

Inspection sequences – multisensorial inspections of unfamiliar objects

Kristian Mortensen / Johannes Wagner

Abstract

The social world is inextricably linked to its physical environment. The way in which social interaction makes material objects relevant to meaningful practices has consequences for the flow of interactions.

In this article we examine how participants inspect unknown objects and how their different materiality determines the course of such inspections. We are interested in the resources that are mobilized in the inspection, how participants initiate, organize and complete these inspections; how they use different senses, depending on the materiality of the objects they are inspecting, and how they become momentarily unavailable for the surrounding interaction, while performing recognizably "private" activities.

Our data come from design workshops, tastings, grocery shopping and teaching with different participation frameworks (single action, two- and multi-party interaction).

Keywords: Ethnomethodology – multimodality – multisensoriality – inspection – objects – unknown objects – tastings.

German Abstract

Die soziale Welt ist untrennbar mit ihrer physischen Umgebung verbunden. Die Art und Weise wie in sozialer Interaktion materielle Objekte für sinnstiftende Praktiken relevant gemacht werden, hat Konsequenzen für den Ablauf von Interaktionen.

In diesem Artikel untersuchen wir, wie Teilnehmer unbekannte Objekte inspizieren und wie deren unterschiedliche Materialität den Ablauf solcher Inspektionen bestimmt. Wir sind daran interessiert, welche Ressourcen in der Inspektion mobilisiert werden, wie Teilnehmer diese Inspektionen einleiten, organisieren und abschließen; wie sie - abhängig von der Materialität der von ihnen inspizierten Objekte - unterschiedliche Sinne einsetzen und sich momentan für die umgebende Interaktion unzugänglich machen, indem sie erkennbar "private" Aktivitäten durchführen.

Unsere Daten stammen aus Design-Workshops, Verkostungen, Einkaufen im Supermarkt und Unterricht mit unterschiedlichen *participation frameworks* (Einzelsituation, Zwei- und Mehrparteien-Interaktion).

Keywords: Ethnomethodologie – Multimodalität – Multisensorialität – Objekte – unbekannte Objekte – Probieren.

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1. Introduction

Inspecting objects is a common feature of everyday life, and the reasons for those inspections are manifold. Familiar material objects are usually not inspected; they are used in ordinary practices for whatever purpose. However, familiar objects might have undergone a change, e.g. a glass has fallen down (Is there a crack?), a car door has been close to a parked car (Is there a scratch?), a cup has been taken out of a dish washer (Is it clean? Did somebody already activate the machine?) et cetera.

In this paper, we are interested in the ways inspections of unfamiliar objects are organized. The term 'unfamiliar' refers to how participants orient to them. Those objects may be an unfamiliar specimen of a known class of objects like e.g. new attire in a clothing shop or a new beer from the local brewery, but also unknown objects, e.g. a 'thingy' in an antique shop or an art gallery or an instrument in a medical museum. 'Unfamiliarity', we argue, is visible through the ways in which participants treat objects – they are investigated as mere objects of ('new') perception – what Heidegger (1927) calls *Vorhandenheit* ('present-at-hand'). Taking or passing such unfamiliar objects typically initiates what we refer to as inspection sequences, in which objects are put under scrutiny for sensorial inspection (e.g., Streeck 1996; Mondada 2018a, 2018c). In this paper, we are interested in the ways different human senses are involved in the inspection, be it vision, touch, taste or smell or any combination of those. We draw on data in which both tangible objects and beverages are inspected. We will argue that (i) inspection sequences are organized as a systematic and witnessable social practice that can be recognized by (possible) co-participants, but (ii) that the resources for accomplishing the inspections depend on the type of object that is being inspected and the local environments in which an inspection is undertaken.

We will start with a very simple example to clarify central issues for our analysis. Our first extract is taken from a study of shopping behavior in a supermarket. A male customer, shopping alone, inspects some packaged food items, i.e. an unfamiliar specimen of a known class of objects, before he chooses one and puts it into his basket. Although it can be argued that his actions are not designed for others,

they are publicly available, recognizable for what they are, and recognizable as a common social practice, in short they are part of the "witnessable social order" (Livingston 2008). As a practice, the customer's shopping behavior has a recognizable beginning and end and can be analyzed as a sequence of ordered actions. Since no talk is involved, we will present several screenshots to document the unfolding action.

In the extract, the customer approaches the Deli counter at a supermarket, looking at packages with ready made meal offers with his left hand under his chin in a 'thinking face' posture (Goodwin/Goodwin 1986). From arrival (pict. 1.1) to departure (pict. 1.2), the activity takes 55 seconds.

(1) Inspecting and choosing food items in a supermarket



Picture 1.1:
Customer approaching the counter



Picture 1.2:
Customer leaving

After having scanned the counter, the man lifts packaged food out of the shelf and looks at it (pict. 1.3). The food is wrapped in solid transparent plastic that allows the customer only to inspect it by vision. This prevents other inspection methods that are available in for instance cheese shops where cheese is inspected by vision, touch, smell and taste as Mondada shows in a number of studies (Mondada 2018a, c, forthc., this issue).



Picture 1.3:
Customer inspecting a package sample



Picture 1.4:
Customer reading the text on the sample

The inspection proper is sequentially organized: The customer starts looking at the package (pict. 1.3), then tilts his hand so he can read the content declaration on the front (pict. 1.4). When done, he returns the package into the counter and grabs another one that he inspects visually as well in similar ways as with the first one (pict. 1.5).



Picture 1.5:
Customer inspecting a package sample



Picture 1.6:
Customer reading the text on the sample

He keeps this package in his hand while looking at other samples in the Deli counter (pict. 1.6) before he finally puts it into his shopping basket and leaves.

The customer coordinates the movement of his hand with his gaze when picking up and turning the package. As Merleau-Ponty (1945) has pointed out, human beings experience the world through bodily engagement. Indeed, "[w]e gain most of our tactile information about the world through taking, holding, using, and handling things" (Streeck 2009:47). In this case, access to the food item is limited since it is packed the way it is. But we see the unique status of the human hand as the prominent way in which humans engage in the physical world including taking, holding and feeling material objects. Indeed, it has been argued that grasping things is the most basic function of the human hand (MacKenzie/Iberall 1994).

