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Sharing as a conversational turn in digital interaction

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Introduction

This working paper draws on our mobile messaging data to engage with a key emerging theme within the TLANG project, namely the diversity of semiotic resources on which people draw in everyday interactions. Specifically, we look at the various networked resources which are shared in private mobile messaging interactions. In doing so, we show that such acts of sharing can be analysed as conversational turns in digitally mediated interactional exchanges. This adds to the existing literature on online sharing, which has tended to focus on public social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, where (re)sharing occurs at great reach or scale, enabling users to join public debates and to perform ambient affiliation with potentially global networked publics. In private conversations, the sharing of multimedia resources – images, screenshots, videos, links – is a more local practice, aimed at bolstering immediate relationships. Recognising that a legitimate digital ‘turn’ need not be text-based but can involve the sharing of multimodal resources is important because it highlights the increasingly diverse ways in which people can participate in contemporary social interaction, with implications for second language learners, people with dyslexia, and others.

Using elements of a conversation analysis approach, the analysis focuses on one key participant in a large four-year linguistic ethnography project, and his interactions with friends through WhatsApp. We show how acts of sharing can be seen to both initiate and complete adjacency pairs, how interlocutors work together to conduct conversational repairs and manage disrupted turn-taking, and how interlocutors can sometimes be described as taking the floor in extended acts of sharing. As we shall see, the analysis shows that sharing can usefully be considered a conversational turn, and suggests a new adjacency pair particular to digital conversations, that of *share*→*show appreciation*. In carrying out the analysis, we also show how resources are selected, styled and negotiated (Androutsopoulos 2014) among this friendship network and the targeted way in which participants in a private digital conversation can draw on and orient towards their shared communicative history. Furthermore, by conducting an in-depth analysis of selected extracts and drawing on our wider linguistic ethnographic data, we also show how mobile messaging conversations can be seen to display the same richness and nuance as spoken interactional data.

Online exchanges as conversations

This study starts from the assumption that exchanges conducted via mobile messaging – that is, through a range of mobile phone apps including WhatsApp and SMS – can be considered as a form of conversation. They are certainly displayed conversationally within most apps, with messages presented in speech bubbles and with alerts which inform a user when their interlocutor is typing the next message. The assumption is also reflected in the research literature, which describes mobile messaging exchanges as sequentially organised in ways that both resemble and depart from spoken conversations (Hutchby and Tanna 2008; Laursen 2005; Spagnolli and Gamberini 2007; Spilioti 2011¹). For example, in their conversation analysis of a corpus of 1250 text messages, Hutchby and Tanna (2008) find that text message exchanges are organised around adjacency pairs as in spoken conversation, while the specific technological affordances encourage ‘package texts’ – messages with multiple elements or

¹And see the special issue on computer-mediated conversation in *Language@Internet*, edited by Herring (2010).

‘actions’, the structure of which is then recreated by interlocutors who respond in sequence to each action. Spilioti (2011) finds that the omission of closing sequences within initial messages which anticipate an immediate reply suggests texters’ ‘orientation to a sequential organisation akin to face-to-face conversation’ (p. 81). When closings in Spilioti’s data are found to mark the end of an SMS exchange, they appear to fulfil predominantly relational purposes rather than closing the channel – a finding which chimes with those of others who describe digital or mobile channels as remaining perpetually open (Ito and Okabe 2005). Other differences from face-to-face conversation concerns tempo and simultaneity: firstly, the fact that there can be considerable gaps between turns in digital conversations (Herring 1999) and, secondly, the quasi-synchronicity of online exchange (Garcia and Jacobs 1999) which means that, while users know that their interlocutors are typing, they only have access to another’s utterance after the sender has hit Send: a phenomenon that leads to message chunking, whereby users break up a message into multiple transmissions (Baron 2010). Another difference is the apparent structural incoherence (or disrupted turn adjacency) that characterises online discussions which, as Herring (1999) argues, encourages users to adopt new turn-taking management strategies (such as the conventionalisation of minimal responses or backchannels like ‘Haha’), whilst opening up new ways of interacting and facilitating language play. A decade later, a study of ‘polylogues’ on YouTube by Bou-Franch et al (2012) paints a not dissimilar picture of online conversation, noting that the occurrence of adjacency turns, turn management signals and cohesion devices is sufficient to create a space for online interaction. Such studies highlight the potential fruitfulness of an approach which treats mobile messaging exchanges as akin to spoken conversations, whilst pinpointing important differences which shape how people now participate in social interaction.

In similarly treating mobile messaging as conversational, this study highlights another way in which online conversations differ from spoken ones, namely that turns can constitute the various digital and networked resources available to smartphone users (Androutsopoulos 2014). In contrast to social network sites and media-sharing platforms, much less has been written about the use of multiple modes – emoji, typography, photos, audio files – in private, synchronous interactions on interactive multimodal platforms like WhatsApp (though see, for example, initial work on emoji by the ‘What’s up, Switzerland?’ project, e.g. Siever 2016; Siebenhaar 2016). Our research suggests that, in such contexts, multiple modes and media can be a resource for creative acts of ‘intersemiotic translanguaging’ (Lyons 2015) which enable people to participate in increasingly diverse ways in social interactions. The multimedia nature of conversational turns in mobile messaging is here conceptualised in terms of ‘sharing’.

