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Title: Leave-taking as multiactivity: Coordinating conversational closings with driving in cars

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Abstract:

This paper uses conversation analysis and video-based methods to study how the driver and passengers interact in order to coordinate multiple activities in cars. The video data have been recorded in naturally occurring driving situations in Britain and Finland. The analysis focuses on leave-taking during drop-offs, i.e. situations where the driver is pulling over for a momentary stop to let a passenger out of the car. It shows how in-car participants time and coordinate the conversation's closing step by step with respect to the car's movement and the eventual stop; i.e. they coordinate leave-taking as multiactivity. The paper suggests that some of the ways in which leave-taking is managed as multiactivity contributes to the construction of safety in traffic.

Highlights:

- Talk and visible action are used to progress two or more courses of action simultaneously.
- Multiactivity is a collaborative achievement, not an individual effort.
- Drivers and passengers carefully time and coordinate the progression of talk and driving.
- Through multiactivity, in-car participants can jointly facilitate traffic safety.

Keywords: multiactivity, leave-taking, driving, mobility, talk, embodiment

Biography: Pentti Haddington is Professor of English language and interaction at the University of Oulu, Finland. He uses video-based methods and conversation analysis to study social interaction in complex settings. He is interested in how participants talk, use their bodies and other multimodal resources as part of their everyday social activities. Haddington's research has been published for example in *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *Journal of Pragmatics* and *Text & Talk*. He has also co-edited several books, for example for Benjamins and de Gruyter.

Leave-taking as multiactivity: Coordinating conversational closings with driving in cars

Pentti Haddington, University of Oulu

1. Introduction

This paper analyses *leave-taking* in cars, i.e. the driver pulling over for a momentary stop to drop off a passenger. First, it offers an outline of leave-taking as a social activity. Second, it shows that when engaged in leave-taking in cars the driver and the passengers systematically time and order two ‘action streams’ (Levinson, 2013, pp. 124–125, 128) – the closing of an interactional encounter with respect to the car’s arrival to the drop-off location – and maintain them simultaneously, as multiactivity (Mondada, 2014, pp. 47-50). Third, it is argued that some of the ways in which leave-taking is accomplished as multiactivity display the participants’ sensitivity to possible surrounding traffic; while the stop’s possible consequences to other road users are rarely verbalised, the participants’ actions in leave-taking are indicative of attempts to minimise or prevent any disruptions of the stop to the surrounding traffic. This study also adds to previous research on two interactional activities: *the closing of conversations and interactional encounters* (e.g. Heath, 1985; Robinson, 2001; Schegloff and Sacks, 1973) and *stopping as a mobile action* (D’hondt, 2009; Laurier, 2005; Mondada, 2009a). It also adds to research in interactional mobility studies (Haddington et al., 2013b; Laurier et al., 2008; McIlvenny et al., 2009, 2014) by investigating how people talk and interact, and how they coordinate their actions, while engaged in joint mobility.

The findings build on observations made from video recordings of naturally occurring social interaction. By relying on methods used in conversation analysis, the analysis targets interlocutors’ talk and embodied actions as they progress, moment to moment and step by step, grounding on the premise that social actions are multimodal accomplishments (e.g. Goodwin C., 1981, 2000). The findings are based on the analysis of 23 examples of leave-taking in cars found in two driving corpora.¹ The materials used for this study amount to approximately 7 hours, containing at least the driver and one passenger. The recordings have been made with two cameras, one to give a general view of the car interior and participants in it, and the other to provide a view in front of the car through the windscreen.

2. Closing down interactions and stopping mobility as interactional achievements

There is an etiquette for bringing an encounter to an end (Goffman, [1971] 2010, p. 2). Stopping talking and remaining silent is not an option for closing a conversation appropriately, because silence coming after a turn-at-talk is not hearable as a closing but as a refusal to talk (Button, 1987; Sacks, 1992, pp. 363-366; Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). By analysing the routines and practices involved in closing a conversation, conversation analytic studies have shown how closing a conversation requires a sequence of interactional moves that lifts the relevance for speaker transition at the end of a turn and thereby signals to the participants that stopping talking does not occasion a next turn and that the conversation is now arriving at its end. The basic make-up of leave-taking is not different from interactional closings in other settings. Extract 1 shows an example of a

¹ The first corpus has been collected in Britain in early-mid 2000s as part of the Habitable Cars project, led by Eric Laurier. The second corpus has been collected by the author in Finland in 2006-2009.

closing in which two colleagues arriving home from work have just stopped on the side of the road and begin to wind down the conversation.²

Excerpt 1 Closing a conversation (Habitable Cars, Patrizia & Geoff, drop-off.mov)

01 (0.3)
 02 FP Okay?
 03 DRV Okay.*
 fp *starts turning body to step out of the car--->
 04 (0.6)
 fp ---->
 05 FP #Good.*
 ----->*
 #Fig.1
 06 (0.3)
 07 FP *Alright#.
 *moves left leg to step out of the car
 #Fig.2

08 (0.4)
 09 DRV [Se]e you tomorrow.
 10 FP [()].
 11 FP Se[e you tomor*row.]
 12 DRV [Eight o' *#clock.]
 fp *steps out of the car
 #Fig.3
 13 (0.2)
 14 FP Yeah.
 15 (2.8)
 16 FP I *1- -- h. (0.6) Oh. (0.3) My glasses fell out# of me
 *turns to face the driver
 #Fig.4

² The examples are presented with detailed transcriptions of verbal and embodied conduct. For the transcription conventions, see the Appendix.

is a contingent achievement, and participants can at any point suspend the imminent closing and reopen topic talk. For example, the pre-closing sequence warrants for the closing but leaves an opportunity for the participants to raise any as-of-yet-unspoken topics. Participants can refer back to something that has been discussed earlier (back-referencing), make arrangements for the future ('arrangement-making', lines 09-14) or initiate new topics (topic-initial elicitors; lines 16-24) (see Button, 1987, pp. 105-121; Heath, 1985, p. 37; Robinson, 2001, p. 646).