In moments of social interaction objects are passed or taken, offered or requested, and sometimes exchanged in highly ritualized ways e.g. giving and receiving gifts. In grasping or receiving an object, the configuration of the human hand displays an understanding of the object's properties and projected use. From a phenomenological perspective, the meaning of an object lies in the practices through which it is used, and is hence visible in the contact between user and object i.e. grasping and its action projection. Similarly, the way in which an object is passed to a co-participant displays how the object is to be received and used (Tolmie/Rouncefield 2011; Heath et al. 2017; Fox/Heinemann 2015; Heinemann/Fox 2019), and may even be corrected if the pass is done in what participants treat as improper ways – such as instructing children to pass scissors and knives. In addition, taking an object may result in a change in the participation framework, and may induce co-participants to look at or comment on the object (e.g., Hindmarsh/Heath 2000; Kidwell/Zimmerman 2007) or it may have to do with turn design and rights to the floor (cf. Day/Wagner 2014; see also Mondada 2007). In sum, the ways in which objects are grasped, taken, inspected, passed and received reveal

participants' understanding of how the object is to be used, and hence their displayed knowledge about the object itself.

The extract calls for some methodological considerations. The data were collected by a fixed camera that was set up in the shop. Since the shopper is alone at the Deli counter, there is no interaction with other shoppers, clerks or observers, nor does the extract include talk. Does that mean that the data cannot be analyzed as recognizable social actions in conversation analytic or ethnomethodological terms? CA-based studies may be more prone to take talk and interaction between participants as the condition for the analysis of sense-making. However we will follow Rawls and Garfinkel in the argument that social order is intelligible – and therefore describable – through the recognizable and witnessable actions of participants: "the EM analyst needs to discover how intelligible patterns of behavior *are actually being constructed and recognized on the spot*" (Rawls 2002:30). There is no next turn proof procedure in example 1 since there are no turns at talk but just sequentially organized action. But the customer's behavior is still intelligible for an observer (of the videotape) who can make sense of it by drawing on the situation.

2. Data

People grasp familiar objects in their daily routines at countless occasions. However, unfamiliar objects are encountered more rarely. We have systematically mined corpora from three different environments where participants encounter unfamiliar objects and have assembled a collection of 50 instances for this paper. All data are collected in Denmark, and feature interactions in both Danish and English.

In environment one, design workshops and design education, we found frequent instances of inspecting objects. Here, material objects are ubiquitous, since they are the focus of what designers do. Further, designers themselves work with a multitude of materials and tools (Heinemann 2011; Matthews/Heinemann 2012; Mortensen/Lundsgaard 2011). In some of these data, design students try to make sense of material objects with which they have no experience at all. In others, designers know the type of object they inspect, but features of the specimen have an element of unfamiliarity. All in all, 15 instances in our collection were drawn from design workshops. The second environment were tastings where the inspection of unfamiliar beverages is the focus of the activity. The data have been collected at a whisky-, gin and rum tasting fair,¹ and 15 instances were selected from the corpus. 10 instances come from the aforementioned supermarket study² and 10 others from miscellaneous environments.

Our collection is quite diverse with respect to the sensory resources brought about by the different materialities in the three environments. It gives us the chance to show the consistency of certain features of inspections across environments including the sequential organization and motivates our decision to call all instances in our collection for 'inspections of unfamiliar objects'. Rawls continues her argument (c.f. above) with the following words:

¹ We are grateful to Carsten Hjort Petersen, Peter Møller Mikkelsen and Niclas Bauenhøj Juhl for making these data available for us.

² We are grateful to Jacob Buur to allow us to use these data.

This is not something that can be done once and for all cases. Every situation has different patterns of order that are required for the coherence of action within that situation. Therefore the EM analyst needs to discover how intelligible patterns of behavior are being constructed in each case all over again, as Garfinkel says, for 'each next first time'.

By drawing on data from various situations and environments we are able to describe 'inspections' as a context-free systematic and recognizable social practice that is not tied to specific participants, settings or activities.

3. The sequential environment of inspections

Our second extract comes from a design workshop where students (A, B, C, D from left to right) work in groups with unfamiliar ('weird') objects. The students work with a metal object which actually is part of a bird feeder. C has inspected the object. For a while he has played with it, jokingly suggesting creative uses, for example using it as a monocle. The extract starts when A reaches out and takes the object that at that moment dangles from C's hand in the middle of the joint workspace.

(2) Bird feeder

- 1 D: ()
- 2 C: #ja:er. (.) ja:. ()
 yeah (.) yes ()
 fig #pict. 2.1



Picture 2.1: A acquiring the object from C

- 3 D: #(det var i hvert fald ikke os der sagde)
a least it wasn't us who said
 fig # pict. 2.2



Picture 2.2: Inspecting it

- 4 (0.7)

- 5 D: ()

- 6 (1.3)

- 7 C: XX#GRE:::
 fig #pict. 2.3



Picture 2.3: C attempts to scare the inspecting person A

- 8 (2.1)

- 9 B: Δer der noen af jer der [kenderΔ
 does anybody of you know

10 *A: [jamen det et #instrument ja
it's a (musical)instrument yes
fig #2.4



Picture 2.4: Bringing the object back into shared space, gaze at co-participants, and verbal assessment

11 *A: (jeg enig) huu hu[
I agree

12 *C: [huu

Participant A initiates the inspection bodily by leaning over and extending her hands (pict. 2.1), and we see how the object is grasped with the tips of the fingers in a rather delicate way (see section 7.1, 7.2). After receiving the object, A leans back and engages in the inspection proper (Streeck 1996). In other cases the inspector may lean over the object, but always avoids eye contact with co-participants (Mondada 2018a) and does not talk to others who however may observe the inspector (pict. 2.2). In Extract 2, the other participants keep talking in a low voice in the group, but neither here nor in other instances in our collection does the inspector engage in the ongoing talk of the others during the inspection. A does not even react to C's attempt to scare her (line 7, pict. 2.3) where C, firmly gazing at A, suddenly puts his hand forward and makes a loud noise. The inspection is closed as the inspector leans forward again, makes the object available for the others and comes with an account about the possible use of the object (line 10, pict. 2.3).

