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Turn Continuation in *yeah/no* Responding Turns: Glottalization and Vowel Linking as Contrastive Sound Patterns

Beatrice Szczepek Reed

King's College London

Marina Cantarutti

The Open University / University of York

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Abstract

This study makes an original contribution to the understanding of sound patterns in interaction by investigating glottalization and linking at word boundaries in naturally occurring talk. Specifically, the study shows how speakers of British English make use of the contrast between glottalized and linked vowel-fronted TCU boundaries in multi-unit turns. Second TCUs whose initial vowel is joined to the last sound of the first TCU routinely either extend or elaborate on the social action of the first TCU. Second TCUs whose initial vowel is glottalized routinely accomplish new actions that are distinct from those accomplished by the first TCU. After giving an

overview of a wider collection of cases, the analysis focuses on *yeah/no* responding turns.

Keywords

Phonetics, turn-taking, turn design, TCU, action formation, British English

1. Introduction

This chapter explores turn continuation in multi-unit turns in British English talk-in-interaction. In doing so, it investigates a particular pair of sound patterns that has been shown to be interactionally relevant in German and French naturally occurring talk: glottalized vs. joined-up vowel-fronted turn-constructional units (TCUs) in multi-unit turns:

TCU ʔV-TCU vs. TCU=V-TCU.

Previous research has shown that speakers of German and French make use of the same set of phonetic resources for managing multi-unit turns-at-talk with regards to distinguishing between new and in-progress actions. In German, glottalization of vowel-fronted second TCUs has been found to co-occur at high frequency with the initiation of new social actions. In contrast, vowel-initial TCUs that are linked directly to the end of a preceding TCU have been found to co-occur with the continuation of current actions in

progress. This phenomenon, first reported in Szczepek Reed (2014, 2015) has since been shown to hold for French in the context of confirmation sequences (Szczepek Reed and Persson 2016). The present study expands this analysis to British English, where the findings suggest a similar distribution. After an initial overview of a wider collection of cases, the chapter focuses on turn continuation in *yeah/no* responding turns.

The study makes an original contribution to conceptualizations of glottalization, linking, and sound patterns in conversation more generally. It shows that glottalization and linking are interactional resources for English talk-in-interaction, and it offers detailed descriptions of vowel linking, a phonetic phenomenon that has so far received little attention. More broadly, the study shows that some phonetic language uses in interaction may hold cross-linguistically, even where language-specific phonologies suggest otherwise.

The remainder of the chapter will situate the study in the relevant literature before introducing the data, methodology and conceptual approach. Subsequently, the findings will be presented in the form of qualitative, conversation analytic analyses of representative extracts from the corpus, complemented by quantitative results.

2. Multi-unit turn design and the TCU

The analysis presented below is concerned with the role of a phonological contrast – glottalization vs. linking – for multi-unit turn construction, that is, turns extending beyond a first chunk of talk that has the potential to perform an independent social action. Such chunks have been described as turn-constructional units (TCUs) (Sacks et al. 1974). TCUs have been defined in a variety of ways, with some approaches putting greater focus on language form, and others designed primarily to capture interactional contingencies. Seminal publications have identified the "structural bases according to which turn-constructional units are recognized" (Auer 1996: 57) as well as the linguistic flexibility (syntactic, prosodic, pragmatic) that defines naturally occurring talk and specifically TCU design (Auer 1996; Ford and Thompson 1996; Selting 1996). Much of this work has focused on identifying "predictor[s] of turn completion as validated by actual speaker change" (Ford and Thompson 1996: 142), that is, the linguistic resources that both current and upcoming turn holders orient to in their management of turn taking. The early consensus was that the linguistic format of TCUs is a "complex" (Ford and Thompson 1996) interplay of syntax, prosody, and pragmatics, although Ford et al. (1996: 449) report "numerous cases in which, instead of clear cases in which syntax, prosody, gesture, and action predictably converge to form

unequivocal units, even emergent ones, an array of combinations are produced, which are open to manipulation of various sorts as they are being built". With these complexities in mind, the present analysis follows Ford et al. (1996, 2013), Schegloff (1996), and Selting (2000) in being less concerned with pinning down the abstract linguistic features of the TCU as a unit and instead being primarily interested in turn construction as a means of building turn and action trajectories. In adopting such an orientation, we acknowledge that the TCU may be linguistically "indefinable" (Ford et al. 1996: 428) in the abstract, since it is "interactively determined" (Sacks et al. 1974: 727) and thus "a members' problem" (Hutchby and Wooffitt 2008: 50). Schegloff (1996: 55) defines TCUs as units that "can constitute possibly complete turns; on their possible completion, transition to a next speaker becomes relevant (although not necessarily accomplished)". This definition facilitates the discovery of participants' strategic exploitation of linguistic resources for the management of turn and action trajectories. Schegloff (1996) discusses how the prosodic design of first TCUs in multi-unit turns may orient to the possibility of a next speaker coming in by counteracting that possibility. In such a scenario, a first TCU may be designed "to interdict (literally) the possibility of another (…) starting to talk at the possible juncture" and thus be oriented to its own status "as a possible TCU, and its end as a possible turn completion" (1996: 57). Schegloff shows that such TCUs are "designed for their position in the turn"

(1996: 61), and that they may, for example, project more TCUs. Seen in this light, "transition spaces are (…) organizationally strategic" (Schegloff 1996: 97). The strategic use of linguistic resources at points of potential turn transition may occur in the form of a "rush-through" (Schegloff 1982) or "abrupt-join" (Walker and Local 2004), or in the form of the phenomena described below. This concept of the "possible TCU" as a resource rather than a linguistic format is also supported by Selting's (2000) understanding of TCUs without TRPs, that is, TCUs that are designed for their non-final position in multi-unit turns. Raymond's (2013) discussion of "slots" (ibid.: 176) vis-à-vis TCUs is also relevant here. Raymond describes how "complex" (ibid.: 177) responses to yes/no interrogatives may successively address the grammatical form and the action made relevant by a preceding turn "within a single (intonation) unit" and "using turn constructional *materials* associated with *different* TCU types (a lexical TCU composed of type-conforming token and a phrasal, clausal or sentential TCU)" (ibid., emphasis in the original). Here, speakers design turns as two "possible TCUs", each filling a relevant slot, and designed as a single unit of talk.

Writing on turn-relevant units, Ford et al. advocate conceptualizing talk as the emergent unfolding of turn and action trajectories and propose to place the "central focus on action-oriented accounts for turn construction" (2013: 49). The present study aligns with their proposal. In describing the role of glottalization and vowel linking for turn construction, Schegloff's

(1996) concept of the "possible TCU" is made use of. In approaching multi-unit turn construction in this way, the analysis does not foreground the definition, identification and segmentation (Auer 2010; cf. Barth-Weingarten 2016) of units but the resources with which turn trajectories are oriented to and managed.

3. Glottalization and linking in speech and conversation

The analysis presented here is concerned with two phonetic phenomena at word boundaries: vowel-onset glottalization and linking in intervocalic environments. While glottalization has received considerable attention from phoneticians, linking has mainly been mentioned in materials for English language teaching.

3.1 Glottalization

The term "glottalization" refers to a variety of phenomena ranging from complete closure of the vocal folds (glottal stop, perceived as a brief period of abrupt closure or held silence and sudden release) to varying degrees of irregular vocal fold vibration (perceived as creaky voice) (see Garellek 2013 for an extensive examination). Spontaneous talk exhibits a tendency towards the realization of glottalization as irregular vocal fold vibration rather than

as full glottal stops (Garellek 2013). The IPA symbol "ʔ" is used here for transcribing both full glottal stops and lesser degrees of glottalization.

