpt (7): Home help TH/V3/HH/2-1: 0:23:55.3

```

01 VAC: [#-----#-----
02 PEN: [(                               ) (ene daw etter den anden,)
      (                               ) (day after day,)
      fig #7a                               #7b

03 VAC: -(0.5)-#[------(0.5)-
04 HOM:      # [HVA'R?
           WHAT?
      fig #7c
```

05 VAC: [-----
06 PEN: [Det' fra sparekassen det' snart hver anden dag.
It's from the bank it's almost every other day.

07 VAC: -(0.4)-[-----
08 HOM: [(Du må) ha' brugt mange penge Lena,
(You must) have spent a lot of money Lena,

09 VAC: #_{[1}-------(0.7)-[------(0.2)-[-----#-(2.9)-
10 PEN: #_{[1}() [Ka' du komme u', [Kom så.#
Get out, Come on.

fig #7d #7e

11 VAC: [₂-------(1.0)-[₁-------(0.3)-[-----#-(3.8)-
12 PEN: [₂() [₁() [Om å' læg dig. #
Go lie down.

fig #7f

13 VAC: [₃------#------(0.8)-[-----
14 PEN: [₃(Det' nok fordi jeg'# fallit,) *(It's probably because I'm broke,)*

fig #7g

15 HOM: [Hva'r?
What?

16 VAC: [₄------
17 PEN: [₄D(hh)et ka'(hh) være jeg gået(hh) fallit,
M(hh)aybe I(hh) have g(hh)one broke,

18 VAC: -(0.7)-[----#------(0.3)-[----
19 HOM: [Ar' #mon ikke bā:re ā:' (0.3) [det'
Oh it's probably just it's

fig #7h

20 VAC: [₁------
21 HOM: [₁opgørelse over e:h >checkhæfte< >>Har du ikk'
the account for e:h >the cheque book< >>Haven't you got

22 VAC: [₂-------(0.2)-[-#----[------(2.8)-
23 HOM: [₂ checkhæfte,<< [Jerh.
a cheque book,<< Yes.

24 PEN: [Ja.
Yes.

fig #7i

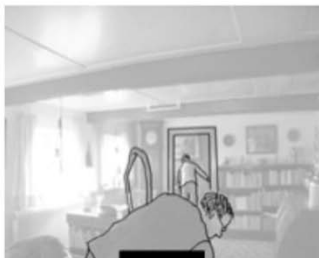


Fig 7a



Fig 7b



Fig 7c

figs. 7a-c: The pensioner picks up something in the hall and begins talking as she reenters the living room. The home help straightens up and gazes towards the pensioner.



figs. 7d-f: The pensioner commands the dog. The home help looks on, then begins vacuuming again. The pensioner returns to the living room.



figs. 7g-i: The pensioner walks towards the home help while beginning to open the letter and making a joke about its contents. The home help responds but continues vacuuming.

Notably, and in contrast to Excerpts (4) and (5), the home help does not adjust the soundscape even though she clearly has trouble hearing what the pensioner says and though she has direct access to the source of the ambient sound, the vacuum cleaner. Instead, she lets the pensioner carry out repair (6), which makes it clear that the pensioner was referring to an object she picked up in the hall: a letter from the bank. The home help responds to this by jokingly suggesting that the pensioner gets so many letters from the bank because she has 'spent a lot of money' (8).

Here then, the home help, by not turning off the vacuum cleaner in the context of a hearing problem, indicates that the talk launched by the pensioner does not make increased involvement relevant. The pensioner's subsequent conduct confirms this interpretation: while the home help responds to the pensioner's repair, the pensioner directs her own attention to her dog, telling it to go into the kitchen and lie down (lines 10-12; Figures 7d-f). The home help, who has been monitoring the pensioner, now directs her attention back to the vacuum cleaner and begins vacuuming again (around lines 12-13). Both participants thus treat the pensioner's turn in line 1 (and its subsequent repair) as initiating talk that does not require a high level of involvement. We see further orientation to this in subsequent turns: having succeeded in commanding the dog, the pensioner returns to the living room and walks towards the home help while beginning to open the letter (Figure 7g). Simultaneously, she continues the joke introduced by the home help in line 8, suggesting that the letter is a notification of bankruptcy (l. 14). Again, the home help has apparent problems hearing this and initiates repair in line 15. When the pensioner repeats the joke about bankruptcy, the home help instead returns to a more serious note, suggesting that the letter contains an account statement. Through all this, she neither adjusts the soundscape nor directs her gaze towards the pensioner but continues vacuuming (Figures 7h-i). Likewise, the pen-