As Heath (1985) and Robinson (2001) show in the context of medical consultations, closing and withdrawing from an encounter involves not only talk and physical leave-taking but also the careful coordination of talk and embodied action. Heath (1985, p. 28) shows how patients begin to prepare to leave the room during the first moves that anticipate the closure and prior to the terminal exchange, and how the leave-taking is closely coordinated with the organisation of turns-at-talk. In their study on walking practices in guided tours, Broth and Mondada (2013) show how the participants orient to emerging sequence closings by beginning to walk away. This shows that walking is reflexively coordinated with talking and that walking away is a resource for closing an activity and, in effect, achieves the closing of a sequence. In similar studies, Tuncer (2015) shows how position in space, mobility and body orientation are important resources for achieving closings in offices, and Ticca (2012) explores how participants in travel agency service encounters draw on multimodal resources to close an interaction.

Interaction and communication research has also considered how stopping or being still in different mobile contexts can be paced with the features of a mobile surround, tied to particular activities and coordinated in and through talk and embodied interaction (for an overview, see Haddington et al., 2013a, pp. 30-33). For example, studies have considered how drivers and passengers together search for and find a place to park the car (Laurier, 2005), how pedestrians can stop other pedestrians in order to ask for directions (Mondada, 2009a), and how successions of starts and stops are organised in guided tours or while shopping (see e.g. Broth and Lundström, 2013; De Stefani, 2013). These studies highlight how stopping becomes a meaningful action; they show how participants' actions while stopping are organised with respect to the surrounding space and the mobile event, and how talk and action may serve the coming to a stop.

The above studies show that coming to a stop does not entail closing an interaction, but in leave-taking stopping makes the closing relevant. While there are no studies exploring this in particular, related studies include Psathas's (1991, p. 208) early study that shows how in direction-giving sequences, the closing of the instructions and the route construction is marked by the 'arrival' at the destination. Furthermore, D'hondt (2009) shows how stops on a journey are identified, communicated and negotiated between passengers, conductors and drivers in minibuses in Dar-es-Salaam so that passengers can exit the vehicle at the desired stop. As to leave-taking in cars, the physical arrival constitutes a 'closing-relevant environment' (see Robinson, 2001) and is thus a strong warrant for ending the conversation. This is because the car does not come to a complete stop, as in parking or other 'arrival' situations, and because the physical co-presence of the participants is terminated, and they will continue going separate ways.

3. In-car interaction as multiactivity

The broadly used term 'multitasking' usually refers to the human cognitive ability to perform several tasks simultaneously. The term 'multiactivity' similarly refers to the concurrent performance of several activities but is used to highlight the *practical accomplishment* of progressing two or more courses of action at the same time, and how social interactants' achieve this through talk and visible, embodied action (see for example Mondada 2014 and Haddington et al. 2014). Indeed, it is rare that in social interaction participants are engaged

in only one activity at a time (Goodwin C. and Goodwin M.H., 1992, p. 84). Goodwin C. (1984, p. 227) further notes that many interactional situations involve and require the concurrent organisation of multiple activities. Various socio-technical work settings have been analysed in detail for their complexity as settings for work (Goodwin C. and Goodwin M.H., 1996; Goodwin M.H., 1996; Heath and Luff, 1996; Suchman, 1997). More recently, special interest has been given to the details of how participants progress multiple activities simultaneously. These studies have explored multiactivity not only as a feature of workplace settings, such as airplanes (Nevile, 2009), operating theatres (Mondada, 2011, 2014), doctor-patient encounters (Pasquandrea, 2011) and beauty salons (LeBaron and Jones, 2002; Toerien and Kitzinger, 2007), but also as evidenced in various everyday settings, such as schools (Mondada, 2006) and dinner tables (Mondada, 2009b, 2009c).³ These studies show that multiple activities can interconnect and influence the progressivity of each other in different ways. Mondada, for example, shows that different action streams can be managed in *parallel*, without interference, or *embedded*, so that they alternate with each other, or they can be mutually *exclusive* so that one activity is abandoned momentarily or for good (2011, p. 207; 2014, p. 45). The above studies also show how interactants organise and allocate interactional resources to multiple activities, and thereby – often in collaboration with each other – solve different interactional, sequential and temporal challenges posed by multiactivity.

There is also interactional research that specifically focuses on cars as sites for multiactivity. Haddington (2013, p. 193) notes that when people journey together in cars, a situation may rise at any moment in which the temporally and sequentially progressing activity inside the car needs to be coordinated with the demands of driving (see also Deppermann, this issue; De Stefani and Gazin, this issue). Some research also shows how drivers engage in activities that are not directly related to driving: how drivers organise their driving and working simultaneously in cars (Laurier, 2004), how drivers and passengers coordinate the use of mobile phones with driving (Haddington and Rauniomaa, 2011) and how in-car conversation is orderly integrated in the driver's driving performance (Mondada, 2012; Nevile, 2012).

Additionally, psychological driving research has been interested in how drivers manage a conversation with passengers while driving the car. These situations have been considered as 'multitasking' with a specific interest in whether conversation distracts the driver (Strayer and Drews, 2007). These studies provide varying results about conversation's impact on driving: while some argue that conversation distracts driving (Amado and Ulupýnar, 2005; Gugerty et al., 2004; McCarley et al., 2004; Rakauskas et al., 2004), others point out that conversation has a positive effect on driving (Charlton, 2009).⁴ The next section studies how conversational closings and the driving activity are coordinated as multiactivity in leave-taking in cars.