Phonological research has linked pre-glottalization of vowels to the marking of stress. This has been shown for German (Kohler 1994) and for the "accent d'insistance" in French (Léon 2001). Research on mostly American varieties of English found glottal stops to occur at strong intonation phrase boundaries, especially on pitch accents (Pierrehumbert and Talkin 1992; Dilley et al. 1996; Garellek 2012), and with full lexical items (rather than grammatical words, Garellek 2012). When occurring within V_V combinations at word boundaries, glottal stops have been found to be an alternative form of hiatus resolution (Fuchs 2015; Mompeán and Gómez 2011) in variation with linking processes such as liaison, i.e. [r] epenthesis in non-rhotic varieties of British English (ibid.) and homorganic [j] or [w] epenthesis after high unrounded or high rounded vowels respectively (but see Davidson and Erker 2014, who treat these not as actual glide insertions but rather as articulatory transitional palatalisation/ velarisation phenomena). When produced, vowel onset glottalization in British English is more frequently found after high and central vowels and before low or back vowels (Fuchs 2015; Garellek 2013).

In talk-in-interaction research, terminal glottalization (i.e., at word boundary) has been observed to co-occur with self-repair (Jasperson 2002; Schegloff et al. 1977) and turn holding (Local and Kelly 1986; Ogden 2001;

Selting 1995). Our work focuses on vowel-onset glottal stops, which are as yet unstudied by interaction analysts aside from the work on German and French that relates to the present study (see Section 3.3).

3.2 Linking

The term "linking" is used here to refer to the uninterrupted latching of word-final sounds (consonants or vowels) to the initial vowel of a next word, without intervening pauses, breaths, coughs, clicks or glottalization. In the case of word-final vowels, V_V linking happens when no break in phonation can be perceived and no consonantal gesture is inserted. Linking has not yet been investigated for its contributions to spoken language interaction except for the studies related to the present research. In fact, within English phonetics the phenomenon is still very under-researched, with the exception of English language teaching, where pronunciation materials recommend "liaison" (as [j,w] glide insertion) to avoid hiatus (see Cruttenden 2014; cf. Lindsey 2019, for objections to the idea of glide insertion). Our work will focus not on hiatus resolution strategies but on actual processes of vowels merging into each other, where linking across V_V combinations at word boundaries implies processes of monophthongization, reduction, and articulatory smoothing (Buizza 2022) of the implicated vowels if compared with what could have been their canonical qualities.

3.3 Glottalization and linking as interactional resources in German and French

Three recent studies have investigated the contrastive role of glottalization and linking in naturally occurring talk. Szczepek Reed (2014) shows that in German, vowel linking and glottalization at TCU-VTCU (TCU followed by vowel-initial next TCU) boundaries are interactionally distinctive. Participants make use of the glottalization of TCU-initial vowels in their design of new actions, and of linking in their design of continuations of actions-in-progress. In a small number of cases, participants exploit linking to integrate new but dispreferred or delicate actions into preferred actions. In a follow-up study (Szczepek Reed 2015), German *ja aber* ('yes but') is shown to accomplish different actions depending on whether the phonetic design is *ja ʔaber* or *jaber*. In the case of *ja ʔaber*, *ja* implements a first action, typically as a Second Pair Part, while *ʔaber* initiates a new, typically disaffiliative action that is being done – or designed as being done – for the first time. In contrast, turns starting with *jaber* perform one single disaffiliative action, redoing – or designed as redoing – a disaffiliative action that has been done or attempted earlier. The significance of the findings from both studies lies not only in the discovery that glottalization and linking offer participants two distinct resources for building multi-unit turns, but also in showing that German speakers use both linking (42%) and

glottalization (58%), when German phonology claims that almost all word-initial German vowels are glottalized (Krech et al. 2009).

In French, many types of word boundaries are characterized by a range of linking processes, including elision, enchaînement and liaison. Nevertheless, Szczepek Reed and Persson (2016) show that in a small collection of confirmation sequences, TCU boundaries follow the same pattern as in German. Linking accompanies confirmations that are designed as single, unified responses, that is, as multi-unit turns that start with an initial confirming TCU and are extended by talk that straightforwardly furthers the progressivity of the initial confirmation, or by talk that was additionally elicited by preceding turns. In contrast, glottalization accompanies complex multi-unit turns where only the turn-initial confirmation responds to a prior request for confirmation, but where subsequent talk is a departure from the turn-so-far.

The fact that the glottalization / linking distinction can be observed in both French and German is noteworthy and has implications for the way sound patterns in interaction are conceptualized. The analysis below adds English to the comparison. If natural talk in all three languages were to show connections between glottalization and the start of new talk on the one hand, and linking and action continuation on the other, such a finding could be considered evidence that these sound patterns are not solely determined

by language-specific phonologies but are also cross-linguistic interaction-shaping resources.

4. *Yeah/no* responses followed by same-speaker talk

Our study examines phonological contrasts between the response tokens *yeah* and *no* and subsequent same-speaker talk. Response tokens and the talk that follows may occupy different "slots" (Raymond 2013) with regard to grammatical and action-oriented constraints set up by prior turns. Our phonological study was carried out in parallel with the action analysis before establishing possible connections between linking or glottalization between these tokens and surrounding talk. Since the analysis concerns contexts where *yeah* and *no* are followed by more same-speaker talk, a brief overview of the literature on *yeah/no* responses is offered here to throw light on the kinds of relationships that *yeah* and *no* establish with subsequent talk by self, and how these tokens orient to prior talk by others.

Yeah/No are multi-functional polar response tokens. They are typically used as type-conforming responses to polar requests for information or confirmation (e.g., Drummond and Hopper 1993a; Raymond 2003). They may be freestanding and project no more talk from the same speaker in

second or third position, or they may be followed by further same-speaker talk.

In some cases, *yeah/no* responses act as prefaces in responses that address the relevancies of double-barreled actions in prior requests (Raymond 2003; Schegloff 2007; Steensig and Heinemann 2013), that is, with the response particle addressing the *yes/no* interrogative format and the remainder of the response orienting to other aspects that the prior action has made relevant. In other cases, *yeah/no* are the starting point for a confirmation or rejection that is treated by the current speaker as requiring elaboration (Drummond and Hopper 1993b; Seuren and Huiskes 2017). Ford, Fox and Hellermann (2004) show that the use of *no* as a stand-alone token or as part of an extended turn can be connected to the larger activity participants are engaged in.

When used in responses to informings and tellings, *yeah/no* may be deployed as acknowledgement tokens accomplishing the work of continuers (Jefferson 1984, 2002; Mazeland 1990; Schegloff 1982) that treat the co-participant's turn as still ongoing and align with the telling activity in progress. Moreover, in these contexts, *yeah* has also been found to display incipient speakership, projecting a transition from recipiency to the adoption of a speaker role. *Yeah* and *no* may also be deployed as displays of agreement and affiliation, although these uses may remain ambiguous with those indexing acknowledgement (Drummond and Hopper 1993a).

Our collection of *yeah/no* responses followed by more material by the same speaker features examples of the interactional uses described above. The study contributes to our growing understanding of how speakers can make use of phonetic resources to project relationships between the action of a particle and what follows.

5. Conceptual approach, data, and methodology

The conceptual approach of this study aligns with the theoretical and analytical principles of Conversation Analysis (Schegloff 2007) and Interactional Linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 2018). This means that the work presented here approaches language as a repertoire of resources for performing social interaction. Specifically, while this study investigates a linguistic contrast, its objective is to understand the use of the two sound patterns as interactional practices. Participant concerns about accomplishing actions and other purposes in interaction lie at the heart of the analysis. Thus, this chapter is less concerned with the position of language forms within language structure but with their status in the repertoire of practices for human social conduct.

The data underpinning this work are five hours of naturally occurring dinner table conversations between two, and in one brief stretch, three

participants. The recordings were made in 2012 with the participants' consent for their anonymized dissemination for academic and educational purposes, and with ethics approval from the University of York, UK. The participants are in their early twenties and native speakers of British English (Southern and Northern English varieties). Both audio and video recordings were collected; however, only the audio channel was examined for this study. The transcription follows the GAT 2 notation conventions (Selting et al. 2011); the impressionistic transcriptions make use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (2015).

