

## **On the Place of Linguistic Resources in the Organization of Talk-in-Interaction: Grammar as Action in Prompting a Speaker to Elaborate**

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Specific parts of grammatical structure can be employed by speakers to accomplish specifiable actions in talk-in-interaction. In this article, I describe the interactional use of “parts of speech” ordinarily used by individual speakers to connect elements within single turn-constructural units. The items employed for these held-in-common grammatical practices can also be deployed as stand-alone contributions that by their very incompleteness prompt a prior speaker to add another increment to their turn. As such, this constitutes a recipient-administered practice for expanding a turn at talk. I show that this usage constitutes another (previously undescribed) form of other-initiated repair that is designed to prompt a prior speaker to add a type-specific element found missing from an otherwise completed turn.

In conversation, turn-taking organization includes practices for constructing and allocating opportunities to speak, whereas sequence organization encompasses practices for ordering actions—carried out through speaking—as sequences of actions. Action sequences *in* conversation are

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constrained by turn-taking practices for the most part (but not entirely). For example, the pair parts of adjacency pair sequences occur in separate turns at talk with the sequence-responding action ordinarily (although not always) being held off until the turn that contains the type-matched, sequence-initiating action comes to a next possible completion. Responding actions in the talk are held off even when it seems clear that the recipient can recognize—before completion—what second pair part will be relevant.<sup>1</sup> This then is one “intersection” of turn taking and action sequencing. At another intersection, turn taking relies on sequence organization to implement one of its central practices—the selection of a next speaker by the current speaker. Sequence-initiating actions and the sequences they initiate represent a central resource for selecting a next speaker (Lerner, 2003; Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974).

In this article, I consider yet another intersection of turn taking and action sequencing in conversation. I examine *turn-prompting sequences* in which a distinct form of turn construction is used as a device to prompt a type-specific extension of a prior speaker’s turn.<sup>2</sup> Each of the following items (among others) can be issued as a stand-alone contribution that operates as a parsimoniously constructed turn-continuation prompt:

“to”  
“for”  
“as”  
“at”  
“with”  
“about”  
“from”  
“rather than”  
“such as”  
“meaning”  
“concerning”  
“and”  
“or”  
“but”  
“because”  
“except”

Items such as these can be positioned to prompt a type-specific continuation to an apparently completed turn by another speaker and thereby elicit a

type-specific amplification or elaboration of what was said in that prior turn—usually but not always the just prior turn. The aim of this article is to show how such stand-alone contributions furnish participants with a linguistic (i.e., syntactic) resource for prompting a type-specific elaboration from a prior speaker, thus locating an inadequacy or incompleteness in that prior speaker’s turn by starting what could have been expected but leaving it to the prior speaker to substantively complete the elaboration. As such, this form of action can be deployed as a (previously undescribed) form of other-initiated repair—one that targets something as projected but missing from the trouble-source turn on its apparent completion.

I start with a description of several methods speakers use to expand their own speaking turns, focusing on those turn-constructural resources available to speakers to extend their own turn-constructural unit (TCU) beyond a possible completion. I describe the “tying devices” speakers use to extend their own turns to show that these are the same resource available to a recipient for prompting continuation of a previous turn.

### TURN EXPANSION

There seem to be several ways that turns at talk can develop or expand. Before a speaker reaches a first or next possible completion (and thereby reaches a place that another party might properly begin to speak), they can expand their turn—vis-à-vis what has already been projected for the TCU—by adding TCU-internal increments to their turn. This can be seen in Case 1 in which a TCU-internal increment is added before a projected “then” component of a compound TCU (Lerner, 1991) and again in Case 2 in which a parenthetical remark (“like yer mother says”) is inserted into an otherwise projectable TCU:

(1) [NB]

→ B: When we get unpacked, **and you get through with your guests**, we’ll get together.

(2) [Mother’s Day]

→ R: What would be good is t’ sit down here ’n tell- you tell me (1.1) what is wro::ng (.) if you f:ind, **like yer mother says** someone that you-

In each of these cases, an element not projected by the turn-so-far is added before a first or next possible completion, thus resulting in a TCU-internal expansion of the turn.<sup>3</sup>

Once a speaker reaches a possible completion of a TCU, they can begin a new TCU as the WH-question does in Case 3 at arrow “a,” thereby establishing the possible completion of the prior TCU as its actual completion, or they can add an increment to the just possibly completed TCU and thereby show that the possible completion of the unit will not stand as its actual completion as in Case 3 at arrow “b”:

(3) [Joyce and Stan]

- Stan: Any changes of uh: party affiliation er °>anythin like tha(t)?<  
 a → Joyce: Uh: not at this moment. (u)When do I haftih: tell you byζ  
 b → Stan: Well the last day is May fifth. **fer** the Ju:ne uh fourth primary.  
 Joyce: May fifth? We [ll,  
 Stan: [For the June fourth primary. °Yeah.

The increment at arrow “b” elaborates and clarifies Stan’s answer to Joyce’s question.

Many increments are begun with some type of *increment initiator* such as “for” at arrow “b” in Case 3 that shows the speaker may be continuing a TCU rather than beginning anew. The use of an increment initiator can also be seen in the following cases:

(4) [TG]

- Ava: Yeh en so he siz yihknow he remi:nds me of d-hih-ih-  
 → she reminds me, •hhh of you, **meaning** me:.

(5) [Tony 3]

- Susie: Well yeah. Why don’t you send us a letter. **and then** we’ll see whut happens,

In this article, I use the term *increment initiator* to encompass a range of grammatical practices that can be used to explicitly connect a next turn-constructural component to a possibly completed TCU as a continuation. I do so not because I believe that all operate in the same fashion—some tightly tie the increment to the host TCU as a continuation of the action that TCU has been implementing (as in Case 3), whereas others act to draw dis-





a next increment to an earlier turn’s final TCU. Phyllis does this in Case 9:

(9) [Auto Disc]

Phyllis: Mike siz there wz a big fight down there las’night,

Curt: Oh rilly?

(0.4)

→ Phyllis: **Wih** Keegan en, what. Paul de Wa:ld?

