

Information withholding as a manipulative and collusive strategy in Nukulaelae gossip*

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the organization and function of information-withholding sequences, a conversational strategy used by participants in gossip interactions on Nukulaelae, a Polynesian atoll of the Central Pacific. A withholding sequence is a three-turn sequence whereby a piece of information is withheld in the first turn, an other-repair is initiated in the second turn, and the withheld material is provided in the third turn. Information-withholding sequences thus involve moves that in other contexts would be construed as face-threatening. They have a dual function: they provide speakers an opportunity to manipulate their audiences into becoming coproducers of the gossip, and they reinforce the status of their initiator as controller of the floor. Withholding sequences illustrate how ambiguity and repairs can be exploited to meet the communicative demands of particular interactional contexts. They also illustrate how gossip may be framed simultaneously as group-cohesive behavior and self-serving behavior. (Conversation analysis, ethnography of speaking, gossip, conversational repair, Polynesia, Nukulaelae Tuvaluan)

INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, conversation analysts and ethnographers of conversation have set out to discover the principles that underlie the organization of everyday conversation. These researchers have described the patterns of organization regulating such mechanisms as turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson 1974), adjacency pairs (Pomerantz 1975, 1984), and conversation openings (Schegloff 1968), among others. Based on the micro-analysis of conversation transcripts, these studies have shown that conversation is organized in a systematic fashion so as to minimize the occurrence and the disruptiveness of communicative breakdowns between interactants and to render the mechanical workings of conversation as unobtrusive as possible.

In particular, the mechanisms through which interactants *repair* themselves or each other have been described as regular and predictable (Hedström

1984; Remler 1978; Schegloff 1979, 1987; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks 1977; Shimanoff & Brunak 1977). In the course of talking, speakers may forget a word, make an inappropriate choice in syntax, or be unclear. They may simply change their mind about “what to say” in mid-utterance. There are socially organized ways of dealing with such communicative slips. Speakers may correct or repeat the troublesome utterance, turn to another individual for correction or clarification, or do nothing and go on. Likewise, a recipient may point out that there is a problem, correct the prior speaker’s mistake, or do nothing. There are also different ways of pointing to the communicative trouble and providing a remedy. Interactants may repair by stopping the conversation and attending to the remedying process, thus initiating a *side sequence* (Jefferson 1972), or they may opt for a more covert method of repairing (Jefferson 1987). Similarly, an interactant may simply point out (overtly or covertly) that trouble has been encountered and let another party provide the remedy, or vice versa. Repairs thus involve a series of choices, and the various options available to interactants are associated with different interactional and social consequences.

Some choices have the potential of being perceived as *face-threatening acts*, that is, verbal acts that undermine another person’s presentation of self as a rational agent, because they “may imply that self is misguided and incompetent” (Brown & Levinson 1987:38). Such is the case, for example, when the repair is accomplished entirely by someone other than the author of the problematic utterance, as in the following example:¹

1. Ben: Lissena pigeons.
 (0.7)
 Ellen: Coo-coo:::coo:::
 [
 → Bill: Quail, I think.
 Ben: Oh yeh?

Example (1) is illustrative of an *other-initiated other-repair*, that is, a repair that is accomplished in its entirety by someone other than the author of the problematic utterance. An other-repair that involves a correction, as in example (1), is particularly threatening because “it directly questions an underlying assumption of conversation – that everybody is telling the truth or at least presenting his or her best version of it” (Wardhaugh 1985:152). Other-initiated other-repairs contrast with three other logical repair types. *Self-initiated self-repairs* are controlled by the author of the problematic utterance and are thus the least face-threatening and disruptive way of dealing with trouble in conversation:

2. N: She was givin me a:ll the people that
 → were go:ne this yea:r I mean this quarter y’ // know
 J: Yeah

The last two types, other-initiated self-repair in example (3) and self-initiated other-repair in example (4), are less socially disruptive than other-initiated other-repairs, but more so than self-initiated self-repairs:

3. Ken: Is Al here today?
Dan: Yeah.
(2.0)
→ Roger: He is? hh eh heh
→ Dan: Well he was.
4. → B: He had dis uh Mister W- whatever k- I can't
think of his first name, *Watts* on, the one
thet wrote // that piece,
→ A: Dan Watts.

Because interactants generally strive to maintain and maximize interpersonal harmony through talk, they downplay in force and frequency face-threatening moves. Thus, when the circumstances of the conversation render other-repair unavoidable, they are frequently prefaced by a hedge (e.g., *I think* in example (1)), whose function is to "reduce" (Syder & Pawley 1974) the confrontational force of the turn, or a discourse marker (Schiffrin 1987) like *oh* or *well*, the effect of which is to downtone the face-threatening nature of the move.

Opting for self-initiation and self-repair also ensures that less time and attention are devoted to the repair and minimizes the disruption to the conversation. Conversationalists strive to identify communicative trouble as promptly as possible and to provide a remedy as innocuously as can be afforded. This is best achieved when the interactant who uttered the problematic utterance is also the author of the repairing process. When other conversationalists get involved, the importance of the trouble is necessarily magnified, and the repair resolution and subsequent return to the original thread may require greater social and cognitive effort. In short, other-initiation and other-repair force the conversationalists to acknowledge the difficulty in a more overt manner than self-initiated self-repair, and make the task of resolving the repair more problematic.²

There are contexts, however, in which the avoidance of face-threatening behavior and the concern for the smooth running of a conversation come in conflict with other needs, and other-repairs may then be used for specific purposes. For example, in teaching contexts and in other adult-child interactions among middle-class white Americans, teachers and adults make it their business to offer explicit corrections or clarifications. Other-repairs play a central role in these contexts and have a socializing function (Clark 1982; Ochs 1984). Similarly, in certain social groups, other-repairing mechanisms may have a different value than they have in middle-class white American society. M. H. Goodwin (1983) has shown that urban black children not only

engage frequently in other-repairing activities, but they also *aggravate* the face-threatening aspects of the process. This comes as little surprise in light of the fact that the norms of politeness at play in black American society differ in a number of fundamental ways from white middle-class norms, particularly in the social definition of the roles of self and other in interaction (Kochman 1984).