The phonetic analysis of glottalization and linking was done initially through the authors' aural perception followed by independent verification of a sample by two trained phoneticians and in a second step through acoustic analysis in PRAAT 6.2.08.[1] To allow for a meaningful comparison of glottalization and linking, glottalized vowel onsets were excluded if they were preceded by pauses in order to align them with linked vowel onsets. This was considered a pre-requisite for any analytical claim regarding the contrastive use of the two patterns. However, excluding cases where pauses were followed by glottalization, of which the corpus contains a considerable number, also presented a limitation. The analysis below suggests that glottalized vowel onsets contribute to the design of talk as separate or new.

[1] https://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/

It may well be that glottalization plays a role in a much larger number of separate turn components, where TCUs are separated from prior talk by a combination of glottalization and a pause. However, our exclusion did not allow us to consider such cases. To mitigate against too much distortion, we established a threshold of 0.2 seconds and excluded only pauses that were above this threshold and not themselves glottalized, i.e., not held. We also excluded glottalized word boundaries that involved /t/ glottalization at the end of the first TCU, because the resulting glottalization could not be meaningfully attributed to the vowel onset of the following word. Finally, only complete first TCUs were included, which excluded any instances of closure cut-off (Jasperson 2002) resulting in glottalization.

6. Glottalization and linking of vowel-fronted TCUs in British English

Following Szczepek Reed (2014), the study reported here investigates C-V and V-V word boundaries at TCU boundaries, that is, in locations where additional linguistic and interactional boundaries co-occur (syntactic, prosodic, sequential, action-related). The specific focus on a sub-collection of *yeah/no*-initiated turns resulted in an exclusive set of V-V boundaries at these locations. This chapter briefly presents the findings from the entire

corpus before focusing in more detail on a sub-collection of turn continuation in *yeah/no*-fronted responding turns.

6.1 General tendencies of glottalized and linked TCU boundaries in British English

The British English collection contains 721 mostly turn initial TCU-VTCU boundaries, of which 466 (65%) are linked and 255 (35%) are glottalized. A close analysis of the actions performed by the TCUs in question shows that in the vast majority of cases, linking co-occurs with a continuation of an action in progress (94%), while glottalization has a strong tendency to co-occur with new actions being performed by the second TCU (73%). Table 1 shows the distribution across the five recorded conversations.

	Glottalized V-TCUs						Linked V-TCUs					
	New action		Continuing action		TOTAL		New action		Continuing action		TOTAL	
REC 1	31	*76%*	10	*24%*	41	*100%*	9	*9%*	86	*91%*	95	*100%*
REC 2	46	*64%*	26	*36%*	72	*100%*	4	*5%*	80	*95%*	84	*100%*
REC 3	33	*80%*	8	*20%*	41	*100%*	7	*8%*	84	*92%*	91	*100%*
REC 4	48	*79%*	13	*21%*	61	*100%*	5	*5%*	106	*95%*	111	*100%*
REC 5	28	*70%*	12	*30%*	40	*100%*	2	*2%*	83	*98%*	85	*100%*
TOTAL	**186**	***73%***	**69**	***27%***	**255**	***100%***	**27**	***6%***	**439**	***94%***	**466**	***100%***

Table 1. Distribution of glottalized and linked TCU-VTCU transitions

We present two examples of the dominant patterns. Extract 1 shows a linked VTCU boundary that co-occurs with a continuing action trajectory.

Extract 1: Melissa and Zack

((English, face-to-face, video-recorded, dinner table, May 2012))

```
1   Z:      cos whAt you ¯SPE::ND; (.)
2           <<all> well like-> d: f:(.)do: ef: you: do'(.)
3           <<all> whAt do you `DO.> =
4           = a ↑fO:urteen wEek ´PLACEment,
5           at (0.4) `TEN we:ek- (.) what `IS it.
6   M:      I've got the `DEtails; = at ˇHOME,
7   Z:      yeah but hOw many `WEEKS; =
8           =is it `OUT of the' Out of you:r' (.) tIme at `Uni. =
9           cause you `WON'T be:; (.)
10          <<all> you wOn't be (in ¯LEEDS-) =
11          = for> ˇALL of it, = `WILL you;
12  M:      `NO:::; (.) -¯UM:
13          (2.8)
14  Z:      you might ^Only be in lEeds; =
15          =for ´HALF of it? = ?it ¯MIGHT be:-
16->M:      i ¯AM- =
17          =im not at `LEeds for very ˇLO:::NG,
18          (0.4)
19  Z:      .hh ((clears throat))
20          (4.2)
21  M: it's ¯LI:KE-
22          (4.0)
23  Z:      <<p> `WHA:T;>
24  M:      I -thInk ^ONE of them's like; = nIneteen wEeks ^LONG.
```

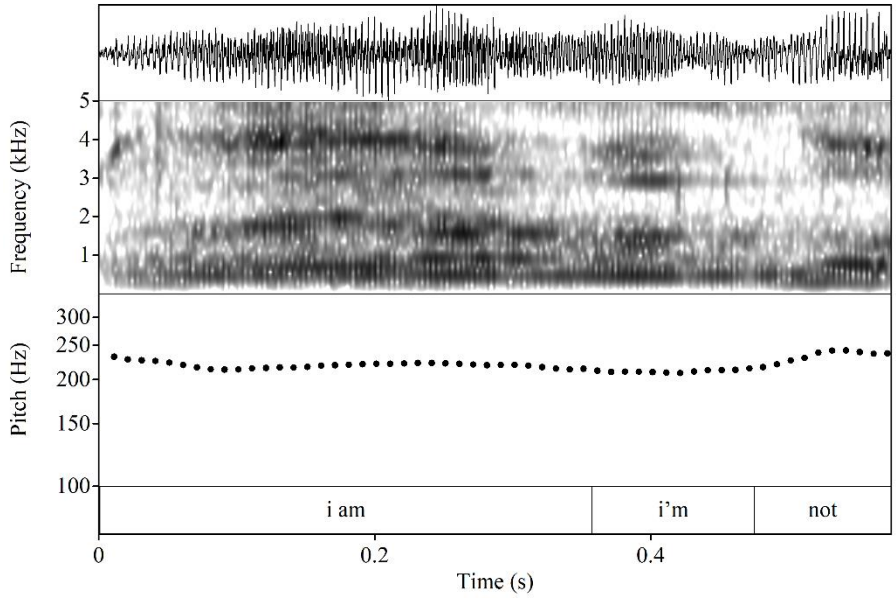

Figure 1. Acoustic visualization of linked TCUs at lines 16-17, Extract 1 (top: waveform, middle: spectrogram, bottom: fundamental frequency/f0 trace)

Zack and Melissa are discussing Melissa's future plans around a work placement. Zack displays access to Melissa's arrangements (cf. Labov and Fanshel 1977) by eliciting information regarding the length of her stay in the area through a B-event scenario, closed with a tag requesting confirmation (lines 9-11) (cf. Pomerantz 1980 on "fishing devices"). After Melissa's confirmation that she will not be in Leeds for her whole university year, an upgraded candidate is put forward: *you might only be in Leeds for half of it it might be-* (lines 14-15). Melissa responds with a confirmation (*I am*), delivered as a "possible TCU" (Schegloff 1996: 57). *I am* can potentially stand by itself as a confirming response. It is delivered with a final level pitch accent on *am,* which is linked directly to the following TCU

(*I'm not at Leeds for very long*, lines 16-17) that extends her turn with more confirming talk. Together the two TCUs make a single unified confirmation turn in which the second TCU extends the action of the initial confirmation (Szczepek Reed and Persson 2016), orienting to the prior part of the initial question (*how many weeks*, line 7*),* which is fully addressed in line 24. The linked boundary is manifest in the continuation of voicing (visible from the periodicity of the waveform continuing throughout and a continuing dark band of energy at the bottom of the spectrogram) and pitch (in the f0 trace) shown in Fig. 1.