In the analysis of Extract 2 we have observed a sequence of different actions:

1. The inspection sequence is initiated as the object is taken or requested and received.
2. The way the object is grasped informs about the user's epistemic position towards the object. We see an unspecific 'pinching' grip in the case of the unknown objects. That is, the hand's prehensile posture (MacKenzie/Iberall 1994) is shaped by the object's intrinsic properties, not its projected use.
3. The object is removed from the central stage and moved close to the body of the inspector who creates a 'private' version of Goodwin's 'ecological huddle' (Goodwin 2006). The object is thus not merely 'looked at', but 'inspected' or 'scrutinized' (cf. Coulter/Parsons 1990, see also Goodwin 2007; Koschmann et al. 2011; Streeck 1996).
4. The object is inspected primarily through vision and touch. However, the inspector can easily transgress these limits and allude to tactility and haptics or

even taste and smell (see section 7.2). The inspection is a silent embodied activity (Mondada 2018b), and the inspector does not talk during the inspection proper.

5. By grasping the object and disengaging from the established participation framework the inspector indexes the inspection as a publicly available 'private' activity as opposed to inspections that create a shared focus of attention for the participants (see e.g., Goodwin 2018:349ff.)
6. The end of the inspection sequence is accomplished by bringing the object back into the common space and making it available for others.
7. Depending on the actions in which the inspection is embedded, the inspectors use some form of an account that addresses the reason for the inspection and brings the sequence back into the general talk. Talk thus may be resumed as part of the closing of the inspection proper.

In the next section we will discuss a case from our corpus of tasting beverages. We argue that 'doing tasting' here is organized as an inspection sequence with the same sequential structure as in extract 2 above.

4. Inspecting taste

In the inspection of material objects, we see how vision and tactility are the main resources through which participants interact with the object. Other types of materials, however, may require or afford other sensorial experiences such as smelling (e.g., perfume) or tasting (e.g., coffee or cheese). Streeck (2013) has argued that research on social interaction has largely been based on auditory and visual information. In part, he argues, this visual focus was established by Goffman (e.g., 1963) and became a core interest in interaction as an "exchange of words and glances between individuals" (Goffman 1963:13, cit. in Streeck 2013:69). On the other hand, the audio-visual focus is inevitably a result of the limitation to sound and vision by the technology of (video)recordings. However, participants' haptic experience in the above extracts may be equally important for their experiencing of the objects in questions. The haptic experience is at least in part visible and thus available as a resource for intersubjectivity (Streeck 2017). This new line of research has been coined multisensory interaction (Mondada 2016; Streeck 2013, 2017). In many professional settings, participants have undergone formal instruction in order to develop embodied practices for sharing their individual sensorial experiences. For instance, professional coffee tasters make their descriptions and assessments available to co-tasters with the aim of arriving at an objective description of each coffee; a description that is deeply embedded within social structures (Lieberman 2013). Here, vision, olfaction and haptics might be relevant for describing and assessing the quality of wine, coffee or cheese (Lieberman 2013; Fele 2019; Mondada 2018a, 2018c, forthc.) and indeed such sensorial experiences serve and inform the tasting experience itself. Thus tastings as an institutional practice has its own sequential organization (Lieberman 2013). For instance, in (professional) wine and coffee tastings the sample is examined through vision and smell before it is tasted.

In this section, we describe inspection sequences in which the inspection is of a

gustatory beverage. We focus on the tasting itself, and describe how tasting is organized as an inspection sequence. Later, in section 6, we will look at the inspections themselves and compare how the nature of the inspected object affords the format of the inspection. In extract 3, a customer attends a fair where various sellers serve small tasting samples of whisky, rum and gin. Here, the customer tries a specific brand of rum for the first time. Although he might be familiar with rum as a generic category (or the particular brand), he now tastes a specific rum sample. In this sense, the sample is treated as an unfamiliar object and this is visible in how the tasting is made publicly available.

(3) Rum tasting

- 18 S: og du siger til hvis du vil ha' mer'
and do let me know if you want more
- 19 det ba'r hvis du ska:: komme igennem hele dagen
it's just if you want to make it through the entire day
- 20 så det måske en go' ide og bare ha' en lille smu[le
it might be an idea to have just a little bit
- 21 C: [jamen
right
- 22 #det klart (.) det klart
sure sure
fig #3.1



Picture 3.1 SEL disengages from F-formation

23 (1.5) # (4.6) # (1.3) # (0.8) # (1.0) # (0.2) # (0.3)
 ((9.7))
 fig #3.2 #3.3 #3.4 #3.5 #3.6 #3.7



Picture 3.2:
CUS raises glass to nose



Picture 3.3:
CUS lifts glass to mouth



Picture 3.4:
SEL finds a drinking co-participant



Picture 3.5:
SEL gazes away from drinking co-participant



Picture 3.6:
SEL monitors CUS



Picture 3.7:
SEL gazes away from drinking co-participant

24 S: #fyrre procent
forty percent
 fig: #3.8



Picture 3.8: SEL gazes at tasting co-participant

25 S: (0.8) # (1.0) ((1.8))
fig #3.9



Picture 3.9: CUS inspects taste

26 S: og du burde ku:eh altså (0.8)hentyde til det til det jeg
and you should be able to eh I mean(0.8)refer to what I

27 sa'e før
said before

28 C: jaer
yeah

29 S: °ti::l (0.3) til smagsnuancerne°
to (0.3) to the taste flavours

30 (1.3)

31 C: jamen den er meget blød i smagen=
yes it does have a very soft taste

32 S: =det er den
it does

The extract starts as the seller has just described a specific rum label, and is now pouring a sample of it into a glass, and makes an account for the small quantity (line 18-20). The customer acknowledges this (lines 21-22) as he puts the money on the counter.³ As the seller takes the money, he disengages from the established F-formation (Kendon 1990) by turning to a colleague on his right and drops the money in a box behind the counter (pict. 3.1). In overlap with the seller's body torque (Schegloff 1998), the customer takes the glass, and lifts it to just below his nose (pict. 3.2). He then moves the tip of the glass to his mouth (pict. 3.3), and by tilting his head backwards he slowly pours a part of the liquid into his mouth (pict. 3.4).

At this point, the seller reorients his body and gaze towards the customer (pict.

³ During this tasting exhibition, most samples are free of charge, but fees are required for more expensive/exclusive samples.

3.4), but in finding a 'drinking co-participant' his gaze continues to the left past the customer (pict. 3.5). Indeed, throughout the customer's drinking, the seller does not fix his gaze towards him (see also Mondada 2018b). However, he monitors the customer's drinking by briefly looking at him (pict. 3.6) only to turn the gaze away again (pict. 3.7).

