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The interaction order of silent moments in everyday life: Lapses as joint embodied achievementsⁱ

Introduction

‘Silence’ can be defined and understood in countless ways. For instance, an individual can be described as silent – that is, not talkative; a situation can be characterized as silent – that is, not involving much talk; and a place or a space, such as forest, can be thought of as being silent, and so forth. In contrast, ‘silence’ is sometimes used to denote a moment of non-talk in an otherwise continuous conversation. Caution is thus needed as to what is actually meant when the words ‘silence’ and ‘silent’ are used. Even when referring to a silent moment in an interactional situation, precaution is essential, as there is considerable variation in the kinds of situations that exist. What is the focal activity in the situation, and what role does talking have in it? Who are the people involved, what are their relationships? (For an overview of different approaches to silence, see Hoey 2017, chap. 1.) These and many other issues are crucial in analyzing silences in interaction.

Another focal question is how to interpret the silence. What does it convey, what meaning is it given? Furthermore, it is also important to consider whether the interpretation of the silence is supplied by the participants themselves or by outsider analysts, as these may differ. In studies of psychoanalytic encounters, silence has been given many types of meanings and interpretations (see, e.g., Ronningstam 2006), as Part Two of the present volume shows – for instance, silence as resistance (Dimitrijevic, this volume) or as “the Mouth of the Unconscious” (Scarfone, this volume). Long silences can indeed be related to professional practice; for example, in psychotherapy sessions they may retroactively be construed as ‘contemplation’ (Peräkylä et al. 2008). In occasions such as these, the institutional context is used to account for what is going on in the silence, and the absence of talk is understood in relation to that institutional activity (Levinson 1992).

The chosen research approach and methodology also have a crucial role in the kinds of phenomena that can be studied and the results the investigation may engender. Studying interactive situations with a method that allows for detailed and precise analyses of actual interaction – such as conversation analysis – affords fine-grained interpretations of when and how silent moments emerge as well as the ways in which they are used. When conversation analysis is used – as in the current study – the primary focus is on the participants’ actual behavior, both vocal and embodied, in a given situation. The analysis aims to uncover the methods that the participants themselves use for making sense of what happens, and the meanings they ascribe to any given phenomenon. This kind of analysis may (or may not) engender discussions of issues such as identity, emotion, power, culture, and the like – issues that may be essential in psychoanalytic sessions, for instance.

In the current paper, the issue of silence is approached from the viewpoint of interaction order in the context of casual conversations between friends and family members. Attention is paid to what the participants themselves publicly orient to and how they make sense of one another’s behavior. The analysis is solely based on publicly observable vocal and visible behavior: the participants’ talk, activities, movements, gestures, facial expressions, use of the environment, and so forth. Hence, the internal thought processes of the participants is beyond the scope of the analysis. The essential questions are: What is at stake at the moments of silence? What is the central activity in the overall situation? More specifically, how do participants shift from one phase or activity to the next – from talking to being silent, and from silence back again to talking?

Let us take an initial look at one of the examples of this study. Here Jaana (on the right) is telling a story to her sister Tuula (on the left), both of them sitting in Tuula’s kitchen after finishing a meal. Once Jaana’s story is potentially complete (l. 5), a silence emerges (l. 7). What happens during the silence is captured in stills from the video. (This extract will be analyzed in more detail below as Example 6. The later analysis, which contains more frames, uses the same numbering system. All data extracts comprise English translations of the data; original transcripts in Finnish are in the Appendix. Transcription symbols can be found in the Introduction to Part III in this volume.)

Example 1.

Sg 437, 57:35

01 Jaana: so that (she) then was able to put the little
02 sister in clean clo- ↑clothes, (0.4)
03 to day [care and, (.) [and, (.) all canvas shoes=

04 Tuula: [mm [yeah
 05 Jaana: =and [all such #things#,
 06 Tuula: [°yeah°
 07 (0.1) * (0.2) * (6.5) * (0.2) ((=7.0))
 *fr3 *fr4 *fr5
 08 Jaana: .mth but it is (as you know) like they have that ((telling continues))



Figure 1. Frames of example 1.

The above example shows how, at the beginning of the silent moment, which is to last for seven seconds, Jaana gazes at Tuula (see Frame 3). Finding Tuula not gazing at her, Jaana quickly brings her gaze down (Fr. 4) and continues to gaze at the table for the duration of the silence, as does her sister (see Fr. 5). After the seven seconds of joint being-together without talking, Jaana breaks the silence by continuing her telling (l. 8). Here the silence thus ends as one of the participants simply continues talking; there are no changes in the participants' bodily behavior prior to that. In other cases, on the other hand, the continuation of talk is preceded by certain embodied behaviors. (For a more detailed analysis of this and other instances of silent moments, see below.)