Sharing in online interactions

The concept of ‘sharing’ is by now strongly associated with online practices on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. As Nicholas John argues in his book on sharing, the concept serves as a means for social media companies to sell products and encourage participation by drawing on the positive, open, collaborative connotations of the term (John 2017). But sharing is also a form of practice in which ordinary users, commercial companies and celebrities engage on a daily basis. Importantly, by taking advantage of the online affordances of persistence, replicability and searchability (boyd and Marwick 2011), acts of sharing can result in great reach or scalability, as shared posts and resources ‘go viral’. Giaxoglou and Spilioti (2017), for example, show how the mass sharing (and playful

manipulation) of images relating to the European refugee crisis in 2016 plays an important role in the discursive construction of refugees among networked publics, which in turn shapes political and social debate. This study extends this understanding of public online sharing to account also for acts of sharing in more private digital conversations and between known interlocutors.

In doing this, the paper draws on Androutsopoulos's (2014) understanding of sharing as an act of entextualisation. As an act of entextualisation, sharing involves the detaching of a text from its original context and its embedding in a new context – for example, in the news feed of the sharer – an act which inevitably charges it with new social meaning. To paraphrase Androutsopoulos (2014, p. 5), sharing involves the entextualisation of social action through situated appropriation of the available technology, including the transcription of spoken into written language and the recontextualisation of image, video and other digital media, as well as the subsequent re-sharing of posts.

Androutsopoulos (2014) suggests that such acts of entextualisation involve three main stages: the *selection* of semiotic resources, the *styling* of these resources for presentation in a new context, and *negotiation* with other users. As Androutsopoulos points out, how these posts are selected (what is chosen), styled (how sharing is carried out) and negotiated (discussed with others) indexes users' orientations to each other and their perceptions of the audience's background knowledge: in Androutsopoulos's (2014, p. 6) words, '[u]nderstanding such moments and participating in their interactive negotiation is contingent on the background knowledge and the linguistic resources that members of the networked audience have in common with the sharer'. As Georgakopoulou (2017, p. 182) shows in relation to the posting of selfies and spoof videos, acts of sharing are likely met with varying degrees of *ritual appreciation* ('positive assessments of the post and/or poster, expressed in highly conventionalized language coupled with emoji') or *knowing participation* ('bringing in and displaying knowledge from offline, preposting activities or any other knowledge specific to the post or poster') – or, as this study shows, a complex mixture of the two. As these various attempts at alignment suggest, acts of sharing are framed as everyday performances – what Maybin and Swann (2007, p. 502) describe as 'a fleeting breakthrough into performance' – which are marked out from the flow of communication and thus made available for social evaluation as well as for further acts of recontextualisation (Bauman 1992; Bauman and Briggs 1990). This marking out is facilitated by the interactional structure of most social media sites, whereby an initiating post (status update, video) is structurally distinguished from responding comments which are displayed on a secondary level.

How does sharing in (semi-)private contexts of mobile messaging differ from the public acts of sharing assumed in the studies discussed above? Firstly, in relation to the final point above, an initiating turn or act of sharing has the same status as subsequent turns, both appearing as turns in a flow of conversation. Similarly, interactions take place in what can be described as a shared communication space, rather than on one user's wall; although the smartphone user's turns will be distinguished from the others in a mobile messaging conversation, even in a group chat (by being placed to the right of the dialogue and in a different colour), this varies between phones so that every user has access to their own 'ego-centred' version of the conversation. Secondly, social media audiences on sites like Facebook are typically both large and highly diverse; and unknown and invisible, in the sense that a user does not know who exactly among their audience will read and respond to their post

(Tagg and Seargeant 2014). In the mobile messaging contexts discussed in this paper, users interact either in a one-to-one situation or with a much smaller group and, thus, their posts are more narrowly targeted at a particular audience; presumably, they can also assume a more consistent level of background knowledge and shared communication history. Finally, acts of sharing online have been likened to acts of identity display and curation, whereby a user curates a particular public image of themselves; or, in other cases, they serve as a way of joining a wider debate and establishing ambient affiliation with a large imagined community (Giaxoglou and Spilioti 2017). In more private online contexts, we would argue that sharing may be more interactionally oriented; that is, designed primarily to facilitate relationship maintenance – through, for example, provoking amusement or exploiting shared communicative histories – all of which is achieved by generating conversation through sharing.