This gazing behavior shares characteristics with what Goffman (1963:84) refers to as *civil inattention* in which

one (participant) gives to another enough visual notice to demonstrate that one appreciates that the other is present (and that one admits openly to having seen him), while at the next moment withdrawing one's attention from him so as to express that he does not constitute a target of special curiosity or design.

The seller's gaze also shares similarities with self-grooms in which a co-participant's gaze is "driven away" from the self-grooming participant (Goodwin 1986: 40ff.). However, the seller's avoidance of maintaining his gaze towards the customer seems to be related only to drinking: as soon as the customer removes the glass from his lips – but visibly still with the liquid in his mouth – the seller turns the gaze towards him, and produces an online comment about the alcohol percentage (line 24, pict. 3.8).

The customer produces a minimal acknowledgement – a subtle head nod – before turning the gaze down in a kind of middle distance gaze (Heath 1986) as he 'chews' the liquid with the glass maintained in chest height position (pict. 3.9). Indeed, as the customer displays tasting the liquid it bears more similarities with the three-part structure of eating (put food in the mouth – chew – swallow) than with the two-part structure of drinking (drink – swallow).⁴ Now the seller prompts an account by referring back to his prior description (line 26-27) while the customer is still 'chewing' the sample with his gaze in a middle distance. The customer produces an acknowledgement, and, following the seller's increment (line 29), the customer makes an account of the tasting (line 31) thus publicly displaying his sensorial experience.

The tasting in extract 3 is organized as an inspection sequence, i.e. through participants' emerging construction of the activity as a momentary change in the social activity. The move into the inspection is characterized by a stagnation of bodily movement in relation to lower and upper body (see section 6 below). The inspection sequence ends with the inspector's release of the bodily immobility and a reengagement in the focused encounter with the co-participant. Similarly, the inspection proper is composed of various bodily features including maintaining the glass in high chest position, middle distance gaze, and bodily immobility. This is treated as a temporal unavailability for talk.

5. Drinking beverages, using objects

As we have seen, inspections are a systematic and recognizable social practice. However, they are not the only way of using beverages and objects. On the contrary, objects are most typically grasped, passed and received to be used; beverages are typically taken for drinking. In this section, we will shortly discuss two extracts

⁴ This comment was made by Jürgen Streeck (personal communication).

where this is the case.

5.1. Drinking, but not inspecting

We argue that the customer's drinking in extract 3 is beyond merely drinking, but is a publicly available and recognizable practice for 'doing tasting' (Mondada 2018a, b). As such, tasting goes beyond a private or individual sensory experience, but is lodged within a public social domain for which it is designed (Wiggins 2002). As a way of comparison, consider extract 4 in which drinking is embedded within and structured around the interactional progression of the activity. Here, seller and customer discuss the local facilities of the whisky distillery with which the customer is familiar.

(4) Drinking and talking

- 36 C: øh det var der i: ø:h (0.2) det var der i byggede [ikk os
eh *that's where you eh (0.2) that's where you build right*
- 37 S: [jaer
yeah
- 38 C: ja
yeah
- 39 # (2.3)
fig #4.1



Picture 4.1: CUS raises glass to nose

- 40 C: de:t et lækkert område
it's a wonderful area

41 S: #ja (.) ej det dejligt stille o:g (0.7) xxx tilbagetrukket
 yeah (.) it's nicely quiet and (0.7) remote
 fig #4.2



Picture 4.2: CUS drinks

42 (0.5)
 43 C: nemlig
 exactly

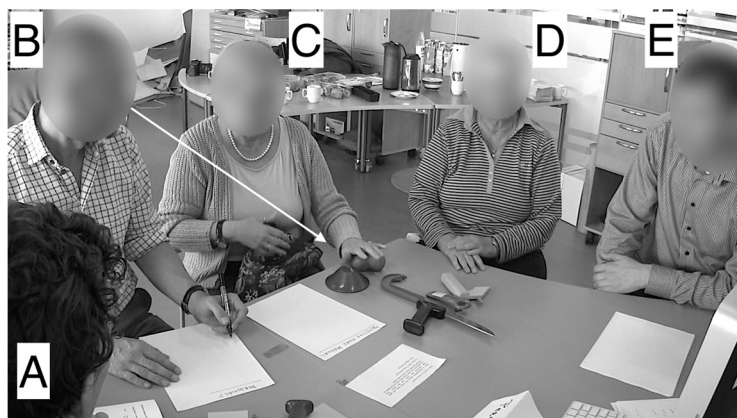
During participants' talk, the customer maintains the glass in head-high position while repeatedly lifting it to his nose thus visibly engaging in smelling the sample (pict. 4.1). In line 42, the customer makes an assessment of the geographic location of the distillery, and lifts the glass to his mouth (pict. 4.2). A first assessment projects a second assessment by the/a co-participant (Pomerantz 1984; see also Lindström/Mondada 2009) and thus functions as a first pair-part of an adjacency pair. In this way, the sequential position in which the customer starts drinking is a position in which a second pair-part is recognizable and projectable. Drinking is thus embedded within and organized around the unfolding talk (Hoey 2018). Drinking and talking may here be described as a multi-activity (Haddington et al. 2014), which are mutually exclusive – besides vocalizations such as *mmm* one cannot generally drink and talk at the same time (Wiggins 2002; Hoey 2018). Participants, then, do not orient to the *tasting* of the sample.

5.2. Taking an object, but not inspecting

Returning to the inspection of physical objects, we noted in extract 2 how the inspector did not account for taking the object, and how the inspection was done as a publicly available individual activity. As a way of comparison, in extract 5 the object is *not* taken-for-inspection, but rather as a component of the turn-design of a first pair-part. The extract comes from a designer workshop in which arthritis patients (C and D) present various facilitating tools for designers (A, B and E). Just prior to the extract, C has presented a heart shaped foam ball from her purse. She demonstrates to D how she uses it as a training tool by squeezing it with her hand. D indicates her appreciation (line 1) and C puts the ball on the table and addresses her handbag again.