Here Phyllis designs the arrowed utterance as an incremental continuation of her own prior TCU as a method to continue prompting Mike to begin a story (Lerner, 1992) without specifically targeting his seeming reluctance to do so after Curt registers interest in hearing the story with a “news marker” (Terasaki, in press).<sup>5</sup>

In the preceding cases, the speaker of the TCU targeted for expansion is the same party who then both initiates and completes the increment—that is, the increments are SELF-initiated and SELF-completed. This is certainly the predominant way in which increments are produced in talk-in-interaction, but it is not the only way. In Case 10, the increment initiator is again voiced by the speaker of the prior TCU, but the remainder of the increment is voiced by another party. That is, the increment is co-constructed: It is SELF-initiated but OTHER-completed. (Note, the underscore after “which\_” indicates a completely flat, midutterance, intonational contour.)

(10) [Kara: 31:00]

A: or we could just hau:l a:l the skis

en ta [ t h a : h ] dorms.

B: [we could] [haul all the skis into the dorm.]

C: [hh h u h h u h h u h ]

(1.0)

a → B: **which\_**

(0.3)

b → A: might work.

B: might be: the best.

In this case, speaker B produces a confirming repeat of A’s still-in-progress proposal. B then resumes speaking after a gap in which no one else

has taken up the proposal. He does so (at arrow “a”) by producing an increment initiator, thereby launching into a continuation of his turn. He then pauses at a point of “maximum grammatical control” (Schegloff, 1996, p. 93). The delayed progressivity of the turn’s talk following the increment initiator furnishes an opportunity space (Lerner, 1996b) for the originator of the proposal to explicitly evaluate it by completing the increment.<sup>6</sup> The main point I make here is that a self-initiated increment can furnish a recipient with the structural (i.e., projective-syntactic) resources for completing the just-begun increment—and these resources can be used when there is an opportunity and entitlement to do so. Here speaker A has a special entitlement to complete the increment because she initiated the proposal that B took over from her in a rather heavy-handed manner.<sup>7</sup>

The following case demonstrates that other-completion of a self-initiated increment need not conform to the increment format begun (and thereby projected) by the previous speaker. As in Case 10, the speaker at arrow “a” in Case 11 begins an increment with a recognizable increment initiator and having rushed through the transition space to produce it, then pauses at a point of maximum grammatical control—but *this also makes it a point of maximum grammatical projection*. Here the increment initiator projects an exception relation to the TCU it is continuing. Taken together, the increment initiator and pause furnish Louise’s coparticipants with both the opportunity and projected structure to complete the increment. Although this case begins as a SELF-initiated increment, Roger’s contribution transforms it into an OTHER-initiated continuation. That is, he does not complete the increment as begun by Louise but instead begins with “and,” which skip-connects to the foregoing possible completion:

(11) [GTS]

a → Louise: Ki:nda gives y’a feelin a’security=**except**,  
(0.5)

b → Roger: and you c’n lose that

Nevertheless, note that Roger’s contribution does voice an exception, although it is constructed as an addition. It will turn out that this also is a common feature of turn-prompting sequences: The prior speaker takes up the matter targeted by an increment-initiation prompt but not always in a manner that completes the increment.

## OTHER-INITIATED INCREMENTS

Thus far, the reader has seen that increments can be both self-initiated and self-completed as well as self-initiated and other-completed—when the opportunity arises. Next, I examine increments that are begun by someone other than the speaker of the host TCU. First, I briefly examine OTHER-initiated increments that are also OTHER-completed, and then I turn to those that are OTHER-initiated yet SELF-completed. It is this latter type of increment that stands as the central concern of this article, and that is realized through a turn-prompting sequence.

There is a range of ways to design the beginning of an utterance to show that it may be a syntactically tied continuation of a prior TCU by another participant. The following cases exhibition some of these syntactic tying techniques:

(12) [Storytelling]

- A: She had a big hairy mole  
 → B: **On** her neck

(13) [Bowl Dinner 2] ((concerning two dogs))

- Lynn: she pees all over his face, which she ((sic)) then spits out=  
 → Lia: =**in** the house,

(14) [Schenkein]

- Joe: I went- I went to, uh Escondido Friday  
 → Edith: **with** Jo:hn

(15) [Schenkein]

- Leni: We were getting worried  
 → Jim: **and** hungry hehh

(16) [Schenkein]

- Ben: There wz at least ten mi:les of traffic bumper tuh bumper  
 → Edith: **because** of that

(17) [CS:27]

- Fran: It's uh small place:.  
 → Mike: **but** their foo:d is excellent

(18) [Schenkein:II:13]

- Ben: Did you notice it?  
 Leni: Yeah how do you like it.  
 Ben: It's fantastic  
 → Edith: **except** the thing presses into his head

Each arrowed contribution begins with an increment initiator (addressed to the host turn speaker's recipient) that ties the current speaker's utterance to a possible completion of the prior speaker's TCU as a particular type of continuation of it and then continues the increment to its next possible completion.<sup>8</sup>

### Increment Directionality

When a speaker ties their utterance to a previous speaker's possibly completed turn, the action accomplished through that contribution can constitute one of two types of connections: The action accomplished through that contribution can constitute it as an increment to that turn (forwarding the action of that turn for its recipient) or as a distinct turn in response to it but one built off of the prior turn syntactically.

Case 19 contains a syntactically tied utterance that continues the action of the previous turn and thereby can be understood as continuing that turn as an other-initiated, other-completed increment to a possibly completed TCU:

(19) [Schenkein]

- Joe: I went- I went to, uh Escondido Friday  
 → Edith: **with** Jo:hn

(All of the cases in the prior section operate in this way as well.) The following well-known case of an "appendor question" (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 1996) instantiates one type of syntactically tied but separate turn:

(20) [GTS]

- Roger: They make miserable coffee.  
 Ken: hhhh hhh

→ Dan: **Across** the street?  
 Roger Yeh

To my mind, the distinction is primarily one of action. That is, “across the street” constituted a separate turn because it implements a distinct (responding) action—in this case checking the speaker’s understanding of the unexplicated pro-term “they.” For the most part, those syntactically tied utterances that continue a turn’s action *for its current recipient* (i.e., maintains a turn’s directionality of address) can be understood as adding an increment to the prior turn’s talk, whereas those syntactically tied utterances that implement a responding action *addressed to the speaker of the prior turn* (i.e., “reverses” the directionality of address from that of the prior turn) can be understood as constituting a distinct turn that implements a distinct action—but one that uses a syntactic connection to do so. In Case 20, the change in directionality is sharpened by the question intonation that explicitly marks Dan’s utterance as a confirmable candidate addressed to last speaker (cf. Sacks, 1992, Vol. 1, pp. 660–661).