Little is known about repair mechanisms in contexts other than Western societies, but the presence of cross-contextual and cross-social variation in Western societies makes it likely that cross-cultural variations exist.³ Thus, although Moerman (1977, 1988) finds that the repair organization in three Tai languages follows the principles described for mainstream American society by Schegloff et al. (1977), Duranti and Ochs (1982) show that the organization of repairs in Samoa is contingent on the social status of interactants, as high-status individuals rarely initiate repairs. Similarly, though not dealing specifically with the micro-organization of verbal interactions, Albert's (1972) study of speech behavior in Burundi shows that the nature of the social situation has a strong impact on verbal fluency and, presumably, on correction: "Appropriate speech behavior for peasants in intercaste relations is that of an inferior; their words are haltingly delivered or run on uncontrolled, their voices are loud, their gestures wild, their words and sentences clumsy" (1972:78). Clearly, the *sociocultural context* of conversation has a recognizable impact on the organization of repairs and, probably, of conversation in general. It is the nature of this impact that the present article seeks to investigate.

This study describes certain aspects of repair organization in gossip interactions in Nukulaelae, an atoll society of Western Polynesia. Although self-initiation and self-repair are preponderant in most contexts, Nukulaelae conversationalists clearly favor repair mechanisms that are accomplished with the help of others under certain specific circumstances. I will show here that, at key points in the development of a gossip interaction, Nukulaelae speakers withhold information from their interlocutors, thereby creating a situation where the interlocutors have to other-initiate a repair. The resulting *information-withholding sequence* enhances audience participation in the organization of conversation and enables Nukulaelae conversationalists to *manipulate* the collusive bond between their audience and themselves. Information-withholding sequences illustrate how repair organization is determined, in nonnegligible ways, by the sociocultural norms that regulate verbal interactions. On Nukulaelae, for example, repair mechanisms are subordinate to the cultural definition of the role of self and other in gossip.

The next section presents a brief description of the setting and the data upon which this study is based. A general characterization of Nukulaelae repairs and the use of questions as repair-initiators is then provided. The discussion then turns to the organization and function of information-

withholding sequences. The article closes with a discussion of the relationship between norms of interaction and conversation organization and of the social function of gossip.

NUKULAEAE GOSSIP

The data used in this study are transcripts of spontaneous gossip between adult (unless otherwise indicated) speakers of the Nukulaelae dialect of Tuvaluan, a Polynesian language. Nukulaelae is a small isolated atoll community in the Tuvalu group (Central Pacific) inhabited by approximately 310 people. Its social structure is one of the least stratified of the Polynesian cultural area. Ten hours of gossip were recorded in 15 different settings, yielding approximately 50,000 words of transcript, and to which 27 individuals (i.e., 8.6 percent of Nukulaelae's population) contribute three or more turns.

Typically, Nukulaelae gossip, which takes place in open-wall houses or on the raised floors of kitchen huts, is a *multiparty interaction*: because of crowded conditions and because Nukulaelae people take intense pleasure in socializing, conversations typically take place when there are many people around. (Of course, gossips always ensure that the "victims" of the gossip and their kin are not within earshot.) But Nukulaelae gossip is also *dyadically focused*, in that a clear distinction is drawn between primary and secondary participants (Hymes 1974). Primary participants are usually two people of the same gender (conversations between intimates of different gender are relatively rare); the conversation itself is their principal focus of attention, and they select each other as interlocutors (through eye contact and body posture) more frequently than they select secondary participants. Secondary participants contribute to the conversation sporadically. They are often engaged in a working activity like binding fishing lures or cooking, whereas primary participants generally focus solely on the conversation, reclining on mats or standing outside kitchen huts. Female and male adults or adolescents all have access to the floor (preadolescent children usually do not participate in adult conversations unless information is elicited from them). At times, women and men separate into two or more independent conversations, which merge again after a while. Among primary participants, a division of labor between the *principal speaker* and the audience is often clearly demarcated: when a person has a story to tell, he or she can claim the floor for an extended period of time, during which other primary and secondary participants listen intently and do not compete for the floor. At the end of one narrative, another participant may claim the role of principal speaker. However, as I shall demonstrate, the audience members do not remain verbally passive during gossip conversations.

A broad range of topics may be addressed in gossip sessions. The actions of absent persons are by far the most frequent topic of conversation (Bes-

nier 1989), which justifies the label *gossip*. But commentaries on other people's behavior are commonly interspersed with narratives of everyday events, such as fishing expeditions and trips to the taro swamp. Good-natured teasing frequently occurs during these exchanges, and bawdiness is common as long as different-sex classificatory siblings are not present. The degree of emotional involvement displayed by conversationalists varies from topic to topic and from participant to participant. Generally speaking, displays of involvement in the conversation are more common among women than among men. Hushed and dramatic exchanges may focus on scandalous events, during which conversationalists keep urging each other to keep their voices down and to come closer, being aware that inquisitive ears are everywhere and that voices carry from one wall-less house to another.⁴

5. E initiates a gossip sequence in a cooking hut in the evening, but S warns her to come closer and lower her voice. [CONV111:04]

E: Faalupo ne faipati ((falsetto)) mo:-=

Faalupo Pst talk with

→ S: =ia! ((whisper, rising pitch)) muu mea laa *hhh!* (3.0)

hey a-bit thing then

((very high pitch, whisper)) Muu mea mai laa

a-bit thing hither then

o faipati mai! [. . .] ((normal pitch, whisper)) taatou

Cmp talk hither we-3-i

koo t:oo meaga, ((fast)) i tino e tii olo

Inc too-much thing because people Nps often go

i auala, [. . .] ((normal pitch)) moo mea mai

on road a-bit thing hither

o takato fakafaauli ki au. (2.6)

Cmp lie-down facing to me

E: Faalupo had a talk with-

S: Hey, come closer! Come closer and talk to us! [. . .] We are talking too loud, and there're people coming 'n going on the road! [. . .] Come 'n lie down here facing me.

Conversationalists often lapse into lengthy pauses between gossip sequences, during which participants savor the sheer pleasure of being together, a pattern found in many other societies (Saville-Troike 1985). Nukulaelae islanders value greatly the feeling of interpersonal harmony and warmth that permeates conversational events, which may go on for many hours.

Interpersonal harmony is in fact more than desirable in Nukulaelae gossip; it is essential for its success. In order to create a successful gossip session, gossips must ensure that their audience shares their own feelings and attitudes toward the topic of the gossip, as Haviland (1977) shows for Zinacantan gossip. This prerequisite applies equally to Nukulaelae gossip (Besnier 1989), where the creation of *collusion* between the author of the gossip and the audience is the driving motivation of many structural features of discourse.⁵ Sometimes, Nukulaelae conversationalists underscore the collusive nature of verbal interaction by engaging in contrapuntal narration (cf.