Data and methods

The data for this study is taken from a four-year project funded by the AHRC, exploring communication in diverse urban neighbourhoods contexts, ‘Translation and Translanguaging: investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities’ (or TLANG).² The project worked with sixteen key participants living and working in four UK cities. Originally from Hong Kong, J came to the UK aged 14 and was living at the time of our collection (Sept 2015-January 2016) with his partner in Birmingham, where he was co-owner of a beauty and hair salon. Although the focus of the research was on J’s role as coach in a volleyball club, the ethnographic data collected included WhatsApp and SMS messages which spanned his professional, social and personal lives. J provided 135 screenshots of his mobile messages in two separate transfers, containing a total of 848 messages (133 SMS; 718 WhatsApp) with colleagues, volleyball players, family and friends. These included a large number of messages sent between three WhatsApp groups: two include J, his partner and different friends: *Eating N Drinking* (269 messages) and *More from Less* (179); another involves J and his family back in Hong Kong (113). These groups in particular involved a great deal of sharing, although sharing was also a practice in one-to-one conversations. Across the 848 messages, the number of photos, videos, and links shared numbered 82. Due to the way in which data was collected, this count is likely to be conservative in relation to the actual number spent, as at the time we avoided collecting photos of people and were primarily focused on the verbal writing. Nonetheless, the figure provides a rough idea as to the regularity with which J engages in conversational sharing.

In discussing the following extracts from J’s mobile messaging exchanges, we draw on a conversation analysis approach (Schegloff and Sacks 1973) to show 1) how acts of sharing can be seen to both initiate and complete adjacency pairs, 2) how interlocutors act together to conduct conversational repairs and manage disrupted turn-taking, and 3) how they can sometimes be described as taking the floor in extended acts of sharing. The analysis shows

² Arts and Humanities Research Council (1/4/2014–31/3/2018) ‘Translation and Translanguaging. Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities’ ((AH/L007096/1), £1,973,527), Principal Investigator: Angela Creese and Mike Baynham, Adrian Blackledge, Jessica Bradley, John Callaghan, Lisa Goodson, Ian Grosvenor, Amal Hallak, Jolana Hanusova, Rachel Hu, Daria Jankowicz-Pytel, Agnieszka Lyons, Bharat Malkani, Sarah Martin, Emilee Moore De Luca, Li Wei, Jenny Phillimore, Mike Robinson, Frances Rock, James Simpson, Jaspreet Kaur Takhi, Caroline Tagg, Janice Thompson, Kiran Trehan, Piotr Wegorowski, Zhu Hua.

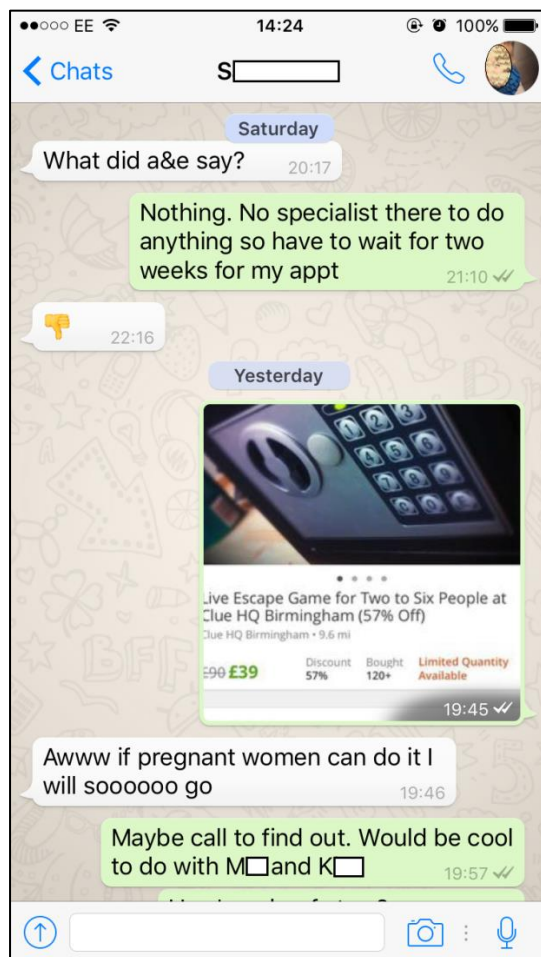
that sharing can usefully be considered a conversational turn, and that the approach suggests a new adjacency pair particular to digital conversations, that of *share*→*show appreciation*. In carrying out the analysis, we also show how resources are selected, styled and negotiated among this friendship network and the targeted way in which participants in a semi-private digital conversation can draw on and orient towards their shared communicative history.

Analysis of conversational sharing

Sharing and adjacency pairs

This first extract is from a WhatsApp conversation between J and S, a close friend and manager of his beauty salon. The conversation we are interested in starts ‘Yesterday’ (Monday 7th December 2015) at 19:45, and it highlights the way in which acts of sharing can be embedded in sequences of adjacency pairs.