Understanding the ongoing activity is a central concern of the analyses described in the current essay. Hence, even though they focus on mundane interactions between familiars, the essay also has relevance for scholars interested in psychological phenomena and psychotherapy sessions, for instance. The analyses show that silent moments are closely connected to the actual situation and how it unfolds; they are not merely psychological phenomena or mental experiences of the individuals. Furthermore, it will be shown that the meaning and interpretation of each silence is created moment by moment in interaction, in collaboration between the participants. It is thus not possible to infer the meaning of a silence for instance by solely looking at its measurable characteristics such as length, as is sometimes done in certain research traditions. Instead, what any given moment of silence 'means' is always a complex phenomenon, sensitive to local contingencies, with varied characteristics and interpretations.

What is also at issue in the present analysis is the question of the central activity of each situation. There are moments when talk may not have an important role, for instance some moments when family members are casually together. During these, the central activity may be watching television, petting a dog, having coffee, and so forth – it may even be mere co-presence. Thus the present analysis does not take talking itself as its starting point; instead, each occasion is analyzed individually to determine its unique characteristics as oriented to by the participants. The aim is to provide an empirical account of how the participants collaboratively create and transform the silent moments into recognizable social objects – the kinds of things they are for them.

Even in situations where people with familiar or intimate relationships have gathered together, the meaning of each silence may vary greatly. One of the most crucial factors is the exact position of the silent moment in the flow of conversation. These positions will be discussed next, and the precise focus of the present study will be described.

Background

In conversation analytic literature, silent moments that occur in conversations have been divided into three categories based on the specific point in a turn and sequence at which they occur (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974). *Pause* is a silent moment within one speaker's turn before its projected completion, i.e., an intra-turn silence. *Gap*, on the other hand, occurs between two turns within a sequence. It is silence at a moment when a certain turn-at-talk is expected to occur, for instance, when a second pair-part (such as an answer) is expected after a first pair-part (such as a question) – i.e., it is an inter-turn silence. There is an extensive body of literature on gaps and the impact and meaning they may carry in conversation (e.g., Jefferson 1989, Kendrick & Torreira 2015, Mushin & Gardner 2009, Stivers et al. 2009). Lapses, in contrast, have been investigated much less. *Lapse* is a silent moment that may occur at a sequence ending when no specific turn is being expected and no one takes up the option to speak (Sacks et al. 1974). These silences do not 'belong' to anyone: no one has been selected as the next speaker and no one has self-selected. It is thus everyone's and no one's responsibility to end the silence and resume talking again. At these moments, the turn-taking machinery (Sacks et al. 1974) provides no next speaker or next thing-to-do; the previous sequence has been completed, and often the topic has been exhausted. A silence emerging at the end of some course of action may be treated as constituting the completion of that

sequence (Schegloff 2007: 137). It has also been noted that after these moments, the topic typically changes (Maynard 1980). The current study focuses on silent moments classified as lapses.

When faced with a lapse, the participants may have various orientations to the emerging silence – they may deal with it in three different ways, as shown by Hoey (2015). The participants may treat the silence as (1) ‘now relevant’ and begin engaging with an activity that precludes simultaneous talking. They may also treat the silence as (2) ‘allowable’, whereupon they orient to an alternative engagement such as watching television or eating. In this type of situation, talking is not even expected, as the focus is elsewhere and the lapse is occupied by another activity.ⁱⁱ Participants may also orient to the lapse as (3) potentially problematic or awkward – in Hoey’s (2015) words, as “the conspicuous absence of talk”. This orientation is typically visible in the participants’ embodied and/or vocal behavior during the lapse: they utilize behaviors such as bodily disengagement, certain embodied practices, or lexical resources such as particles to manage the lapse (see, e.g., Goffman 1963, 1967, Goodwin 1981, 1986, Hoey 2017). These devices show that participants may orient to the lapse as possibly problematic. Hence, whether the emerging silence is ‘allowable’ or ‘awkward’ is not predetermined by the analyst; instead, the interpretation is based on the participants’ observable behavior during that silence.