Reisman 1974), in which a narrative is coconstructed by more than one person. In the following sequence, for example, two speakers make an allusion to a humorous incident involving two members of the island community; speaker F provides the beginning of the narrative, and speaker S provides the punch-line:

6. [CONV_{102:11}]

F: ((high pitch)) Kae aa:?? (koo fai) p(ee)laa mo te fueega:
and what? Inc do like the fan+Nom

a: Tito ((mid-high pitch)) nee Tausi,

Cnt Tito

Erg Tausi

((normal pitch)) fue atu loo i te afiafi, (f)ano,
fan Dxs indeed in the evening go

koo vvini te moa, ((laughter)) =

Inc crow the rooster

→ S: = ((laughing)) kae ppoko makalili a- hah Thhithhho. .hh
and afflicted cold Cnt Tito

F: Yeah, it'd be like when Tausi started fanning Tito, (she) started fanning (him) in the evening, went on and on, (until) the rooster crowed [i.e., until morning].

S: And then Tito caught a cold [as a result].

Contrapuntal exchanges take place when allusions are made to common-knowledge information (rather than "new" gossip, which is more commonly the responsibility of a single principal speaker). By collaborating as *coauthors* (Duranti 1986) in the production of the discourse, the participants underscore the fact that they are of one mind and that their affective responses to the narrative are the same. Convergence of opinion is so essential that adult audiences rarely disengage from gossip interactions by expressing disagreement or doubt about what the principal speaker is saying. Disengagement sometimes occurs in gossip among adolescents or when the principal speaker is a woman and the audience consists of her close male relatives. But adult men together and adult women together will rather feign collusion than appear to threaten the collusion of the interaction, even if they subsequently discredit or ridicule the principal speaker in his or her absence.

Another important trait of Nukulaelae gossip conversations is the fact that participants generally avoid voicing conjectures, interpretations, and inferences. A gossip strives to present events as narratives, and generally does not speculate on the reasons or motivations that underlie the behavior of others. Similarly, audiences rarely lay a claim of being able to foresee what's coming next in a gossip narrative. In other words, the audience does not try to guess what is on the principal speaker's mind. The striking division of labor between principal speaker and audience may in part be the result of these dynamics: audiences remain quiet because they cannot claim to be able to figure out the development of a narrative. Whereas it is recognized that intentionality guides verbal and nonverbal behavior, the notion of intention plays a noticeably less salient role on Nukulaelae than in Western societies. (Similar patterns are found in other Polynesian societies; cf. Duranti 1983,

on Samoa.) As will be seen later, this interactional norm affects the organization of repairs in Nukulaelae gossip.

THE ORGANIZATION OF NUKULAEAE REPAIRS

Repair mechanisms in Nukulaelae conversation follow the patterns described by conversation analysts for American English conversation: Nukulaelae interactants collaborate to allow speakers to correct their own mistakes. Furthermore, if a conversationalist provides assistance to another conversationalist in a repair situation, this assistance will be limited in scope; more precisely, Nukulaelae interactants avoid guessing what is on another person's mind. This fact is reflected both in overtly stated norms of interactions, as described in the previous section, and in the microorganization of conversation.

Initiation and resolution of repairs

As expected, all four types of repair described for English conversation by Schegloff et al. (1977) occur in Nukulaelae conversations. Following are examples of a self-initiated self-repair, in which other participants offer no assistance to K in the process of a word search:

7. Word search for the name *Kelese*. [CONV₁₁₃:02]
K: ((mid-high pitch)) (*h*)e lagona atu laa me ne faippati
Nps heard Dxs then because Pst talk
→ laaua mo:- (o.9) (m) Kelese
thev-2 with with Kelese

K: I did hear later that he had a talk wi::th- (with) Kelese.

Example (8) is an other-initiated self-repair, in which F indicates that K's first turn presents difficulties for comprehension.

8. The conversation takes place in a cooking hut surrounded by coconut trees. K asks F a question about a particular tree which he points to nonchalantly with a head movement, and which F cannot identify. In the second turn, F requests that K provide a more precise identification of the tree. [CONV113:01]
- K: A ko te:: niu teelaa koo maaluga:
and Foc the coconut-tree that Inc tall
e: too eilaa kiaa koe?
Nps fall indeed to you
(1.0)
- F: Teefea?
which?
(.)
- K: Teenei koo fua?
this Inc bear-fruit
(.)
- F: ((mid-high pitch, creaky voice)) Oo!=
yes
- K: That tall coconut tree, is it yours?
F: Which one?
K: The one bearing nuts?
F: Yeah, it is!

Following is a self-initiated other-repair:

9. K attempts to date a historical event that he did not witness, and self-initiates an other-repair with a tag question directed at F, who was a witness to the event. [CONV102:11]
 → K: I *aso* o *ttaua*, *nee?*
 during days of the+war Tag
 (2.0)
 → F: *mai: t:ua* o: *ttaua*,
 from back of the+war

 K: (It happened) during the war, right?
 F: *After* the war,

Finally, other-initiated other-repairs occasionally occur:

10. S initiates and resolves a repair about the composition of a fishing party. [CONV102:09]
 K: Apelaamo m(o) Tito.
 Apelaamo with Tito
 (1.5)
 → S: ((high pitch)) (i)kaai ko ia toko tasi ua i tena mutu:::
 Neg Foc he Num alone just in his canoe
 fetau, ttamaa mutu fua o ia. (3.0)
 laurel the+small small-canoe just of him
 ((normal pitch)) Apelaamo toko tasi e- =
 Apelaamo Num alone Nps

 K: Apelaamo (was) with Tito.
 S: No, he was by himself in his small canoe made of laurel-wood, his own little canoe. Apelaamo was by himself- =

As in American English, self-initiated repairs and self-repairs are considerably more frequent in the Nukulaelae data than other-initiated repairs and other-repairs. Self-initiated repairs are resolved quickly and unobtrusively. Resolution occurs as close to the source of trouble as possible. Other-initiated other-repairs like example (10) are infrequent and only occur when a conversationalist has produced a grossly inaccurate account of facts that needs to be corrected in order for the conversation to proceed successfully. Other-initiation and other-repair do not take place following a slip of the tongue or an error of surface syntax that does not jeopardize comprehension. Other-repairs are commonly embedded in elaborate turns, as is the case with example (10), in which the other-repairer attempts to downtone and justify the potentially face-threatening nature of the move. Other-initiation and other-repair appear to be the speciality of particular individuals in the community; in example (10), S is a man in his seventies, famous in the community for his confrontative conversational style and his propensity to control informal interactions. The intervention of others in repair mechanisms is marked.