Extract 1: if pregnant women can do it I will soooooo go

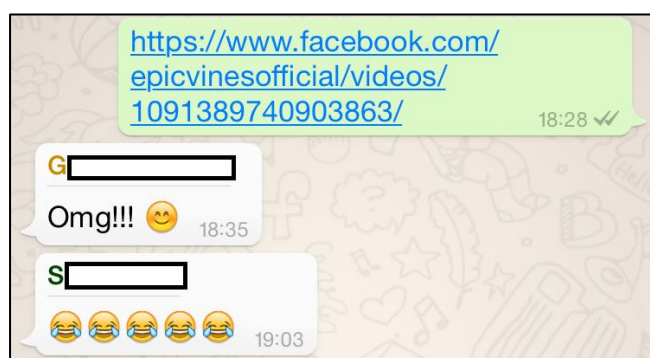


J initiates the conversation with a turn which comprises a screenshot of an online discount voucher for a ‘Live Escape Game for Two to Six People at Clue HQ Birmingham’. Although the screenshot is not accompanied by a written explanation, J’s turn is interpreted by his interlocutor apparently as it is intended – as an offer or a suggestion and therefore the first half of an adjacency pair. This is evident in S’s response, ‘Awww if pregnant women can do it I will soooooo go’, which can be categorised as an *acceptance* in an *offer*→*acceptance* adjacency pair. Her turn (sent at 19:46) is immediate and exhibits elements of ritual

appreciation in the letter repetition or ‘flooding’ (‘Awww’ and ‘soooooo’); but it also shows her knowing participation by raising the matter of her pregnancy as a relevant issue. The conversation continues ten minutes later (the delay likely occasioned by J’s offline activities) with J offering a non-minimal third turn, in which he picks up on S’s reference to her pregnancy and suggests she should call them ‘to find out’: his turn is functionally dependent on S’s previous turn in that it completes a *problem*→*solution* pair. The coherence of this snippet of conversation is maintained throughout by anaphoric references back to ‘doing’ the game (‘if pregnant women can do it’, ‘would be cool to do’). This reinforces the intended meaning of the act of sharing as an offer; putting something forward that they could do.

As evident across the data, using and sharing discount offers is a regular practice for this friend network. For example, J also shares a Groupon voucher for the pub Fiddle and Bone in response to his friend L’s query ‘Where is it?’ when he tries to persuade her to join him for dinner (*More from Less*, Wednesday 11th November). The regularity of this practice may in part explain why J chooses not to accompany the voucher with any explanatory text. The practice of sharing media resources without explanatory text is also a regular one across J’s conversations. In the following example, J posts a link to a video on Facebook. No verbal writing is provided in an attempt to introduce or explain the video: its shared relevance and significance appears to be assumed by J and appreciated by G and S, who respond with ritual appreciation. In terms of conversation analysis, we might describe this act of alignment in terms of a new adjacency pair along the lines of *share*→*show appreciation*.

Extract 2: Omg!!!



In interview, J suggested that his and his friends’ shared background was also implicated in their tendency to send pictures and other resources without explanatory text, pointing when asked to their long history on WhatsApp: his app records that members of one group, *Eating N Drinking*, had sent 1200 media resources (not all of which we collected).

J: sometimes you put something on, you already know exactly what it’s about, anything to do with Greggs [a chain bakery in the UK] is to do with S, because she loves Greggs, so anything like that we know it’s a joke about her

To return to the original conversation started by J in Extract 1, it continued as shown in Extract 3 below. As evident in the extract, J sends two messages in quick succession at 19:57: one which we have already discussed as completing a *problem*→*solution* adjacency pair (‘Maybe call to find out’), and a second which initiates a new adjacency pair: ‘How’s ur beef stew?’. Baron (2010) suggests that the transmission of a digital message may carry out the

same communicative functions as a pause in speech, and in this case it appears that the chunking of J's turn into two transmissions marks the change in topic.

Extract 3: How's ur beef stew?



The reference to S's beef stew highlights their shared communicative history, which encompasses J's knowledge of what S was having for dinner and their shared interest in food (as we shall see, they both also belong to the WhatsApp group *Eating N Drinking*). S replies around 15 minutes later, expressing her approval of the stew through emotive vocabulary and a heart-eyed emoji, and then asks J 'what you got?' The informal communicative choices throughout their exchanges index the intimate relationship between these two colleagues. J responds immediately, not with an appreciative statement but with a photo of his half-eaten meal: he completes the *question*→*answer* adjacency pair through a process of entextualisation, by which the immediate action of eating is captured and recontextualised within the digital conversation, becoming an object which can be negotiated and revised (Jones 2009). The act of entextualisation does not serve primarily to address S's question but rather to invite her into the moment, the half-eaten food and the cutlery resting on his plate creating a sense of immediacy and intimacy. The text accompanying the photo, 'Groupon',

