On the Social Constraints
of Having a World

by
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Notions like 'The World at Your Feet' and 'having a grip on the world' or 'grasping the world' have the inbuilt assumptions that there 'is a world', that one 'has or inhabits a world', that there is a 'one', and that that one 'shares a world' with other ones. This paper points out that one cannot take all of that for granted. In order to discuss, within an Ethnomethodological Conversation Analytic (EMCA) framework (Garfinkel & Sacks 1970), how human 'bodied individuals' (Howe 2008) organize bodily conduct, we start from Merleau- Ponty's (2012) understanding of the relation between the physical body and the material world. It is argued that part of the organizational work consists of typifying behavioural activities and embodied action for interaction along 'normal/typical' vs. 'abnormal/atypical/deviant' scales. If the conduct is categorized as 'abnormal', this may have serious consequences for the bodied individual and his or her possibilities in life. The paper then proceeds to carry out an EMCA analysis of a face-to-face interaction. The aim is to demonstrate how bodied individuals, as participants in interaction, may orient to a commonly established, i.e. known, relation between types of 'engagement with the world', 'having a world', and 'being part of this world' in the concrete details of face-to-face interaction; this analysis constitutes the main part of the paper. We conclude that socially (re)established ordinary knowledge, of and about engagement with the world, constrains everybody. It takes ascribed membership in this 'World' to have it 'at Your Feet'. Moreover, individual or existential choices that are made when 'grasping the world' are embedded in, and thus ultimately constrained by, this world.

1. Introduction: Phenomenology and phenomenological sociology

In order to describe the world, classical phenomenology (cf. Husserl 1976; Heidegger 1986) emphasises the importance of understanding

the relationship between the world and the 'I' who experiences it. The French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1945) pointed to the body – the physical body – and its direct engagement with the material world as the starting point for describing this relation. When perceiving, the body is open to the world that it is simultaneously embedded in; according to Merleau-Ponty's understanding, all experience and understanding is grounded in the pre-linguistic perception, which manifests itself in bodily capacities and dispositions. Language only deepens the experience. Our reality, i.e. all that we are aware of, is in other words constituted by sensorimotor structures and the 'relation' to the world is not actually a 'relation'; rather, the world is our existence and we inhabit it. Though inhabited by a bodied individual (Howe 2008), the world is not 'private', however. Rather, and importantly, the inhabited world is inherently intersubjective and social (Heidegger 1986; Husserl 1973; Merleau-Ponty 1960), since other bodied individuals are in some way involved when one engages and experiences it.

The classical philosophical tradition has inspired not only new generations of philosophers (Zahavi & Stjernfelt 2002), but has also engendered phenomenological traditions within psychology, psychiatry and sociology (Baugh & Mohan 1985; Berger & Luckmann 1966; Garfinkel 1967; Schütz 1932). My own work falls within phenomenological sociology, specifically within the framework of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (EMCA) (Garfinkel & Sacks 1970). EMCA studies have shown how 'facts' (Durkheim 1982) in and about 'the world' become the outcome of diverse, rather unstable social processes which ordinary people as members of society are engaged in (Liberman 2013).

In other words, the process ends in an 'object', i.e. in sociological terms in 'facts', which are likely to be categorised in static semantic units, e.g. 'the world', 'grasping' or 'being part of the world'. As Merleau-Ponty has it, "[o]ur perception ends in objects, and the object, once constituted, appears as the reason for all the experiences of it that we have had or that we could have" (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 69).