This distinction is similar to the one I have drawn elsewhere to distinguish two types of anticipatory completions of compound TCUs (Lerner, 1991).<sup>9</sup> Anticipatory completion of another speaker’s compound TCU can either continue the action begun in the preliminary component for its recipient (Lerner, 1993; Lerner & Takagi, 1999) or implement a responding action to the erstwhile speaker of the turn-so-far (Lerner, 1996a).<sup>10</sup> Note that the directionality of address of the anticipatory completion is not independent of the directionality of address of the host turn. So, for example, after A addresses B, then if B produces a tied utterance, it will almost always be implementing a responsive action addressed to A. On the other hand—in multiparty interaction—after A addresses B, then if C produces a tied utterance, it will almost always be addressed to B as a continuation of the action implemented by A’s turn.<sup>11</sup> In the next section, the reader will see that although stand-alone prompts do seem to operate as a response to a prior turn, they do so by initiating a continuation of that turn.

With this brief survey of TCU increments in hand—self-initiated and self-completed, self-initiated while other-completed, and other-initiated and other-completed—I can now turn to the final form: OTHER-initiated but SELF-completed increments. It is here that increment *initiators*—deployed as stand-alone prompts—constitute increment *elicitors* and therein launch a two-part sequence. The increment initiator prompts the turn’s

original speaker to complete the as-yet-incomplete continuation of their own prior turn begun by a recipient.

### PROMPTING A SPEAKER TO SAY MORE THAN THEY HAVE

It is worth considering the possibility that because each of the other-initiated, other-completed increments described previously was in fact other-initiated, each conceivably could have been halted after other-initiation. Rather than adding an increment to a prior speaker's turn (to, e.g., clarify/elaborate or seek clarification/elaboration), recipients sometimes simply produce the initial tying device and stop there, thus leaving it to the host turn's original speaker to produce the clarification/elaboration by finishing the turn-constructive increment as in Case 21. In this case, Jack has been asked if he has just returned from a trip by someone who knew he had been away. Line 1 constitutes his answer:

(21) [GL:FN]

Jack: I just returned  
 → Kathy: **from**  
 Jack: Finland

Kathy, who apparently did not know about the trip, then prompts Jack to clarify his answer by producing a type-specific increment initiator ("from"). Here she is beginning to voice the format for a detail that Jack himself could have added and in a sense is most entitled to voice. She then stops, and Jack completes the increment to his earlier TCU.

After the question has been answered by Jack—or in sequence-organizational terms, after the sequence-initiating action (or First) has been followed by a sequence-responding action (or Second)—the next (or Third) position in the sequence is systematically available to appraise the adequacy of the answer as a response to the question (Schegloff, 1992). In Case 21, Kathy prompts a clarification for an answer to somebody else's question—an answer that was designed for that other party. The answer was designed for a party who seemed to know about the trip but was deficient for someone who apparently did not know where he had been.<sup>12</sup> Other-initiation of an increment locates the type of trouble

and prompts its solution by making relevant self-completion of the increment.

In the following case, it is the original questioner who prompts the answerer for a fuller response to his question:

(22) [Jones & Beach, 1995]

- Therapist: What kind of work do you do?  
 Mother: on food service  
 → Therapist: **At**\_  
 Mother: uh post office cafeteria downtown  
           main point office on Redwood  
 Therapist: °Okay°

The Therapist uses a type-specific increment initiator to begin and thereby to project an additional increment to Mother's turn, thus showing her answer to be deficient and specifying in just what way it is deficient. He prompts a continuation in a fashion that demonstrates how her prior possibly completed turn might have been continued. He does not directly ask for additional information or specification so much as shows that her own turn might itself have headed—*should* have headed—in that direction to adequately answer his original question.

As a device that can be used to elicit elaboration or clarification, it is well suited for this type of “third-position” deployment. However, increment initiators can also follow a question to prompt the questioner to deal with some deficiency in its formulation—to make it “answer ready”—as in Case 23. In this case, Abby is seated at a dining room table with a second participant, Maureen. Abby has been complaining about her “cranky mother” to Maureen. (Line 1, a kind of topic-final reaffirmation, is addressed to Maureen before Terry enters the dining room.) Then, just as Terry returns to the dining room from another part of the house after a 3-min absence, Abby asks this just-entering participant to confirm her evaluation of her mother's behavior. In one sense, this is used as a device for reengaging or reincluding Terry in the conversation (cf., Szymanski, 1999)—or even perhaps drawing her back to sit at the table with them—yet it nonetheless has to be dealt with on its own terms as a question. However, of course, Terry has no idea what “It” could be referring to because she was not present for any part of this troubles telling (Jefferson, 1988). The query has been specifically misdesigned for this recipient. Here misdesign does not seem to be so much a mistake as a design feature of a practice employed

on the entry of a new participant. That is, this may turn out to be one place in which a trouble source is specifically produced to elicit repair initiation as a way to bring a just-entering party into an ongoing conversation.

(23) [Game Night]

- Abby: Yeah. Yeah, (.) its too bad.  
(1.8)
- Abby: It's too bad (.) don't you think?  
(0.3)
- Terry: **Abou:t,=**
- Abby: =that my mom has to be so cranky?  
(0.5)
- Terry: Oh ↑yeah.

If a deficient reference is produced in a turn that does not mandate a response (especially in multiparty conversation), it may not be necessary to resolve the problem at just that point, as subsequent talk may help to solve the puzzle. However, in Case 23, the requirement to respond makes a further explication of an unclear reference necessary first. In this case, Abby does not continue the increment from Terry's increment initiator, but as in Case 11, she nevertheless does produce an increment to her own prior question that accomplishes the type of action implicated by Terry's use of an increment initiating prompt.