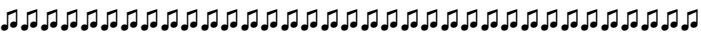

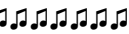
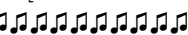

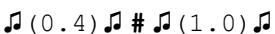

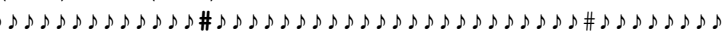
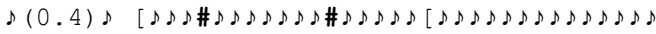
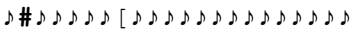
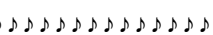
sioner merely confirms having a checking account and, after a 2.8-second lapse, the home help introduces talk about the acquisition of food items (not shown here).

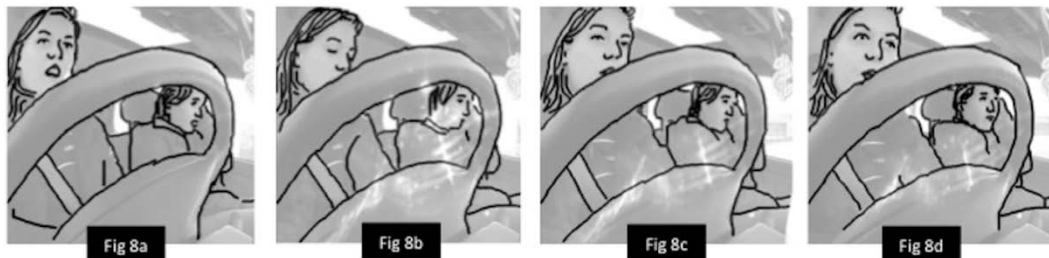
Excerpt (7) attests that apparent hearing problems can be resolved without altering ambient sounds. Yet, as Excerpts (3-6) illustrated, participants do on other occasions mute or muffle auditory objects in contexts where they appear to have either foreseen or explicitly indicated problems with hearing. Excerpts (7) and (3-6) differ not only in this regard, but also with respect to the nature of the talk that is produced when the participants orient to hearing as a potential problem. In Excerpt (7), the talk seemed to be locally occasioned by the pensioner's picking up a letter in her hallway. Bergmann (1990) demonstrates that objects can be introduced into interaction and engender topical talk to develop; in Excerpt (7), the pensioner's verbal invocation of the letter could be seen as such a topical bid. Both participants clearly indicate, however, through their behaviour that further – increased – involvement in this particular talk is not necessary, the pensioner by attending to her dog and the home help by not turning off the vacuum cleaner. By contrast, the unfolding talk in Excerpts (3-6) in various ways concerns potentially delicate or troublesome matters that were not merely offered as topics to talk about, i.e. a pensioner's problems with reaching the home help office, a pensioner's failure to remember where her home help is going on vacation, and two young children's and a mother's discussion about death. We suggest that in these cases both the repair and the alteration of the soundscape are done in orientation to the nature of the talk that is unfolding. That is, by indicating potential problems of hearing, the participants treat emerging or on-going talk as requiring a strong degree of involvement from both parties – involvement that can, among other things, be accomplished by making sure that no details get lost by virtue of competing sounds. We explore this finding further in the following section.