EMCA's research interests concern specifically *how* (bodied) individuals in concert initiate, develop and maintain methods for stabilising dynamic, fluctuating elements and processes, as they base their work on recognisability and assumptions about reciprocity in order to make sense of occurrences in 'the world' (Garfinkel 1963). I argue that the extent to which a (bodied) individual engages in objectivising processes (Liberman 2011) is decisive for (other) individuals' experience and understanding of *how* and *to what extent* an individual inhabits 'the world', or rather 'is part of' it, 'has a grip on' it or may 'grasp' it, like other bodied individuals do ordinarily, i.e. given that he or she is part of the same world. In this vein, individuals turn 'the world' into a fact and in concert split it into more 'worlds', e.g. an ordinary social world (Garfinkel 1991; Douglas 1970; Sacks 1984) versus a paranormal social world (Zingrone et al. 1993), or some individuals' very 'own private' world, which is likely to be accessible to no one else (Goode 1994). Individuals having their 'own' world are by social convention typically categorised as 'intellectually disabled' (Antaki et al. 2017; Rapley et al. 1998) or diagnosed with 'psychiatric diseases' (Coulter 1991; Penn et al. 2000) or 'cognitive disorders' (Majlesi & Plejert 2016; Smith 2010).

The expression 'the world at your feet' as addressed in the present Special Issue, represents a social, semantically manifested concept that may conventionally be described as 'having opportunities', as 'grasping opportunities', or even as 'making existential choices'. The current paper aims to discuss how the degree to which a bodied individual 'has a world' in which this concept exists, is defined socially, not just by the perceiving and engaging 'I' alone. Through the analysis of naturally occurring interactions, the paper attempts to show how the categorisation of a bodied individual as not inhabiting this world is based on the bodied individual's physical engagement with it. The paper will also show how *not* inhabiting this world is socially and interactionally consequential, in that the individual is prevented from engaging physically with it and also from 'grasping it' in a metaphoric understanding of the concept. The paper's

focus is on the physical and linguistic engagement with the *social* world as a precondition for 'Having the World at Your Feet'.

1.1. Behavioural activity or recognizable action-for-interaction?

When engaging with 'the world', bodied individuals for instance produce sound, they manipulate material objects, and they move (Depperman 2013; Streeck et al. 2011; Rasmussen et al. 2014). At some point, they treat all of this as 'figuring' against the 'ground' (Merleau- Ponty 2012) of other physical and nonphysical occurrences in the material world, in terms of actions *and* methods employed for making sense of the activities that they are engaged in. In this way, they make 'objects' of the world perceivable (cp. Goodwin 2000, 2003a). Some sounds are understood as speech and some speech is understood as action-for-social interaction. Some sounds may for instance be categorised as singing or hymning (Schegloff 2005), and individuals' speech may be understood as being directed to themselves (Diaz & Berk 1991) or as 'thinking out loud'. The same holds for bodily movements and the manipulation of objects. Not all bodily movements and engagements are turned into actions and ways to interact with others, i.e. into embodied interaction (Goodwin 2003a, 2003b; Streeck et al. 2011). Individuals moving their arms upwards in the air may either be seen as 'stretching themselves' or alternatively as 'waving at/greeting' someone.

When experiencing the world, bodied individuals are continuously engaged in typifying human activity and actions which are treated as complexes, are understood by reference to the features of the complex action and the social rules governing the action, rather than to the properties of its physical components or the physical laws that may explain its production.[1]

EMCA studies have convincingly shown *how* the organisation of the details of e.g. each bodily movement and its detailed organisation with perhaps other embodied practices, e.g. head movements, gaze direction,

or talk is decisive for how the movement is understood as an action-for-interaction: either in itself (e.g. bowing or bending in greeting without accompanying talk) or as part of an assemblage of practices for action construction (cf. Fox & Heinemann 2015; Heath 1984; Mondada 2007; Rasmussen 2014), like bowing or inclining the head, accompanied by a "good day". Alternatively, it may be 'just' behavioural activity that is not performed for interaction (like bending over to pick up something from the floor). To typify a bodily movement, co-present bodied individuals have to observe the incrementally developing movement in order to be able to work out what it serves to accomplish, even though a person does not necessarily have to wait for its production to be terminated to project what it will *possibly* turn out to be. The observer, the possible recipient, or even the producer of the movement can never be sure what it will end up being, as it may be changed, for instance, from an upcoming greeting/ waving movement to a scratching of the producer's head.