Sequence-initiating Firsts and sequence-responding Seconds constitute recurrent sequence-organizational environments for stand-alone prompts. In each of the preceding cases, a speaker treats a prior turn as deficient as a sequence-initiating or as a sequence-responding action (as not having done as much as it could have done or even should have done before reaching what has been judged to be the turn's actual completion) by producing an increment initiator as a stand-alone prompt to elicit a type-specific addition from the prior speaker.<sup>13</sup>

In each of the preceding instances, the stand-alone prompt has in fact stood alone. That is, the increment initiator was the only item produced by the speaker. However, this is not always the case. In Case 26, the prompt is positioned *after* a continuer (Schegloff, 1982):

(26) [Kamunsky:3]

- Mary: ... Guess what happened yesterday
- Alan: What:t,  
(0.3)

- a→ Mary: I talked t' To:ny:.  
(0.2)
- b→ Alan: Ye:h, **A:nd**;  
Mary: Uh:: he doesn't have too much to say since  
Bruce moved out, does 'e  
Alan: Mm-mmhh

The placement (after a preannouncement) and prosody of Mary's turn at arrow "a" seems to form up "talking to Tony" as itself newsworthy—that is, as "what happened yesterday." Moreover, she does not continue speaking, but Alan also does not talk immediately. (At this point, she appears to consider the delivery response-ready, whereas Alan does not.) At arrow "b," Alan first employs a continuer (which shows more is expected) and then upgrades this response by adding a prompt that treats the delivered news as deficient—as having been deficient on its delivery. The increment initiator shows that not only is more expected but that by adding it as a stand-alone prompt, Alan shows that more should already have been forthcoming—that her delivered news should not have stood as newsworthy on its own.<sup>14</sup> As it turns out, there really is no more to tell, but that only becomes clear after the prompt has been issued.<sup>15</sup>

In one sense, increment initiators and continuers belong to the same family of practices: Each treats the turn-so-far as not yet at a transition-relevance place (although in either case, the turn might have come to possible syntactic completion). The continuer shows that more is expected, whereas the increment initiator shows that more of a specific type should have been forthcoming and is still expected. In this case, both practices are used, and I suspect that their joint use is systematically ordered in the same way that multiple occurrences of repair initiators seem to be (cf. Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977)—with the "stronger" practice ordinarily following the "weaker" one when both are issued in the same contribution.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, an increment initiator can—given a felicitous circumstance of content, context, composition, and sequence position—prompt a prior speaker to complete an increment that reaches back across several interchanges by an assortment of participants to its host TCU as in Case 27:

(27) [Christmas]

- a→ Dad: Children, if s- someone asks you what your father does,  
(0.2)  
he's an inves:tor.  
(0.5)

- Daughter1: Okay.  
 Daughter2: >Oh, okay.<  
 Dad: That- sounds (0.8) like [yer with it. soforth.  
 Son1: [Invester  
 Daughter1: heh heh [heh  
 b→ Daughter2: [So I shouldn't [sa:y thet-  
 c→ Son2: [rather than,  
 Dad: retired. eh hah hah hah hah huh huh [huh huh  
 Daughter1: There's nothing wrong with that,  
 Son1: Retired sounds like the decadence it is.

In this case, a tacit contrast is implied in Dad's lighthearted request at arrow "a." That is, asking to be described in one way implies he should not be described in another way that he might otherwise be described. Two of his (adult) children grant the request that has been addressed to all the "children" present, whereas a third repeats the categorical reference but does not accept it. The request can still be seen to be relevant for those who have not yet taken it up (although, of course, they need not take it up at all), and the intervening talk maintains the relevance of the request with Dad giving a reason for the request. At arrow "b," Daughter2 begins to make the alternative, apparently objectionable, membership category explicit. The increment initiator, produced in overlap with this at arrow "c," prompts Dad to make the contrasting descriptor explicit himself—which he does. Here, "rather than" can reach back across intervening talk because it makes a type-specific increment—the second part of a contrast—relevant, and Dad's original (still relevant) sequence-initiating request is the most recent utterance that the increment initiator can be connected to contrastively.

Although Firsts and Seconds furnish systematic environments for assessing the adequacy of a prior turn,<sup>17</sup> stand-alone prompts can be used when weaker sequential connections obtain. In Case 28, a prompt is occasioned by one element in a lengthy troubles telling:

(28) [Linton:2.22.01.1]

- Brenda: .hh So:we:ll=  
 Mindy: =They sent a psychiatrist to see him,  
 (0.6)  
 Brenda: Well I don't=  
 Mindy: =They did a depression scale on 'im  
 (0.3)  
 → Brenda: And,=thh  
 (0.3)

- Mindy: An' (.) Well I think he's (.) depressed,  
 It's all over this.  
 (0.2)  
 Brenda: Oh yes,

Although mentioning the “depression scale” is new information for her recipient, it does not seem to be delivered as an announcement of news. Because this is just the next item in a lengthy troubles telling, it does not make a response conditionally relevant, although there certainly is an opportunity to respond, and such a response would be relevant. Here, the description of the administration of a psychological test is treated as incomplete because the projected results have not been forthcoming.<sup>18</sup>

Stand-alone prompts can also be employed in other, perhaps more specialized, forms of speech-exchange.<sup>19</sup> The following case comes from an after-game press conference with a baseball player—Barry Bonds. Although he is asked a somewhat malformed question, his terse response is taken to be inadequate as an answer to an interview question:

(29) [ATC: Barry Bonds Locker Room Press Conference]

- Reporter: The double offa Wa:shburn, <what kinda  
 pitch it was what you sa:w?  
 (0.7)  
 Bonds: Threw a change up,  
 (2.2)  
 → Reporter: And\_  
 (1.8)  
 Bonds: Double.  
 (.)  
 Reporter: Ye(hh)ah I sa(h)w th(h)at,  
 ((another person possibly laughs quietly as well))  
 (0.6)  
 .hh ((somewhat constricted))  
 (0.7)  
 Were ya lookin' for it or were ya looking for somethin' else?  
 (0.6)  
 Reporter: I look jus ta hit the ba:seball.  
 (1.0)  
 Moderator: Another question for Barry?

It is my impression that questions such as the one that begins this extract are treated as requests not merely for a simple factual answer but as requests to give an insider's view of the episode.<sup>20</sup> Bonds does not do this in

his initial response. The reporter waits for over 2 sec for more, but no more is forthcoming. At this point, he prompts Bonds for more. Note that in this case, Bonds then treats the reporter's prompt as having treated Bonds' prior turn as inadequate. He resists this prompt (and the not-so-veiled complaint it carries) not by refusing to speak but by producing an even more tersely constructed increment completion that only furnishes a publicly available fact. (Impressionistically, one might say that when the reporter pushes Bonds to do more, Bonds just "digs in" and pushes back even harder.) I take the reporter's subsequent response as registering the continuing and increasing inadequacy of Bonds' response.<sup>21</sup>

In each of these cases, a prior turn has been treated as incomplete or deficient in some way. In many cases, not only do these increment initiators prompt more from a prior speaker, they seem specifically designed to prompt more on those occasions when more should have been forthcoming. That is, "more" can warrantably be *claimed* to have been promised—but not delivered.<sup>22</sup> In the next section, I consider some sources of "disappointed" projection that seem to "promise more" than is delivered and thereby furnish both the warrant and resources for launching a turn-prompting sequence with an increment initiator.