Extract 2 shows a glottalized TCU that accomplishes a new action. Hannah is explaining to Amy what she has heard about the university's admissions process for Master's degrees.

Extract 2: Amy and Hannah

1	H:	<<all> apparently you get an> Offer from the <<cr>
		de˅PARTment,
2		.hhh and thEn from the `U:ni::;>
3		(1.6)
4	A:	<<all> so you `mIght <<cr> get an Offer from `ONE; =
5		=and nOt the `Other.>>=
6	H:	=`YEAH;
7		(0.4)
8	A:	<<all+p> ↑`thAt's really ¯WEIRD->=
9	H:	=<<p>`YEAH.>=

```
10          =but you gOt a? = you ↑hAve to ¯GET-
11          (0.5)
12          <<all> it's like the> de↑pArtment will Offer you a
13          ˇPLA:CE, (.)
14          and then `PASS your; (.) applicAtion `ON; .hh
15          [to the `U:ni. ]
16->A:      [`O::H o´KAY:, ]
17->        =<<all> ?and then the Uni can be lIke well>
            ↑`ACTually:;
18          <<cr>> i `dOn't want ´HE:R,
19          [i want `THEM.>]
20  H:      [YEAH;         ]
```

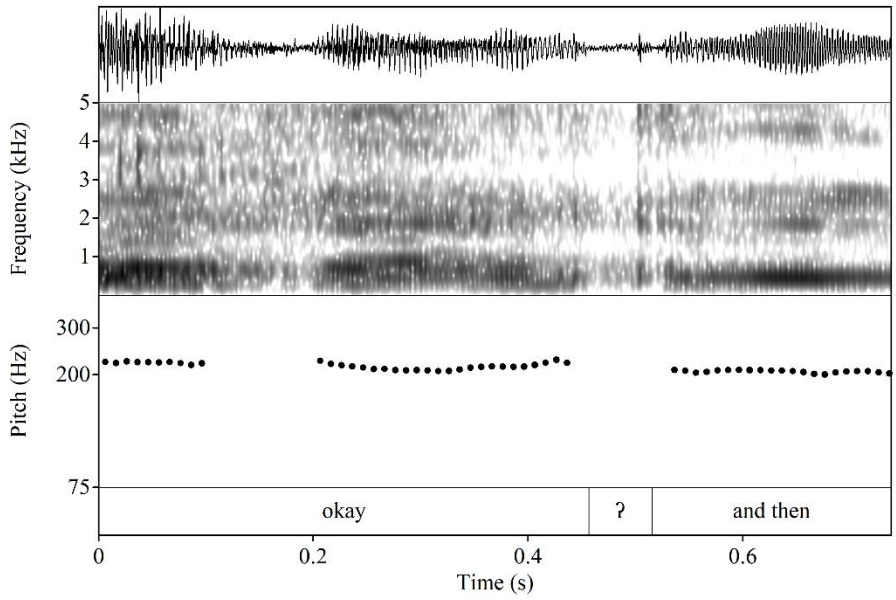

Figure 2. Acoustic visualization of linked TCUs at lines 17-18, Extract 2

Throughout this interaction, Amy is seen to be negotiating her understanding of the admissions process Hannah is retelling, which is done

by candidate completions (lines 4-5, 17-19) and an assessment (line 8). Subsequently, Hannah offers a reformulated and slightly repaired version of Amy's candidate understanding regarding how the process works. Amy's response at lines 16-19 contains a news receipt followed by a candidate co-completion. The first TCU in this multi-unit turn is *oh okay*, which receipts the previous turn in post-transition overlap by acknowledging the slight difference in their versions of the retold process. Both *oh* and *okay* are lengthened, resulting in a slow speech rate, in contrast to the usually faster rate found in abrupt joins as described by Walker and Local (2004). The reduced speech rate contrasts with the fast speech of the subsequent TCU. The second TCU, *and then the uni can be like…* (lines 17-19), completes Hannah's previous narrative scenario by spelling out the situation that Hannah was in the process of explaining in the light of the new information received. The second TCU thereby displays understanding through co-completion of Hannah's telling (Szczepek 2000). The two TCUs accomplish distinct social actions with the second making relevant a confirmation and thus starting a new sequence, and their delivery is separated by a glottal stop preceding *and* (line 17).

As mentioned above, there are several factors that impact on the presence or absence of glottalization, including sociolinguistic factors (variation), prosodic factors (accent, prosodic hierarchy) and interactional factors (e.g., self-repair, turn holding). The action-oriented analysis

presented here does not claim to be an exclusive explanation for the glottalization / linking distinction but instead seeks to present an additional and previously overlooked factor.

In the following, we zero in on multi-unit responses initiated by *yeah/no* to explore the ways in which participants strategically employ the glottalization / linking contrast in the context of a comparable set of first TCUs.

6.2 Glottalization and linking of *yeah/no* responding turns

To explore the nuances of the interactional work that is accomplished by glottalized and linked TCUs, the following analysis focuses on *yeah*/*no*-fronted turns that respond directly to preceding turns by other speakers. Here, the initial *yeah* or *no* accomplishes a responsive action, such as confirmation, response to enquiry, agreement, or disagreement. In doing so, *yeah/no* orients to the relevancies put in place by preceding initiating actions, and, in the case of prior turns with *yes-no* interrogatives, it also orients to type-conformity (Raymond 2003). Our collection excludes cases of resuming *yeah* and *no*[2], self-repair prefaced by *yeah/no,* and *oh* prefacing (*oh yeah* and *oh no*).

[2] See also the "summary assessment" mentioned in Schegloff (1996: 88-89).

The collection contains a considerably larger number of linked next TCUs (81%) than glottalized ones (19%). This may be due in part to the exclusion of non-glottalized pauses from the sample and in part to the kinds of actions that most frequently follow *yeah/no* and their most frequent phonetic boundary design. As Table 2 shows, the results for both groups show the patterns described for the larger corpus (Section 6.1): the majority of action continuations are linked, while new actions are most frequently glottalized.

	Glottalized *yeah/no* responding turns	**Linked *yeah/no* responding turns**	**Total *yeah/no* responding turns**
Continuing an ongoing action	7 (10%)	65 (90%)	72 (100%)
Initiating a new action	9 (82%)	2 (18%)	11 (100%)
TOTAL	**16 (19%)**	**67 (81%)**	**83 (100%)**

Table 2. Glottalization and linking of continuing vs. new actions in *yeah-/no*-fronted responding turns

The analysis reveals that within the group of continuing *yeah/no* responses, participants distinguish further between next TCUs that merely extend the work done by *yeah* and *no* by doing the same interactional work as the *yeah/no* tokens, and those that introduce additional turn content which elaborates on the prior action, and which can have varying effects on the *yeah/no*-fronted action without creating further relevancies.

The data show that the distinction between elaborating on an action and starting a new one is fluid. Glottalization and linking are found to be resources for managing this fluidity, which represents a resource for participants. Table 3 shows the distribution of the three formats across the *yeah/no* responses collection.

	Glottalization	**Linking**	**TOTAL**
Action Extension	1 (2%)	46 (98%)	47 (100%)
Action Elaboration	6 (24%)	19 (76%)	25 (100%)
New Action	9 (82%)	2 (18%)	11 (100%)
TOTAL	**16 (19%)**	**67 (81%)**	**83 (100%)**

Table 3. Glottalization and linking in the three action formats 'action extension', 'action elaboration' and 'new action'

6.2.1 *Action extensions*

By far the most frequent multi-unit *yeah/no* responses in the corpus are those in which *yeah/no* is followed by talk that does nothing more than extend the *yeah/no* action, adding no new turn content. This is either done through minimal clausal responses (Thompson et al. 2015: 59) with pronominal and pro-form elements, or through partial reformulations of the prior speaker's initiating action. This format is referred to here as "action extension". Of 47 action extensions in the collection, 46 show linking between *yeah/no* and the subsequent TCU; only one shows glottalization.