Sudden changes may result from the individuals' orientation towards the sociality of their engagement in the co-presence of others (Goffman 1963). They, the co-participants, work to coordinate their conduct; in concert, they stabilise its details and turn it into specific recognisable types of actions-for-interaction (Curl & Drew 2008; Jefferson 1984; Sacks 1992 Schegloff & Lerner 2009). Recipients' subsequent recognisable actions will ratify and establish the recognisability of for instance a bodily practice as a method and specific type of action, e.g. through a responding recognisable greeting nod, a smile, and/or waving (Jefferson 1979; Kevallik 2014; Mondada 2009).

What is categorised as an action-for-interaction and typified as a specific one, is not a mere 'happening', neither is it understood as a bodily activity similar to the one carried out by other species, like for instance ants. Human bodied individuals build morality into this kind of interactional work as they assume knowledge about the choices that each of them make in doing some kind of action in some specific way at some specific time to convey some specific understanding (Garfinkel

1967; Garfinkel & Sacks 1970). So, co-participants construct their actions in ways in which the actions themselves *account* for what they serve to accomplish, and the co-participants may at any point in time hold each other accountable for their actions. Co-participants overwhelmingly carry out accounts with a focus on *talk-in-interaction*, though the talk is of course mostly accompanied by other embodied actions. As I have discussed elsewhere (Rasmussen 2013), talk however seems to *be treated as the primary* means through which, we, as bodied human beings, *ordinarily* claim, display and establish 'knowledge'. This may explain why research in accounting has primarily investigated accounts formatted through language (Buttney 1993; Robinson 2016; Scott & Lyman 1968).

The current paper will base its line of argument on an analysis of how co-present individuals also treat certain assemblages of embodied practices (without accompanying talk) as *accountable* actions. Moreover, it will show how they subsequently account for their responses to the embodied action which is interestingly accomplished with a focus on talk. The analysis serves to illustrate how human bodied individuals orient towards systematicity and recognisability of bodily activity and of embodied actions-for-interaction (often including talk) when experiencing the world. The ordering of conduct is a vehicle for categorising co-present individuals as 'inhabiting the same world' and as being capable of making choices *within* 'this world'. Choices made within this world are made understandable *through* this world and are thus basically social 'objects'.

The methods, actions and interactional processes of typifying and categorising actions (Fitzgerald & Housley 2015; Hester & Eglin 1997; Sacks 1979) as for instance 'ordinary', 'deviant' (McHugh 1970; Sharrock 1984), and maybe as 'part of another world', are mundane but powerful. The inference machinery (Sacks 1985) leaves the non-members of the 'ordinary world', such as cognitively impaired bodied individuals, no way of escaping the category of 'their world' (Rasmussen 2012). Health science has of course developed methods that are treated socially not as mundane, but instead professional (cp. Cullen et al. 2007). The social

conventional category for this kind of work is 'diagnosis', which also has an enormous social and political power. In addition, diagnosis may result in social exclusion, as it may lead to the diagnosed individual's hospitalisation or becoming a resident in a care facility.

1.2. Data for analysis

The examples that serve to illustrate some of the points made above are naturally occurring interactions (Sacks et al. 1974) in a care facility in Denmark between an elderly woman, Karin, diagnosed with severe dementia (Lubinski et al. 1995), staff, and a visiting researcher. Karin's communication skills are heavily affected. She produces no recognisable words and no bodily movements in terms of 'nods' or 'head shakes' that could serve to indicate the instance of a confirming or disconfirming response. She only produces vocalisations in terms of 'nø nø nø' and, as we shall see, makes systematic use of gaze and body posture when engaging with other (bodied) individuals in her surroundings.

The instances were observed and video-recorded as part of an ethnographic study (Gobo 2011) of abilities and possibilities in life with dementia (DAP)[2]. In the care facility, every resident has a single-room apartment. The instances emerged in the ward's semi-public common room (Goffman 1963), where the residents may gather during the day, e.g. for having lunch or watching television.

The interactions were video-recorded with the consent of Karin's relatives (Karin is a pseudonym) and the staff. Subsequently, the interactions were transcribed (the transcription key is found at the end of the paper).