4. The coordination of multiple activities in leave-taking in cars

The following sections analyse how the closing of the interactional encounter, which involves such actions as pre-closings, reopenings and termination, *and* the drop-off, which involves slowing down, using the indicator, bringing the car to a stop, releasing the seatbelt, opening the door, exiting the car and closing the door are coordinated as a multiactivity episode (Licoppe and Tuncer, 2014). First, section 4.1. shows how prior to the beginning of a conversational closing, the participants manage practicalities involved in the imminent drop-off. Section 4.2. analyses how pre-closings are connected to driving actions signalling the drop-off. Section 4.3. focuses on moments in which in-car participants momentarily suspend the closing, and Section 4.4. shows how leave-taking is ended. Finally, the conclusion summarises the findings.

³ For an overview, see Haddington, Keisanen, Mondada and Nevile (2014).

⁴ For an overview, see Nevile and Haddington (2010).

4.1 Drop-off projectors: Managing the practicalities of the imminent drop-off

As Excerpt 1 above showed, in leave-taking in cars, the participants close the interactional encounter by using the same interactional techniques – pre-closings and terminal sequences – that are generally used to close conversations. Sometimes, however, before the in-car participants begin to close down the interaction in the car, they deal with practicalities concerning the imminent drop-off. Excerpt 2 is a case in point.

Excerpt 2 Preparing for a pit stop 1 (Habitable Cars, Diane, 6 dropping off.mov)

```
01 DRV -> U::hm (0.4) Where am I dropping you.
02      (.)
03 FP   Don't know, [just here in the (      ) .]
04 DRV      [here in the (      ) .]
05      (6.8)
06 DRV   Wigewig is that one.=No it isn't, is it.=It's
07      [not he:re::.]
08 FP    [°No, this is] St. John's Road°*.
09 drv                                *applies indicator
10      (1.3)+(0.7)*
11 fp          +unfastens seatbelt
12 drv          *starts to slow down
```

In line 1, shortly before the driver applies the indicator and begins to slow down, she asks the passenger a question, *Where am I dropping you.* (l. 1), which requests information about the actual location of the pit stop. After this, the driver and passenger begin to discuss their location and the place for the drop-off. A similar instance of solving practicalities of the drop-off can be seen in Excerpt 3, in lines 1-3.

Excerpt 3 Preparing for the pit stop 2 (Habitable Cars, Andrea & Kathleen, 39 dropping off.mov)

```
01 DRV -> Tommy, I'm gonna turn right at the lights, up [here]),
02 BSL ->                                [Yeah.]
03 DRV -> Is that [okay?]
04 BSL      [I'll just] go. ↑Yeah, it's fine.
05 DRV      So you're going to do a deathly p(h)iece of
06      t(h)raffic(h), (h)or even(h). .hh We'll see what the
07      traffic does, won't we.
08      (0.4)
```

In line 1, moments before the drop-off, the driver verbalises her planned driving actions: she is going to turn right at the next lights before dropping the passenger off. This seems to be her regular route but is also treated as potentially inconvenient for the passenger (see lines 5-6). The driver asks if the manoeuvre is alright for him (l. 3), which the passenger confirms (lines 2 and 4).

The imminent arrival to the drop-off location can, just before the closing, also occasion an expression of confusion or uncertainty about the current location or the drop-off location, as we can see in Excerpt 4 (l. 4).

Excerpt 4 Preparing for a pit stop 3 (Habitable Cars, Leonidas, 4 coming another way.mov)

```
01      ((radio on))
02      (2.5)
```


passenger. In this way, they are concerned with and facilitate the passenger's exit from the vehicle and entrance into the surrounding traffic. Nevertheless, as Excerpt (4) shows, despite an attempt at a pre-closing (l. 13), sequences initiated by 'drop-off projectors' can extend and postpone the closing beyond the car's stop (lines 14-16). This shows that rather than progressing the drop-off and the conversational closing in parallel, the driving activity can be suspended after the drop-off location has been reached and for the benefit of finishing the conversation (see Section 4.4.).

4.2 The timing of first pre-closings tokens

As was mentioned above, closings are initiated by so-called pre-closing tokens, such as 'OK', 'alright', 'so' and 'well' (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973) (see Excerpt 5, l. 25, 28; Excerpt 6, l. 12-13; Excerpt 7, l. 23 below). Pre-closing tokens propose a warrant for closing the interaction, while simultaneously preserving the possibility to reopen and continue the conversation.

In leave-taking, first occurrences of pre-closings are coordinated with respect to the simultaneous driving activity: they tend to come after some closing-implicative signal *and* before the car comes to a full stop. Closing-implicative signals are composed of the indicator use and/or the car slowing down, and as these relate to a location in the environment, and they mark the imminent arrival to the destination. We can see an instance of this in Excerpt 5.

Excerpt 5 Pre-closing a conversation (Habitable Cars, Diane, dropping off2.mov)

```

01          (0.4)
02 FP      tsk (0.3) Aye, (          ) true that there'd be another
03          minute or so.
04          (1.0)
05 DRV      (          ) than that.
06 FP      -> (OK), thanks very much, Anita:*.
           drv ->                               *brings car to a full stop
07          (0.6)

```

In the above example, the car has been slowing down and just before the car stops, the passenger produces a pre-closing token and thanks the driver (l. 6).⁵ Passengers also tend to release their seatbelt close to the first pre-closing token, thus projecting and preparing for the physical exit from the car prior to the terminal exchange (see Heath, 1985). We can see this in Excerpt 6.