When participants have a clearly available common activity at hand, they frequently transition between talking and being engaged in that activity. The local devices for achieving such transitions have been described for several activities such as students doing group work in classrooms (Szymanski 1999), friends playing video games (Mondada 2012), and family members watching television (Ergül 2016). Also, so-called ‘multiactivity’ settings (see Haddington et al. 2014) often involve situations where participants ‘fill’ silent moments by engaging in relevant non-talk activities, which are thus used to account for the silence. Furthermore, as is evident based on many of the chapters in the present volume, in the psychoanalytic therapy tradition as well silent moments are seen as having a specific function in themselves, and they do not necessarily need to be ‘filled’ in with talk.

What have been studied much less are situations where the central activity is (ostensibly) talking, such as situations where a person visits a friend and they sit around a table, perhaps having a drink – such as the situations in the present study. The participants’ roles and social relationships affect the expectations in the situation and how the participants deal with what may happen – and this can be analyzed based on their observable behavior. Most often in social situations continuous talk is

normatively expected. What do participants then do when a lapse emerges? Three possible ways to orient to the silent moment were described above, based on Hoey's (2015) studies. The present paper aims to provide a more detailed analysis of the participants' bodily behavior at the moment when a lapse emerges, and at the moment when talking is resumed again. As will be shown, in both instances, the participants' embodied orientation to the emerging lapse and the relevance of talking at that moment may be more or less shared; it may be reciprocated or not. An interesting question is how sharedness of orientation is achieved among the participants. And what happens if the embodied orientation is not shared at all but it remains unilateral throughout? In addition to analyzing bodily behavior, we will also observe the linguistic details of the participants' post-lapse talk, as it is indicative of the meaning they give to the silent moment.

Aligned with Acheson's (2008) exhortation "to study silences as situated, embodied practices", the present study thus investigates the ways in which silence is *created*, as a result of the participants' active behavior, and the kind of bodily behavior that leads to *being in silence* – and leads the way out of it. Silence is seen as a way of being in a social situation, not just as lack of talk (see also Vatanen, submitted). It will be shown that the different ways of being silent are jointly constructed by the participants in the actual situation.

Data and method

The data for this study consist of three hours of video-recorded naturally occurring everyday interactions between speakers of Finnish. While there is a rather widespread stereotype of Finns favoring silence in certain situations where speakers of other languages may favor talking (as described by, e.g., Lehtonen & Sajavaara 1985 and Sajavaara & Lehtonen 1997), the current study steps back from this generalized view of culture and interactional situations and examines specific types of silent moments as they actually occur in authentic spontaneous interaction.

Each recording in the data corpus involves two participants who know each other well. The data are naturalistic, which means that the events that were recorded – visits by a friend or a family member – would have taken place irrespective of the current study. In the videos, the participants are seated around a table in a kitchen or in adjacent armchairs in a living room. These participant configurations may have been influenced by the recording layout; however, such spatial organization is nevertheless natural in the given settings. At least seemingly, the situations are thus

organized for sustained talk. At these moments, the participants are together mainly for the sake of interaction, and initially there seems to be a joint, normative commitment to socialize.

In the data, 130 lapses (no less than two seconds long) were identified. At these moments, the previous sequence of talk has been completed, and no specific turn is expected next. No one has been selected as the next speaker, and no one self-selects themselves. Instead, both participants remain silent. The data is analyzed using multimodal conversation analysis (Sidnell & Stivers 2013, Mondada 2016a; for conversation analysis in psychotherapy, see Peräkylä 2013). The sections below present close moment-by-moment sequential analyses of lapses, focusing on the participants' verbal and embodied conduct in the situated, material environment. The data fragments have been transcribed according to conversation analytic standards (Jefferson 2004). As regards embodied conduct, I follow the conventions developed by Mondada (2016b). For the most part, for the ease of reading, still images taken from the videos have been inserted into the transcripts with a specification of their exact placement in the flow of interaction.

Let us now examine in more detail the ways in which participants enter into and navigate out of the emerging lapse, with their bodily behavior displaying their orientation to the lapse and the relevance of talk.

Entering into a lapse

How do participants in interaction enter into a lapse? What does “falling silent” actually look like? This section presents an analysis of the participants' embodiment and the multimodal resources they use in achieving the state of being in a lapse. As mentioned above, the participants' orientations, the gradual and sometimes even stepwise moving into and out of a lapse, are observable in their visible behavior – their gaze, face, body, and physical activities. It will be shown that entering into (and also moving out of) a lapse is a collaborative, joint interactional achievement. Sometimes, however, it may be unilateral. The data of the present study suggest that it is most common to enter the lapse jointly and to move out of it unilaterally, whereas unilateral entering and joint moving out are rare.