2. *Knowledge: 'Knowing how' and 'knowing what'*

Though diagnosis may be powerful, it does not relieve interacting bodied individuals from the obligation to work out what a bodily activity is about and whether some movement is used as a method for conveying a specific

understanding to co-present individuals. As we shall see, residents like Karin with no recognisable language may, like anybody else in our society, produce bodily movements as accountable actions that are subsequently dealt with as morally chosen. In this sense, they are treated as based on ordinary mundane knowledge; I shall categorise this kind of knowledge as 'knowing how'. However, as the analysis will show, co-present bodied individuals do not categorise Karin's incrementally developing actions as based on recognisable ordinary knowledge about *what* she is doing – a knowledge referred to here as 'knowing what' (cp. Ryle 1971). In dealing with Karin's actions, the co-present individuals interactionally construct a relationship between themselves (Pomerantz & Mandelbaum 2005) as individuals knowledgeable of what it takes to grasp and engage with 'the world', as this is accomplished through talk. In contrast, they treat and categorise the resident as not fully inhabiting the world, as the latter presumably lacks a common stock of knowledge about its complexity – a presumption likewise based on Karin's recurrent embodied engagement with the world. Hence 'knowledge', which in the end is a category that belongs to ordinary life and the ordinary world, is approached in very practical (stabilising, objectivising) ways in our ordinary everyday engagement with it. Being an everyday ordinary theorist is in other words a practical matter (cp. McHugh 1970).

2.1. The social-interactional establishment of 'knowing how'
One afternoon after lunch, Karin, who had been sitting on a couch in the common room, while saying and doing 'nothing', suddenly stands up and walks towards the table (from left to right in Example 1, Figures #1 - #3).

Example 1

#1

#2

#3

Two other residents are present: Gyda, who sits at the table (on the right) together with a visiting researcher (almost invisible up front on the right), and John, who sits in an armchair (on the left) 'doing nothing'. A staff person (slightly to the right of centre, in the bottom of the pictures) is cleaning the table after lunch. She talks to a colleague, Lena, about a new resident and asks her when he entered the facility. Lena is in the kitchen section and is not seen in the pictures. The visiting researcher and Gyda are also having a parallel conversation (Egbert 1997) about the new resident.

On the table, there is a Christmas decoration made with pine tree branches, candles, and Christmas ornaments in red glass. As shown in the pictures below, Karin walks up to the table, gazes at the decoration (#4) and afterwards at the staff person (#5). At this moment (#5), she stops her bodily movement towards the table and the decoration.

Example 1

#4
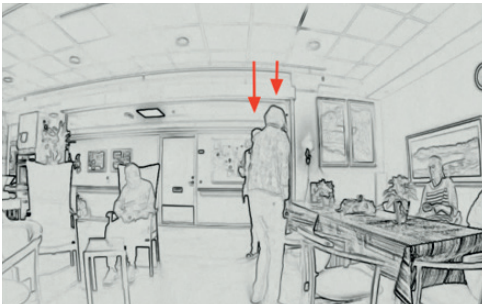
#5

The staff person, too, stops her activity and turns towards Karin (#5), an action through which they seem to achieve mutual gaze. In terms of gaze direction, the eyes are systematically and recognisably used as a means of opening a conversation (Birdwhistell 1970; Goffman 1963; Hausendorf & Schmitt 2010; Heath 1986; Scheflen 1972), which in this instance forms the context (Duranti & Goodwin 1992) in which Karin turns her head and again gazes towards the decoration on the table (#6). (In the picture, Karin covers the staff person.)