4. Increasing involvement in the context of emerging talk

So far, we have sought to illustrate that the relationship between potential hearing problems and a participant's adjustment of the soundscape is not a causal one and to suggest that when participants mute or muffle an auditory object, they do so also in orientation to the nature of unfolding talk. That participants may distinguish between different types of talk and indicate their increased involvement by adjusting the soundscape is further illustrated in this section. Here, we consider cases in which the participants do not indicate having any problems hearing each other but nevertheless adjust the soundscape as on-going talk develops into something that requires a higher degree of involvement than has hitherto been displayed. Excerpt (8) provides a first instance of such development; here it is the participant who is producing the main line of talk who adjusts the soundscape. The driver, Elsa, has been moving to the music and assessing it positively to the passenger, Mary. In line 2, Elsa initiates another topic, possibly touched off by something in the environment that they are currently passing through.

Excerpt (8): Habitable Cars seasonal death 00:00:17

01 MUS: [₁ 
02 ELS: [₁oh did you hear about that family who died?
03 MUS: [₂ 
04 ELS: [₂I [₃reckon it's 'cause of the Christmas lights man.
05 MAR: [₃no.
06 MUS: [
07 MAR: [no[:,
08 ELS: [.bf::
09 MUS: [
10 MAR: [when was that.
11 MUS: # 
12 ELS: [yeah, just the last # week. #
fig #8a #8b #8c
13 MUS:  # 
14 [
15 ELS: [and that the # whole family (.) died.# I think.
fig #8d #8e
16 MUS:  [
17 MAR: [oh # go:d, # that['s awful.
18 ELS: [yeah, I know,
fig #8f #8g
19 MUS: [
20 MAR: [what happened.



figs. 8a-d: The driver, Elsa, initiates a telling. When she answers the passenger's, Mary's, question, Elsa glances towards the centre console, leans forward and brings her hand towards the controls of the audio entertainment system. During an interval in talk, Elsa shakes her head slightly.



figs. 8e-g: Before delivering the main part of the news, Elsa turns down the volume of the audio entertainment system. After delivering the news, Elsa straightens back up, retracts her hand and turns to look at Mary.

Elsa first inquires whether Mary has heard about a particular incident (l. 2) and then moves on to reflect on its possible causes (l. 4). Whereas Elsa seems to orient to the incident itself (i.e. a family having died) as possibly shared information and her own reflections about it (i.e. the incident involving Christmas lights) as the gist of the telling, Mary receives information about the incident itself as news to her: she claims not having heard about it (lines 5 and 7) and invites Elsa to elaborate (l. 10). Mary's response thus puts Elsa in a position where she cannot simply continue to speculate what may have caused the incident but has to relate it as a piece of news to an unknowing recipient. The asymmetry between the deliverer and recipient of the news thus brings focus on the incident itself and highlights the somewhat delicate aspects of the news. As she answers Mary's question (l. 12), Elsa glances towards the centre console, leans forward and brings her hand towards the controls of the audio entertainment system (Figures 8a-c). The data do not show when exactly Elsa turns down the volume, but a change in the level of volume becomes noticeable just before Elsa delivers the main part of the news (lines 13-15; Figures 8d-e). During Mary's reception of the news (l. 17), Elsa straightens back up and retracts her hand (Figures 8f-g). In sum, Elsa seems to change the course of her telling when it becomes apparent that the recipient is not aware of the incident in question and that what emerges is perhaps more dramatic than originally intended. Elsa's muffling of the audio entertainment system thus becomes a way of her displaying appropriate involvement in sharing the news.

Whereas in Excerpt (8) it is the teller or deliverer of the news who also adjusts the soundscape, in Excerpts (9) and (10), it is the recipient who apparently recognizes that a co-participant's talk is developing into something so troublesome or sensitive that it makes a display of increased involvement relevant and mutes or muffles the auditory object. In Excerpt (9), a pensioner and her home help are conversing while the home help is vacuuming (Figure 9a). Before the excerpt begins, the home help inquires after the pensioner's neighbour, Dina. The pensioner reports that Dina had failed to visit her over the last couple of days (not shown here) but that she had come to apologize and account for this failure the day before (l. 33).