### **Some Sources of Disappointed Projection in Turn Construction**

For a stretch of talk to operate as a TCU, participants must be able to project roughly what it will take to complete it, and they ordinarily must be able to do so before it actually reaches that completion (Sacks et al., 1974). What will be needed to bring the current TCU-in-progress to a next possible completion is not a unilateral matter. For a turn to be response ready, it must ordinarily come to what Ford and Thompson (1996) called "pragmatic completion" as well as "syntactic" and "intonational completion"—and I would stress that it must be understood as coming to pragmatic completion by its recipients on this occasion (in light of the thick particulars of its situated production). That is, to accomplish turn transfer in an orderly fashion, what constitutes an interactionally adequate complete TCU must include "recipient design" considerations (cf. Sacks et al., 1974, p. 727). The TCU must be understood to be a possibly complete action not only by its speaker but by its recipients as well.

When one inspects the host turns that occasion increment initiators, one recurrently finds that the trouble source assumes a distinct turn-

constructional form: The host turns strongly project what might be thought of as *syntactically optional, but pragmatically key constituents of the turn's action*. Thus, the projected elements can be seen to have been dispensed with as the TCU is brought to completion syntactically and intonationally; yet, these elements can remain practically necessary.

In each of the following cases, the host turn is completed syntactically but remains pragmatically incomplete for its recipient, and in each case, the increment initiator locates as the trouble source an element that can now be seen as having been made relevant before syntactic completion but not delivered before the turn was completed. To put it another way, once the missing item is pointed out, it can be seen to have been projected by a particular feature of the host turn for the turn's recipient. Without this, it would not be practically possible to complete the increment. Thus, not every type of prompt is equally available for use with every type of TCU—even though some could be used as part of a self-initiated, self-completed increment or even other-initiated, other-completed increment but not as an other-initiated, self-completed increment because there would be no findable basis for projecting increment completion. This situation can be seen in Case 7 in which “with” does not seem to make relevant a feature of the turn-so-far that would allow projection of increment completion, although it obviously can be used to initiate an increment.

In Case 30, speaker B's description of what she is going to do can be seen to project but not deliver something like an employment category, and speaker C then prompts her to produce it:

(30) [Kitzinger:BCC:23:H]

- C: Oh I'm sorry.=Are you thinking of moving *else*↑where o:r  
 B: Well no ... ((several lines of B's answer not shown))  
 C: Yeah  
 → B: so I'm going to just resi:gn [ 'n ] **retra:i:n**.  
 C: [mm]  
 C: A:s,  
 (.)  
 B: We:ll 't the moment that's a:ll still a bit iffy

For C, speaker B has reached a syntactic completion but has not adequately completed her answer because she has not specified just what she will be retrained to do.

In the following case, “too” carries the sense of “disqualifyingly more than is appropriate or efficacious”:

(31) [JM:FN] ((Daughter has just put up a calendar on her wall))

- Daughter: Mom, I think my calendar’s a little **too high up**.  
 Mom: for,  
 Daughter: writing, crossing things out and stuff.

Here Daughter declaims an “insufficiency” but not the criterion on which its disqualification is based (and on which it can be judged by Mom)—and Mom prompts her for it.

In Case 32, the known-in-common structure that connects “results” to “testing” furnishes a basis for eliciting the results when they are not forthcoming at syntactic completion:

(32) [Linton:2.22.01.1]

- Mindy: =They did a **depression scale** on ‘im  
 (0.3)  
 Brenda: And,=thh

In the following case, the trouble source seems to be based on divergent understandings of the type of sequence underway—what Jefferson and Lee (1992) called “activity contamination” (p. 524). Here, Sally has just concluded that Dan is not in his personal office because as a newly appointed administrator, he is now in his new administrative office:

(33) [GL:FN]

- John: Actually he is home **sick**  
 Sally: With.

As a disconfirmation of Sally’s assertion, “home sick” could stand as adequate. However, as a report of news, it probably cannot so easily do so. In this case, John designs his response as a disconfirmation, but the use of the turn-continuing prompt treats it as an incomplete delivery of the news by showing that more should have been forthcoming.

A similar treatment of an underway sequence can be seen in Case 34. Here, a doctor asks a just-arriving patient what is taken by the patient to be a generic “personal well-being” question common in nonmedical conver-

sational openings as well as in many medical interviews (Robinson, in press):

(34) [Robinson and Heritage]

- Doctor: How ya doin' today.  
 → Patient: .hh ↑ **A:h pretty good,**  
 (0.5)  
 Doctor: BU:t, hh=

However, the doctor treats the patient's response as incomplete—as possibly just a downgraded pro forma response premonitory to a problem presentation, which he then prompts after it is not forthcoming (cf. Jefferson, 1980).<sup>23</sup> In both Cases 33 and 34, the increment initiator not only prompts more from a prior speaker but in doing so shifts the sequence type underway. Here an adequate First (in Case 33) and an adequate Second (in Case 34) for one type of sequence are located reflexively as inadequate for another type of sequence.

Clearly, on some occasions, host turns such as these could be treated as adequately completed and response ready—under circumstances in which the projectable elements are already known, assumable, or not germane. In fact, in the following institutionalized circumstance (a birth crisis hotline), the source of a common problem (caller “flashbacks”) is routinely treated as known-in-common and remains unexpressed (C. Kitinger, personal communication, February 10, 2003). Because it is a birth crisis hotline, it is the birth that both parties treat as the crisis unless otherwise announced. This recurrently unproblematic reference becomes a source of trouble in Case 35 because of situation-specific details that call into question the otherwise ordinary taken-for-granted source of hotline caller “flashbacks”—a birthing trauma.<sup>24</sup>

(35) [Kitinger: YYY: Side A]

- S: You know some nights I just- (0.2) if **I get bad flashes**  
 I c- I can't mo:ve.  
 C: No:.=  
 S: So some nights he's got the baby and me:huh  
 (.)  
 → C: .hhhh Uh by flashes **you mean flashbacks.**  
 → S: **Yea:h.**  
 C: To:;,

- S: To- To the bi:rth  
 C: To the birth itse:lf. mm.  
 (0.2)  
 S: And thee uhm (.) the- the labor an' thee the week in the  
 hospital afterwa:rd[s. ]  
 C: [Y]e:s. Ye:s.