Excerpt 6 Pre-closing a conversation (Habitable Cars, Ford & Greg, 20 Dropping off.mov)

```

01          (16.4) * (5.8) * (2.4) * (2.6) + (0.5) * (4.1)
           drv          *applies indicator
           drv          *begins a left turn
           drv          *turns steering wheel back;
           drv          *indicator switches off
           fp ->          +releases seatbelt
           drv ->          *applies indicator
02 FP      -> tsk >Alright#.<
           fig          #Fig.10
03          (0.3) + (0.4)
           fp          +opens door

```

⁵ When passengers thank the driver, the action tends to occur as part of pre-closings (see Excerpts 5, 10 and 11).

```

04 DRV      [>Alright.<]
05 FP       [Se]e you later, at *the +#(chu[rch]).
           drv      *brings the car to a full stop
           fp        +starts getting out of the car
           fig        #Fig.11
06 DRV      [See you.]
07          (3.2)+
           fp        +closes front door

```

As the car is slowing down, both the driver, by applying the indicator twice (see embodied actions in l. 1), and the passenger, by releasing the seatbelt (l. 1) and opening the door (l. 3) before the car has come to a full stop (l. 5), are visibly preparing for the stop. These actions co-occur with the pre-closing sequence (l. 2, 4), and together they progressively advance the closing down of the encounter and lead to the passenger's exit from the car and the final exchange (l. 5-6). The same pattern can be seen in Excerpt 7.

Excerpt 7 Pre-closing a conversation (Habitable Cars, Kathleen & Caitlin, 8 drop-off 1.mov)

```

01          (0.3)
02 DRV      *Here you go then, (          ) this handy space is here,
           drv  -> *applies indicator
           bsl  ->                                     +unfastens
                                                         seatbelt
03 DRV      -> [oka*y?]
04 BSL      -> [Oka*y,] Kathleen,
           drv      *starts turning wheel to the left
05          (1.3)$
06          $indicator switches off automatically
07 FP       Do you pay extra for (          )?
08 BSL      °(          )°. +(. ) °(*          )°. (. ) °(          )°
           bsl      +opens rear door
           drv      *brings the car to a full stop
09          (1.0)+
           bsl      +steps out of the car

```

In line 2, the driver simultaneously applies the indicator and produces a 'drop-off projector' *Here you go then, () this handy space is here*, which not only refers to the appropriateness of the space as a drop-off location,

but projects the closing. This is also confirmed by the subsequent actions: the passenger unfastens the seatbelt (l. 2), and the driver and the passenger simultaneously produce a pre-closing token (l. 3-4).

Excerpt 8 Chance exit (Habitable Cars, Andrea & Kathleen, 39 dropping off.mov)

As was shown in Excerpt 3, the driver has a moment earlier verbalised her plans to turn right at the next lights, before letting the passenger out, invoking the turn's potential inconvenience for the exiting passenger. After this, during talk about dogs the driver has spotted outside the car, the passenger releases his seatbelt (l. 10),

and as the car is stopped in traffic and he sees (l. 17) an opportunity, he exits the car. The passenger's chance exit is prefaced with an account (>*There's nothing coming*<, l. 18), which alludes to the potential dangerousness of the chance exit or the disturbance it may cause to other road users. At the same time, it communicates that the exit will be safe.⁶ Right after this, the passenger says *I'll just go here*, and opens the door (l. 19). The driver confirms the passenger's plans and immediately launches the closing sequence with a pre-closing token (l. 20).

The above examples support previous findings that pre-closings initiate the closing of the interactional encounter (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). However, they also show that in leave-taking in cars, the first occurrences of pre-closing tokens are carefully timed with respect to driving actions signalling the arrival: using the indicator, braking and releasing the seatbelt. While these driving actions are closing-implicative, they are not pre-closings, because there is no evidence in the data that they alone would make the termination sequence a relevant next. Rather, they are actions that are produced *in parallel with* the conversational closing and which provide the context for the overall organisation of multiactivity: driving is treated as the "main" activity in relation to which the conversational closing is achieved.

Pre-closings often lead to the termination sequence, i.e. the goodbyes leading to the passenger's exit from the car, but sometimes the conversation can also be reopened after them. The next section discusses how and when reopenings take place.

4.3 *Moving out of closings in leave-taking*

While there is a pattern in how in-car participants time pre-closings in parallel with driving, and in a way that displays their orientation to the approaching drop-off location and a possibility for a smooth stop-and-go, conversations are not always ended after pre-closings. As many studies show (Button, 1987; Robinson, 2001; Schegloff and Sacks, 1973), reopening a conversation after a pre-closing is not uncommon. As sequence types, reopenings occur between pre-closings and the final exchange (Antaki, 2002), and they offer opportunities to delay, defer or even abandon a closing (Button, 1987). Reopenings in leave-takings in cars are not different from the ones in other interactional contexts: drivers and passengers plan future events (Excerpt 12, l. 25), refer back to topics they have discussed earlier (Excerpt 10, l. 20) and initiate new topics (Excerpt 9, l. 17; Excerpt 11, l. 17).

What is interesting here, however, is how the reopening as a verbal activity is coordinated with the temporal advancement of the arrival. The question is important, because reopenings delay the progression of the closing and therefore present a potential conflict with the temporal advancement of arrival to the pit stop. An extended stop could also be treated as an accountable action by other drivers and traffic users, if it blocks and hinders traffic.

The data shows that reopenings are temporally coordinated with the driving in three ways. First, Excerpt 9 (Excerpt 7 repeated) shows that reopenings can be initiated and closed just before the car comes to a stop.