Extract 3: Melissa and Zack

```
1       Z:      <<all> whY don’t you say you cAn’t `DRIVE;=
2               =and then yOU:’ll> (.) get pUt somewhere `CLOSE.
3 ->    M:      ((click)) `YEAH = i wIll.
```

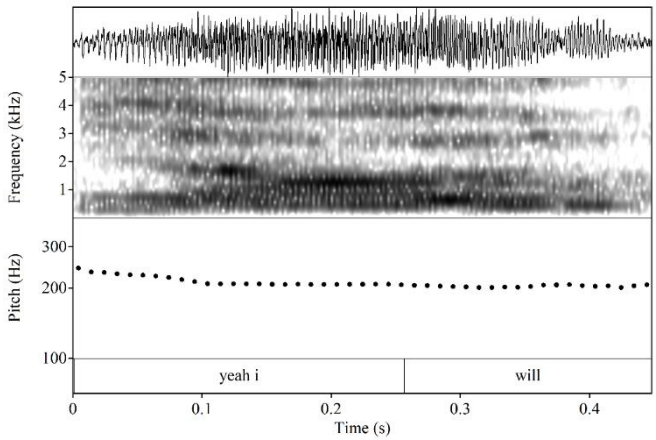

Figure 3. Acoustic visualization of linked TCUs at line 3, Extract 3, impressionistically transcribed as [jɐˑᵊɐ̟ːʷː]

Extract 4: Beth and Matthew

```
1       A:      `YEAH; <<all> but If you have a> `ROOM; =
2               = <<all> you’re just gonna> `STAY in it; = All `DAY.
3 ->    B:      nO = i `WON’T;
4               be¯CAUSE-
5       A:      `HUMm:;
6       B:      `NO one’s gonna `LET me stay in it all day;
```

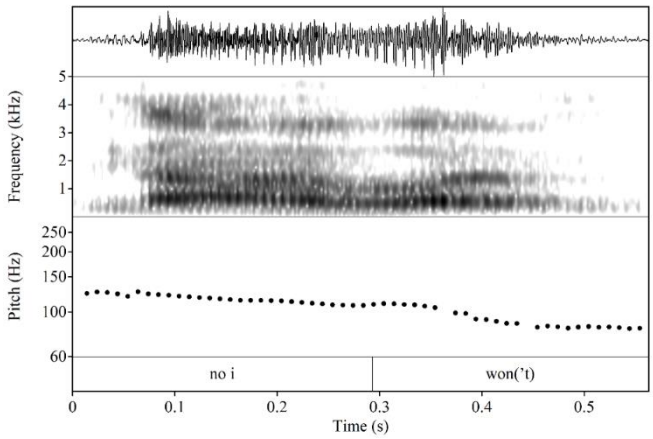

Figure 4. Acoustic visualization of linked TCUs at line 3, Extract 4, impressionistically transcribed as [nə̃ːːʊʷʌ̟ː ˈwə̃ˑə̃nʔ]

Extracts 3 and 4 show *yeah* and *no* as possible TCUs to which only the simplest extensions are added, involving the subject (*I*) and the respective auxiliary verb form. In 3, *yeah I will* accepts a proposal; in 4, *no I won't* rejects an assertion in the form of a B-event statement. While in 3, the linked TCUs constitute the entire turn-at-talk from the speaker in that sequential slot, 4 shows more same-speaker talk following the two linked TCUs. Both examples show how linking affords the delivery of two possible TCUs as a single unified response where the second TCU extends and is interchangeable with the action accomplished by *yeah/no*. The acoustic evidence (Figs. 3-4) shows the continuation of voicing and of fundamental frequency (f0; an acoustic correlate of pitch) across the vowels, and the impressionistic transcription offers an approximation to the kinds of monophthongisation, smoothing, co-articulation and reduction processes through which the vowels are linked. The following two extracts show more

complex turn extensions. In each case, the second TCU reformulates preceding turn content.

Extract 5: Beth and Matthew

```
1       B:      <<all> you nEver ^KNOW;>=
2               = you mIght have a ^JO:B by then;
3               (1.8)
4 ->    M:      `YEAH:;=
5 ->            =i `SHOULD be wOrking by thEn.
6       B:      did you `GET e:rˀ = any `Emails bAck of: the `THINGy;
```

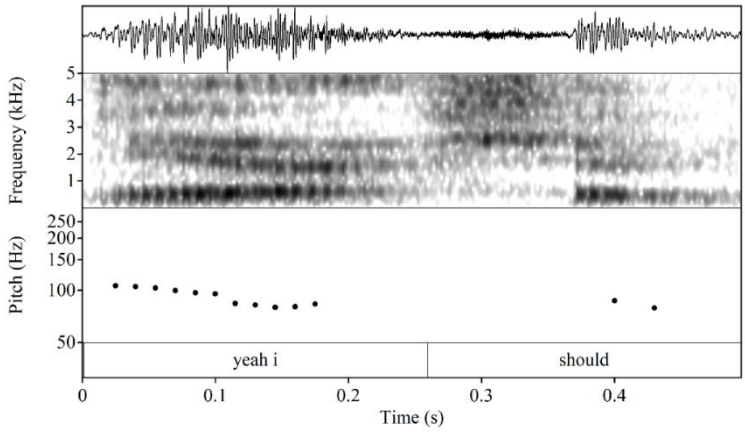

Figure 5. Acoustic visualization of linked TCUs at lines 4-5, Extract 5, impressionistically transcribed as [ˈjɛ̯ːˈɐ̃ːˈʃʊd]

Extract 6: Kirsty and Jess

```
1       J:      have you Actually `BEEN to the cOurtyard;
2               (.)
3               ¯LIKEˀ (0.4) Oh you ↑`DID;
```

```
4              you ↓WENT up one tIme; = ^D[IDn't you;]
5      K:                                [`Mm:      ]
6 ->           ((click))`YEAH;= i've come `UP; =
7 ->           = for ´DRINKS here,
8      J:      whAt are the ^DRINKS like lIke;
```

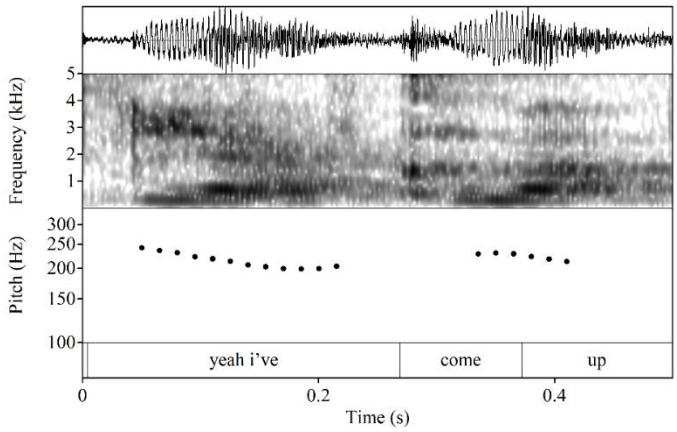

Figure 6. Acoustic visualizaton of linked TCUs at line 6, Extract 6, impressionistically transcribed as [ˈjɛ̰ːɐ̰ːv kn̥m ˈʌp]

While the second TCUs in extracts 5 and 6 contain more than pro-forms, they, too, do no more than extend the actions performed by *yeah/no* by offering a reformulated version of the statements by which prior speakers display access to circumstances related to *yeah/no* speakers' epistemic territory. In 5, Matthew confirms Beth's suggestion *you never know you might have a job by then* (lines 1-2) with his own upgraded agreement *yeah I should be working by then* (lines 4-5), with lexical repetition (*by then*) and reformulations (*job > be working*), thus confirming Beth's understanding but offering an epistemically stronger version (*might > should*). Similarly,

in 6, the confirmation accomplished by *yeah* (line 6) is extended by an affirmative rephrasing (lines 6-7) of the confirmation request. Here, *yeah* conforms with the grammatical constraint of the polar request for confirmation while *I've come up for drinks here* provides confirmation (Raymond 2013). In both cases, the agreeing or confirming action initiated by *yeah/no* is extended by the subsequent TCU through the addition of repeated or rephrased turn content that is being appropriated for the purposes of the *yeah/no* fronted turn. Extracts 3-6 show the majority turn design for action extensions, that is, linked boundaries between *yeah/no* and subsequent talk. The only glottalized action extension in the collection is the following.