(5) Foam ball

- 1 D: syn's jeg er en god id[e
I think it's a good idea
- 2 B: [(ok)
(okay)
- 3 D: (ja ok)
(yeah okay)
C puts ball on table
- 4 # (1.8)
fig #5.1



Picture 5.1: B gazes at object

- 5 B: #what's tha:t
fig #5.2



Picture 5.2: B grasps object prior to turn beginning

6 # (1.0)
fig #5.3



Picture 5.3: Manipulates object

7 C: it's for your ha:nds
8 (0.3)
9 B: yea- to make o:h

When C puts the ball down, she catches B's gaze that rests at the ball (pict. 5.1). He then reaches for it, just prior to his turn beginning and picks it up precisely at the onset of talk. During the turn in line 6, he moves the object into his personal space, and manipulates it (pict 5.3). Taking the tool, then, is not a move into a 'private' inspection sequence, but is part of initiating talk about this object (Day/Wagner 2014; see also Mondada 2007).

5.3. Summing up

So far we have described the sequential organization of inspection sequences. We have argued that such sequences are found both in relation to inspecting physical objects and gustatory beverages. We have shown how such inspections are not merely 'drinking' or 'taking an object' as part of taking a turn, but are recognizable as publicly available '*private*' activities in which the inspector momentarily withdraws from the ongoing interaction. Inspection sequences thus produce a change in the participation framework. We shall now turn to a closer analysis of how inspection sequences are initiated (section 6), how inspections differ in relation to the type of object that is put under sensorial scrutiny (section 7), and how the ending of a sequence is achieved and recognized (section 8).

6. Initiating an inspection sequence

Inspection sequences are organized in relation to the turn-taking system, and they are - as the next extract demonstrates - typically initiated in transition relevant position (Sacks/Schegloff/Jefferson 1974). In this way, the inspection is marked as a relevant next-action. In extract 6, we see how the inspection sequence is initiated at the end of a storytelling. Here, the interaction is put on hold with participants being engaged in more or less individual activities (Heath et al. 1995): customer 1 initiates an inspection sequence while the other two customers disengage from the encounter by torqueing their bodies and looking back behind customer 1.

(6) Peach and citrus flavours

- 75 S: det faktisk det sjove det er at den- den starter
in fact the funny thing is that it actually starts
- 76 egentlig når vi: når vi brygger den
when we when we brew it
- 77 og øøh (.) og så: så er der masser af af fersken og
and eh (.) and then there's lots of peach and
- 78 citrusno[ter
citrus flavours
- 79 C1: [jaer
yeah
- 80 (0.2)
- 81 S: og øh og ferskennoterne er faktisk i løbet af
and eh and the peach flavours are actually during
- 82 fadlageringen der er de egent- (.) der har de faktisk
the storage in the barrils there they actual- (.) there
- 83 ændret sig til at blive ti:l (.) til pære[noter i ø:h
they have changed to become (.) pear flavours in the eh
- 84 C1: [huu
huu
- 85 S: (.) i fadet
in the barril
- 86 C1: kh hee
- 87 S: og det sådan lidt eh (.) det(h) l(h)idt
and that's quite eh (.) that's quite
- 88 i(h)nteressa(h)nt
interesting
- 89 C1: jaa
yeah

- 90 S: at det gå:r går den vej men det synes jeg er blevet
that it changes that way but I think it's
- 91 meget tydeligt i den her
very clear in this one
- 92 (1.7)# (0.5)# (0.5)# (1.0)# (3.0)# (0.8)# (2.1) ((9.6))
 fig #6.1 #6.22 #6.3 #6.4 #6.5 #6.6
- 93 C1: altså det er bare sjov hvor meget den (.) den ligner en
well it's so funny how much it resembles a
- 94 slivovitzer
 slivovitz

As the extract starts, the seller initiates a ('funny', line 75) telling (Jefferson 1978) about how the whisky changes its taste from peach to pear during the time it spends in the barrel, and finishes the description by accessing it as 'interesting' (line 87-88), which he produces with laughter, and he receives an agreement from C1 (line 89). He proceeds with a personal assessment ('I think it's very clear in this one', lines 90-91). The end of the telling is thereby clearly recognizable, and provides a slot for C1, to move on.



Picture 6.1: SEL extended gaze towards CUS1



Picture 6.2: CUS1 raises glass to the mouth

The seller maintains his gaze towards C1 beyond turn-completion in line 91 (pict. 6.1). His extended gaze might display an orientation to this being a sequential position in which C1 could do the necessary actions for experiencing the taste himself, and C1 raises the glass to his mouth (pict. 6.2) and starts drinking. Similar to what we observed in extract 3 above, the seller turns his gaze away from him and directs

it towards customer A on the far left (pict. 6.3) and down towards the table (pict. 6.4).



Picture 6.3: SEL removes gaze from CUS1



Picture 6.4: SEL turns the gaze towards the table

Having poured the liquid into his mouth, the customer removes the glass while circulating the liquid in his mouth (pict. 6.5). Now the seller returns his gaze towards him (pict. 6.6). CUS1 makes an account of his tasting experience by claiming its similarity with another kind of liquor – slivovitz (line 93-94) – a similarity which he has already stated earlier in the tasting. This ends the inspection sequence. His account, however, is directed not to the seller, but to a fellow customer.



Picture 6.5: CUS1 finishes drinking and starts tasting



Picture 6.6: SEL reorients the gaze to CUS1

Next, in extract 7, the seller disengages from the F-formation by grasping a coffee cup and drinks from it, following which the customer grasps his glass, drinks, and moves into an inspection sequence.

(7) Soft flavor 1

- 48 S: eh:: (0.5) men det var meget interessant fordi det du
ah (0.5) but it's quite interesting because you re- (.)
- 49 f:- (.) du fjerner oss (.) altså du gir' den lidt mere
you do remove (.) I mean you give it some more
- 50 tid
time
- 51 (0.7)
- 52 S: og så (.) interagerer den meget mere med træet og gør
and so (.) it interacts much more with the wood
- 53 S: du får den her (0.5)° ↓bløde smag.°
so it gets this soft flavor
- 54 C: #ja #
yes
fig #7.1 #7.2



Picture 7.1:
S gazes at a cup on the counter



Picture 7.2:
C takes cup

55 (2.0) # (1.5) # (1.9) ((5.4))
 fig #7.3 #7.4



Picture 7.3:
S raises cup to mouth w/ gaze on C



Picture 7.4:
C raises glass. S removes gaze

As the seller reaches possible completion in line 53, he gazes at his coffee cup on the counter (pict. 7.1) and reaches for it (pict. 7.2). His turn has reached a pragmatic, syntactic and prosodic completion, and reaching for the cup indicates that he has finished with his lengthy explanation of the flavor. An obvious next action for the customer would be to move on and do his tasting. Moving his cup to his mouth, the seller maintains his gaze towards the customer (pict. 7.3) until the customer moves his glass to his mouth and the seller removes his gaze from him (pict. 7.4).