⁶ The backseat passenger's account further confirms the importance of 'drop-off projectors' that manage practicalities of a stop just before the closing begins (see section 4.1.). Since a chance exit deviates from the plan voiced in the drop-off projector, it is treated as an accountable action.

Excerpt 9 Reopening a conversation (Habitable Cars, Kathleen & Caitlin, 8 drop-off.mov)

```

01          (0.3)
02 DRV      *Here you go then, (          ) this handy space [is here,
           drv      *applies indicator
           bsl                               +unfastens
                                           seatbelt
03 BSL                               [Ah, here,
04 DRV      oka*y?]
05 BSL      Oka*y,] Kathleen,
           drv      *turns wheel to the left
06          (0.9)*(0.4)$
           drv      *turns wheel to the right
                       $indicator switches off automatically
07 FP      -> Do you pay extra for (          )?
08 BSL      -> °(          )°. +(.) °(*          )°. (.) °(          )°
           bsl                               +opens rear door
           drv      *brings the car to a full stop
09          (1.0)+
           bsl      +steps out of the car
10 BSL      .hh Alri:ght.
11 DRV      >Alright<, [see you, Rita.]
12 FP                               [See you in the morn]ing.

```

After a 1.3-second gap (l. 6) following the pre-closing, the front-seat passenger reopens the conversation by asking a question from the exiting passenger in the back (l. 7). The reopening is timed so that it occurs just before the car comes to a stop and allows the exiting passenger to answer (l. 8) while the driver brings the car to a stop and she starts to step out of the car (l. 8-9).⁷

Second, Excerpt 10 shows how the driving activity takes priority over the closing. Some moments before the extract, the driver, who is accompanied with a passenger in the front seat, has picked up another colleague, seated in the backseat, to give him a lift closer to a bus stop. The excerpt begins when the driver applies the indicator and the participants begin to close down the conversation.

⁷ Unfortunately, it is impossible to hear from the recording what the exiting passenger says in line 8.

Excerpt 10 Re-opening a conversation, drop-off prioritised (Habitable Cars, Patrizia & Geoff, Giving a lift.mov)

```

01      (6.1)+(0.2)
      drv      +applies indicator
02 BSR      O- --
03 DRV      OK, [#see +you tomorrow.]
04 BSR      [#OK, +than]ks.
      fig      #Fig.15
      drv      +slows down the car
05 DRV      +Yea*h?#
      drv      +indicator switches off automatically
      fp      *turns head to the right and looks at bsr
      fig      #Fig.16
06      (0.6)+(. )$#(0.4)
      drv      +reapplies indicator
      bsr      $opens the door while car is moving
      fig      #Fig.17

```

```

07 DRV      Be [care#]ful.
08 FP ->      [*Oh #look.]
      fp ->      *raises right hand and points to the back
      fig      #Fig.18
09      (.)
10 DRV      >Be careful.<
11 FP ->      There goes your bus.
12      (.)
13 BSR      +O[:h.$# ( [ ] .)
      drv      +car comes to a full stop
      bsr      $starts to step out of the car
      fig      #Fig.19
14 FP      [°aha°oho ho h[ah]
15 DRV      [O::h.]
16      (0.3)
17 DRV      Really.
18      (0.3)
19 DRV      [Where.]
20 FP      [(Maybe.)].
21 BSR      See you# tomorrow.

```

```

22      * (0.9) *
      fp      * , , , , , >
23  FP      One *up there* [(    )].
      , , , , *POINTS* . . . . . *
24  DRV      [Yeah.] (0.8) I cannot s$ee any$thing.
      bsr      $closes the door
      bsr      $waves
              right hand
25      (.) + (0.3) + (1.3) +
      drv      +waves right hand,
      drv      +applies indicator
      drv      +begins to speed up

```

In line 1, the driver applies the indicator, which is followed by a pre-closing sequence between the driver and the exiting passenger (l. 2-4). As we have seen above, these actions project the end of the shared journey and initiate the preparations for the stop and the drop-off. The driver then starts to slow down the car, after which the exiting passenger opens the door (l. 6). At this point the driver says, *Be careful* (l. 7), which could be a type of pre-closing token that offers a friendly warning to watch the traffic when exiting the car.⁸

Up to this point, the way in which the leave-taking has progressively emerged has projected a quick stop and a drop-off, but then in overlap with the driver's warning, the front-seat passenger reopens the conversation with a jocular comment⁹ in form of a noticing (*Oh look. There goes your bus.* l. 8, 11). The front seat passenger's remark is targeted at the exiting passenger, and since he is catching a bus, it directly concerns him and his near future. He responds to the FP's remark (l. 13),¹⁰ but nevertheless continues to exit from the car: he steps out of the car (l. 13), says *See you tomorrow* (l. 21) and closes the door (l. 24). While the driver and the front seat passenger continue to talk about the bus, the exiting passenger abandons the sequential trajectory initiated by the front-seat passenger's reopening, moves to the termination sequence without attending to the reopening, and exits the car. The exiting passenger's actions indicate that he gives priority to his leaving the car – possibly because he is a hurry to catch the bus – over the reopened conversation and thus treats the progression of both activities as mutually exclusive.

Finally, Excerpt 11 (end and continuation of Excerpt 4) shows how reopenings can also lead to the suspension of the driving activity.

⁸ The second warning in line 10 is probably prompted by the FP's remark about the bus that comes in overlap with the first warning.

⁹ See the front-seat passenger's laughter in line 14.

¹⁰ Unfortunately, the exiting passenger's response in line 13 is unclear.