Questions as repair-initiation signals

When it occurs, the other-initiation of repairs may be accomplished with one of several strategies, the most common of which is a question. Both yes-no and question-word questions may function as repair signals. When they

function as repair-initiation signals, questions are always abbreviated and consist of a single phrase uttered with a rising yes-no question intonation, as in example (11), or a question-word, as in example (12):⁶

11. [CONV113:05]

K: Taki lua sefulu taalaa,
each twenty dollars
(.)

→ F: Te gafa?
the fathom
(2.6)

K: ((nonverbal assent))

K: (It costs) twenty dollars each,
F: A fathom?

12. Gossip about an old man being stingy with his radio. [CONV111:07]

S: Ko au i ei, fakalogo mai i te leet:ioo e tagi atu,
Foc I then listen Dxs at the radio Nps turned-on Dxs
(3.0) me ulu mai maaua ki loto i te fale
because enter Dxs we-2-e to inside of the house
kae taamate aka tena leetioo!
and turn-off then his radio
(.)

→ T: A ai?
Cnt who

S: A puunana hoki teelaa!
Cnt asshole again that
(1.8)

V: Neli?
Neli

S: Me, I heard that the radio was playing, so I came into the house [to listen to it],
but then he just turned it off!

T: Who?

S: That asshole again!

V: (You mean) Neli?

When used as repair initiators, questions fall into two types. In the first type, the question bears on an element of the previous turn. In example (12), for example, T's question is a request for S to provide the referent of the subject of the last sentence of S's previous turn, where it is expressed zero-anaphorically. Such questions may be called *retrospective questions*. In example (11), in contrast, the question is a request for the interlocutor to provide more information than is given in the preceding turn. Such *prospective questions* function as requests for the interlocutor to elaborate or expand on the first turn of the repair sequence.⁷

Conspicuously absent from the range of possible repair-initiation signals are attempts to provide a potential resolution of the repair. In a word search, for example, Nukulaelae conversationalists rarely try to supply possible candidates for the word; rather, they leave it to the initiator of the search to find the candidate and limit their own contributions to questions that aid the searching process. This peculiarity of other-initiation in Nukulaelae conver-

sation is a symptom of the norm against conjecturing described in the previous section. In the next section, I shall show that it enables Nukulaelae speakers to request questions from their audiences without risking that the audience will supply a conjecture rather than a question.

INFORMATION-WITHHOLDING SEQUENCES

One type of conversation move stands out in Nukulaelae conversations as an apparent violation of the patterns described in the previous section. Principal speakers commonly *withhold* an essential piece of information or proffer an ambiguous or problematic reference at certain strategic locations in gossip interactions, thereby eliciting repair-initiation by the audience. The organization of these information-withholding sequences is described in this section, and an evaluation of their function is proposed in the next.

The following excerpt is an example of an information-withholding sequence:

13. [CONV_{102:06}]

- K: A koo vau o fakatootoo mo tena tautai i aso nei. =
 and Inc come Cmp Cst+fall with his fishing-lore in day this
 → F: = A ai? =
 Cnt who?
 K: = Manono.
 Manono

 K: An' (he) comes along an' starts to pontificate about how much he knows about
 fishing. =
 F: = Who? =
 K: = Manono.

Sequence (13) occurs after a long pause. In the first turn of the sequence, the principal speaker, a middle-aged man, initiates a gossip interaction by introducing a new topic. In the first turn, he refers to an individual by using a zero-pronoun in the main clause and a possessive pronoun (*tena* 'his') in the subordinate clause.⁸ Yet his interlocutor does not have enough background information to enable him to identify the referent of these pronouns; K has therefore used highly indexical expressions to which his interlocutor is unable to assign a meaning. Consequently, the interlocutor initiates a repair in the second turn, in which he elicits a fuller identification of the referent with a retroactive question. Because of normative sanctions against conjecturing, F cannot offer a possible identification of the referent. In the third turn, the principal speaker provides a referential expression that allows his interlocutor to identify unambiguously who is being talked about.

We may view the first turn of this sequence as containing an *invitation* for the interlocutor to initiate a repair in the next turn; the principal speaker extends this invitation covertly by withholding an essential piece of information, with the tacit understanding that the primary interlocutor will not try to issue a guess about the withheld material. Whether the invitation is inten-

tional or not will not be speculated upon here, although it is useful to note that Nukulaelae informants, after listening to tapes, uniformly claim they are. What is important about these sequences, which are frequent in gossip sessions, is their organization and function, about which several things must be said.

Position of withholding sequences

Withholding sequences may occur at topic boundaries, where the conversation shifts from one center of attention to the other, as illustrated by example (13). But topic boundaries are not their only possible position of occurrence; they are also found where no topic shift is evident. Following is an example of a withholding sequence positioned in the middle of a gossip narrative:

14. S and V are exchanging humorous stories about their own and other individuals' lack of familiarity with Western life when traveling away from the atoll. [CONV108:08]
- S: ((very high pitch)) Kae aa laa aka ttou fafinee,
and what? then also our-3-i woman
((mid-high pitch)) ulu ki loto i te: meaa, (1.5)
enter to inside of the thing
((fast)) tiko. (2.0) "e aa koe na?"
shit Nps what? you there
((normal tempo, normal pitch)) au e kilo atu nei,
I Nps look Dxs now
koo ggalo hh ana vae hhh i loto i te poo::? hhh
Inc disappear her feet in inside of the toilet-bowl
((laughter)) =
- V: = A ai?
Cnt who?
(.)
- S: ((high pitch)) A Saavave! hh hh hh hh hhh
Cnt Saavave
((very high pitch)) "Saavave ee! e aa?" hh ttaa!
Saavave Voc Nps what? hey!
iaa ia hee iloa o ppaki te mea!
because she Neg know Cmp pluck the thing
((mid-high pitch)) kae ((normal pitch)) teenei laa
and here then
tena vae i loto hh o te hhh poo (.) hh ((laughter))
her foot in inside of the toilet-bowl
- V: ((breathy)) e akaaka ana tae hh kee ggalo ki lalo.
Nps kick her shit Sbj disappear to below
(2.0)
- S: ((very high pitch)) kee- hh kee ggalo ki lalo::!
Sbj Sbj disappear to below
ttaapaa ee! ((normal pitch)) mata eloo, ttamaa ee!
Exc Voc eyes indeed the+person Voc
- S: What 'bout our friend, (she) walks into the thing [i.e., the toilet], she shits. [I say to her,] "What are you doin'?" I look at her, she's got both her feet deep inside the toilet bowl.
- V: Who?
- S: Saavave! "Saavave! What's goin' on?" Hey, she doesn't know how to flush, so here she's got her foot inside the toilet bowl.
- V: She's kickin' down her shit to make it go down.
- S: To make it go down. Can you believe this? I swear, that woman!