One could even argue that the seller by drinking himself models a possible action for the customer. Building on Goodwin's (2013, 2018) notion of substrate, we can see how the customer builds on what he finds in his perceptual field (Streeck 1996), here a co-participant's action, which he copies in his own action (Brouwer/Mortensen, *forthc.*).

In extract 7 then, we see how the initiation of the inspection sequence is sequentially fitted to the local environment, and how the customer builds on the seller's action, drinking, which he mirrors. Indeed, inspection sequences are typically initiated in a transition relevance position following a turn-at-talk by a speaker *other* than the inspector. In this way, the inspection sequence occurs when transition to a next-speaker might be relevant (Sacks/Schegloff/Jefferson 1974). In the case of tasting liquids, we might say that moving the glass to the mouth and projecting drinking (or tasting) is a way to refrain from taking a turn-at-talk as talking with liquid in the mouth is difficult if not impossible besides vocalizations such as *mmm* (Wiggins 2002; Hoey 2018).

What we see in extracts 6 and 7 then is how the seller creates a slot in which an inspection sequence can be launched. This is done in relation to the turn-taking organization and may be followed by actions such as drinking, which does not project an immediate upcoming next turn-at-talk.

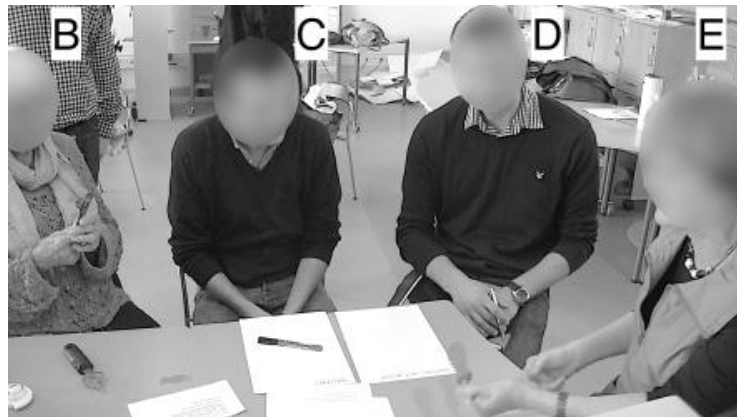
6.1. Changing participation frameworks

So far we have described cases in which the inspection momentarily puts the interaction on hold, that is, participants treat the inspection as the main activity. Here, talk is typically withheld, and the inspection thus constitutes a moment of silent embodied activity (Mondada 2018b). However, when the encounter is made up by

three or more participants the inspection may be organized as a momentary disengagement from the encounter in which talk continues between the other participants. As such, the inspection marks a shift in the participation framework. Consider extract 8 below in which a designer inspects an object. Prior to the extract, E (to the right) has just described the object as a specific tool for opening jars.

(8) Jar opener

- 1 E: <den her den har> vægtstangsprinci[ppet med oss.=
this one has the leverage principle as well
- 2 C: [ja den ()
yeah it ()
- 3 E: [=°ikk os
right
- 4 D: [(ja det #kræver kræfter at åbne)
(yeah it takes force to open
 fig #8.1



Picture 8.1: E puts object on the table

- 5 E: jaer
yeah

6 # (1.5)
fig #8.2



Picture 8.2: C takes object from table

7 E: #det simpelthen mit bedste (.) hjælpemiddel.
it's simply my best assisting tool
fig #8.3



Picture 8.3: C inspects object

8 E: Δog jeg ved godt den ikk er køn men den ka ligge i en
and I do know it's not pretty but it can stay in a

9 skuffe
drawer

10 (0.5)

11 D: den ska man oss kun bruge hjemme i køkkenet
you also only use at home in the kitchen

12 E: det er nemlig det jeg gør
that's actually what I do

13 (0.3)

- 14 B: ja: den her e:r #pænere
 yeah this one looks nicer
 fig #8.4



Picture 8.4: C puts object back on the table

- 15 E: jamen det har du helt ret i (0.2) men den her fungerer
 well you're absolutely right (0.2) but this one works
- 16 bedre
 better

At the end of her description, E assesses the 'leverage principle' (line 1) as the key feature of the tool. C acknowledges this by verbally producing an agreement token. E now puts the object back on the table (pict. 8.1), and C takes hold of it (pict. 8.2), leans over the table, moves the object closer to his face, and inspects it (pict. 8.3).

Note that E now produces another assessment of the object first by an extreme case formulation (Pomerantz 1986) in line 7 and then by a self-deprecation (Pomerantz 1984, Goodwin/Heritage 1990) and an account in line 8-9. The assessment is followed by an agreement by D (line 11), and a counter by A (line 12). During A's counter, B puts the object back on the table (pict. 8.4). In this way, the inspection sequence does not become a shared focus of attention of all participants.

Note that the inspection sequence here does not end with an account, but merely with C merging back into the ongoing interaction thereby reengaging in the surrounding participation framework. We thus see that an inspection sequence may be a relevant next action in which participants orient to, and indeed co-construct, one participant's inspection.

7. The inspection proper

Although inspectors may use a combination of different senses such as vision, tactility and olfaction to inspect material objects it could be argued that the intrinsic properties such as texture affords inspection primarily through touch and vision (Gibson 1979; Norman 2013). Beverages may be looked at and eventually touched,

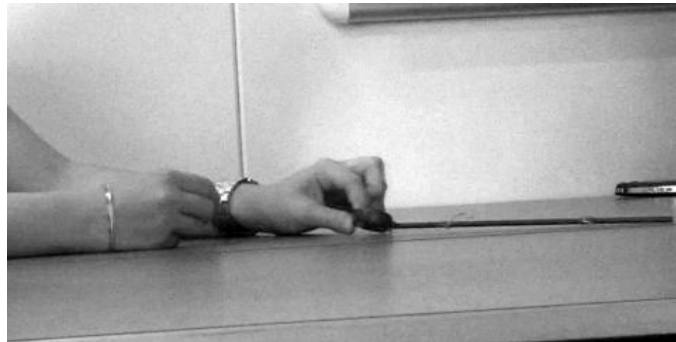
but smell and taste may be highlighted when the inspection is about the taste of the beverage in question. Similarly, touch is central to tasting for instance cheese (Moncada 2016, *forthc*), but may be less relevant for tasting beverages. As such, inspecting unfamiliar objects might involve different senses for the sensorial experience. In this section, we look at participants' embodied conduct during the inspection proper. We argue that the difference in the materiality of the object under inspection affords different embodied resources for 'doing inspection'. Such practices, however, are lodged within the recognizable action of doing inspections.