In this case, confirming “flashback” alone is treated as insufficient on this occasion because most of the call has dealt with a long series of severe postbirth traumas, any one of which could be the source of the flashbacks.

In each of these cases, a recipient targets and thereby makes relevant an incipiently projectable but undelivered element of a prior speaker’s completed turn. This must be seen as only one method amongst alternative methods for initiating repair on this type of trouble source.<sup>25</sup>

I am suggesting that this way—using an increment initiator as a stand-alone prompt—is a way to show not only that more is needed but that *more should have been forthcoming* because the prompt plainly demonstrates that a TCU increment is the *form* that elaboration should take, and an increment (especially one completed by the speaker of the host turn) is not a new turn but a continuation of a prior TCU and thus an expansion of the host turn.

### A Note on Prosody

Increment initiators are syntactically “incomplete” in two senses—or in two directions—as they neither begin with a recognizable turn beginning nor end with a recognizable completion. Moreover, they are regularly voiced in a manner that aims at demonstrating their intended incompleteness prosodically. This can be realized through a range of voicing practices.

In its mildest or least marked form, one finds increment initiators voiced with some degree of lengthening accompanying a “continuing” intonation contour. This can be seen in its most insipid form in Cases 36 and 37,<sup>26</sup> whereas Case 38 is produced with a more pronounced stretch on the word-final vowel. In Case 39, the prompt exhibits the same features, but punched up a notch or two:

(36) [Game Night]

- B: **Abou:t,=**

(37) [Kitzinger:BCC:23:H]

C:       **A:s,**

(38) [VYC:980302A1–LC]

CG1:     Are you taking Reilly?

CG2:     Yeh,  
(0.3)

→ CG1:   **to:,**

(39) [Robinson and Heritage]

Doctor:   How ya doin' today.

Patient:   .hh ↑A:h pretty good,  
(0.5)

→ Doctor: **BU:t, hh=**

The stretch constitutes a nascent delay in progressivity that is then fully realized when the speaker does not continue speaking. This prosody shows that more is projected as a continuation of the prior turn it is syntactically tied to; delaying both projects more to come *and* its unavailability. By launching an incremental addition to another's turn and markedly delaying its completion, a turn's recipient makes relevant—in the first place—the completion of that increment by the host turn's speaker.

Increment initiators can be produced with even more distinctive voicing features—that is, as more distinctively incomplete contributions designed to prompt completion from a prior speaker. This can be seen in Cases 40 to 42 in which a word-ending “\_” indicates a completely flat and unchanging pitch contour:

(40) [Land:NE:8]

Shelly:    Yeh iShelly Brown calling from Sheffield.  
              I left a message a(c-) couple of days ago and  
              nobody has actually got back to me as yet.

→ Desk:    **for::\_**

(41) [Jones & Beach, 1995]

Therapist:   **At\_**

(42) [ATC: Barry Bonds Locker Room Interview]

Reporter:    **And\_**

To my ear, each of these cases has a distinctly flat pitch through to its completion (without even a slight rise or fall) that parallels the voicing of nonstressed, nonfinal words produced in the course of an utterance. (This contour was also seen in Case 10 in which it was produced by a continuing speaker.) These cases are voiced in a manner that realizes a nonfinal TCU word as a stand-alone contribution. Here, the distinct intonation contour seems specifically designed to prepare the way for continuation by another speaker.<sup>27</sup>

This voicing practice is one way that recipients can transform an ostensibly completed turn into now having reached just a possible completion by showing that that completion was not transition relevant. This form of contribution shows itself—through its very syntactic and prosodic incompleteness—to be treating the prior turn as not yet adequately completed.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The practice described in this article stands as empirical evidence for the analytic distinction among syntactic, prosodic, and pragmatic completion because it is a practice specifically aimed at deficiencies in one of these (pragmatic completion) after the others (syntactic and prosodic completion) have been otherwise properly realized. Employing increment initiation as a stand-alone prompt is designed to reopen the turn of a prior speaker after it has apparently been completed. This is one way that lifting the transition relevance of a possible completion can be recipient enforced.

The production of a stand-alone increment initiator is not treated as a defective or inadequate contribution but as a recognizable action implemented through a syntactically incomplete format—where the criterion for syntactic completeness is understood in turn-constructural terms as the next possible completion of the *host* TCU. Here is a place in which the structural analysis of syntax is a practical matter for members of a linguistic community.<sup>28</sup>

It is this intended incompleteness that (a) accomplishes the action of tying to the prior possibly complete TCU as an increment beginning and (b) projects a form for the completion of the just-beginning constituent but does not produce it. In this way, it produces a complete action—prompting a prior speaker to elaborate. So, here we have a contribution that is pragmatically complete while remaining syntactically and prosodically incomplete (for its sequential environment). This might best be thought of not as a

fully fledged turn at talk but as a recipient’s contribution to the talk—a “fledgling turn,” as it were.

Finally, I suppose there is a bit of “structural irony” (not to mention structural symmetry) in the fact that the way to call attention to the pragmatic incompleteness of an otherwise syntactically and prosodically completed turn is to produce a syntactically and prosodically incomplete contribution that is itself pragmatically complete. It is in this way that the speakers of these stand-alone prompts deploy grammar as action.

### NOTES

- 1 It should be clear that I am only talking about courses of action accomplished (for the most part) through talking. For sequences of action that take place partially outside of the talk or take place independently of talking, the orientation to completion may not be an omnirelevant concern.
- 2 In addition to the type-specific prompts that are the central concern of this article, there are other methods for prompting a speaker to continue that are used under different circumstances. For example, one can elicit more from a prior speaker by explicitly instructing them to continue as in the following case. Here, Carney directs Curt to “go on” with his story after jokingly challenging what portends to be a second “dick-measuring” story being told in her presence—that is, in the presence of a woman—by reminding them, “You forget I’m here.”