Excerpt (9): ((Home help TH/V3/2-1: 10:10.9))

32 VAC: # [-----
 33 PEN: # [Ja du må undskylde at jeg ikk' har været inde (i mange
 Yes you must forgive me for not having been in (for many
fig #9a

34 VAC: [-----#-----
 35 PEN: [dawe men hun så'n et vrøvl me' #denne her niece)
 days but she has such trouble with this niece)
fig #9b

36 VAC: - (0.4) - [----- [----- [----- - (0.4) - # [-----
 37 HOM: [Niecer? [(j) Erh,
 Nieces? (y) Ep,
 38 PEN: [Jerh. # [fordi
 Yeah. because
fig #9c

39 VAC: - (0.7) - [----- (1.3) - [---#-----
40 PEN: [<hun har en dreng> [å' # han bor
 <she has a boy>
fig **#9d**

41 VAC: [1-----#---■.... (0.8) .#. (0.8) ..#[.....
42 PEN: [1hos (sin-) hans #far, # [Det' bestemt
 with (his) his father, It's decided
fig **#9e** **#9f** **#9g**

43 VAC: [2.....
44 PEN: [2a' han ska' bo hos hans far,=
 that he should live with his father,=



figs. 9a-c: The home help vacuums while the pensioner tells about a neighbour, turning towards the pensioner on *denne her niece* and away again on *fordi*.




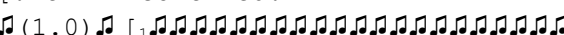

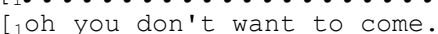
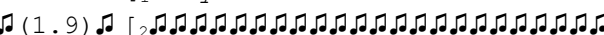

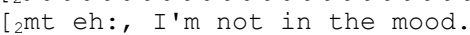
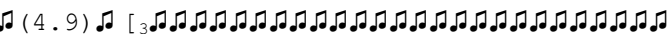
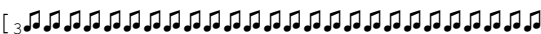
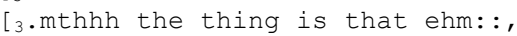
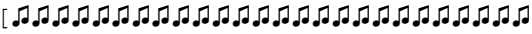
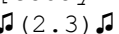
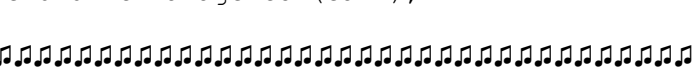

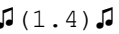
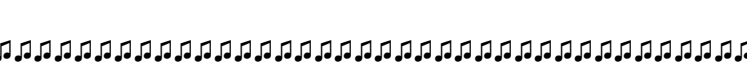

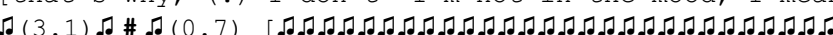
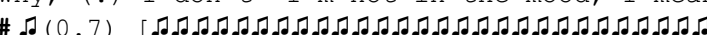
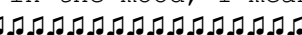
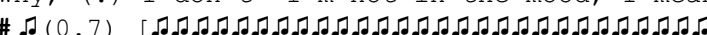
figs. 9d-g: The home help turns towards the vacuum cleaner, presses the on/off button with her right foot, turns towards the pensioner and takes up a listening position.

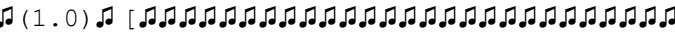
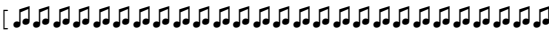
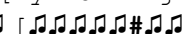
The reported account of why the neighbour, Dina, has not visited the pensioner includes the 'prospective indexical' *vrøvl* ('problems/trouble', l. 35) (C. Goodwin 1996). Prospective indexicals serve to register that something is to be unpacked subsequently, here clearly something with negative connotations. In other words, at this point in the pensioner's talk, a potentially troublesome moment has been projected and there are indications of changes in the home help's involvement already here: she turns to the pensioner and repeats the reference 'niece' (Figure 9b; l. 37), as if checking her hearing or understanding of it. Once the reference has been confirmed, however, she appears to re-engage in vacuuming (Figure 9c). The pensioner continues in a manner that now even more clearly projects a telling concerning troublesome matters: she projects a longer, explanatory turn with the conjunction *fordi* ('because'), then pauses for 0.7 seconds before slowly delivering the next part of the projected turn ('she has a boy') and then pauses again for 1.3 seconds before continuing. Similarly to restarts, these changes in the quality of the delivery may serve to secure a co-participant's attention and indicate that the speaker is producing her talk in overlap (see Schegloff 2002), and the overall delivery of the turn furthermore renders it a confidential or confessional tone, pos-