In his work on lapses in interaction, Hoey (2015) showed how participants may be misaligned with regard to whether the now-relevant thing is talking or being silent (and doing something else). His examples are from situations where participants have another activity with which they can engage

(e.g., doing school assignments), instead of talking together. In my data, on the contrary, this is not the case. Instead, the main activity in the situation is the joint conversation. However, when faced with silence, participants may also utilize the local environment in order to create some other, ad hoc activities to turn to. Crucial questions for participants are thus: What do we do now? What is the relevant activity? In the following, I propose a detailed account of the participants' orientations to the now-relevant activity, especially as regards their embodied behavior.

Shared orientation

Most often, participants enter a lapse jointly, as was discussed above. Their embodied behavior shows a similar orientation to the situation: the preceding sequence is complete, and it is possible and allowable to lapse for a moment. The following fragment is an example of this. Here friends Aino (on the left) and Bea (on the right), sitting in Bea's kitchen having tea and snacks, are talking about a TV show they both have seen and jointly discuss what has happened in it. In lines 1 and 3, Bea reenacts the behavior of an actress in a certain scene:

Example 2.

Sg 377, 09:35

01 Bea: £so she [looks (then),£

02 Aino: [he heh

03 Bea: £this ended up l(h)ooking really good£ .hhh*
*fr1

04 Aino: °it is good. .nfff* oh my°
*fr2

05 (0.1) * (0.6) * (1.4) * (3.2) * (0.2) ((=5.5))
*fr3 *fr4 *fr5 *fr6



Figure 2. Frames of example 2.

When Bea finishes her reenactment of the scene (ll. 1, 3), both Aino and Bea smile and sustain mutual gaze (see Fr. 1). Aino then assesses Bea's telling of the TV show positively (l. 4), successfully ending the sequence. At the end of the assessment, she averts her gaze to her right, and her smile begins to fade away (Fr. 2). She then utters *oi oi* (translated here as "oh my"; l. 4), reduplicating the rare Finnish interjection *oi* which tends to occur in exclamations (ISK §856). *Oi oi* seems similar in function to the English *oh dear*, which, when occurring at post-sequence transitions, treats the prior sequence as finished and shows preparedness to move on (Hoey 2017: 58). After *oi oi*, Aino brings her teacup to her mouth and tilts it, preparing to drink (Fr. 3). Slightly over half a second of silence after Aino's *oi oi*, Bea has lowered her gaze to the cat in her lap (which she strokes throughout the fragment) and her smile has disappeared; Aino is drinking (Fr. 4). Both participants lower their heads exactly at the same time (cp. Fr. 3 and 4) and reset their faces (cp. Fr. 1 and 4), showing that their orientation shifts from being in a conversation to being in a lapse. In addition, they both look away from their co-participant at the possible sequence ending

(see Fr. 2–4) and thus treat the sequence as effectively complete (Rossano 2012). After having taken the sip, Aino keeps the cup in her hand, gazing towards the table, whereas Bea continues to stroke the cat in her lap, looking at it (Fr. 5–6). In other words, entering into the lapse is achieved here jointly, with reciprocal orientations by the participants. This is the most common way in which silences emerge in everyday interactions. In the next section, we will examine cases where the participants’ orientations are more unilateral.

Unilateral orientation

Participants’ orientations to what to do now in interaction – to talk or not to talk, to be engaged or not – are not necessarily shared: one may be oriented to sustaining mutual orientation and engagement but the other withdraws bodily and orients to something else instead. However, this is relatively rare. Moreover, if the participants’ orientations are not shared in the very beginning of the lapse, most often they will soon realign. This happens when one participant withdraws gaze and perhaps engages in another activity when one sequence ends and no talk follows. At this moment, the other participant – who, after talking has ceased, is still looking at her co-participant – soon adjusts to the co-participant’s behavior by withdrawing gaze as well. In this way, the orientation to the lapse becomes shared. This is visible in the participants’ gaze behavior and sometimes in their other embodiment as well.