Extract 7: Beth and Matthew

```
1      E:     whAt are you Up to ^NO:W;=
2             =thIs is sEems [like a ro¯MA:N]tic-
3      B:                    [Ehm           ]
4 ->          ↑`YEAH;
5 ->          ?i? `?IS rather ro´MANtic,
6             `ISn't it?.
7      M:     `Mm.
8      B:     got as mUch frIed ´FOOD,=
9             =as wE ca(h) pO?ss(h°)i(h°)b(h°)ly ˇEAT(h°):t?
```

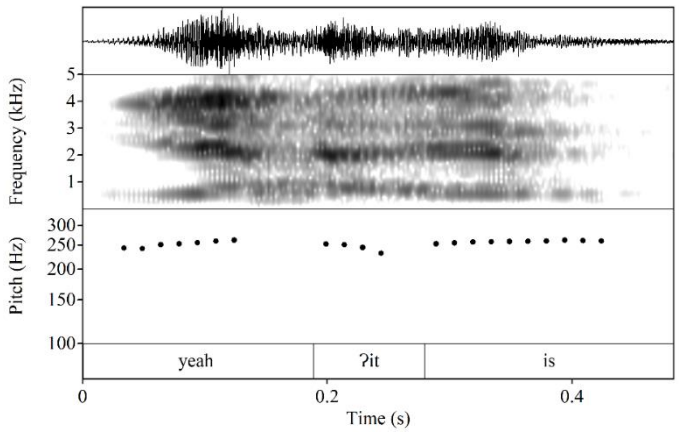

Figure 7. Acoustic visualization of glottalized TCU boundaries at lines 4-5, Extract 7, transcribed impressionistically as [ˈjɛˑʔe̯̊ˈʔɪz]

In 7, the *yeah*-fronted turn responds to an aborted assessment by a third participant, Eleanor, who has entered the room where Beth and Matthew are having dinner (*this is seems like a romantic…*, line 1). Beth agrees (*yeah*, line 4) and then adds a "full modified repeat" (Stivers 2005): the second TCU *it is rather romantic isn't it* is designed with a primary accent on the first *IS* accompanied by a brief raising of the left eyebrow and with a repeat of Eleanor's assessment term "romantic" (lines 5-6). The added tag *isn't it* transforms the turn into a request for confirmation and thereby into a first- rather than second-positioned assessment. The second TCU thus establishes Beth's epistemic rights and authority (Heritage and Raymond 2005; Stivers 2005). While Beth gives no embodied cues as to which recipient the turn is designed for (she looks down at her plate throughout lines 5-6), Matthew provides confirmation at line 7, being a joint recipient of Eleanor's initial assessment and a potential recipient of Beth's request for confirmation.

Here the glottalization, which more typically co-occurs with turns that implement a new action, helps design the assessment as if new, even though the action format itself is one of re-doing a prior assessment. The acoustic evidence shows the interruption of the f0 trace and of the formant tracks in the spectrogram, as well as lack of periodicity and reduction in the amplitude in the waveform in the space between the vowels (see Fig. 7).

The above examples have in common that TCUs following *yeah/no* continue to accomplish the same action as *yeah/no*, with either minimal (3, 4) or recycled (5-7) lexical turn content. Linking is the default pattern for this turn format. When a next TCU simply adds more of the same and does not initiate new action trajectories, linking provides participants with a resource to design it as part of a single unified package.

6.2.2 *Action elaborations*

A smaller group of *yeah/no* responding turns contains those in which *yeah* or *no* accomplishes a responsive action and is followed by a TCU that continues that same action with additional turn content. In some cases, these turns respond to the grammatical relevancies of a preceding turn with an initial *yeah/no* token and to the solicited action with subsequent, more elaborate talk (Raymond 2013). Such extensions do more than repeating or re-phrasing prior talk and are therefore termed “action elaborations”. Our collection contains 23 cases: 19 are linked, 6 are glottalized. The extracts

below show two clear examples of action elaboration. In both cases, *yeah/no* is linked to subsequent talk. A third extract shows an example where the TCU boundary is glottalized, and where the distinction between elaborating on an action and starting a new one (see Section 6.2.3) is more complex.

Extract 8: Amy and Hanna

```
1       A:      are you sEeing him ´MUCH this week?
2       H:      ¯U:M-
3               (0.4)
4  ->           ((click)) `MYE:AH;=
5  ->           =i'm gOing ¯ROUND -
6               (0.6)
7               tomOrrow `NIGHT;
8               after ↑`WORK.
9               (0.4)
10              <<p> he's `COOKing;
11              aˆPPArently;>
12      A:      mh°uh huh ha huh
```

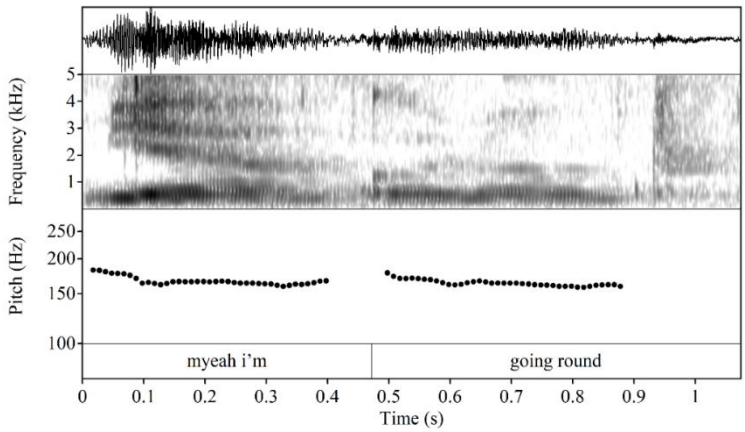

Figure 8. Acoustic visualization of linked TCU boundaries at lines 4-5, Extract 8, transcribed impressionistically as [ˈmjɛɐ̯ːm gɔɪn ˈɹɔʊnd]

Extract 9: Kirsty and Jess

```
1       J:      whY: do they ¯WANT a- (.) <<p >`REference for you.>
2       K:      ↑¯I don't ↓¯KNOW-
3               (.)
4               maybe jUst it's cOs there's lImited `PLA[Ces;= ¯SO:-]
5       J:                                              [O:h RIGHT; ]
6               (<<all> they gOnna sEe if you're Up for ´THAT,>)
7               =you [have to a]`PPLY:: for it;
8       K:           [ˇYE:AH,  ]
9 ->            `YEAH =
10->            =i've ↑gOtta `WRITE like;
11              (0.6)
12              <<p> a `thrEe hundred ¯WO::RD- (0.8)
13              u:m `SORT? of;> (0.8)
14              ´rEason whY I want to ´DO it thIng?
15      J:      ˆM::m;
```