[Auto Discussion]

Curt: Remember we wz in there en  
           he [s a y [s-  
 Gary:           [•uhh! [  
 Carney:                 [You ferg<sup>t</sup> I’m here.  
 Curt:           Ulright,  
 Carney: [Teh hhah hah hah  
 Curt:           [Mhh hehh heh[heh  
 Mike:                         [heh-heh-heh hah-  
                                   hah[hah heh heh  
 Curt:                 [ehh heh heh  
 → Carney: **Go o:n,**  
 Curt:           We:ll? We wz just in there  
                                   et the prison camp ennuh,

In this case, the explicit prompt is used after the speaker has interrupted another participant’s talk with a remark that is designed to occasion laughter. Once the laughter is pro-

duced, the prompt is issued to the prior speaker to resume the interrupted action. In short, the explicit prompt is used to elicit the resumption of a halted action by the speaker responsible for halting that action.

- 3 There are other ways to add unprojected elements to a turn, but these do not constitute TCU-internal increments to the ongoing TCU. For instance, a speaker can re-project a turn in a marked fashion by cutting off a TCU before it has reached its projected next possible completion and begin the whole unit again:

[Berkeley]

Rita: well, I wan'ed tuh thank you fer the c- well Sidney otta  
thank you fer the ca:rd 'n thank Evelyn.

Or, a speaker can re-project a TCU in a more unmarked fashion by employing a syntactic pivot maneuver—what Fox (1993) described as a “syntactic blending, whereby a speaker begins with a particular syntactic construction and then pivots on one of the words in the construction into another syntactic construction ... [so that] the resulting utterance ... is not a single syntactic construction” (p. 108).

[Fox:108]

Tutor: and you look over (at) your equation and you go okay well  
that's (0.2) work and energy are the same thing.

- 4 This is the strongest way to turn an emerging gap between turns into having simply been a pause in the course of the now-resumed turn because a speaker is continuing with an utterance that could not stand alone. A speaker can also continue a turn by starting a new TCU, but doing so ratifies the possible completion of the prior TCU as its actual completion.
- 5 Or, as I have shown elsewhere, skip-connecting to a prior possibly complete TCU can be used as a form of delayed completion to sequentially delete the relevance of an intervening action (Lerner, 1989):

[GTS]

Roger: I don' wanna accept that responsibility. (0.7) cause I'm not trained  
along those lines  
(.)  
Dan: Mh=  
Roger: =so I wanna bu- I don' wanna raise an underachiever. (0.2) an an  
i(f)- 'n further the problem. (0.4) perpetuate the=uh (0.3)

- underachiever, (0.6) so ah'll just leave it (.) to somebody who is  
(0.2)
- Dan: you're not going to have children?  
(.)
- Roger: so trained, (.) t' have children.

Here Roger uses a delayed completion to turn a potentially complete TCU into merely the first part of the TCU that the delayed completion now recompletes. Here a ratified completion is shown post hoc not to have been the actual completion, thus potentially deleting the relevance for subsequent talk of Dan's question.

- 6 However, it is also possible for a speaker to design a TCU in such a way that it is clear he or she is prompting its completion by other participants. In the following case, a teacher stops before a possible completion in a place—after an increment initiator—and in a manner that makes it relevant for her students to complete the TCU (Lerner, 1995):

[CIRC:Dugg]

- Teacher: Where was this book lub- published?  
:
- Teacher: Macmillan publishing company in?  
(.)
- Class: New York ((mostly in unison))
- Teacher: Okay,

Of course, the production of a delay after an increment initiator does not require other-completion as can be seen in the following case of a nascent word search at the arrowed line:

[Three Sisters]

- Rose: We gotta ca:ll,  
(2.0)
- from:., (0.2) the Jeromes.

Here, as elsewhere, the “distribution of knowledge” among the participants may be consequential for how the word search will be prosecuted.

- 7 Note that there is then a delayed completion by the turn's original speaker. I mention this just to register the fact that the successful use of an opportunity space made available by a delay in progressivity is not a unilateral accomplishment. Speakers who delay the completion of their turns also have means to reclaim a turn—and in fact regularly do so.

- 8 In each of these instances, another speaker adds an increment to a possibly complete turn; however, it is also possibly for TCU-*internal* increments to be added by another speaker, as in the following case:

[HIC]

Mom: See this is little peanuts now, but if it ever got to be  
something [ people would be fi:];gthing an ah: that's  
→ Dad: [ an an it could ]

Here Dad adds a TCU-internal element (addressed to Mom's recipient) at the completion of the preliminary component of her compound TCU.

- 9 Perhaps it is worth mentioning that there are practical analytic differences between completion and recompletion of a TCU by another speaker. Completion of a compound TCU is made possible by a within-TCU projectable opportunity space and a projectable format for completion, whereas recompletion of a TCU (i.e., adding an increment to a TCU) uses the transition space available at each possible completion of *any* TCU, and as such, its format is not necessarily specified in advance.
- 10 Not all syntactically tied utterances addressed to a prior speaker are designed to implement responding actions (e.g., see the discussion of "speaking on one's own behalf" in Lerner, 1996a). In the case of the stand-alone prompts described in this article, the action is in one sense responsive, but its form shows it to be forwarding both the format and action of a prior turn's talk.
- 11 I say "almost always" because it is possible to markedly shift recipients as in the following case in which the addressed recipient addresses her anticipatory completion to a third party:

[Mother's Day]

Mom: If you should decide to live with a fella  
(.)  
→ Daughter: Mom will still talk to me ((laugh))  
Mom: I'll still talk to ya [ but please take- please take the pill  
Dad: [I d- I didn' s+

Here Daughter, the addressed recipient, completes Mom's compound TCU but redirects the turn as a whole to Dad in a syntactically realized attempt to align herself with her mother (or perhaps more precisely to draw her mother to her side of the dispute).

- 12 This is one way that recipient design practices can systematically result in trouble: The very design of an utterance for one (addressed) recipient can thereby make its understanding troublesome for another (unaddressed) recipient for whom it was not designed.

- 13 Because post-First deployments show that the sequence-initiating action is not response ready, this practice can be used to expand the scope of a First. For example, it can be used to expand the scope of an offer by showing that more choices were expected.