Let us examine an example where the participants’ orientations are unilateral at first but then become shared. In this data fragment, middle-aged sisters Tuula (on the left) and Jaana (on the right) spend time together in Tuula’s kitchen, sitting at the table, Tuula holding her cat in her lap. Jaana is about to finish her telling about how things are nowadays in her profession (customer service). In line 1, she provides a generalized statement, gazing at Tuula, who gazes at the table (Fr. 1). Tuula provides a mildly affiliating response to Jaana’s telling (l. 2), and a short lapse follows (l. 3):

Example 3.

Sg 437, 1:08:59

01 Jaana: this is the present #t[ime (so)#.]

02 Tuula: [i n d e]ed;*
*fr1

03 (1.2)

04 Jaana: so it is,* (0.2) such that:

*fr2

05 Jaana: from this end in (and) from the [other end out,]*

06 Tuula: [mhm]*

*fr3

07 (0.2) * (0.5) * (5.6) * (1.0) ((=7.3))

*fr4 *fr5 *fr6



Figure 3. Frames of example 3.

During the short lapse in line 3, Tuula begins to take a slice of bell pepper, showing an interpretation of the prior sequence/topic as finished. She reaches for the pepper as Jaana continues her telling (l. 4, Fr. 2) by providing an additional (yet generalized) detail about the situation she has described. Jaana is about to complete her utterance (l. 5) as Tuula, in terminal overlap, acknowledges it minimally with the particle *mm* (l. 6; see Gardner 1997, Siitonen & Wahlberg 2015), again showing her orientation to the sequence/topic as complete. At this moment, Tuula is dipping the pepper, looking at it, while Jaana gazes at Tuula (Fr. 3). In other words, at the very beginning of the ensuing lapse, Jaana shows her engagement to continue the conversation (see

Rossano 2012). However, after a micro pause (0.2 sec), Jaana withdraws by closing her eyes for a brief moment (0.5 sec; Fr. 4), after which she gazes at the table for several seconds (Fr. 5–6), until resuming talking again (data not shown here; how this lapse ends will be analyzed below in Ex. 5). For the duration of the lapse, Tuula dips and bites the pepper, gazing towards the table. That is, here the participants' orientations regarding whether to enter into a lapse or not are not immediately reciprocated but then one participant – here, Jaana – adjusts to the co-participant's behavior and embraces a similar orientation by withdrawing, too. In addition to the wholly shared orientation examined in Example 2, this maneuver too is a common way to enter into a lapse in everyday interaction.

In the next fragment, the participants' orientations to the lapse, as displayed by their embodied behavior, are non-reciprocated throughout the silence. In this case, friends Aino and Bea are talking about Bea's cat, who is in the kitchen with them. Bea has just told that for a period of time the cat was quieter than normally, after which Aino asks a question that implies some knowledge of the cat (l. 1). After a brief gap (l. 2), Bea responds (ll. 3–4).

Example 4.

Sg 377, 21:00

01 Aino: >hasn't he< ↑always been quite a growler.

02 (0.3)

03 Bea: yeah I mean or I mean h(h)e is l(h)ik(h)e, .hh

04 £tells* about his things£?=
*fr1

05 Aino: =mm*
*fr2

06 (2.1) * (1.6) * (0.2) ((=3.9))
*fr3 *fr4

07 Bea: but it really is tiring/annoying that ...



Figure 4. Frames of example 4.

At the end of Bea's response (l. 4), the participants hold mutual gaze (Fr. 1). While producing the weak acknowledgment token *mm* to Bea's response (l. 5; see Gardner 1997, Siitonen & Wahlberg 2015), Aino lowers her gaze, showing her orientation to the sequence as complete (Fr. 2; see Rossano 2012). A lapse follows, during which Aino keeps her gaze on the table while Bea keeps gazing at Aino (Fr. 3–4). Thus the participants' bodily orientation to the emerging lapse is non-reciprocated throughout its duration – even though they both remain silent and in that sense orient to that moment in a similar manner. After nearly 4 seconds of silence, Bea resumes talking by returning to the pre-lapse topic, indicating this with the connector *mut* 'but'. The sequence thus gets expanded, which, according to Rossano (2012: 239, 258–266), typically happens in situations where one participant shows an orientation to the sequence as not yet over by continuing to look at the co-participant.

This section showed different ways in which participants may create a silent moment. Let us now examine how they end the silence and resume the state of talking again.

Navigating out of a lapse



Figure 5. Frames of example 5.