Withholding sequences thus differ from *preannouncements*, of which (15) is an example from American English.

15. [Terasaki 1976:53]

D: *hh* oh guess what.

R: What.

D: Professor Deelies came in. – An' he put another book on iz order.

As discussed by Terasaki (1976), preannouncements always introduce a new topic of discourse. In example (15), D begins a story by laying a claim on the newsworthiness of the story. In example (14), in contrast, the newsworthiness of the story has clearly been established well before the information-withholding sequence. Withholding sequences and preannouncements are thus distinct phenomena.

Strategies for eliciting repairs

Withholding sequences fall into two types. In the first type, of which (13) and (14) are examples, the principal speaker completes a turn without providing a specific enough referential expression. In other words, he or she withholds information before issuing a turn-change signal. The principal interlocutor (or a secondary audience member) then initiates a repair. The principal speaker provides the withheld piece of information in the third turn of the sequence. Occasionally, the information is withheld for longer periods of conversation time. A striking example of this is sequence (12), in which S identifies the withheld information with the noun phrase *a puunana hoki teelaa* 'that asshole again', forcing the interlocutor to initiate another repair, which, this time, provides a tentative identification of the withheld referent. Similarly, in the following example, K does not identify the withheld referent by name; instead, he provides a context through which the identity of the referent becomes clear to the interlocutor:

16. [CONV101:01]

K: Tou tagata koo pi:li eeloo o maalaia tena masiini.
your man Inc close-to indeed Cmp damned his motor
(1.0)

T: (a) ai?
Cnt who?
(2.5)

→ K: Ttele atu maatou i te::, (2.0) i te mata eeloo
run Dxs we-3-e at the at the front indeed
o te ava mate kkii te masiini, (2.0)
of the passage dead completely the motor
((mid-high pitch)) toe ffoki aka maatou, i te mea laa
again return then we-3-e because then
e pp:ono tonu eil(oo), ((normal pitch)) a koo ff:uli
Nps clog straight indeed and Inc turn
aka peela ttaumua. (3.5) fakateletele atu maalie maatou,
Dxs thus the+box Cst+run Dxs slowly we-3-e
(2.3) fakaola aka:, ttele atu ki tua, toe mate.
Cst+alive then run Dxs to oceanside again dead

K: That guy, somethin' bad is gonna happen to him with his outboard motor before too long.

T: Who?

K: We were running along just outside the boat passage, (and his) motor died out completely. We went back out cuz (the school of fish) was rising (to the surface) right across in front of us, and (by that time the dinghy) was turned around with the bow like this. We navigated slowly, then (he) turned on (the engine), off (we) go toward the ocean, (and his motor) dies again.

In this example, T does not ratify verbally that the identification of the referent is successful (I am not able to ascertain whether this is done nonverbally either because I do not have a video recording of the interaction). But the absence of an indication to the contrary and the fact that the conversation goes on normally after the sequence are evidence for the success of the move. It is clear that the person being referred to is the owner of the dinghy in which K went fishing that morning.

The second type is similar to the first. But there the principal speaker signals that the withheld piece of information is problematic by self-initiating a repair but not resolving it. An interlocutor then provides another repair-initiation signal in the second turn, and the principal speaker provides the withheld information in the third turn. In example (17), for example, K initiates a repair in the first turn of the sequence by using repetition, vowel gemination, and cut-offs as repair-initiation signals; that he makes no attempt to resolve the repair is evidenced by the chuckle.

17. [CONV112:06]

K: (whisper) Ae (muimui) hoki naa a te-te:-
and complain also there Cnt the the

→ ((chuckle))

→ F: ((whisper, smiling)) A ai?
Foc who?

()

K: ((high pitch)) Aalisi mo Faalogo!
Aalisi and Faalogo

K: And there was a complaint from the- the:-

F: Who?

K: Aalisi and Faalogo!

In both sequence types, the second turn of withholding sequences invariably consists of a retrospective question that focuses on the missing or implicit element of the previous turn. What is important is the fact that the second turn of these sequences is undistinguishable from “genuine” other-initiated repair.

Strategies for withholding information

A number of devices can be used to withhold information in the first turn of information-withholding sequences. When the withheld information is the referent of a noun phrase (most typically a personal name), the most com-

mon strategy is to refer to it via a referential expression other than a *recognitional*, that is, a referential expression that allows the interlocutor to recognize unambiguously the referent (Sacks & Schegloff 1979). For example, a zero-pronoun may be used, as in example (13), or a generic expression like *ou taagata* 'those guys' (literally 'your men'):

18. [CONV114:02]
 A: ((fast)) A (ko) ou ta(a)gata ne olo ki te ulugaa fonu.
 and Foc your men Pst go to the pair+of turtle
 (0.8)
 → L: A ai?
 Foc who?
 (.)
 → A: Haa Teik(a). (0.1) Teika mo Filo.
 groupTeika Teika and Filo

 A: And those guys 've gone to catch the two turtles.
 L: Who?
 A: Teika and the gang. Teika and Filo.

When the withheld information is not a nominal entity, more complex inter-turn relationships may obtain. In the following sequence, which occurs in the course of a gossip session about a garden-boundary dispute, F asks why a garden boundary is not demarcated, and does so with an indirect speech act; in the second turn, K provides a yes–no answer to F's question, failing to acknowledge or ignoring the indirect interpretation of F's first-turn request, and forcing F to elicit the information again in the third turn, this time with a direct speech act:

19. Gossip about a garden-boundary dispute. [CONV112:04]
 F: Kae tonu (e) heeai ne paepae i te vai teenaa?
 and true Nps Neg any boundary-stone in the garden that
 (0.8)
 K: ((high pitch)) oo!
 yeah
 (1.5)
 → F: ((fast, high pitch, whisper)) Kae hai peehee?
 and do how?
 F: And is it true there's no boundary stone for that garden?
 K: Yeah!
 F: But then how do they do it [i.e., know where to garden]?

By the third turn of example (19), the interlocutor's attention is fully focused on the gossip, as witnessed by the fast tempo, high pitch, and whispering quality of F's utterance. K's information withholding has thus served its purpose.