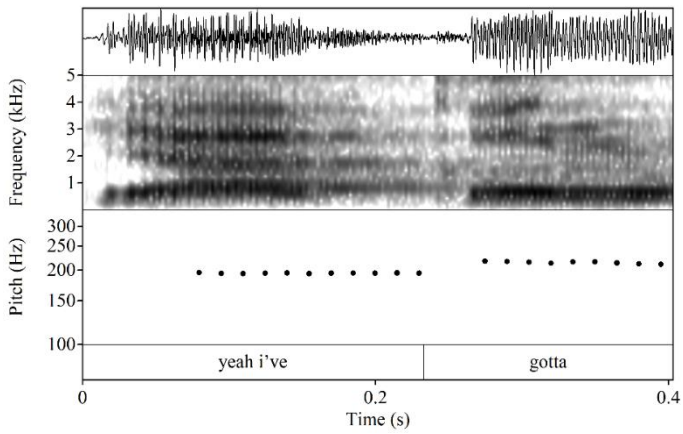

Figure 8. Acoustic visualization of linked TCU boundaries at lines 9-10, Extract 8, transcribed impressionistically as [ˈjɛ̟ːɐ̟v ˈgɒrə ˈɹa̠ɪʔ]

In Extracts 8 and 9, speakers respond to a polar interrogative (8) and a confirmation request (9) with affirming / confirming tokens (*myeah, yeah*) and then go on to provide the elicited informing made relevant by the multiple relevancies set up by the design of preceding turns. Extract 8 shows an "unmarked type-conforming response" to a polar interrogative (Raymond 2013: 177-183), that is, a response that addresses both the grammatical form (that is, the constraint to produce either *yes* or *no*) and the social action (here, the information request) in an unmarked manner. Similarly, Extract 9 shows a response to a request for confirmation, which first delivers the grammatical form and then a more elaborate confirmation.

Both extracts contain First Pair Parts where "'yes' is not enough" (Steensig and Heinemann 2013: 207), that is, where initiating turns mobilize more than a polar response. In 8, the polar question *are you seeing him much this week* (line 1) receives a type-conforming *yeah* response followed

by the elicited response-to-enquiry (*I'm going round tomorrow night after work*, lines 5-8). The additional content elaborates on the action initiated by *yeah/no*, treating *yeah/no* as a preface to the requested information. Similarly, in 9, a candidate understanding (*you have to apply for it*, line 7), which is based on prior talk, receives a confirming response, first with *yeah* (line 9) and then with talk that spells out the requested confirmable (*I've got to write*…., line 10). In both extracts, the TCUs following *yeah* continue the progressivity of *yeah* by doing more than simply extending its work. The elaborations add new information while staying well within their specific responding actions (response-to-enquiry; confirmation) and not creating new relevancies in subsequent positions beyond acknowledgement. Both extracts show linking at the TCU boundaries, and thus the phonetic joining of two possible TCUs into single unified actions.

Extracts 8 and 9 show linked elaborations of *yeah/no*; that is, linked turn continuations that do more than simply reformulate the work of *yeah*, but that nevertheless continue the action *yeah/no* have set in motion. While the majority of action elaborations are linked (19 out of 23 cases), the collection also holds six glottalized action elaborations, as the case below.

Extract 10: Lucy and Emma

1 B: ʔO:::h ʔerm ((xxx)) what's this Orilo: sUmmer

```
                `CINema: thing;
2               (.) dyou knOw what it ˇI:[S,       ]
3 ->    A:                                [<<f>↑`YE ]AH;
4 ->            ʔIt's the thIng that `Alan;> (.) ´TEXTed me abOut,
5               (.)
6               whIn i `SAID to you; = do you knOw what it `IS;
7               °nhh it's the One in the: m:(.)(you DO: xxxx `TRY it;)
8               there's sOmeone In the mu[SE:UM::]
9       B:                                [for`GOT;] huh
```

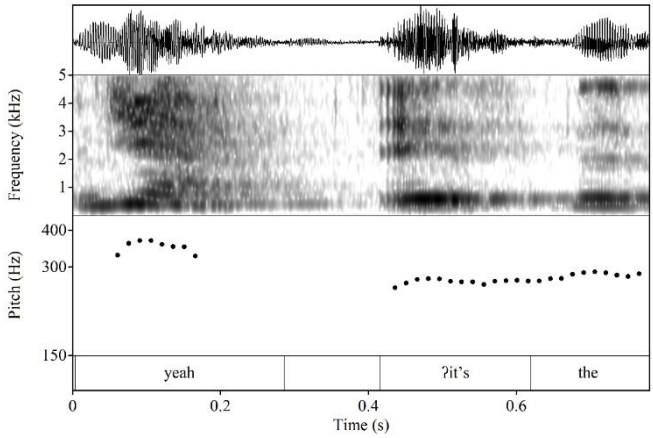

Figure 10. Acoustic visualization of glottalized TCU boundaries at lines 3-4, Extract 10, transcribed impressionistically as [ˈjɛ̰ː ʔɪ̰t̰s̰ ðə], where the glottalization is realized as creaky voice

Emma's enquiry, delivered in two parts (*what's this Orilo summer cinema thing, do you know what it is*, lines 1-2) receives both a polar response (*yeah*) provided adjacently to the polar interrogative, and a response to the first enquiry (*it's the thing that Alan texted me about*, line 4), making it another unmarked type-conforming response (Raymond 2013). This bears similarity to Extract 8, where the enquiry *are you seeing him much this week* receives a response to the polar question followed by a

response to the information request. While the boundary in 8 is linked, the one in 10 is glottalized. An explanation for the difference can be found in the turn format of the enquiries preceding *yeah*. In 8, a single polar question elicits both a type conforming *yeah* plus an elaboration. The linked design of the [*yeah* + elaboration] response matches the unified design of the prior double-barreled (Schegloff 2007: 76) question. In 10, two separate questions are asked, and the response – [*yeah* + elaboration] – is designed as two separate responses, one that tackles the most adjacent enquiry first.

Extract 10 gives a sense of the nuance that is at participants' disposal for the design of multi-unit turns. The linking / glottalization distinction allows speakers to distinguish between different response formats. Talk may be designed as progressing an action through a single unified response format (linking) or through one that orients separately and consecutively to distinct elements of prior initiating turns (glottalization).

6.2.3 *New actions*

In 11 cases, TCUs following *yeah/no* accomplish a new action that is observably different, and treated by next participants as different, from the responding action accomplished by *yeah/no*. Of these, nine are glottalized and two are linked.

Extract 11: Emma and Lucy

1	L:	ive `Only ˆSEEN him like (0.7) ˆTWICE this term;=
2		<<all> like i've seen him Once in the˘LIbrary,
3		(0.4)
4		and once `O::UT.
5		and we were GREAT = and singing h°INdie so(h°)ngs hh°
6	E:	`SAME ´Actually,
7	L:	`mm.
8		(1.1)
9	E:	`I walked pAst him in the `LIbrary and i've um
10	L:	<<p> `YEAH. (.)[`wE:] were bO:th `THERE.>
11	E:	[I was s:]
12		´Uh? (.)`O:H. (1.2)
13		((click)) <<f,all> `O::h I was thinking of a `DIfferent'.>
14		I:ve seen him `THREE: times.
15	L:	nhhh°
16	E:	Huh huh [huh]
17	L:	[huh]
18	L:	`?Us in the ´LIBrary, °nhh
19->	E:	((swallow)) uhm `YE:AH;
20->		?and `THEN ¯U::m- (0.9)
21		he was `OUT; = um with ¯VANbu:rgh- = ´FOOTball?