During the lapse in this fragment, Tuula dips the pepper and bites it twice (Fr. 5–6). When she has put the final piece of pepper in her mouth (Fr. 6) and places her hand again around the cat (Fr. 7–8), Jaana resumes talking. During the lapse Jaana gazes at the table, slightly towards Tuula, and is thus able to monitor Tuula’s bodily conduct – at least with peripheral vision – and to project the end of Tuula’s embodied activity’s trajectory. Jaana then strategically positions the onset of further talk at the moment when the visible bodily behavior of her co-participant ends (for a more detailed analysis of this phenomenon, see Vatanen 2018). However, when she begins to talk, Jaana is still looking at the table and does not change her bodily behavior at that point yet (Fr. 7–8). As regards linguistic detail, she ties her utterance to the pre-lapse topic using the conjunction *et* ‘so’, thus in a way sequentially deleting the lapse.

In the next case, the unilateral moving out of the lapse is accomplished just with talk; embodiment plays no role here. Sometimes this happens when the silence is occupied by some activity that does not have a projectable ending, such as stroking a cat (see Ex. 2). However, the same may happen also during silences where there is no activity going on at all. This is what we observe in the next example (which was briefly introduced above as Ex. 1). Here Jaana is telling her sister Tuula about an incident in the past. Tuula responds to Jaana’s telling (ll. 1–3, 5) solely with the acknowledgment tokens *mm*, *nii* (l. 4; *nii* translated here as “yeah”) and the inhaled *joo* (“yeah”; l. 6) which implicates closure (Sorjonen 2001). Then, a lapse follows (l. 7) (see Figure 6):

Having gazed at Jaana during the telling (Fr. 1), Tuula brings her gaze down at a moment that is close to a possible end of the story (l. 3, Fr. 2) and does not look up for a while. Jaana finishes her telling, and for a couple tenths of a second, still gazes at Tuula (Fr. 3, l. 7), bodily orienting to continuing the conversation. She then brings her gaze down (Fr. 4), after which both participants look at the table for almost seven seconds (see Fr. 5 which has no visible differences compared to Fr. 4; see Vatanen, submitted, for a closer analysis of cases like this). Both sisters still gazing down, Jaana starts another telling. Embodiment plays no role here, as the lapse ends when Jaana simply starts talking, keeping her gaze down at that moment. She looks up at Tuula only when saying the name of the main-character-to-be of the current telling (l. 9, Fr. 6), and her sister looks at her only at the end of line 10, at the end of Tuula's animated reported speech (see Fr. 7). Jaana's post-lapse turn begins with the conjunction *mut* 'but', by which she ties her turn back to what went on before the lapse, bringing in a contrastive view to the topic.

After these unilateral endings of lapses, let us now examine a case where the participants start talking simultaneously after a lapse and their orientation is thus shared.

Shared orientation

As shown above, most often moving out of a lapse is performed by one of the participants only: the participant resumes talking, sometimes positioning the onset of talk at the projectable ending of some embodied activity. Occasionally it happens, though, that both participants do the same thing simultaneously, even after lengthy silences. Let us examine one such example. Here again friends Aino and Bea talk about cats. Aino, stroking one of Bea's cats, enquires about the duration of time that Bea housed a cat called Mirre (l. 1). Bea responds (ll. 2–3, 5) and Aino acknowledges the response with the particle *nii* (l. 4). Then, a lapse follows (l. 6).

Example 7.

Sg 377, 19:00

01 Aino: for ↑how long did you have Mirre then.*

*fr1

02 Bea: for ↑quite long (he was).=he was probably

03 (-) (1.0) a bit over a month at lea[st.

04 Aino: [yeah

05 Bea: about one and a half months* or something?

*fr2

06 (2.0) * (1.5) * (2.4) * (0.5) * (0.1) ((=6.5))

*fr3 *fr4 *fr5 *fr6

07 Bea: *a[nd also otherwise;]
*fr7

08 Aino: [our Viljo has b]ecome old because

09 he has started to sleep secretly* on the couch,
*fr8

10 Bea: ↑a↓ww::.



Figure 7. Frames of example 7.