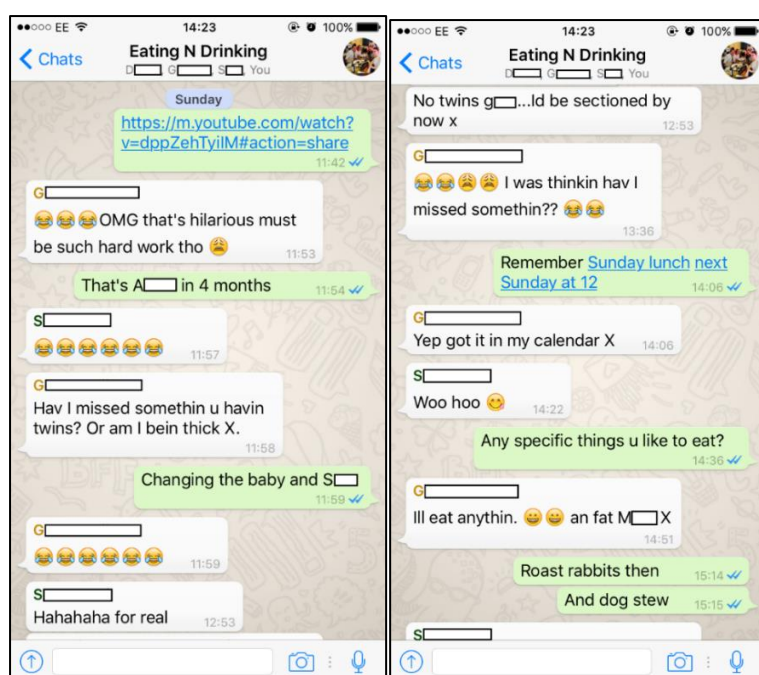
adds a kind of wry evaluation which can be seen as either enhancing the value of the food because it is discounted; or explaining why he is able to eat out on a Monday. Again, S's subsequent turn shows elements of ritual appreciation (completing a *share*→*show appreciation* pair), this time with emoji flooding, a common response to shared pictures of food across this dataset and others (Tagg and Seargeant 2012).

In short, what this snippet of digital conversation shows is how the sharing of multimedia resources can constitute a turn in a mobile messaging conversation, one that does not necessarily require accompanying verbal support. This reflects our findings at an earlier stage of the project, when current location information was conveyed by sending a pin dropped onto a map and was received and processed as though it were 'equally valid to stating one's location verbally' (Tagg et al 2016). Similarly, the media resources in this case appear to be accepted as a turn and are apparently interpreted as intended by the sender. Furthermore, they occur in adjacency pairs with other turns (e.g. the discount voucher offer elicits an acceptance while the food photo answers the question 'what you got?'). As such, they exist in a relationship of functional dependence with other turns (Schegloff and Sacks 1973): they are structurally and functionally embedded in the conversation.

Conversational coherence: repair and disrupted adjacency pairs

This second extract is from a group conversation taken from the WhatsApp group *Eating N Drinking*, which includes J and his partner D and two of his closest friends: S and G. As the name suggests, one of the group's interests is in food and drink, and eating out (as already evidenced in Extract 1). In this case, however, the conversation in question starts on Sunday January at 11:42 when J shares a link to a YouTube video. In short, the video shows a man changing the nappies of twin babies. The ensuing conversation illustrates how easily the group deal with a potential lack of understanding and coherence.

Extract 4: Hav I missed somethin



The share is met with the expected ritual appreciation from S, suggesting that she appreciates both the humour (through emoji flooding and internet acronym) and the hard work involved. Again, this appears to be an example of the adjacency pair *share*→*show appreciation*. It is clear, however, that J intends the video to be a comment on S's own future child and her partner's likely behaviour once her baby is born, and he clarifies that in his subsequent turn – a wry comment that elicits more emoji from S. It is difficult to know whether S had previously noticed the connection herself.

