

## Part I: Transcription reflection

The challenges in the transcription process were both due to issues of hearing and how to represent what was heard. In other words, there were parts that were difficult to hear, such as overlapping dialogue, and parts that were clearly heard but choosing how to translate them to written form required careful consideration.

For the overlapping speech, it was obviously quite easy to tell where the second speaker begins, as it is the beginning of their talking. I was surprised at how difficult it was to determine where the first speaker's speech is first overlapped. In the end, I had to slow down the speech to 53% speed, to help differentiate between the two speakers, and it was still a challenge. The overlap was often in the middle of a word spoken by the first speaker, but for the interest of this transcript, if there was overlap I included the entire word in brackets. For example on lines 13-14, the overlap really seems to begin during the glide [j] between vowels on the word *oil* [ɔjəl], making it even more difficult to hear, since the overlapping word is *yeah* [jæ], which begins on the glide.

Some of the final intonation contours were difficult to hear. The rising intonation marked with the question mark was especially troublesome. Dubois et al. (1993) note that all

questions are not said with rising intonation. In fact information questions and closed choice questions are falling (lines 20 and 79-80). I also had to constantly remind myself not to apply grammatical rules to the intonation units. The speaker, Elle, sometimes ended her IUs with a kind of trailing off, sometimes with the word *so* (lines 6 and 67), and sometimes just without finishing the phrase (lines 50 and 78). I was tempted to make these truncated intonation units initially, but decided against it. They are not false starts and she is not interrupted. It seems she has finished her thought and is trusting that the addressee, Kara, will understand what she is saying.

While determining which contour to assign to each intonation unit could be tricky, deciding where each intonation unit started and ended became easier with more practice. There were many IUs I had put together that I later separated. Most of these were due to recognizing the anacrusis, or acceleration-deceleration pattern (Chafe 1994, Stelma & Cameron 2007) common for typical IUs. I applied this to lines 6, 40, 66, 75, and 183 to make them their own IUs. I also listened for the pitch reset and voice quality of Elle for her intonation units, but that will be discussed in the analysis section. I marked a few words for prominence, though they did not really help determine the boundaries of intonation units (lines 1, 140 and 142). I chose to only mark for prominence when both the pitch was higher and the words were louder.

I decided to not change the orthography of the speech, except for the instance of Elle saying *I don't know* as something akin to [əno] which I wrote as *unno* (line ) and *wanna* (line ) a fairly common pronunciation for *want to*. The other places this could have been done, but that I feel would have made it less readable for no purpose would be *did you*, pronounced more like [dɪdʒjə] (line 15) and *what do you* pronounced [wʌdəju] (lines 20 and 25). I also kept all the instances of *you know* written as such instead of *y'know* or something to that effect. The sound ((*PFFT*)) in line 157, is interesting in that it carries a great deal of meaning in a short burst of sound, namely agreement but also bemusement at what was just said and a shared acknowledgement of the ridiculousness of the previous statement, that the reason Kara was willing to do extra work was in fact because she was not a salesman, the person who is supposed to care about making a sale.

The resulting transcript really helped to highlight the discourse markers to me, especially the differences between speakers of which discourse markers would be chosen. These different styles of discourse marker are discussed further in the analysis section. The faithfulness and accuracy of the transcript is hard to determine as the person who did the transcribing. As Bucholtz (2000) says, an objective transcript is not possible. I had to keep in

mind the parameters of the assignment and was looking for specific things such as pauses, vocal quality, which made me focus on them, perhaps missing other things because of this.

## Part II: Transcription analysis

This analysis will focus on vocal quality and the possible meanings behind them as well as their functions, and discourse markers, primarily *yeah*, *mhm* and *right*, markers of agreement. Scheggloff (1982) refers to these discourse markers as response tokens while Jefferson (1984) differentiates between passive reciprocity for *mhm* and speaker incipency for *yeah*.

I noticed that there are three instances of breathy speech, or under-the-breath speech and one of whispering. All three carry with them a different meaning. The first breathy speech, on line 42, is Elle speaking to herself, more than addressing a question to Kara. It is common for such asides in conversation to be breathy or mumbled. The second breathy speech, the discourse marker *yeah* on line 98, will be discussed further below. The third breathy speech, *oh my god*, (line 179) also includes the quality of creaky voice and is more a sign of exasperation. It does seem to be Kara speaking to herself but with additional meaning behind it of annoyance as opposed to the first instance of trying to remember. Kara's choice to whisper the word *rent*

(line 52) is rather interesting. She is perhaps trying to downplay the request for her rent money, though she follows Elle's acknowledgement with *that I need*. There is a slightly longer than average pause of almost 4 seconds after this exchange, broken by both speakers trying to introduce a topic shift, suggesting that it was indeed a slightly delicate matter. There are other instances of long pauses in between topic shifts, but they are not broken by both parties trying to ensure the conversation continues.

The voice quality of creaky voice was rather prominent in this conversation. Elle used it much more than Kara, even occasionally carrying it through several intonation phrases (line 82-83). It seems that it is more likely to be used throughout an entire IU at the end of what could be considered a prosodic paragraph, signaling the end of a topic (Bing 1992). Elle also resets to a higher pitch and volume on the following intonation unit, after the conclusion of a creaky voice utterance (lines 47 and 88). It was difficult to determine the voice quality of some of the overlapping *yeah* utterances, though some instances of creakiness in *yeah* were very salient (line 86-87). Perhaps the creaky voice is that the speaker is speaking with a falling intonation contour but they have already fallen as far as their vocal register allows and cannot go any lower so the voice gets a creaky laryngealized sound.

There are a few instances of *yeah* as an affirmative answer to a question, not just an acknowledgement token (lines 3, 86, and 101). The *yeah* in line 87, which follows the answer *yeah*, signals the continuation of the topic but also a shift to Elle's speakership. There are two other instances of double *yeah* (lines 33-34, 97-98). In lines 33-34, it seems as though Kara is kind of passively acknowledging what Elle says, and then after thinking about it, actually agrees and says *yeah* with a similar intonation but at a higher pitch. This *yeah* is not as related to the topic shift that follows as in lines 97-98. Elle says *yeah* twice, once with a creaky voice quality and then a breathy one, before introducing a completely new topic. Neither of these *yeahs* are related to what was previously said as she has already answered *okay* to Kara's request to *let me know*.

Jefferson (1984) claims that *mhm* is more passive than *yeah* and does not often signal a change in topic or speakership. There are not as many examples of *mhm* as *yeah* in this particular conversation. The first *mhm* (line 12) does in fact signal a change in speakership, though not topic, however Elle leaves a decent pause before adding the information *the diamond oil* to Kara's topic of the shampoo. Perhaps she used *mhm* instead of *yeah* because she thought Kara was going to continue. Elle uses a prolonged *mhm*, written as *mm = hmm* (line 53), during Kara's topic of rent, which Kara does indeed continue with *that I need*. Kara,

on the other hand, says *mhm* (line 92,94) followed by *well*, a common indicator of topic shift and continues talking, Elle says something unintelligible after the *mhm*, perhaps because she thought it was still her turn, due to the use of *mhm*.

There are a few other discourse markers in the dialogue that were not discussed at length, such as the *ah* (line 109) as a receipt of information and Kara's use of *well*. Most of the instances of *well* mark the beginning of a quotation (lines 120, 123, 175), but line 94 marks more of a call to pay attention. Elle uses *yeah*, *but*, *so* and *um* more than Kara, while Kara says *right* more. They both use *mhm*, *like* and *you know*, though Elle uses *you know* a little more frequently.

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