sibly further underscoring the troublesome or even delicate nature of the talk. This interpretation gains strength as the pensioner explains that the boy in question lives with his father, paternal custody suggesting that the mother has been deemed an unfit parent. Both the content and form of the pensioner's turns-at-talk in lines 40-44 thus serve to indicate that a delicate telling is underway. The home help certainly appears to understand the telling as something that deserves her increased involvement: on *han bor* ('he lives', l. 42; Figure 9d), she begins to turn towards the vacuum cleaner and on *far* ('father', l. 44; Figure 9e), she presses the stop button on the vacuum cleaner and then turns towards the pensioner (Figures 9f-g).

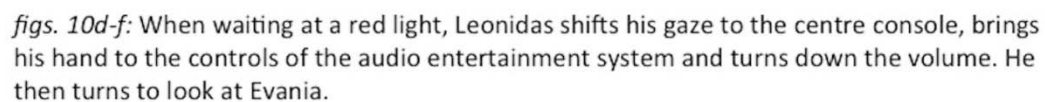
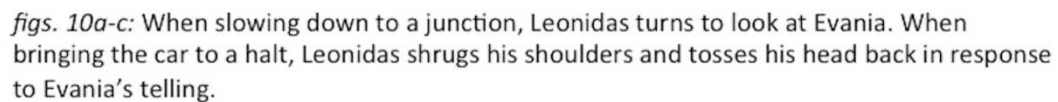
Excerpt (10) is similar to Excerpts (8) and (9) in that it shows how participants' orientation to the relevance of muting or muffling an auditory object is occasioned by the nature of ongoing or emerging talk, i.e. that something sensitive, troublesome or delicate is underway. Furthermore, Excerpt (10) sheds some light on the potential difference between turning off the audio entertainment system and lowering its volume. The driver (Leonidas) and the passenger (Evania) are discussing events of the day, especially one that is to take place the same evening. They are driving straight ahead in an urban residential area.

Excerpt (10): Habitable Cars not in the mood 00:00:03

01 MUS: []
 02 EVA: [.mt I'm so tired.
 03 MUS:  (1.0) 
 04 LEO: [ oh you don't want to come.
 05 MUS:  (1.9) 
 06 EVA: [ mt eh:, I'm not in the mood.
 07 MUS:  (4.9) 
 08 EVA: [ mthhh the thing is that ehm:.,
 09 MUS: []
 10 EVA: [today we didn't manage to (earn),
 11 MUS:  (2.3) 
 12 []
 13 EVA: [%: to- too much money >you know< in the shop? and,
 14 MUS:  (1.4) 
 15 []
 16 EVA: [that's why, (.) I don't- I'm not in the mood, I mean,
 17 MUS:  (3.1)  #  (0.7) []
 18 EVA: [°I'll be okay°. I can't control it.
 fig **#10a**