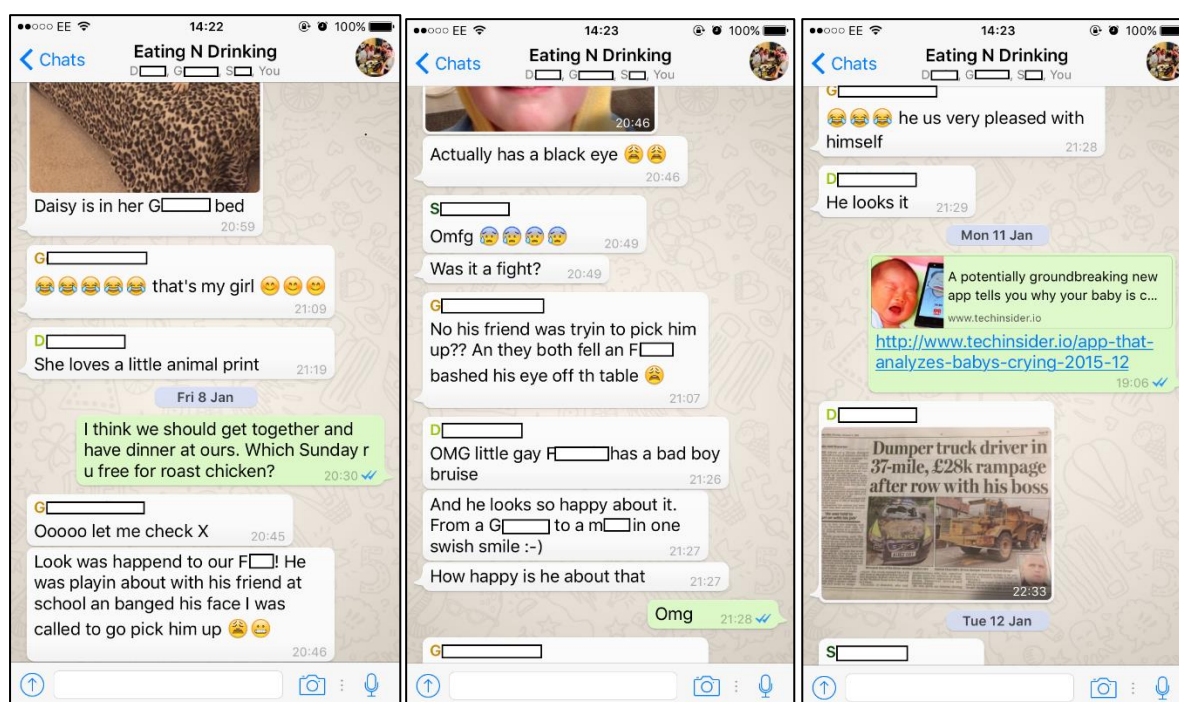
What is interesting is G's turn, in which she suggests the need for further conversational repair: she has not understood the intended message. Her assumption that she should understand – given S' apparent understanding and the group's close relationships – is evident in her question 'Or am I bein thick' (that is, has she missed something obvious). G's confusion is that the video suggests S is having twins (G asks, 'u having twins?'), which G thinks she knows is not the case. The confusion seems to be dealt with fairly easily, with J's explanation 'Changing the baby and S' serving as the second part of this *question-explanation* adjacency pair. G is then able to respond with her own display of ritual appreciation, which may be seen as reacting either to J's preceding turn or to the initial share: what matters is that the conversation is back on track. However, G's question and J's response can also be seen as an 'insert expansion' coming between another question-answer adjacency pair, that between G and S. S also responds to G's question 'u havin twins?' with two turns: the first one of laughter ('Hahahaha for real') and the second to joke that she'd have gone mad if she were having twins. Again we see the choice to chunk a message into two immediate turns, perhaps – given the speed of this interaction – in order to mimic the synchronicity of spoken conversation (something also observed in Asprey and Tagg in press, 2017).

The key point emerging from this extract is that both the lack of understanding and the disrupted turns are easily managed by the interlocutors, with G acknowledging her earlier mistake by responding to S's joke with laughing emoji. Her utterance 'I was thinkin hav I missed somethin?', which closely parallels her earlier turn, serves as a metacomment on her earlier confusion and adds coherence to the conversation. All participants appear to work hard to ensure that the preferred actions – the ritual appreciation and knowing participation that is expected to follow an act of sharing – are smoothly carried out.

Taking the floor

This final extract is from the same group, *Eating N Drinking*. In this case, the conversation in question starts on Friday 8th January at 20:45 when G shares a photo of her son F's injury.

Extract 5: little gay F has a bad boy bruise



The extract shows how G takes the floor in order to carry out a more extended act of sharing than in the previous examples. G's act of sharing the photo seems to be triggered by her having just responded to J's previous message ('Ooooo let me check X'); not only is she prompted to share her news because she has her phone in her hand but because this channel of communication (the WhatsApp group) has been 'renewed' by J (Spilioti 2011, p. 81). Her subsequent turns can be described as a fleeting everyday performance, marked off from the surrounding discourse by her opening utterance 'Look what happened to our F!' and explicitly held up for evaluation (Maybin and Swann 2007). Semiotically, we might describe her performance in terms of *ensemble* – a bringing together of different modes and media to form a coherent whole (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001).

G introduces the shared photo with two verbal explanations, the first of which sets up the photo as the main communicative event ('Look what happened to our F!'), outlines the background to the photo, and uses emoji to frame the way in which the photo should be interpreted through emoji: presumably the shocked face indicates her initial response to the incident while the grinning face works to reassure her friends. This second stance is reflected in her use of colloquial respellings 'playin' and 'an' which suggest casual informality (although this is also a style adopted by G throughout her messages so may have no marked meaning here). G's second verbal explanation is sent after the photo and appears to specify what is important about the photo. Interestingly, her friends' responses suggest that it is the photo, rather than the written explanations, which serves most effectively to generate further conversation and social alignment.

The photo elicits both ritual appreciation – as in S's 'Omfg' and emoji flooding – and further conversation, as S asks for details. S's query ('Was it a fight?') appears not to have fully taken into account G's verbal explanation that F 'was playin about' and 'banged his face', but seems rather to be responding primarily to the shared photo. This prompts G to repeat her explanation, again with colloquial respellings and emoji; she also uses question marks

expressively, to indicate her doubt about her assertion rather than to ask a question ('his friend was tryin to pick him up??').