Example 1

#6

Karin then turns her head towards the staff person again (#7):

#7
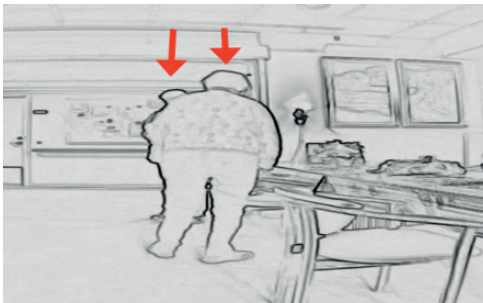
Until this point, the staff person has not exchanged a word with Karin. Through the bodily interaction with Karin, she seems to try to figure out

what Karin's incrementally developing embodied action purposes to do. Karin has so far produced her actions by way of an assemblage of gaze and bodily movement; having established mutual gaze with the staff person for a second time (#7), Karin redirects her gaze towards the decoration for a third time *as* she moves towards it again (#8 - #9). In this moment (i.e. in the context of Karin's two changes of gaze direction between the decoration and the staff person and her two movements towards the decoration), the staff person shouts loudly and clearly: 'NEJ nej *(no no)*'. However, Karin continues and as she moves closer to the decoration, the staff person responds with a 'nej *(no)*' (#9) and also a quick 'hm=hm *(uh uh)*' (#10) as she moves closer to the table:
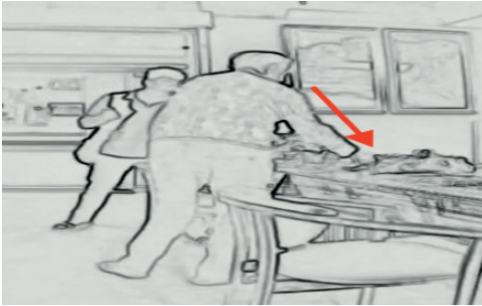
Example 1
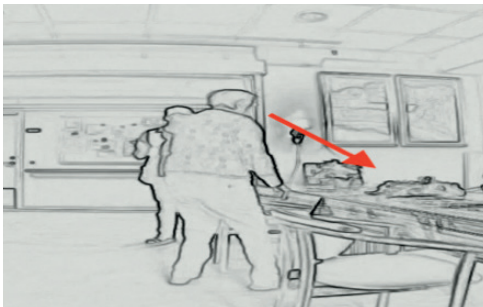
Staff person: NEJ nej *(no no)*

Staff person: nej *(no)*

Staff person: hm=hm *(uh uh)*

Interestingly, the staff person starts shouting *'no no'* (#8) before Karin has reached out for the Christmas decoration, obviously anticipating what Karin is going to do. Thereby, she treats Karin's gaze at the decoration as an indication of the decoration being the object of her movement, and Karin's gaze at the staff person as an action and method for telling that she, Karin, is going to somehow grasp, or do something with, the decoration. Thus, on a moment-by-moment basis, Karin is understood, by way of her incrementally developing gazing behaviour, to produce a morally chosen attempt to involve the staff person in her undertaking, and have her deal with the prospective action-in-interaction in some way. Moreover, the prospective bodily activity is understood as a morally chosen action that constitutes a 'possible' breach of the stable structures (Garfinkel 1967), obtained by placing a Christmas decoration on the common room table for co-present individuals to enjoy.

Karin acts systematically in the way described; in the next actions, the co-present individuals respond accordingly (Schegloff 1992). Karin moves towards an object, gazes at the staff person, other residents or visitors, including visiting researchers, who are close to the object; the gazed-at individuals engage in the interaction by attempting to prevent Karin from taking the objects. In picture #11 (Example 2), Karin (on the left) manipulates the Christmas decoration and the pine tree branches. When she removes the candles in the decoration, the visitor (on the right) attempts to prevent her from taking the decoration or the candles.

Example 2

Visitor: Karin det er ik noget, det er pynt
(Karin it's not something, it's a decoration)

In the instance that is pictured in #12 (Example 3), Karin and the other resident, Gyda, have been given mandarin oranges. Karin gets up, gazes at Gyda's mandarin, gazes at the visitor, and then moves her hand towards the mandarin (Gyda is almost blind). In #12, the visitor makes an attempt to prevent Karin from taking Gyda's mandarin. The mandarin is behind the plant in the middle of the table.