19 MUS:  (1.0) 
 20 EVA: [my working place includes my life.
 21 MUS: #  (0.8)
 22 LEO: [e-eh:#:,
 fig **#10b** **#10c**

23 MUS:  (1.1)  # (0.9)
 24 LEO: [yeah # but,
 fig **#10d** **#10e**



Evania's initial expression of fatigue (l. 2) seems to serve as a prospective indexical in the same way as 'problems/troubles' did in Excerpt (9), but here it is the recipient, Leonidas, who unpacks its meaning, by reformulating 'tired' as reluctance to participate in a planned event (l. 4). Evania aligns with this troubles interpretation and moves on to the exposition phase of her telling (see Jefferson 1988) by providing reasons for her current spirits, i.e. her "not being in the mood" because of issues at the workplace (lines 8-16). The slow pace of their conversation, i.e. neither participant jumping in to take or continue a turn but letting lapses develop, can be heard as reflecting Evania's low spirits and the overall sensitivity of the issue (see Hepburn/Potter 2012:198). The lapses are also used by Leonidas both to carry out driving-relevant actions and to signal his continued reciprocity by turning to look at Evania. In particular, during the lapse in line 17, Leonidas first changes gears in order to slow down to a red light and then turns towards Evania with what could be described as a concerned look on his face, a facial expression

fitted to the stance displayed by Evania in her telling (Figure 10a; see Ruusu-vuori/Peräkylä 2009).

As Leonidas slows down the car and brings it to a halt at the lights, he begins to seek for the appropriate degree of involvement in Evania's telling. His vocalization *e-eh::* (l. 22) and his simultaneously shrugging his shoulders and tossing back his head (Figures 10b-c) can be understood as projecting a divergent view on the issue. Indeed, Leonidas first acknowledges Evania's view of the situation and then invokes a contrasting one: *yeah but, (2.0) don't let it* (lines 24 and 26; see Couper-Kuhlen/Thompson 2000). At the same time, Leonidas brings his hand from the gearshift to the controls in the centre console to turn down the volume of the audio entertainment system and turns to look at Evania (Figures 10d-f).

When Leonidas brings the car to a halt at the lights and the engine of the car quiets down, music playing on the audio entertainment system becomes more audible, but overall it is now quieter in the car than before. By turning down the volume, Leonidas treats the soundscape, to which the participants have not previously attended in any explicit way, as in need of modification. Indeed, Leonidas may have to be especially careful in how he responds to Evania's telling: as a troubles recipient, he is expected to align and affiliate with the teller, but as someone whose own evening plans may also be at stake (note that he uses the self-inclusive *come* in line 4), he may also be expected to challenge and resist the implications of the telling. While verbally objecting to the view put forward by Evania, Leonidas manually muffles the audio entertainment system, displaying relevant attunement to the telling and appropriate sensitivity to the trouble reported. That is, through employing both verbal and manual means, Leonidas may be managing a "distance-involvement dilemma" in trying to balance between appearing disengaged, on the one hand, and over-involved, on the other, in the affairs of a friend (Raymond/Heritage 2006:701; Heritage 2011:182). The sequence soon ends in a kind of comic relief as Leonidas points out that Evania has something in the corner of her mouth and, after a moment of no talk, Leonidas begins to drum his fingers on the steering wheel and slightly turns up the volume of the audio entertainment system (not shown here).

Excerpts (8-10) illustrate how changes to the soundscape are implemented without any overt claims of trouble with hearing or any explicit solicitation of attention. Instead, the participants' orientation to the relevance of altering the soundscape appears to emerge gradually, as the talk they are engaged in develops into something of a sensitive, troublesome or delicate nature. Moreover, Excerpt (10) hints at one possible difference between muting and muffling an auditory object for which such a distinction is possible: when a relaxed conversation with music playing on the background gives way to a participant initiating a troubles telling and displaying some distress over the matter, it may be that the appropriate response is not to put the troubles teller on the spot and mute all ambient sounds, but to show that one is listening and muffle those sounds temporarily, so that they may nonetheless remind the participants of a pleasant activity that can be returned to if – and when – the trouble soon have eased.

5. Discussion

In this paper, we presented a range of examples where participants interact while an auditory object, either an audio entertainment system or a vacuum cleaner, is producing sound. We first illustrated that participants sometimes interact with one another, without any apparent problems, when surrounded by ambient sound. We then showed how, on other occasions, the same types and levels of ambient sound appear to cause participants problems with hearing, so that the participants orient to them by initiating repair and adjusting the soundscape. We also demonstrated, however, that even in contexts of evident hearing problems, participants do not automatically adjust the soundscape and may resolve the problems otherwise. Finally, we discussed cases in which participants do not in any way indicate that they have, or anticipate having, problems with hearing one another but nevertheless mute or muffle auditory objects.