7.1. Acquiring objects for inspection

In this section we look at how unfamiliar objects are grasped, passed and received. We note that the grasping hand configuration is that of a precision grip (e.g., Streeck 1996; 2009) in which thumb and index finger (and, at times, middle finger as well) are extended and by pinching the fingers together grasp the object in question. Often, the grip is placed at the extremities of the object. Pictures A and B show how various unfamiliar objects are picked up, picture C shows the transfer of such an object.



Picture A:
Pinching grip



Picture B:
Grabbing the end of the object



Picture C:
Pinching grip when transferring
an unfamiliar object



Picture D:
Passing a (modified) familiar object

The way in which the objects in pictures A-C are grasped does not display how the objects are to be used – or rather that they are to be used for anything else but for sensorial inspection. In that way, participants do not rely on their embodied knowledge of the practices in which the objects reside, but rather on different kinds

of categorical work based on the objects' intrinsic properties such as size, material, texture and assumed weight. This categorization is made visible in how the objects are grasped – for instance, that the object might be fragile, heavy, solid, slippery or the like. The grip of the hand indicates an epistemic position where no knowledge about the objects' use is embodied in the grip, compared to e.g. taking a familiar object such as a knife during dinner (c.f. Heinemann/Fox 2019).

Tolmie/Rouncefield (2011:40) have argued that "in handing someone an object you project the way they will engage with it through the manner in which you hand it over. Of course, the appropriate understanding of that projection is intensely situational. All of this is saying that a good measure of the meaning and the significance of shared objects within the world we inhabit is tightly bound up with the interactional methods through which these objects are shared". As we have seen, inspecting unfamiliar objects is significantly different as the configuration of the hand does not project how the object is to be used beside for inspection. In contrast, in picture D, the participant on the left side of the picture receives a can opener. Her grip is different from the three others: she displays knowledge of the object that she is receiving by the local way she receives it. In sum, we observe how unfamiliar objects are taken and passed in a very different way than with familiar objects, where giver and taker display how the object is to be used. In other words, the participant's epistemic knowledge of (familiar) objects is visible through the way it is taken, passed and received.

7.2. Inspecting material objects

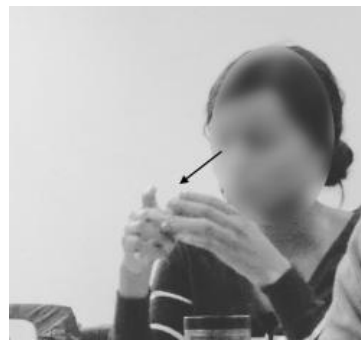
Staying with material objects, we now look at the inspection proper. Pictures E to J are from a classroom activity in which design students are inspecting (ontologically) unfamiliar objects. The object in this case is a darning mushroom, a mushroom shaped tool to support darning socks – a practice and tool that has gone out of fashion at least for young students so the object now is unknown for them.



Picture E: looking at



Picture F: smelling



Picture G: looking at



Picture H: turning



Picture I: speaking



Picture J: tapping the cap lightly

Here we see that when the female student has grabbed the object, she moves it towards herself, gazing at it shortly (pict. E) and moves it immediately up to her nose with both hands and sniffs it (pict. F). Note how her eyes go off-focus to her left side while she is sniffing the object. She brings the mushroom back into the space before her eyes and scrutinizes it by looking at it from different angles, turning it upside down (pict. G and H) – in much the same way as in the supermarket in extract 1. In picture I she displays it and makes a short comment about it. It takes 7 seconds from picture E to the point where she starts speaking in picture I.

Shortly before her turn-at-talk reaches completion, a male student in the group stretches out his hand and starts talking about the mushroom. Picture J shows that just before taking possession of it he softly knocks with his finger on the mushroom's cap.

We note that the other participants in the group do not talk when the female student takes the object and moves it close to her body (cf. Mondada 2018c). However, as she displays the mushroom and moves it away from her person into a space that is available for everybody (e.g. Day/Wagner 2014), the others reengage in talk.

We see in many instances that the participants move the object from the grasping location to their personal space. They bring it close to their face and sometimes lean over the object (Fox/Heinemann 2015). Goodwin (2006:20) has described something similar as "ecological huddle":

The embodied framework of mutual orientation created by Pam and Jeff's bodies, which both bounds their ecological huddle from the world outside its perimeter, and provides a visible locus for shared vision and joint action within the space it creates, has deep affinities with many physical structures in the built environment such as arenas, classrooms, lecture halls, etc.

Differently from Goodwin, our student 'huddles' for herself in the co-presence of others. She brings the object close to her body, she does not orient to the students around her by gaze, and she does not talk to anybody for the time in which she performs a sensorial inspection of the object. The student deploys different sensorial operation in an ordered way: she looks at the object, she smells it, inspects it visually (gazing it and manipulating the object).

7.3. Inspecting gustatory beverages

Tasting beverages in professional or semi-professional settings entails a range of embodied practices that are organized in standardized sequences. These include vision and smell, and are typically done prior to the tasting itself (Lieberman 2013;

Fele 2016; Mondada 2018a, b, c). In this paper, we focus on the tasting itself. Here we note systematic practices for participants' embodied conduct.