Excerpt 11 *Re-opening a conversation, talk prioritised (Habitable Cars, Leonidas, 4 coming another way.mov)*

```

12      (0.9)
13 FP    .hhh [↓Okay.]
14 DRV  ->      [Because u::h], *there were-
            fp                                *releases seatbelt
15 FP    =((coughs))
16 DRV  ->      =There was traffic before* +here in front of.
            fp                                *sneeze
            drv                                +brings car to a full stop
17      (1.2)+*#
            drv                                +focuses his gaze to something outside the car
            fp                                *turns gaze to driver
            fig                                #Fig.21
18      (0.4)*(0.3)
            fp                                *follows driver's gaze, turns head left to look out
19 DRV  ->      #What's this?
            fig                                #Fig.22
20      (0.8)
21 FP  ->      >(What's happening.)?<
22 DRV  =((      )).
23      (0.7)
24 FP  ->      .hh #U::h yeah yeah.
            fig                                #Fig.23

```

```

25      (1.3)
26 DRV  Okay.
27      (.)
28 FP    Thank you.
29 DRV  See you (      ).
30      (0.5)
31 FP    Yeah.
32      (1.5)
33 FP    Bye.
34      (.)**
            fp                                *opens door
            drv                                +shifts gaze to rear-view mirror
35 DRV  +Bye.
            fp                                +waves hand
36      (0.2)+(3.6)*(0.8)

```



```

drv          +moves gaze forward
fp           *closes door

```

The driver and the passenger are approaching the drop-off location. The passenger starts closing down the conversation by producing a pre-closing in line 13. The pre-closing is coordinated with the arrival in a timely manner: she produces it just before she unfastens the seatbelt (l. 14) and the car comes to a stop (l. 16). However, in overlap with the pre-closing token (l. 14), the driver – in response to the passenger’s earlier expression of confusion (see ex. 4, l. 04) – continues the conversation and accounts for his decision to park the car further up the road when he was picking up the passenger. After this, the end of the driver’s turn in line 16, as the car is coming to a full stop, provides a timely possibility to resume the closing. However, the driver directs his gaze to something outside the car (l. 17), which then occasions the passenger’s gaze shift to the same direction and further talk (l. 19-24). After this, the driver produces a new pre-closing token *Okay* (l. 26), which then leads to the final exchange and the passenger stepping out of the car.

Extract 11 shows how reopenings extend the conversation, and therefore can momentarily take priority over the driving activity that is suspended until the participants again begin to wind down the conversation. It also shows that the coordination of the closing and the driving is not time-critical; these two activities do not have to be coordinated in parallel but can be embedded and organised to come one after the other.

In sum, while reopenings can be timed and designed so that they can be progressed in parallel with the actions leading to the exit from the car, as was shown in Excerpt 9, sometimes either the conversational closing or the driving activity is given priority. In Excerpt 10, the exiting passenger gives priority to leaving the car and does not progress the reopened conversation although it concerns him. In Excerpt 11, on the other hand, the driving is suspended momentarily for the benefit of the reopened conversation. In sum, reopening a closing during leave-taking is a potentially vulnerable moment where careful coordination and timing of actions is required – both in the conversation and the driving activity – in order to accomplish the drop-off successfully and safely.

4.4 Terminal sequence: Bringing the drop-off to a close

In canonical closings, the last two turns constitute the terminal sequence where the relevance of a next turn is lifted. The following examples confirm this, but also show that in leave-taking, the terminal sequence can be achieved through talk, gestures (hand waves) and body movement (exiting the vehicle). Furthermore, the focus here is on the different orientations and practices by which participants coordinate the final exchange with the driving activity. Excerpt 12 (Excerpt 6 repeated) shows how the terminal sequence (l. 5, 6) is coordinated with the car’s stop and the passenger’s movement out of the car (l. 5-7).

Excerpt 12 Parallel coordination of terminal sequence and the stop (Habitable Cars, Ford & Greg, 20 Dropping off.mov)

```

01          (16.4) * (5.8) * (2.4) * (2.6) + (0.5) * (4.1)
drv          *applies indicator
drv          *begins a left turn
drv          *indicator switches off
fp           +releases seatbelt
drv          *applies indicator
02 FP      tsb >Alright.<
03          (0.3) + (0.4)
fp           +opens door

```

```

04 DRV      [>Alright.<]
05 FP  ->   [Se]e you later, at *the +(chu#[rch)].
           drv      *brings the car to a full stop
           fp      +starts getting out of the car
           fig      #Fig.24

```

```

06 DRV  ->                                     [See you.]
07      (3.2)+(0.3)+(4.5)+(0.5)*(0.5)*(0.5)*
           fp      +closes front door
           fp      +opens rear door to take coat from backseat
           fp      +closes the rear door
           drv      *puts gear in first
           drv      *releases hand break
           drv      *applies indicator

```

The passenger's first pair part of the terminal sequence (l. 5) co-occurs with the driver bringing the car to a stop. During the turn and the driver's responding second pair part (l. 6), and immediately after the car's stop, the passenger starts to step out of the car (l. 5). In other words, the terminal sequence is carefully timed with and achieved in parallel with the driver bringing the car to a stop and the passenger exiting the car. After this, the passenger closes the front door, opens the rear door to collect his coat from the backseat, and then closes the rear door (l. 7), and the driver drives off.

Excerpt 13 (end of Excerpt 11 repeated) shows how the terminal sequence is timed with the opening of the door and the passenger stepping out of the car.

Excerpt 13 Embedded organisation of terminal sequence and the stop (Habitable Cars, Leonidas, 4 coming another way.mov)

```

26 DRV      Okay.
27          (.)
28 FP      Thank you.
29 DRV      See you (    ).
30          (0.5)
31 FP      Yeah.
32          (1.0)*#(0.3)*(0.2)
           fp      *turns to the door
           fig      #Fig.25
           fp      *quick glance at the drv
33 FP  ->   Bye.