In order to account for this seemingly random muting or muffling of auditory objects in interaction, we have suggested that adjustments of the soundscape are in fact done in orientation to other matters than mere problems with hearing; specifically, we have argued that the muting or muffling of an auditory object serves as a participant's resource for displaying increased involvement with the on-going talk. We hope to have shown that this type of increased involvement is different, though perhaps related, to that of prioritizing topical talk over a manual activity (cf. Toerien/Kitzinger 2007; Nishizaka/Sunaga 2015). In adjusting the soundscape, participants are orienting to some talk as making relevant a higher degree of involvement than other talk, rather than prioritizing talk over a practical activity. This difference is perhaps not so obvious in the home help data. As noted in the data section, the sound produced by the vacuum cleaner is connected to its practical use and, because of this, muting it also effectively means that the home help stops vacuuming. Adjustments to the soundscape could therefore in that context be understood merely as a side effect of the home help prioritizing topical talk over the practical activity of vacuuming. The sound produced by the audio entertainment system, however, is not directly related to the practical activity of driving a car. In that context, adjustments to the soundscape cannot be understood as mere side-effects of a change in priorities: even when they mute or muffle the audio entertainment system, drivers continue to be engaged in the driving activity.

Despite this and other differences between the two sets of data in general and between vacuum cleaners and audio entertainment systems in particular, we hope also to have shown that treating both as 'auditory objects' is arbitrary neither to us nor to the participants. A demonstrable – and observably relevant – feature of both objects is that they produce sound when they are turned on and, in this way, take up varying amounts of space in the soundscape. Research within the emerging field of cognitive hearing science provides one possible explanation as to why ambient sound should have an impact on interaction only some of the time: experimental studies have concluded that listening in noise necessarily involves cognitive compensation strategies. While most people are thus perfectly able to hear in noisy environments, this will always be at the expense of other cognitive functions, such as understanding and remembering (e.g. Pichora-Fuller 2008; Schneider/Daneman/Pichora-Fuller 2002). Relating to our findings, one could suggest that there are some types of talk for which participants in interaction need

more of their cognitive abilities freed up, to deal with, for instance, moments where the talk is of a delicate, troublesome or sensitive nature, such moments constituting the places in which participants may seek to adjust the soundscape and thus increase their involvement. The existence of such moments in talk has been suggested by others before us: Hayashi (2003:128), for instance, describes how the vocal and verbal conduct of a participant engaged in a description sequence "provides the addressee with a heightened moment to participate" and Sidnell (2006:390) similarly suggests that reenactments are "moments of heightened coparticipation". Heritage (2011:160) specifically identifies 'empathic moments' as moments in which a participant, through reporting on an intensive first-hand experience, "obligate others to join with them in their evaluation, to affirm the nature of the experience and its meaning, and to affiliate with the stance of the experiencer toward them" (see also Kupetz 2014). Considering the examples provided in this paper, we can see that only some of the cases in which participants adjust the soundscape involve descriptions, reenactments or reports of something that the speaker has experienced at first hand (e.g. Excerpt 3 where a pensioner reports on her unsuccessful attempt at calling the home help office and Excerpt 6 where Liz reports on how she handled the death of her schoolmates' mothers as a child). In other cases where participants orient to the relevance of displaying increased involvement, the talk reports on other people's experience (e.g. a neighbour in Excerpt 7 or entire strangers in Excerpt 8) or does not involve a report at all (e.g. Excerpt 4 where a problem of remembering is exposed, Excerpt 5 where talk centres on the topic of death and Excerpt 10 where talk concerns a participant's current state of mind). Rather than defining particular actions (e.g. tellings) or particular topics (e.g. death) as moments that make increased involvement appropriate, our data thus illustrates participants' own emerging identification of moments in the present interaction when they, for a variety of reasons, deem it relevant to display increased involvement with what is going on.

6. References

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