Example 3
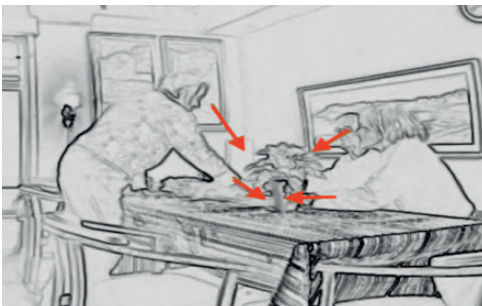
Visitor: Karin du har mandarin her se
(Karin you have mandarins over here, look)

In the current case, Karin's bodily activity is understood and recognised as an action of a specific kind, as based on its position in time and situation, i.e. its recurrency and situated features (Goffman 1963). Hence, the co-present individuals have recognised a pattern underlying these instances, namely an assemblage of practices for producing an action that describes, and makes understandable and known, that a certain person is *going to* take something. Interestingly, the embodied action of going to also serves to address the *morality* of the prospective action *(take X)* as an issue.

In all three examples, the co-present bodied individuals treat Karin as *possessing or having knowledge* of (and about) the described embodied practices of engaging directly with 'the world'. There is, however, more to it than this, at least from the perspective of the co-present individuals (as we shall see below when we discuss the 'being ascribed membership of the world').

2.2. The social-interactional establishment of knowing what
The interaction between the staff person (S) and Karin (K) (Example 1) that was illustrated in pictures #9 -#10 above (replicated below) continues as follows:

Example 1

1	S	>nej< *no*	 #9 (line 1)
2 3	Ps S	(1.0) /hm=hm *uh uh*	 #10 (line 3)
4 5 6	Ps K S	/(1.9) /turns towards S /det er så nogen glas- (0.2) fin kugler=/de sitter ↑ fast *these are fine glass ornaments /* *they can't be moved*	
7 8 9 10	 Ps P	/»«K /»ornaments /steps back (1,3) >dem kan man ik'> spise *one cannot eat them*	 #13(line 10)
11 12	Ps K	/(1,3) /»decoration	

Apart from attempting to prevent Karin from doing what she 'intends' to do, the staff person produces an account (Robinson 2016) as a linguistic device for the staff person's own action, as she explains to Karin that she cannot eat the glass ornaments (line 10; #13). This kind of (talk-based) practice of accounting for the speaker's bodily *(hands on, or close to the object)* and verbal *(no)* attempts to prevent Karin from taking the object of her movement also occurs in the other two Examples (2 and 3), as illustrated in pictures #11 and #12 above. In Example 2 (#11 above), the visiting researcher initiates an explanation, which she, however, redesigns during the production of her turn (Drew 2013): "Karin it's not something - it's a decoration". The categorisation of the object of her movement "it's a decoration" serves as an account of why Karin cannot grasp it and eat it. It provides a context for making the assumed purpose of Karin's action non-relevant and thus builds on an assumption that Karin does not recognise and understand her own, anticipated, upcoming situated action, i.e. eating the decoration. In other words, it builds on the assumption that Karin does not understand the complexity of responding to and engaging with the world.

In Example 3 (#12), the following account is provided by the visitor: "Karin you have mandarins over here, look, they are yours, all of them, and then Gyda has a couple here too". This explanation describes how the mandarins are distributed so that both Karin and Gyda have some. It serves as an account for why Karin cannot take Gyda's mandarin (and presumably eat it); it also indicates how 'the world' is organised and regulated with regard to eating: you have the right to eat what you have been served and the obligation to let others eat what they have been served. Hence, through this account, it is also assumed that Karin does not recognise and *know* the complexity of 'the world', even though this knowledge precisely concerns the world's social complexity.

To sum up, through their responses in interaction, the co-present individuals indicate that they trust that Karin understands what it means to grasp an object in the world and put (or intend to put) it in her mouth, and that she chooses morally to do so and involve co-present individuals

in the activity. Due to these actions' recurrence in time and place, the others recognise Karin's actions (in particular, the visitor had earlier experienced Karin's eating and drinking the other residents' food, and her drinking and putting different kinds of materials into her mouth). The recurrence of this behaviour also indicates that Karin is knowledgeable of how she invokes (possibly special) responses from co-present individuals by her gaze at the individual and at the object she is moving towards.