[GL:FN]

John: Tea,  
 Max: or:  
 John: coffee

- 14 The use of a stand-alone prompt to demote the newsworthiness of the prior turn by treating it as merely a preliminary TCU that should have been on the way to the real news is part of a set of practices used at the intersection of turn construction and sequence organization—in particular at the intersection of turns that are composed with a preliminary TCU or TCU component that seeks to lift transition relevance by projecting a next component within a turn and pre-sequence Firsts that make a response relevant before preceding to the main action. This is far too complex a matter to address here in any detail, but it should be mentioned that whether “preliminarity” is realized through a turn or a sequence can turn out to be an interactional matter on a case-by-case basis. Here, turn and sequence are interactional outcomes, not discrete orders of organization—and the use of increment initiators stand as something like a third alternative here between waiting for continuation and responding with a pre-sequence Second.
- 15 See Case 30 for another instance in which a strongly projected item turns out not to be available after a prompt for it has been issued.
- 16 I use the term *contribution* here rather than *turn* because, as Schegloff (1982) has argued, continuers are designed as less than full turns at talk. I make a similar case for increment initiators. In this case, the contribution involves two less-than-full-turn elements. Some investigators might quickly label such elements as “back-channel” contributions, but I believe that term glosses over their operation and the actions they accomplish.
- 17 It is in these sequence-organizational environments that increment initiators are employed to prompt turn continuation to make a sequence-initiating action response ready or make a sequence-responding action reception ready.
- 18 Notice in this case, the speaker of the host turn begins to produce the increment by beginning to repeat the increment initiator but then recasts her turn as a response to the matter the increment initiator made relevant. A full description of turn-prompting sequences, and in particular the various forms responses to increment initiation takes, is left for another article. This article focuses on the placement, composition, and action of the stand-alone prompt itself.
- 19 Stand-alone prompts are also found in the scripted conversations of novels, films, and television productions, but these are not considered in this article.

- 20 Clayman and Heritage (2002, chap. 4) stated, “Interviewees rarely offer brief responses and tend to do so only in retaliation to questioning that they object to.” See Clayman and Heritage (2002, chap. 7) for a discussion of evasive and insufficient interview answers.
- 21 This artful dodge was not only noticed and appreciated by some of Bonds’ co-participants. It was subsequently selected by a program producer (along with other extracts) to demonstrate Bonds’ well-known reluctance to talk to reporters. However, this device is not only used with notoriously reluctant interviewees. In the following case, a reporter pursues elaboration of an answer after a minimal response:

[National Public Radio: News report]

- |   |     |   |
|---|-----|---|
|   | IR: | Now the <u>o</u> dor (0.3) it’s- called the <u>C</u> or <u>p</u> se <u>F</u> lower, |
|   | IE: | Yeahs:;   |
|   |     | (.)   |
| → | IR: | Becau:se <sub>z</sub>   |
|   | IE: | Becuz it really doe:s sm <u>e</u> ll like deca:y <u>i</u> ng meat.                  |
|   |     | .h An it’s ...  |

Here, the interviewee treats the name offered by the interviewer as a simple confirmation request rather than as an action designed to implement a broader news interview question. The interviewer then prompts the interviewee to continue answering.

- 22 In some cases, the claim of deficiency can have its source in the “recipient misdesign” of a turn as in Cases 21 and 23. Yet, in both of these cases, one might say that “more” should have been produced if the trouble source turn had been properly designed for the prompting recipient.
- 23 One might even say that the doctor “exploits” the downgraded response to pursue the reason for the visit from the patient (J. Heritage, personal communication, June 2003).
- 24 This case is important because it demonstrates that the projectability of a constellation of possibly relevant features is not simply a matter of lexical semantics or Wittgensteinian logical grammars but can be a local contingent matter. This is not to dismiss the grammaticized practices that reflexively link features of human conduct together as practical necessities.
- 25 Some speaking practices can be used to implement different actions depending on the circumstances of their use (Schegloff, 1997). On the other hand, a range of practices can sometimes be available to accomplish the same or closely related actions but in somewhat different ways—and therefore with possibly different sequential uses and/or consequences. In such cases, the set of practices can stand as “slot alternatives” from which a speaker can draw to implement an action—although each practice may not be equally suitable in every case. There are a number of ways to deal with an inadequate or insuffi-

ciently complete or a not yet response-ready turn that has reached possible completion, for example, the following:

[SN-4]

- Sherrie: He collected a fortune fer that, he claimed all kinds 've damages.  
            (1.1)  
    Ruth: huh huh-huh=  
→ Karen: **=From Luhmancha:?**  
    Sherrie: Yeah.

[Hyla (simplified)]

- Nancy: ... He goes yih have a really mild case he goes,  
            (.)  
→ Hyla: **of what**  
            (.)  
    Nancy: A:cne,

[Schenkein:II:38]

- Ben: They gotta- a garage sale.  
→ Lori: **Where.**  
    Ben: on Third avenue.

[SBL 1–6]

- A: Well, I'll see you about twelve thirty.  
→ B: **Twelve thirty::** Monda[y].  
    A: [Monday.

Increment initiation stands as a slot alternative to such practices.

26 I only include surrounding talk for instances not displayed elsewhere in the article.

27 I have occasionally found stand-alone prompts that seem to be designed as distinct turns at talk (cf. Schegloff, 1996, p. 76). The difference, in part, seems to be one of prosodic realization as in the following case that is produced without any “continuation eliciting” prosodic features:

[GTS:4:50]

- Roger: So then it- it is essential that we have members of both sex.  
            (1.2)

- Therapist: Sometimes it brings out other kinds of problems.  
 Ken: hhhh  
 Roger: Huh.  
 Ken: hhhhh  
 → Roger: **Such as,**  
           (1.0)  
 (Jim:) Sex<sub>i</sub>

Here, Roger solicits examples of the “problems” alluded to by the Therapist, but he does not voice his prompt in a fashion that treats those examples as having been missing from the Therapist’s prior turn. Nevertheless, the form of the projected response remains the completion of the prompted continuation. By comparison, see the reporter’s voicing of “because” in Note 21, which makes it clear she is treating the prior turn as incomplete.

- 28 One question left open by this article is to what extent is this practice language specific? That is, to what extent is the production of an increment initiator dependent on the availability of language-specific syntactic resources for constructing pre-positioned connections to subsequent turn-constructive constituents? So, for example, what are the turn-continuation practices and turn-continuation prompting practices available in a language such as Japanese in which pre-positioned connectors may not be an available resource? Are pre-positioned prompts still done (but employing other grammatical or interactional resources), or is the elicitation of turn continuation done in other ways altogether? Investigation into these matters has just begun.

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