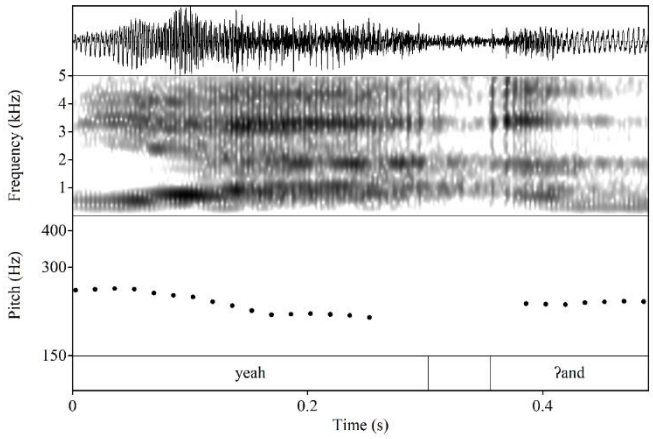

Figure 11. Acoustic visualization of glottalized TCU boundaries at lines 19-20, Extract 11, transcribed impressionistically as [ˈjɛ̰ːˑ̰ʔæ̰n̰ ˈðen]

At the start of the transcribed section Emma begins a telling about meeting a fellow student twice, *once in the library and once out* (lines 2-4). Her beginning of the story proper (*I walked past him in the library and I've um*, line 9) is interrupted by Lucy who claims access to the same encounter. A repair sequence ensues concerning their joint previous meeting of the same person, with an account (line 13) and the repair (line 14), which is treated as a laughable. Once repair has been accomplished, Lucy ends the repair sequence with a playful closing formulation (*us in the library*, line 18) that invites resumption. Emma's responding turn orients first to Lucy's immediately preceding sequence closing (*uhm yeah*, line 19) before resuming the telling she started prior to the repair sequence: the third encounter with the fellow student (*and then um he was out with Vanburgh football*, lines 20-21). The two TCUs accomplish two separate actions: *yeah* acknowledges Lucy's contribution to the list of encounters with this student,

while the subsequent TCU resumes the earlier telling. The boundary between the two TCUs is glottalized.

In two cases, the TCU boundary is linked. The following example shows again how the phonetic design of TCU boundaries can be exploited by participants for nuanced interactional distinctions, here the distinction between two shades of colour.

Extract 12: Beth and Matthew

```
1       B:      `NO: iʔ you cAn'tʔ=
2               = you ˇCAN'T bEat, =
3               =swEet and sOur `SAUCE.=
4               =`CAN you rEally;
5       M:      not ˇREALly,
6               (2.2)
7       B:      [it's: `M:Agicʔ-                          ]
8       M:      [<all> it's kInd of> it's <<f>kInd of ˆO]rangey>
                though.
9               <<cr, p>`Anyway.>
10              (0.4)
11->    B:      `YEAH = it's `BROWN. (0.4)
12              <<p> i `WOULD have said;
13      M:      `NO; = in `FLA:vour.
14              (0.6)
15      B:      oh ↑ˆRIGHT. (.)
16              oh thAt's ´INteresting,
```

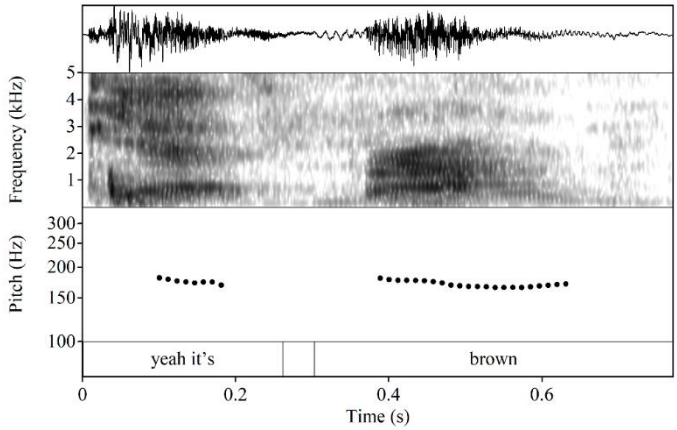

Figure 12. Acoustic visualization of linked TCU boundaries at line 11, Extract 12, transcribed impressionistically as [ˈjɛːˌtˢs ˈbraʊn]

Following Beth's positive assessment of sweet and sour sauce (lines 2-3) two assessments are done in overlap (lines 7-8), and Matthew comments on a feature that eventually results in an ambiguous understanding (*it's kind of orangey though*, line 8). After silence at a point where a potentially agreeing response is made relevant (line 10), Beth responds with an initial agreement (*yeah*) but immediately other-repairs to *it's brown* followed by silence and a mitigating form that presents this as the speaker's own take (*I would have said,* lines 11-12) and indexing it more explicitly as a repair. Matthew responds with a repair initiation that reorients the assessment towards an issue of flavour, which in turn makes another assessment response relevant (lines 13-16). The two actions by Beth – agreement followed by other-repair – are linked together and formulated in a way that foregrounds the agreement aspect over the repair, and which uses "yeah" instead of "no". The extract shows that the distinction between new and continuing actions

is scalar rather than binary, and at times participants use multiple resources to design second TCUs as new *and* continuing at the same time. Here, the other-repair accomplishes a different action to the preceding *yeah*, but its lexical format [*it's* + colour] and verbal content (nuances of colour) link back to prior talk. The phonetic linking serves to integrate a dispreferred action, i.e., other-repair, into a preferred action, i.e., agreement, and thus affords the design of the two actions as one unified response. This resembles findings from the German corpus, where linking of new actions co-occurs with delicate or dispreferred second TCUs, which are being integrated into routine or preferred first actions (Szczepek Reed 2014).

7. **Concluding discussion**

Participants in conversation make frequent use of the nuanced meaning-making afforded by interactional resources (sound patterns, grammar, lexis, bodily actions) and take opportunities to exploit the resulting ambiguities for communicative purposes. The use of glottalization and linking between turn-internal TCUs is a useful phenomenon for observing these practices, as participants make use of the distinction to manage the positioning of their turns within the emerging sequential context. The present study has shown that in a collection comprising 721 TCU-VTCU transitions, a significant

majority of glottalized transitions (73%) co-occur with new actions, while the vast majority of linked transitions (94%) co-occur with the continuation of in-progress actions, which in turn is the most widely-found practice in our corpus. In order to do justice to participants' multi-layered use of interactional resources in their specific context, we focused specifically on *yeah/no*-fronted responding turns. The data show that a large majority of continuations (extensions and elaborations) of the action trajectory initiated by *yeah* or *no* co-occur with phonetic linking of *yeah/no* to subsequent talk (90%), while most new actions that follow *yeah* or *no* are glottalized (82%). The data also show that speakers exploit these phonetic resources strategically to achieve either a unified or a separated turn design in orientation to previous turn designs or for action formation or preference management. The findings replicate patterns observed in German (Szczepek Reed 2014) and French (Szczepek Reed and Persson 2016). The typological differences that exist between languages with regard to the contrast between glottalization and linking make for a fruitful environment to ask whether certain sound contrasts lend themselves to the cueing of particular social actions cross-linguistically. In German phonology, glottalization of word-initial vowels is considered the norm, whereas in French and English it is not. With regard to English V-V boundaries, glottalization has been described as one of the less frequent forms of hiatus resolution, and one normally associated with particular word types, word stress, and vowel

qualities. This is not always the case in our collection, which also offers a wide collection of cases of V_V linking that are not resolved via epenthesis as expected but through vowel reduction, smoothing, and monophthongization processes. Given that natural talk in all three languages shows connections between glottalization and the start of new actions on the one hand, and linking and action continuation on the other, this is evidence that sound patterns are not solely determined by language-specific phonologies but are also interaction-shaping resources. The comparative work presented here is a new and original perspective made possible by the framework of Interactional Linguistics. It is part of a program of research that seeks to explore sound patterns and possibly other linguistic structuring mechanisms as crosslinguistic practices for organizing and managing talk (see also Auer and Maschler 2013). This line of inquiry complements recent conversation analytic work on cross-cultural comparison of social practices and actions (e.g., Enfield et al. 2010; Fox et al. 2010; Sidnell and Enfield 2012). However, in contrast to much of that work, which investigates social actions cross-culturally, the present research is concerned with similarities in linguistic form. It shows how conversationalists exploit the articulatory and vocal interruption of glottalization or the continuation and boundary-blurring afforded by linking to index the continuation or separation of action trajectories. When it comes to English in particular, our observations provide useful pointers for future work as to the processes involved in V_V

linking contexts, as well as confirming that intervocalic glottalization may be interactionally motivated.

Acknowledgements

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