The accounts that the co-present individuals present to her, however, are built on the assumption that she does not know why her upcoming action is sanctioned. She is not trusted to recognise and understand that for many different reasons, one does not put everything in the material world into one's mouth: it may be dangerous for one's health, or it may be socially unacceptable. They indicate, through their talk, that Karin is trusted to know *how* to do X, but that she does not know *wha*t she is doing. Importantly, then, accounts of 'knowing what' are produced through talk.

2.3. Being a non-member of this world

Being categorised as not knowledgeable of '*what* one is doing' necessarily implies that one is not a member of the group of bodied individuals who treat themselves and each other as fully competent members of 'the ordinary world' and who know the complexity that is assumed to be behind engaging with it. Interestingly, members of 'the ordinary world' have interactional methods for typifying such behaviour; they ascribe it likewise to bodied individuals who are *not yet* competent, i.e. children and adolescents, in contrast to people like Karin, who are *no longer* competent, or to people, who never have been competent: namely, the people who are *born* as not being part of the world as we know it – whoever 'we' are and whatever we 'know' and whatever 'it' is. One of the ways in which this is accomplished is by bodied individuals holding each other and themselves accountable for their engagement (or lack of engagement) with 'the world'.

The continuation of Example 1 serves to illustrate how bodied individuals include each other in, or exclude each other from the competent group:

Example 1

(Lines 13-15)

(Lines 17-18)

13	S	der var et år der måtte vi simpelhen tage alt ned *one year we simply had to take everything down*	(#14)
14		»«R	
15		rests left arm on the table	
16	Ps	/(0.9)	
17	S	og der var et år der nået vi og redde hende =der havde hun en *and one year we managed to save her - she had a*	(#15)
18		glaskugle hun havde /knu[st inde i] munden /så *glass ornament broken in her mouth*	
19		/nods	
20		/lifts left hand towards mouth	
21		/points at ornaments	
22		»«R	
23	R	[ne::j] *no*	
24	Ps	(0.5)	
25	R	ne:j for søren *no kidding!*	

In this example, the staff person continues to talk about the first explanation that she designed for Karin as recipient (picture #13, line 10 above). The continuation is designed for the visitor and forms a second account by way of an explanation (lines 17-18: "one year we managed to save her - she had a glass ornament broken in her mouth"). Through talk, the staff person refers to prior instances and establishes how staff persons in the ward ('we') know what Karin is *about* to do. It is noteworthy that Karin does not account for her conduct herself in any possible way and that the co-participants do not work to solicit what would otherwise be a 'missing' account, either through waiting (called an 'off-record practice') or through on-record practices such as uttering "what are you doing?" "why are you doing this?", or "why do you always do this?". The co-participants are not oriented towards a preference for people accounting for their actions themselves (as suggested by Robinson 2016). Neither do they 'normalise' the lack of an account (Goffmann 1963) by, for instance, simply *letting it pass* (Garfinkel 1967; Schegloff 2000; Robinson 2016). In other words, they do *not* hold Karin accountable for her morally chosen action; also in this way, they indicate that they don't trust her to 'know' the complexity of 'the world'.

The co-participants do rely, however, on each other's 'knowledge': the staff person directs her account of her own conduct in preventing Karin from taking the ornament to the visitor; the latter, through her response in line 25 ("no kidding") acknowledges the story and indicates her own 'knowledge' of the danger of having glass ornaments break in one's mouth by chewing on them. In doing so, the co-participants orient towards talk as the primary means through which complexity may be described in concert.

Moreover, the co-present bodied individuals initiate and complete the accounting of their actions in, and their knowledge of and about, 'the world' in relation to Karin's, *while Karin is still physically close to them*. Actually, the staff person already initiates the account in line 13, when Karin takes the first step towards leaving her table, but has not left it yet (#14, lines 13- 15). Neither has she left it when the account develops incrementally (#15, line 17-18). Through their behaviour, the staff person and

the visitor exclude Karin from the 'competent group': they orient towards her not being fully part of the 'ordinary world' which includes themselves.