At the end of Aino's initial question (l. 1), the participants have mutual gaze (Fr. 1). After Bea has started her response, Aino shifts her gaze to the cat she is stroking, while Bea sustains her gaze direction towards Aino (Fr. 2). During the ensuing lapse, which lasts for 6.5 seconds (l. 6), Aino continuously strokes the cat, looking at it, while Bea takes two sips from her teacup, resting her elbows on the table and gazing towards Aino (or the window behind her; Fr. 3–5). After Bea has

taken the second sip, she removes her elbow from the table and begins to put her teacup on the table, gazing down at the cup (Fr. 6–7). When she is about to complete that movement, both participants start talking virtually simultaneously (ll. 7–8), Bea continuing the prior topic (using the conjunction *ja* ‘and’ and the clitic particle *ki* ‘also’ to tie back to the previous talk) and Aino starting a new one (using full clauses with full referential elements such as *meiän Viljo* ‘our Viljo’). Bea soon discontinues her talk while Aino goes on to complete the announcement about her dog. At the end of Aino’s turn, the participants reach mutual gaze again (l. 9, Fr. 8).

The remarkable simultaneous start is temporally related to the moment when Bea’s embodied activity is about to reach its completion. As I have already mentioned and as we saw in a previous case (Ex. 5; see also Vatanen 2018), this is quite common: even though the participants do not seem to look at each other, they can use their peripheral vision to monitor one another’s activities and time the beginning of their talk to coincide with the projected end of the trajectory of an ongoing embodied activity. In the case above, then, both the participant producing the embodiment and her co-participant use the same moment to resume talking again, which attests to the strategic use of that particular moment. Even though the participants move out of the lapse individually, both starting to talk at the same time about different topics – and thus the ending of the lapse is not, strictly speaking, accomplished collaboratively – their individual orientations to that particular moment is shared in the instant. The relationship between unilateral and shared orientations appears thus more like a continuum, not a dichotomy.

Conclusions and discussion

By using conversation analytic methodology, the present study has aimed to uncover some of the mechanisms of lapses – silent moments after a possible sequence ending – in everyday interactions between familiars. Examining how the participants themselves create and organize such moments with their bodily behavior revealed that both entering into a lapse and moving out of it can be accomplished either by both participants together via a shared orientation to (and understanding of) that moment, or by one of the participants only, in which situation their orientations are unilateral. As regards the participants’ vocal behavior, however, their orientations are naturally shared, as neither of them talks at that moment. Furthermore, the participants’ embodied orientations during the lapse may be unilateral in the beginning and become shared only later. Based on the data, it was claimed that the most common way to enter into a lapse is via shared bodily orientations, whereas

moving out of a lapse is most often accomplished by one of the participants only. The analysis above also showed how the sharedness of orientation is practically achieved moment by moment among the participants.

I also hope to have demonstrated that in order to understand what actually happens in interaction, it is quintessential to use video recordings. As is clear from the analyses above, the participants' embodiment – their gaze, body posture, bodily activities, etc. – has a crucial role in understanding and interpreting silences. Conversation analysts would also insist that claims on what a silence 'tells' or 'means' should be grounded in what the participants themselves publicly orient to, in order to avoid discrepancies in analysts' and participants' perspectives. If not supported by direct evidence in the data, conversation analysts would not argue that a silence indicates things like disinterest in the co-participant, for instance (but cp. Bonacchi, this volume).

This study has not primarily dealt with what the silences would possibly mean for the participants or tell about their inner thinking. As the conversation analytic method is strictly based on what can be observed from the video recording, it provides relatively little insight into what the participants think or feel during the interaction – unless they explicitly speak about their internal experiences, or their orientation becomes otherwise visible in the interaction. To reach a more thorough understanding of the meaning and interpretation of, for instance, silent moments in interaction, it would be useful to combine conversation analysis with other types of qualitative methods. One possibility is to exploit the Interpersonal Process Recall method (IPR) (for an example of how to combine these two methods, see Janusz, Józefik & Peräkylä 2018). IPR is a qualitative research method that is used to investigate participants' internal experiences (Elliott 1986; Larsen, Flesaker & Stege 2008). When IPR is used, the focused-on interactional situation, such as a therapy session, is video-recorded. Very soon after the session, the video recording is shown to the participants, who are then individually interviewed concerning their inner thoughts and feelings during specific moments in the session. What is achieved with this procedure are not facts but rather the participant's discursively created reconstruction of what is thought and felt, as the participant remembers it.