```

```

34      (.)*#
      fp      *opens door
      fig      #Fig.26

```

```

35 DRV -> *Bye*.
      fp      *waves hand
      fp      *starts to step out
36      (0.9)+(0.9)+(1.8)*(1.0)+(1.3)+(0.9)
      drv      +turns upper body forward
      drv      +places hand on gearstick
      fp      *closes door
      drv      +applies indicator
      drv      +starts to speed up
      drv      +indicator off, speeds up

```

As we have seen earlier, in this example, the driver reopened the conversation, thus delaying the terminal sequence. After a pre-closing sequence (l. 26-31), the passenger turns to the door (l. 32), utters the first part of the termination sequence (l. 33), opens the door (l. 34) and begins to step out of the car (l. 35). The driver responds with the second part (l. 35), and at the same time turns his upper body forward and moves his left hand to the gear stick, thus visibly preparing to drive off. After this the passenger closes the door.

Excerpts 12 and 13 show that the termination sequence is timed with the passenger's movement out of the car. However, as is seen in Excerpt 14 (end and continuation of Excerpt 10), for example due to reopenings, the final exchange is in temporal conflict with the passenger's movement out of the car.

Excerpt 14 Using an alternative modality in the termination sequence (Habitable Cars, Patrizia & Geoff, Giving a lift.mov)

```

21 BSR      See you tomorrow.
22      *(0.9)*
      fp      *, , , , , >
23 FP      One *up      there* [( )].
      , , , , *POINTS* . . . . . *
24 DRV      [Yeah.] (0.8) I cannot
25      s$see any$thing.
      bsr      $closes the door
      bsr ->      $waves right hand

```

```

25      (.)+##(0.3)+(1.3)+
      drv ->      +waves right hand,
      fig      #Fig.27

```

```

      drv      +applies indicator
      drv      +begins to speed up
26  DRV      (A kind) of city bus?
27      (0.5)+(0.6)
      drv      +indicator switches off automatically
28  DRV      Aye ja.
29  FP      °Yeah.°
30      (0.2)
31  DRV      .hhh
32  DRV      But they can have a lots of busses +there.
                                     +applies indicator
33  FP      I think so yes.

```

Despite the front seat passenger's reopening that is targeted at the exiting passenger, the latter starts to step out of the car. He initiates the final exchange (*See you tomorrow*, l. 21), but does not get a verbal response. While the driver and the front seat passenger talk about the bus, the exiting passenger continues to step out of the car and closes the door. He then reinitiates the termination sequence by adopting an embodied resource and produces a new first pair part of the final exchange in form of a hand wave (l. 24), which is also returned by the driver in line 25. The example shows how in leave-taking the mutual participation framework inside the car progressively dissolves into two participant frameworks. This has consequences for the exiting participant who becomes an outsider to the conversation between the participants inside the car. It also shows how by switching from talk to gestures in order to produce the terminal exchange, the driver and the exiting passenger solve the situation so that the multiple activities – the conversational closing, the new conversational topic about the bus between the driver and the front seat passenger, and the driving activity – can be progressed in parallel.

As we have seen above, the terminal sequence tends to occur simultaneously with the exiting passenger stepping out of the car. This action is sequentially implicative and makes relevant the closing of the door, which then can be treated as the ultimate closure of the interaction that allows the driver to drive off. This presents a potential conflict if, for example, the exiting passenger has yet to collect her belongings from the backseat or the boot. In Excerpt 15, two colleagues have just arrived at the drop-off location; they are winding down the interactional encounter with pre-closings (l. 3, 5), the car comes to a full stop (l. 6), and the passenger removes the seatbelt (l. 7). Just before he opens the door, he says *Get me stuff in the boot* (l. 7).

Excerpt 15 Action projectors (Habitable Cars, Ford & Greg, 40 drop-off.mov)

```

01      ((the indicator is on))
02      (1.6)
03 DRV   Alright, (.) there y[ou go then] Ford.
04 FP    [.hhh] ((handling keys))
05 FP    Alrigh*ty.
          *brings to car to a full stop
06      (0.3)+
          fp      +removes seatbelt
07 FP    -> Get me #stuff in the boot.
          fig      #Fig.28
08      (1.4)+#(1.6)$
          fp      +opens door
          fig      #Fig.29
          $scar makes a warning peep
09 FP    Usual time.
10      (0.3)
11 DRV   Usual time, aye.
12      (0.4)
13 FP    >If there's< [any problem coming back from Gla]sgow,
14 DRV   [( ) quarter past or something.]
15 FP    I'll phone you.
16      (0.2)

```

```

17 DRV   Aye, [( ) .]
18 FP    [+#Right.]
          fp      +starts to step out of the car
          fig      #Fig.30
19      (5.5)+(0.4)+(0.2)$ (0.4)
          fp      +closes front door
          fp      +opens the backdoor
          $warning peep from car
20 FP    -> #Stuff in the boot.

```

```

21      (1.0)+(2.1)+(0.2)$ (6.8)+(8.8)*
fp      +closes backdoor
fp      +opens boot
        $warning peep from car
fp      +closes boot
drv      *starts to speed up

```

The passenger's turn in line 7 functions as an 'action projector': it verbalises an action and solicits a co-participant to attend and enable that action (cf. Streeck 2009: 171). More specifically, here it makes explicit an action that needs to be accomplished after the exiting passenger has stepped out of the car and closed the door, and before the driver can drive off. Therefore, in the above example, the action projector coordinates the temporal progression of multiple courses of actions by suspending one – i.e. the driving – for the benefit of another (see Keisanen et al. 2014). After a brief reopening to arrange the next journey (l. 9-18), the passenger steps out of the car, closes the door, and opens the rear door to get his coat. He then repeats the action projector, *Stuff in the boot*. (l. 20) to extend the pit stop, and then goes to pick up his bag from the boot.