3. Conclusion

Direct spontaneous bodily engagement with the material world may be considered a matter of 'being'. Whether this engagement may be categorised as part of 'human life', i.e. part of the ordinary world, and to what degree, depends on the type of engagement. Bodied individuals such as human beings have managed to develop methods for carrying out, and in concert organising, bodily activity (including speech), as for them recognisable, morally chosen actions-for-interaction, produced by knowledgeable, bodied individuals. Central elements in this organising work are typification, by ordering the details of the incrementally developing conduct with reference to time and place; categorisation of that conduct on a moment-by-moment basis; and its ascription to groups of beings, such as human beings or animals. One part of the work of organising these continuously fluctuating experienced elements is the ascription to specific groups of the species of recognisable behaviour or actions-for- interaction. For human beings, actions are further categorised as devices of specific social groups and classes; they either are typified as presumably being fundamentally recognisable across social groups and classes (the 'human world', aka. 'society'), or as being deviant. What this human world is, and what belongs to it is a matter of social convention; so is the degree to which one acts in accordance with it and as part of it. All of this is dealt with in the micro-moments of social interaction; consequently, empirical studies at the micro-level undertaken from this perspective constitute a relevant contribution to the exploration of the phenomena discussed here.

The human 'knowledge' referred to above emerges from our engagement in terms of bodily activity and speech; it may be produced as accountable actions, i.e. actions that are carried out through methods that indicate to co-present bodied individuals what the action serves to accomplish. For

human beings, some of these actions and some of this knowledge concern a simple 'doing X', whereas others concern the 'what', in particular the kind of complexity the 'doing' of X is embedded in. The latter is expected to be unfolded in accounts, primarily (when asked for) through talk; it constitutes one of the most important methods that members of 'this world' have developed intersubjectively, and demonstrably orient to, when making their full membership of this world manifest. Being categorised as not inhabiting 'the ordinary human world' has consequences for how a bodied individual may be responded to, and can interact with, co-present bodied individuals. One's possibilities for engaging with the world may be locally restricted by other individuals; in the end, as a supreme form of restriction, a person may actually be institutionalised. It takes ascribed membership in 'this world' to have 'it at your feet'.

The notion of 'the world at your feet' is thus embedded in this world and constrained by it. It may, as mentioned in the introduction, conventionally connote a certain 'individualism', inasmuch as bodied individuals of course strive towards individuality by making their 'existential choices', *if* socially granted the competence to do so. In following the idea (as suggested, among others, by Friedrich Nietzsche) that the individual is in the end responsible for being in control of his or her own life, bodied individuals may make relevant choices to ensure that this life does not end up being an accumulation of coincidences. Even though the socially established, recognisable world does not necessarily *determine* the choices that individuals make, the very idea of 'making existential choices' and the actual choices made, as they appear to the bodied individuals, are, in this perspective, lodged in 'this world', no matter how 'individual' the bodied individual may believe his or her choice to be.

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Notes

1. A discussion of the nature of the emergent relationship between the action as a whole and the physical components that make its production possible goes beyond the scope of this paper. So does a discussion of the relationship between the nonphysical emerging components of the emerging action and the action as a recognisable unit as represented in different linguistic paradigms.

2. The study was conducted in collaboration with assistant professor Elisabeth Muth Andersen and post doc Elisabeth Dalby Kristiansen.

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Transcription key

The data were transcribed in accordance with the Jeffersonian transcription system (Atkinson and Heritage, 1984), to which further notations have been added:

> <   word delivered quicker than the surrounding talk

»   Gaze towards/at

»«   Mutual gaze

↑   The syllable following the arrow is sharp rise, a shift or resetting the pitch register

°   Speech produced softly or at lower volume

~   Creaky voice

(.)   A dot in parentheses indicates a pause less than 2/10 of a second

?   Rising intonation

:   Shows the relative stretch of sound.

[ ]   Overlapping turns

/ /   Co-occurring resources for interaction in building a turn