As has been shown in the present paper, conversation analytic investigation reveals the particularities of how interaction is structured and how, for instance, silent moments emerge and are created in collaboration between participants. To combine the methods of CA and IPR for studying silences, there seem to be at least two opportunities. One is to first identify certain silent moments

using CA, after which the IPR methods could be used to investigate the meanings that the participants themselves give to those moments, how they felt and what they thought during them. Or, alternatively, certain types of meaningful silent moments could first be identified with the IPR interviews, and CA could then be used to analyze how those moments were co-created and co-organized in interaction moment by moment, possibly comparing them to other types of silences. In whichever way the two methods would be combined, I see their joint use to be potentially highly beneficial for understanding the structures and characteristics of silent moments in interaction – and perhaps many other kinds of interactional phenomena as well. Hence it could be explored how the actual interactions, such as therapy sessions, realize (or do not realize) the concepts and ideas expressed in clinical and professional theories (Peräkylä & Vehviläinen 2003) – for instance, concerning silence.

The present study suggests that entering and exiting lapses are joint, negotiable, and gradual embodied achievements. This finding most likely pertains not only to everyday conversations but to other interactive situations as well, including psychoanalytic and other psychotherapy sessions: the silent moments that occur in them, regardless of the kind of meaning they are given by the participants, are likewise collaboratively created by the participants then and there. Additional factors that may and most probably will come into play when making sense of the silent moments in therapy sessions are the institutional context and related practices. However, also these factors should and will emerge in the interaction itself. Conversation analytic research thus has great potential to deepen our understanding of how those moments are jointly achieved in interaction *in situ*.

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06 (2.1) * (1.6) * (0.2) ((=3.9))
 *fr2
 *fr3 *fr4
 07 Bea: mut se on kyl just rasittavaa ku, ...

Example 5. (Continuation of Example 3.)

07 (0.2) * (0.5) * (5.6) * (1.0) ((=7.3))
 *fr4 *fr5 *fr6
 08 Jaana: *.mthh (0.2) et niinku ennempää;* (.) öh, (.) #o-# oli just
 *fr7 *fr8
 09 semmos#ta että#, (0.8) henkilökunta tuns toisensa ja ...

Example 6.

01 Jaana: sillai että sai sitten siisteissä vaast-
 02 a *↑vaatteis pikkusisko ni, (0.4)
 *fr1
 03 päiväk*o[tii ja, (.) [ja, (.) kaikki* kangaskengät=
 *T gaze down *fr2
 04 Tuula: [mm. [nii?
 05 Jaana: =ja [kaikki tämmöset #näi#,
 06 Tuula: [°.tjoo°
 07 (0.1) * (0.2) * (6.5) * (0.2) ((=7.0))
 *fr3 *fr4 *fr5
 08 Jaana: .mth mut ohan niinku niil justiin ni toi, (.)
 09 .hhhhhh T_{ommiki}* ni #se:# se on kans semmone,
 *fr6
 10 .hh (0.4) @hän on hyvin #järkeväh ih*minen?@
 *fr7

Example 7.

01 Aino: ni ↑kauanko Mirre sit oli teil.*
 *fr1
 02 Bea: ↑kyl se aika pitkään.=oli se varmaa
 03 m- (1.0) jotain yli kuukauden aina[ki.
 04 Aino: [nii;
 05 Bea: varmaan puoltoist kuukautta* tai jotain?
 *fr2
 06 (2.0) * (1.5) * (2.4) * (0.5) * (0.1) ((=6.5))
 *fr3 *fr4 *fr5 *fr6
 07 Bea: *j[a muutenki;]
 *fr7
 08 Aino: [meiän Viljo on t]ullu vanhaks ku
 09 se on ruvennu nukkumaan salaa* sohvalla,
 *fr8
 10 Bea: ↑o↓:::h.

Transcription symbols

.	falling intonation
;	slightly falling intonation
,	level intonation
?	rising intonation
↑	rise in pitch
↓	fall in pitch
spe <u>a</u> k	emphasis
>spea <u>k</u> <	faster pace than in the surrounding talk
°spea <u>k</u> °	quiet talk
sp-	word cut off
spea:k	sound lengthening
#spea <u>k</u> #	creaky voice
£spea <u>k</u> £	smiley voice
@spea <u>k</u> @	other change in voice quality
.h	audible inhalation
h	audible exhalation
.speak	word spoken during inhalation
he he	laughter
sp(h)eak	laughter within talk
[beginning of overlap
]	end of overlap
=	no gap between two adjacent items
(.)	micropause (less than 0.2 seconds)
(0.6)	pause in seconds
(speak)	item in doubt
()	item not heard
(())	comment by transcriber (sometimes concerning gaze or embodied behavior)
*	point when still image is taken

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ⁱⁱ This type of moments are sometimes also called ‘continuing states of incipient talk’ (see Schegloff & Sacks 1973: 324–326, Berger et al. 2016).