Summary

Information-withholding sequences minimally consist of three turns. In the first turn, a piece of information is either unstated or described inexplicitly. The second turn consists of a repair that focuses on the missing or inex-

plicit information, which is provided in the third turn. Because of cultural norms against conjectures, the interlocutor cannot offer a possible identification of the missing or inexplicit material in the second turn. Information-withholding sequences can be located at either topic changes or within topic units. The second turn of a sequence may include self-initiation signals, but, when this is the case, no attempt is made to self-repair.

THE FUNCTION OF INFORMATION WITHHOLDING

Information-withholding sequences are means through which principal speakers delay the introduction of a key element of the gossip over several turns. This delay enables them to manipulate their interlocutors into taking an active role in the coproduction of the gossip.

The nature of withheld information

Whatever strategy is used to withhold information in the first turn of information-withholding sequences, the element of the discourse targeted is always *the most scandalous or otherwise central element* of the gossip. Turns that follow the “delayed” piece of information introduced in the third turn provide evidence for this analysis: The fourth-turn response is frequently an interjection of disgust or amazement. The interjections *ttaapaa ee!* (loosely translated in example (20) as ‘you mus’ be kiddin’!) or *ttaa!* (‘what?!’) are common and are frequently uttered in a breathy whisper or in a high-pitched voice register.

20. [CONV112:06]

K: ttoko luaa koo: (0.3) peela, hee maallie ki luga i te:-
the+Num two Inc thus Neg agree about the
(.)

F: I te aa?
about the what?
(0.8)

K: I te mea teela (a) Alieta.
about the thing that of Alieta
(0.8)

→ F: ((whispering, exhaling, high pitch)) tthaaphaa ehh!!
Exc Voc

K: Those two are not pleased about the:-

F: About the what?

K: With that thing of Alieta’s.

F: You mus’ be kiddin’!!

Other high-affect responses are found in fourth-turn position. Examples include “amazement” questions like *e aa?* ‘what [are you saying]?’ which ambiguously express either disbelief or genuine requests for further information. In the following example – the first three turns of which are repeated from example (17) – F responds to the third-turn disclosure of the identity of the gossip victim by requesting more information in a whispered tone:

21. [CONV112:06]

K: ((whisper)) Ae (muimui) hoki naa a te- te:-
and complain also there Cnt the the
((chuckle))
[]
F: ((whisper, smiling)) A ai?
Foc who?

(.)

K: ((high pitch)) Aalisi mo Faalogo!=
Aalisi and Faalogo

→ F: ((mid-high pitch, whisper)) =e aa:?
Nps what?

K: And there was a complaint from the- the:-

F: Who?

K: Aalisi and Faalogo!=

F: =What for?

Such responses are overt confirmations of the central status of the information withheld in the first turn of the sequence and disclosed in the third turn.

Nukulaelae gossip most frequently focuses on and shapes the presentation of self of third parties. As a result, the most central element of the gossip frequently is the identity of a person, and personal names are most commonly the target of information-withholding sequences. This is illustrated by example (21), as well as most of the examples quoted in previous sections. In other contexts, another element may be chosen as the most central element of the gossip narrative.

22. T narrates a fishing accident that occurred several decades ago to a large audience in a cooking hut. [CONV102:10]

T: Kae olo atu naa maatou i ssuaa aso o fakaalo, (.)
and go Dxs then we-3-e on another day Cmp trawl
ko au, ko Piita, ko Tili! (2.7) a:t:uli atuli mai
Foc I Foc Piita Foc Tili chase chase Dxs
temotou manu, i tua i koo, (0.5)
our-3-e school-of-fish on ocean-side at there
((high pitch, fast tempo)) mea eeloo maatou loo
then we-3-e then

KOO SISI I ei. (.)

Inc fly-fish in Anp

((mid-high pitch, normal tempo)) te mea e oti

the thing Inc finished

fakavaavave, (3.0) e oti fakanof- (fakanofoga a

quickly Nps finish Cst Cst+stay of

tena paa-), ((normal pitch)) tena atu teelaa

his lure his bonito that

ko te fakafokiiga o te paa, (.) kae fiti aka te paa

Foc the Cst+return of the lure and flip up the lure

llave maut:akitaki i te kati fua o Tili chhh

stuck firmly in the penis of Tili

(5.0)

→ F: ((mid-high pitch, laughing)) te a- () te aa?

the the what?

(.)

[]

- T: ((very high pitch, falsetto)) te maga!
 the shaft
- G: ((mid-high pitch, laughing)) te maga,
 the shaft
- (1.2)
- T: SAE EELOO te maga i te:: pakkili fua o Tili::,
 appears indeed the shaft from the skin penis of Tili
- T: And we were going out (fishing) that day at dawn. There's me, there's Piita, there's Tili. We ran and ran after a school of fish, and then suddenly we started fly fishing in the middle of it. The thing is that it was over quickly, 'twas over an' after he [i.e., Tili] let down the lure- the bonito he'd (caught), then the lure flipped around, and stuck itself deep inside Tili's penis.
- F: The wha-? the what?
- T: The shaft (of the lure)!
- F: The shaft, .
- T: (One) could see the shaft (coming out) of the skin of Tili's penis.

The dual function of withholding sequences

Information-withholding sequences have the effect of promoting a central element into a position of informational salience. This is accomplished by marking that element as the target of a repair structure; in other words, the element is marked as *problematic*. The act of withholding information rests on the same organizational logic that C. Goodwin identifies as the functional principle underlying *forgetfulness sequences* (in which a speaker involves listeners in a word search) in American English conversation: "By marking something as problematic, a speaker can both bring the material being looked for into a position of salience that it would not otherwise have had, and make the task of searching for the material the primary activity that the participants to the conversation are then engaged in" (1987:116). Both American and Nukulaelae conversationalists make use of the same principle to foreground an element of the conversation, though in different ways. American speakers expect their interlocutors to make explicit proposals as to the identity of the problematic material in forgetfulness sequences. In contrast, Nukulaelae interlocutors refrain from providing possible identifications for the problematic material and instead initiate repair sequences that encourage the principal speaker to supply the problematic material.

Information-withholding sequences may be viewed as manipulative strategies in which principal speakers place their interlocutors in a situation where they will be forced to issue a back-channel cue in the form of other-initiation. Principal speakers who initiate a withholding sequence obtain a confirmation that the floor is in their control and that their interlocutors are paying full attention. At the same time, they are assured that interlocutors will not try to take over the floor in the second turn, as they are barred from doing so by cultural norms against conjectures. In addition, principal speakers use withholding sequences to elicit from their interlocutor a ratification of the fact that the material marked as problematic is central to the

topic of the gossip. As such, information-withholding sequences enhance the *individual expressive style* of the gossip in that they confirm the principal speaker's position of manipulative control both of the floor and of the interlocutors' feelings and attitudes. Assigning a manipulative function to withholding sequences does not necessarily imply that they are intentional activities (although, as noted earlier, they are likely to be). Interactional manipulation may be very covert, so much so that interactants may engage in manipulative behavior without necessarily being aware of doing so.