There is then a pause before D responds twenty minutes later. His turns seem to suggest that he is engaging in a range of involvement strategies, designed to show alignment and affiliation with G and the group (Tannen 1985/2007). Firstly, he uses both ritual appreciation ('OMG') and playful alliterative remarks about F's 'bad boy bruise' and his 'swish smile', as well as knowing participation when he alludes to F's character ('gay F') and to those of G and her partner M. Secondly, and most interestingly perhaps, D appears to re-interpret the photo, recontextualising F not as a victim with a black eye, but as a smug and self-satisfied fighter. D explains his position by picking up on a detail in the photo, that of the nature of F's smile. According to Tannen (1985), 'attention to detail is a sign of intimacy' (p. 162) which serves to convey 'a metamessage of rapport, of caring' (p. 149) because it indicates interest: here, it suggests that D is paying attention. Tannen refers to this as displaying listenership, but in this case it is careful looking that D displays. Furthermore, in this case, D's reinterpretation appears provocative and the fact that he feels he can get away with it (and does) further serves to index a close relationship; as Carter (2007, p. 165) notes in his study of language creativity, playfulness is more likely to take place between intimates where relations are close and socially symmetrical – and this may in part be because of the risk involved in pushing at accepted boundaries. D's playful reinterpretation is indeed accepted in a follow-up turn from G: the emoji at the start of her turn serve as expressive response markers to indicate her appreciation, before she confirms that F is feeling very pleased with himself.

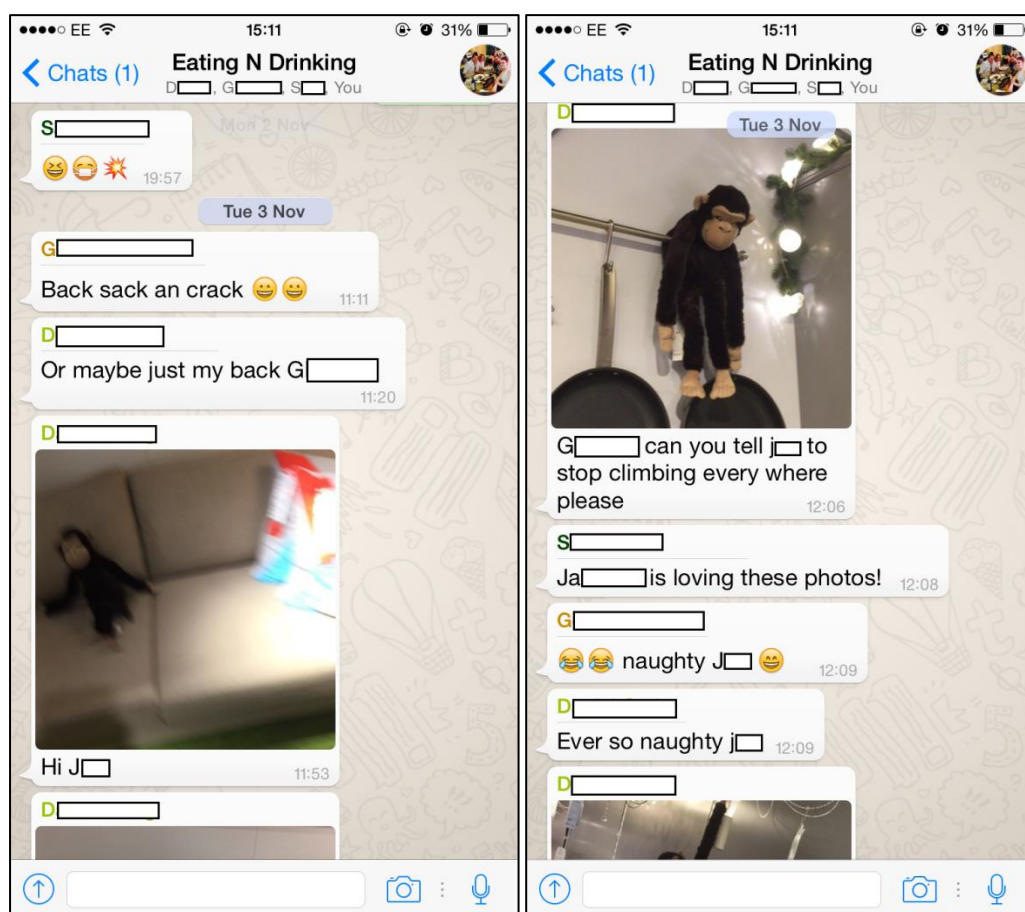
The point emerging is that the sharing of the photo elicits both elements of ritual appreciation (chiefly variations of 'omg') and further conversational turns which exploit the photo in various ways in order to index involvement and alignment between these friends. The fact that they comment quite specifically on aspects of the photo which are otherwise missing from the verbal explanation suggests that it is the photo rather than the explanation that drives the conversation. And, finally, we can see that, like spoken conversations (Tannen 2007), this multimedia mobile messaging conversation lends itself to a detailed study of social involvement and alignment.