Picture K



Picture L



Picture M



Picture N

Firstly, the inspector remains silent throughout the inspection. We do find assessments done through facial mimics, but this happens only towards the end of the inspection sequence. Secondly, the inspectors never put the glass (back) on the counter during the inspection, but maintain the glass in his hand in a chest high position (see pictures K-N). The glass thus becomes a resource for displaying some ongoing social action that has not yet come to a completion, not unlike that of maintaining a physical contact with the desk during service encounters (Mortensen/Hazel 2014). Thirdly, the inspector becomes rather immobile, that is, their lower and upper body and hands remain largely in the same position during the inspection. Movement and stagnation of movement of the body, then, become a resource for displaying changes in social action and changes in the participation framework (e.g., Schefflen 1972; Goodwin 2000). Fourthly, the inspector's gaze is withdrawn from co-participants (most typically the seller), and moves into a middle distance gaze (Heath 1986) (pictures K-N). Comparing this observation to picture F above, in which the inspector smells an unfamiliar object, we might suggest that when vision is not the main resource for the sensorial inspection, gaze is withdrawn from both the object under inspection and from co-participants. As such, the 'gaze into nowhere' might be a public display of cognitive processes such as thinking (Goodwin/Goodwin 1986) or 'sensing' and thus a resource for displaying that the inspector is momentarily unavailable for (other) social actions.

7.4. How different material leads to different embodied practices

In order to sum up, we here discuss some of the differences between inspections of material objects and beverages.

- (i) **Immobility:** During inspections participants remain rather immobile. Whereas participants typically move the upper and lower body prior to the inspection (e.g., when taking/receiving the object or lifting the glass from the counter), they move into a stage of immobility during the inspection proper. This immobility is primarily related to the upper and lower body, although for inspection of beverages it also includes gestures and a lack of manipulation of the glass.

- (ii) Engagement with the object: During the inspection of material objects, inspectors manipulate the object: they look at it, turn it, move it, feel it, handle it in different ways and even sniff it. In tastings, participants hold the glass in a chest high position that indexes the glass as a relevant component for the current activity. And they 'chew' the liquid in different ways, thus publicly displaying the ongoing sensorial experience.
- (iii) Being unavailable for others: Maintaining the gaze on material objects is a resource for displaying unavailability for others. In the same way, the middle-distance gaze during tastings displays the taster's momentary involvement in a visible and recognizable 'private' activity. The materiality of the object (material or liquid) thus affords different ways in which gaze can be used as a resource for displaying the inspector's current focus of attention.

7.5. Ending the inspection sequence; orientation to post-inspection assessment

As we have described above, inspection sequences in tasting environments may be followed by an account from the inspector. These accounts take the form of a description, categorization, or assessment. As such, it is an account for the inspection sequence itself, and a way to change the participation framework. In extract 9, we see how the co-participant orients to the account being normatively expected in post-inspection position.

(9) Soft flavor 2

- 51 S: og så (.) interagerer den meget mere med træet og gør
and so (.) it interacts much more with the wood
- 52 S: du får den her (0.5)° ↓bløde smag.°
so it gets this soft flavor
- 53 C: ja
yes
- 54 (5.4)

- 55 S: #fyrre procent alkohol
forty percent alcohol
 fig #9.1



Picture 9.1

- 58 (5.0)# (6.0)# ((11.0))
 fig #9.2 #9.3



Picture 9.2



Picture 9.3

- 59 C: man ka #stadig godt mærk- (lissom) man ka godt smage
you still do sense (like) you do taste
 fig #9.4



Picture 9.4

- 60 C: hvor det er (.) det kommer fra
where it comes from

61 (0.4)

62 S: *præcis*
 exactly

Extract (9) overlaps partly with extract (7) where we described how the seller avoids looking at the customer during drinking (pic. 9.1). However, about 6 seconds after the customer removes the glass from his mouth (pic. 9.2), but while clearly still 'doing tasting' the seller turns his gaze towards him, and maintains it on the customer (pic. 9.3). The seller thus clearly projects (or prompts) a turn-at-talk from the customer following the inspection. This follows in line 59 when the customer brings the inspection sequence to an end by giving an assessment of the rum while pointing towards the bottle on the counter (pic. 9.4). We see the participants orienting to the assessment as a normatively expected action, which brings the inspection to a close.

8. Conclusions

In this paper we have shown how inspections of material objects and gustatory beverages can be sequentially organized as a systematic and recognizable social action – an inspection sequence. We have argued that inspection sequences reveal a social practice that is different from 'merely' drinking or grasping an object during a conversation. The paper has shown how inspection sequences have a clear sequential structure – a beginning, an inspection proper, and an end.

An inspection sequence is treated as a momentary disengagement from the established focused encounter as the inspector withdraws as a socially approachable participant. As such, the inspection displays an ongoing, publicly available 'private' activity – that the inspector is visibly and recognizably engaged in a sensorial experience. This is done as a visible practice through participants' bodies and their displayed engagement with the object (material or gustatory) in question. For instance, we note how participants significantly reduce the movement of their body posture as they become almost immobile during the inspection proper. And we note how gaze is an important resource for displaying the inspector's visual focus of attention. During tastings, we observe how inspectors move into a middle-distance gaze. We noted the same thing when material objects are smelled. Thus it seems that when vision is not a main resource for the inspection, the participants 'gaze into nowhere'. This observation is similar with Goodwin and Goodwin's (1986) observation that during word searches the participant typically gazes away from the recipient, and here too this is treated as a display of being unavailable for talk.

We thus observe a highly systematic and recognizable social practice which we here call 'doing inspection'. Our starting point was material objects, in which some unfamiliar object was put under scrutiny. As such, the object was no longer used as being *Zuhanden*, i.e., its use reveals practice, but rather as *Vorhanden*, i.e., as an object of theorizing (Heidegger 1927). We then found the same practice during tastings of beverages. Inspections, then, are a visible and recognizable social practice for displaying an ongoing epistemic operation. In sum, we note how inspection sequences are organized in the same way when material objects and gustatory beverages are inspected. However, we also see differences in the embodied ways in

which the inspection proper is formatted. This shows how different kinds of materials afford (Gibson 1979) different ways of doing sensorial work. Here we have focused on how material objects are inspected primarily through touch and vision, and how beverages are primarily inspected through taste. However, as we have seen, objects may also be inspected through olfaction (e.g., Liberman 2013). We may also think of other kinds of material objects, for instance textiles that may be inspected through haptics. Future work will be able to outline how inspections of such and other objects draw on different resources for doing sensorial work.

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Kristian Mortensen & Johannes Wagner
Department of Design and Communication
University of Southern Denmark
Universitetsparken 1
6000 Kolding
Denmark

krimo@sdu.dk
jwa@sdu.dk

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