Information-withholding sequences are also licenses for the interlocutors to get involved in the coconstruction of the conversation. Indeed, by requesting that the principal speaker elaborate on details of the narrative, interlocutors provide evidence that they are in collusion with the principal speaker. They also give themselves the opportunity to provide a fourth-turn response, in which, as illustrated in examples (20) and (21), they can provide further confirmatory signals of collusion. In short, information-withholding sequences allow interlocutors to make meaningful contributions to the gossip, which then becomes a group activity. They reinforce the *group-oriented expressive style* of the event.⁹

Finally, information-withholding sequences are examples of the strategies that speakers may employ to circumvent the socially disapproved nature of gossip (which is not peculiar to Nukulaelae, as witnessed by Haviland's (1977) remarks on Zinacantan gossip). When engaged in gossip, conversationalists have two options at their disposal: they may either involve everyone in the production of the gossip, or they may redefine the activity as something other than gossip. Withholding sequences (and probably other micro-organizational strategies) offer both options at once. On the one hand, their collusive function ensures that both the principal speaker and the audience are involved in the production of gossip. On the other hand, withholding sequences dilute the responsibility of the principal speaker in the production of the gossip. Until the interlocutor requests a specific identification of the central element, the speaker may pose as simply divulging common knowledge, which he or she does with as much indexicality as can be afforded when talking about something that everyone knows.

Summary

Information-withholding sequences have a dual function: a self-serving function (from the perspective of the principal speaker) as well as a group-serving function (from the perspective of all individuals engaged in the gossip session). The first function of these sequences is to delay the introduction of a particularly scandalous or sensitive or otherwise central piece of information. This delaying process places the material in a position of informational salience. The second function is to provide coconversationalists the opportunity

to partake in the production of the gossip narrative and thereby to underscore the collusive element of the enterprise.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I have shown that, in Nukulaelae gossip, the need to create collusion and to ensure that one's audience is attentive is answered in part by a special, context-specific use of over-indexicality, which invites repair initiation by interlocutors. I now turn to the implications of this study for the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural study of conversation, and for the nature of gossip as a communicative and social event.

Information withholding and norms of conversation

In many societies, interactants generally collaborate to minimize the visibility of their own and other's incompetence. One symptom of this tacit collaboration is the avoidance of potentially face-threatening behavior, of which other-initiated repairs and other-repairs are examples. Yet, at certain points in the course of gossip, Nukulaelae interactants engage in behavior that does not follow the general trend. Indeed, an information-withholding sequence is triggered by a lack of clarity on the part of the principal speaker, which would be interpreted as a symptom of communicative incompetence in other contexts. The strategy also calls for the interlocutor to acknowledge the lack of clarity by other-initiating a repair.¹⁰

Why should behavior which, in other contexts, has face-threatening characteristics, be called upon in gossip? Earlier I noted that one of the essential prerequisites for the accomplishment of a successful gossip session is the achievement of collusion. Collusion is achieved by manipulating the structure of discourse, and information-withholding sequences are one of the structural strategies that are employed to this end. By inviting repair initiation, speakers manipulate their interlocutors into participating actively in the production of the discourse. The interlocutors' participation then gives them the role of coauthor of the gossip narrative, which facilitates (even forces) the creation of collusion in the gossip context. Information-withholding sequences enable principal speakers to display their skills at manipulating the gossip context; and far from coming across as face-threatening moves, the other-initiated repair underscores the interlocutor's willingness to play the role of an attentive audience.

Information-withholding sequences thus have a very specific function: to satisfy certain needs and achieve certain goals in the creation of a successful gossip session. They represent a trade-off between these needs and goals and what could potentially be interpreted as face-threatening. Given an appropriate context, namely the introduction of the most central, most salient, and most scandalous element of the narrative, the demands of gossip

overrides the maintenance of face. The context itself creates a *social bracket*, in which behavior that would normally be interpreted as asocial becomes acceptable and even desirable. Information-withholding sequences are examples of a context in which macro-organizational norms (i.e., the creation, strengthening, and maintenance of collusion in gossip) override other concerns. Such macro-organizational factors as norms of verbal behavior in particular contexts may have a dramatic effect on the micro-organization of talk.

The case of information-withholding sequences provides a number of problems for the traditional analysis of repairs. First of all, the face-threatening quality of other-involvement in repair mechanisms is not necessarily the most important characteristic of this involvement. Viewing other-involvement in conversation as inherently face-threatening assumes that self and other are discrete entities. This view obscures the fact that these notions may be defined differently in different cultural contexts (e.g., Shweder & Bourne 1984; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca 1988; and many others), and that, within the same culture, persons may distinguish between different *types* of others in different contexts. In Nukulaelae gossip, it is to the principal speaker's advantage to distinguish an inner circle of otherness, that is, the immediate audience, from an outer circle, that is, potential victims (this is probably true of gossip in any culture). Although the way in which this distinction is created and sustained may vary across societies and contexts (cf. Gilmore 1978), one obvious tool that interactants have at their disposal for this purpose is conversation organization, which can be exploited in more or less covert ways to engage the inner circle of otherness into coproducing the gossip session.

Second, information-withholding sequences put into question the common view of repairs as involuntary activities (e.g., McLaughlin 1984:212). Although I purposely dodged the question of intentionality in these structures, it is fairly obvious that Nukulaelae gossips consciously exploit information withholding in at least some cases of information-withholding sequences (and in other contexts as well – see Besnier 1989). As Jefferson (1987) has pointed out, repairs can be both voluntary and socially consequential; they are not necessarily inadvertent occurrences.

Third, it is equally misleading to treat information-withholding sequences as particular cases of side-sequences during which the ongoing conversation is provisionally put on hold. Rather, these sequences are essential to the co-construction of the conversation. The claim that repairs are side sequences is based on the assumption that the development of a conversation is the primary responsibility of whoever is holding the floor. This assumption, which may hold for mainstream Anglo-American conversation, is not as applicable to Nukulaelae gossip, in which participants manipulate their audiences into contributing to the development of talk. Viewing repairs as side-

sequences implicitly restricts the motivation for repairs to referential concerns; but repair mechanisms can obviously be motivated by social and affective motivations.