This example shows – perhaps more than the others – how sharing within J's networks is driven primarily by a desire to maintain close social relationships through amusement, enjoyment, or what J in interview called 'fun':

J: I think it's just for fun ... it's just for fun, pictures of me, of camping, videos ... it's just for sharing things with friends, I think ... because these two are my best friends, G and S, so anything funny we just share

This sense of fun is nicely illustrated in exchanges such as the following, in which D sets up and takes a number of photos in which J is represented by a toy monkey.

Extract 6: Hi J



These acts of sharing suggest a great deal of playfulness on D's part, carried out in order to amuse his friends, whilst also creatively performing his affection for J.

Summary and conclusion

This study showed how sharing in private digital conversations – in contrast to public social media sharing practices – can be conceptualised as a type of conversational turn. This argument rests on the assumption, prevalent across the research literature, that digital exchanges can usefully be considered as conversations, resembling although also departing from their face-to-face spoken counterparts. Assuming this, we can see that sharing can form part of an adjacency pair, often as the first part but also as second part and thus functionally dependent on the preceding turn (as when a question about J's meal prompts him to share a photo of it). While acts of sharing can be implicated in various adjacency pair types, including *offer*→*acceptance* and *question*→*answer*, we suggested that acts of sharing also triggered a new kind of adjacency pair, undocumented in analysis of spoken conversations, that of *share*→*show appreciation*. In these instances, a shared multimedia resource prompts what Georgakopoulou (2017) calls 'ritual appreciation', marked by emoji flooding and other resources. At the same time, we also saw that such ritual appreciation is often accompanied by a more knowing participation, in part because the *selection* of resources (to draw on the stages suggested by Androutsopoulos 2014) is driven largely by the interlocutors' shared communicative history and close relations, and shaped by their attempts to draw on both to align with their friends. These close relations are also implicated in the way the friends *style*

their shares, with explanatory text not deemed necessary for others to understand what is intended (cf the sending of map locations in Tagg et al 2016). Their attempts at alignment are also evident in their *negotiation* of the shared resource, something most strikingly evident in D's recontextualisation of F's 'swish smile'. Showing 'listenership' by attending closely to the detail of the photo (Tannen 1985/2007), and drawing on his knowledge of G's family, D indexes his close, familiar relationship with G by provocatively challenging G's account of events: 'little gay F has a bad boy bruise ... how happy is he about that'. Finally, in line with previous studies of online group discussions, we saw how potential incoherence – the need for repair, disrupted turn-taking, multiple replies to the same message (cf Herring 1999; Bou-Franch et al 2012) – is interactionally managed in a way that facilitates social interaction. For example, G's admission that she does not understand the meaning behind the nappy-changing video leads swiftly to J's repair and also opens up a space for humour between her and S, who responds appreciatively to the reference to her own pregnancy, 'u havin twins?'. In short, we saw how the selection, styling and negotiating of shared resources plays a central role in this group's management of their social relationships.

As a related point, by conducting an in-depth analysis of selected extracts and drawing on wider linguistic ethnographic data, we also show how mobile messaging conversations can be seen to display the same richness and nuance as spoken interactional data. Conversational analysis of digital interactions has (for good reasons) tended to take a quantitative approach, which does not enable detailed insights into how individuals manage their complex social interactions in the wider context of their social lives. Our approach shows how details of individual's lives – such as S's pregnancy and the group's Groupon sharing practices – play an important role in how conversations are managed.

Having shown that it is possible to analyse sharing as a conversational turn, we turn to the question of why this is necessary and what it contributes to our project findings. The development of social media has added to the myriad of ways in which people can interact with each other, enabling them to conduct near-synchronous interactions across vast distances and, equally, to communicate with others whilst on the move and engaged in other activities, often leading to time lags between turns that would usually be problematic in a phone or face-to-face conversation. This study focuses on the fact that the internet has also opened up the *resources* available to people in holding everyday conversations and what a conversational turn can entail. As the examples in this paper show, a turn need not include text produced by the sender but a range of multimedia resources, not only those produced by third parties (such as the YouTube video that J links to), but also those produced by the sender (such as a selfie or other photo). One consequence of this lies in the increased attention paid to the mundane over more newsworthy events, which potentially alters how people conceive of the worth of their daily activities (Jones 2009, p. 293). Another consequence is that access to these resources greatly opens up what an individual can say and how they say it, and thus has potential implications for what it means to participate in society and who has the means to do so, whether this is language learners or those who are only minimally bilingual (Androutsopoulos 2007; Tagg 2015) or people with dyslexia (Blommaert and Velghe 2014). With digital communication, we thus see a diversification of the ways in which an individual can interact and the resources they have to do so, in a way that may in turn lead to a diversification in the individuals who have a voice in contemporary social interaction.

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