5. Conclusion

When drivers are approaching the location where they will drop off their passenger, they do not first stop the car after which the conversational closing is initiated and performed. On the contrary, when drivers drop off passengers, they are *simultaneously* engaged in talk with the passenger to close the encounter, and so that the talk in the conversational closing is timed relative to and in parallel with driving.

The different steps involved in closing a conversation are coordinated temporally and in parallel with steps in the arrival and the stop in the following ways. First, participants rely on 'drop-off projectors' (e.g. *Where am I dropping you.*) to talk about details pertaining to the drop-off just before they initiate the conversational closing. Drop-off projectors serve to deal with the convenience or appropriateness of the drop-off location to the exiting passenger. Second, the pre-closing sequence follows some closing-implicative signal(s) indicating the imminent stop (e.g. slowing down and/or using the indicator). Third, when conversational closings are reopened, participants still attempt to conclude the reopening to allow for a smooth drop-off. However, sometimes one course of action is given priority while the other is suspended. Fourth, while the conversational closing and the driving activity are intertwined and overlap temporally, they are not sequentially connected. Further, they can usually be ordered in parallel (Mondada, 2014), because they do not rely on the same interactional or embodied resources. However, in cases where the two action streams compete over the same resources, participants can shift to an alternative modality (e.g. gestures) to progress them in

parallel. Fifth, participants sometimes rely on action projectors to suspend one activity for the benefit of another, for example for preventing the driver from leaving before the exiting passenger has picked up all her belongings. Leave-taking in cars is, therefore, a multiactivity episode (Licoppe and Tuncer, 2014). While one activity sometimes takes priority over the other, drivers and passengers attempt to progress the two activities simultaneously rather than one after the other. This in turn is suggestive of the drivers' and passengers' joint orientation to a smooth stop-and-go in the drop-off.

Finally, the parallel organisation of conversational closings and the driving in leave-taking is important in two more respects. It aims to ensure a safe transition for the exiting passenger from the car to the surrounding traffic, and it minimises the duration of the drop-off and the potential perturbation of the car's stop to the surrounding traffic. Consequently, by making the final arrangements concerning the drop-off location before the conversational closing, and not during it or after it, by addressing issues of convenience, easiness and safety regarding drop-off location, by finishing re-openings quickly to accelerate the stop, and by using alternative modalities to ensure the simultaneous progression of two activities, drivers and passengers orient to and jointly construct safety in traffic.

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Appendix: Transcription conventions

Talk is transcribed in black by using the Jeffersonian conventions (Jefferson, 2004). The multimodal features of interaction for relevant parts are transcribed in grey underneath talk by using the Mondada system (https://franzoesistik.philhist.unibas.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/franzoesistik/mondada_multimodal_conventions.pdf; Mondada 2018; for the conventions themselves, see below).

The following abbreviations are used: DRV = driver, FP = front passenger, BSL = back seat left passenger, BSR = back seat right passenger, ENV = environment.

- [Separate left square brackets on two successive lines indicate the onset of overlapping talk by two or more different speakers.
-] Separate right square brackets on two successive lines indicate the point where overlapping talk ends.
- = Equal signs indicate talk – either from the same speaker or another speaker – which comes immediately after previous talk has ended (i.e. there is no pause between utterances; previous talk latches with following talk).
- (0.5) Numbers in parentheses indicate silence in seconds and tenths of a second. Silences can occur within or between utterances.
- (.) A dot in parentheses indicates a less than 0.2-second “micropause”.
- . A period indicates a falling or final intonation contour (not necessarily the end of an utterance).
- , A comma indicates slightly rising intonation.
- ? A question mark indicates rising intonation (not necessarily a question).
- ::: Colons indicate that a preceding sound is stretched. More colons indicate longer stretching.
- A hyphen after a word or part of a word indicates a cut-off or self-interruption.
- hello Underlining indicates that the underlined segment of talk is stressed or produced with high pitch. More underlining indicates greater stress.
- ° A degree sign around a segment of talk indicates quiet or soft speech.
- ↑ The upward arrow indicates rise in pitch.
- > < The “more than” and “less than” symbols, in this order, indicate that the talk between them is faster than surrounding talk.
- .hh A string of the letter ‘h’ which is preceded by a period indicates an inbreath. More letters indicates a longer inbreath.

- heh heh Laughter can be indicated in different ways depending on the quality of laughter (heh heh, hah hah, hi hi, heheh, hahah, and so on). Laughter inside words is marked in parentheses (e.g. “wh(h)at?”)
- (()) Double parentheses indicate a transcriber’s comment or description of an event or a situation, e.g. ((cough)) or ((sniff)).
- (word) A segment of talk inside parentheses indicates the transcriber’s uncertainty of the transcribed talk.
- () Empty parentheses indicate that something is being said, but the transcriber has not been able to identify what is said.
- > The arrow sign is used to highlight an utterance that the analysis focuses on.

Multimodal details have been transcribed according to the following conventions:

- * * indicate the beginning and end of multimodal actions relative to talk (also other signs, such as + or § are used for this purpose to separate different participants’ actions from each other)
- *-> a described gesture or continues in subsequent lines
- *->> a gesture or action continues until and after excerpt’s end
- >* a gesture or action continues until the same symbol is reached
- , , , , a gesture’s preparation
- POINTS a gesture’s apex is reached and maintained.
- a gesture’s retraction
- fig the exact point where a screen shot (figures) has been taken is indicated with the hash-sign #, which indicates its position in a turn at talk.