The self-serving and group-serving functions of gossip

Finally, this micro-analysis of one feature of Nukulaelae gossip interactions has implications for the functional study of the sociocultural aspects of gossip. Anthropologists have long argued over the function that gossip plays in the social organization of a group. Some researchers (Gluckman 1963, 1968; Handelsman 1973) maintain that it is primarily a tool that enables a group to maintain and underscore its internal cohesion; in order to gossip, these researchers maintain, one has to be an insider, and gossip is precisely geared to emphasize the boundary between insiders and outsiders. Other scholars (Cox 1970; Paine 1967, 1968) choose to view gossip as a self-serving tool, through which particular individuals seek to further their self-interests at the expense of others.

Conspicuously absent from this debate is information about how gossip is conducted at micro-levels of organization, and how these different views may translate at that level (Bergmann 1987; Brenneis 1984; M. H. Goodwin 1980). In this article, I have shown that the two functions of gossip are not mutually exclusive: They may both motivate at the same time specific micro-organizational aspects of gossip interactions. Information-withholding sequences are indeed both self-serving and group-serving. They are used in the pursuit of both one-upmanship and group cohesion. What this analysis suggests is that the study of communication phenomena such as gossip and the function of these phenomena needs to integrate both macro-analytic tools with the micro-analysis of how the job of communicating is accomplished.

NOTES

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1. Examples (1)–(4) are taken from Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977). The transcription system used in this article follows roughly the system developed by Gail Jefferson. It is summarized in the appendix.

2. The notion of *preference*, which conversation analysts exploit to account for the differences in status between various repairing scenarios (Levinson 1983:341, Schegloff et al. 1977),

has been shown to be problematic in many respects (Bilmes 1988) and will not be used in this study.

3. Indeed, little cross-cultural research has been conducted on *any* aspect of the micro-organization of conversation, not simply repairs. Among the few studies on the topic figures Boden (1981), who finds turn-taking mechanisms across several Indo-European languages to be qualitatively similar to the mechanisms at play in mainstream American conversation. But Creiter (1977, 1978), Philips (1983), and Scollon and Scollon (1981) describe significantly divergent patterns in turn-taking mechanisms in several East African societies, among the Warm Spring Indians, and among the Athabaskans, respectively. Liberman (1985) provides a useful analysis of several aspects of the organization of conversation in Aboriginal Australia. Godard (1977) describes the distinct telephone conversation openings in France and the United States. Cross-cultural differences in topic organization are investigated in Gumperz (1982).

4. A list of the abbreviations used in the interlinear glosses can be found in the appendix. I have attempted to capture in the translation of examples some of the conversational flavor of the original. In the Tuvaluan orthography used in this article, *g* stands for a velar nasal stop and double graphemes indicate phonemic gemination; nonphonemic gemination is indicated with colons. Personal names have been changed in the examples to protect the identity of individuals being referred to.

5. The notion of *collusion* in reference to conversation appears to have been introduced by Goffman (1974:514, 1981:134). M. H. Goodwin (1985) exploits it in a discussion of *byplay* in American dinnertime family conversation, namely conversational asides during which one participant addresses a comment on a particular aspect of the general conversation to a subset of the conversation group. McDermott and Tylbor (1987:154) define collusion as the way in which "members of any social order must constantly help each other to posit a particular state of affairs, even when such a state would be in no way at hand without everyone so proceeding." In other words, collusion can be described as the achievement of congruent points of view about or evaluations of a particular situation.

6. Nukulaelae Tuvaluan does not have a question-word movement rule, and question-words remain *in situ*. As a result, they cannot occur as independent constituents, and, whether they function as canonical questions or as repair signals, they are marked by grammatical morphemes such as tense-aspect markers (if they function as verbs), case markers, or articles.

7. The boundary between prospective and retrospective questions is not always clear-cut, because it is sometimes difficult to decide, in the context of repairs, whether a question is a request for information that "should" have been provided in the previous turn or whether it is simply a request for the first speaker to go on with an exposition by providing additional information. But the distinction between prospective and retrospective questions remains useful in many contexts, as will be shown presently. Similarly, the boundary between questions that function as repair initiators and "genuine" questions is also tenuous.

8. In Nukulaelae Tuvaluan as in all Polynesian languages, a clause may consist of a verb alone without an overtly stated subject noun phrase. For example, in the first clause of the first turn in example (13), *a koo vau* 'and X comes', the subject is not overtly expressed. (See Besnier (1985) for discussion.)

9. I borrow the terms *individual expressive style* and *group-oriented expressive style* from Billings (1987). Billings uses these terms as descriptors of the general communicative dynamics found in different societies. These labels can be usefully extended to describe the dynamics of particular contexts within the same society and, indeed, the functions of particular interactional strategies.

10. Information-withholding sequences are also problematic for what Sacks and Schegloff (1979) call the "preference for recognitional." According to this principle, speakers provide, when referring to persons, the most recognizable identification of the referent. Obviously, the first turn of information-withholding sequences does not provide recognizable identifications.

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APPENDIX

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Transcription conventions

(1.2)	length of significant pause in seconds
(.)	untimed pauses (for pauses of less than 0.3 seconds)
word-	abrupt cut-off
<i>word</i>	forte volume
WORD	fortissimo volume
<i>hhh</i>	exhalation
<i>.hhh</i>	inhalation
wo::rd	nonphonemic segment gemination
?	rising pitch (not necessarily in a question)
,	slightly rising pitch
.	falling pitch (not always at the end of a sentence)
!	animated tempo
=	turn latching
[]	beginning and end of turn overlap
((<i>text</i>))	information for which a symbol is not available
((high))	dominant pitch level of utterance string

((creaky))	voice quality
()	incoherent string
(word)	conjectured string
[CONV _{101:12-13}]	transcript and page number
→	position of illustrative element
[. . .]	untranscribed material

Abbreviations used in interlinear glosses

Anp	anaphoric pronoun	Nps	nonpast
Cmp	complementizer	Num	proper numeral marker
Cnt	contrastive marker	Pst	past
Cst	causative prefix	Sbj	subjunctive conjunction
Dxs	deictic adverb	Tag	tag question marker
Erg	ergative case	Voc	vocative particle
Exc	exclamation	2	dual
Foc	focus marker	3	plural
Inc	inchoative	i	first-person inclusive pronoun
Neg	negative (ad)verb	e	first-person exclusive pronoun
Nom	nominalizing suffix	+	morpheme boundary