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Notability

The construction of current events in talk-in-interaction

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In this paper, I analyze the behavior of television viewers while watching matches of the men's FIFA World Cup live on television. My main focus will be sudden unannounced shifts from focused talk-in-interaction between the participants to a complete orientation on the happenings on television.

These shifts are instantiated through interjections which function as contextualization cues indexing the relevance of the scene on television. Since notability is negotiable, they may be followed by evaluations accounting for the notability of the scene. The scalar nature of notability can be realized through a number of non-lexical modalities such as increase in pitch and loudness, gaze, facial expressions, gesturing, or even jumping around are used by the viewers. The more modalities are used and the more different they are to the surrounding behaviour, the more a scene is interpreted and flagged as notable by the viewers.

In contrast to tellability which is concerned with the construction of past events in talk, notability strives to account for the construction of current events as they unfold at the same time as the talk produced by the viewers.

1. Introduction¹

This paper will be concerned with the immediate reception situation. In other words, I will investigate the language practices of television viewers. My main focus will be unannounced shifts in their behavior from “ordinary” focused conversational talk to sudden full orientations towards the television program. Mainly, I will propose the notion ‘notability’ to account for these sudden shifts. If a scene on television is regarded as notable by the participants, for instance other-interruption is unmarked. Hence, a viewer can start shouting in the middle

¹ I would like to thank Ruth Ayaß and Neal R. Norrick and two anonymous reviewers for their comments on this paper. All remaining faults are entirely my own.

of another's story and this would not be marked as dispreferred (Pomerantz 1984). Notability is a phenomenon that accounts for the linguistic behavior of the television viewers which one can find in the data. It is not meant to pertain to any average real-world extraordinariness of the scenes on television, even though there are obvious connections, which will also be described. Although my data are from a very particular setting, I assume that one can witness the workings of notability in other situations e.g. when driving a car and pointing out landmarks to fellow passengers.

I will first discuss language or linguistically oriented research in the immediate reception situation. Next I will present research on tellability and related concepts and draw analogies to notability. Then I will introduce my data, the ATTAC-corpus (Analysing The Television Audiences' Conversations), which consists of transcribed talk by English football fans who watched the men's FIFA World Cup. In the body of my paper I will first illustrate the workings of notability with the help of some extracts from my data. Afterwards other modalities to create meaning but language itself will become my focus. Finally, I will describe the connections between the exogenous event on the pitch and notability.

2. Research on television reception

The reception situation in which people watch television is the natural domain of media, communication or audience studies. Hence, there is a wealth of literature on (television) audiences which is based on the respective methodologies of these fields, hence predominantly on group interviews or discussions, or on film criticism. However, these kinds of data do not lend themselves to a linguistic or conversation analytic investigation. Also, it seems questionable in how far these methodologies can capture the actual practices of television viewing, a problem which is recognized in media studies as well:

Reception studies research cannot claim to say as much about an actual reading or viewing experience by empirical readers or spectators as it might like. Several factors intervene between the event and any possible sense data available for its study (...). Reporting, whether through a crafted ethnographic interview or a published review, is always subject to the problem of retrieval, (...) (Staiger 1992: 79-80)

Obviously, problems of retrieval are circumvented in conversation analysis with its data based on recordings of actual behavior in real world situations. Furthermore, I would purport that this paper (and the other papers in this volume) can claim to analyze the "actual (...) viewing experience by empirical (...) viewers" as far as this

experience is socially enacted through meaningful linguistic and other behavior by the viewers. Buckingham (1993) points out about his research on children watching television:

There are fundamental limitations to do with methodology (...) The data do not necessarily tell us about how children talk about television outside the context of discussions with an adult researcher (...) what we have here are individuals' *accounts* of their viewing, rather than direct evidence of that viewing itself. (Buckingham 1993: 265)

One may add here that the practices discovered through conversation analytic (Sacks 1992a, 1992b) or interactional sociolinguistic methodology (Gumperz 1982) are largely subconscious and a priori inaccessible to the participants. Also, self-accounts of the type proposed by Buckingham tend to be more a reflection of predominant normative rules in the sense of what people think they should be doing in a given situation rather than what they actually usually do. Finally, a recent article in media studies still laments:

However, existing research on broadcast talk has thus far only given theoretical consideration to the *implied* position of the audience. A focus on the talk contained within the programming has not envisaged a method of capturing the way in which that talk is received in the context of the home. (Wood 2007: 79)

Again, in this paper as well as others in this volume, real audiences and their doings will be in focus. Because of the limitations of these approaches and my interest in empirical viewers, I will in the following concentrate on research using recording equipment as the basis for their work. In media studies, these include Fritz (1987) who filmed a family watching television for four weeks. Also, the family members were sometimes followed with hand-held cameras when leaving the room. Lamentably, only a short summarising report seems to exist of that study stating that the television often initiated talk (Fritz 1987: 163). Beck filmed a group of American football fans in the commons room of a dormitory while they were watching their favourite sport on TV. She shows how they display their identity as fans of a specific team through the use of jargon, first person plural pronouns, interjections, and extra-linguistic behaviour like applause (Beck 1995). Turning to two more eminent studies, first, Liebes and Katz (1990) analysed the Israeli reception of the American TV series *Dallas*. As far as the talk during the viewing is concerned, they worked with both field notes and transcribed tapes. However, it is not always clear which of the conversations studied form part of which data set. Also, the conversations were mainly coded using rough categories like 'referential' or 'critical' and no close sequential analysis of the talk is undertaken as it unfolds against the backdrop of the media text (Liebes et al. 1990: 32pp). The authors, too,

realise that their procedure is problematic: “A recoding of critical statements in smaller units and in more subdivisions produced a much larger number of critical statements than before. The earlier coding is biased towards the referential...” (Liebes et al. 1990: 33). Secondly, Lull (1990) provides examples through his family observations e.g. a nurse commenting on the appropriateness of the medical practices in a hospital show. However, in both cases, the actual language used is not the focus of these studies.

Turning to more linguistically oriented studies, Scollon provides a framework for talk in the television reception situation: the television audience as ‘watchers’ together with the game as ‘spectacle’ form ‘a watch’: “any person or group of people who are perceived to have attention to some spectacle as the central focus of their (social) activity.” (1998: 92) In differentiating between ‘watchers’ and the ‘spectacle’, Scollon stresses that the primary interaction is within those groups and not between the television as sender and the spectators as receivers. As far as television audiences and their language use are concerned, Matthewson describes utterances ‘to’ and utterances ‘with’ the television concluding that the television “may substitute for conversation, licensing lapses, but at other times is no bar to spans of normal conversation.” (1992: 29) Furthermore, Gordon (2004) and Tovares (2006), both working on the basis of the Sloan corpus (cf. Tovares, this volume,) analyse how the television is employed by families to construct family identity and to negotiate the different roles the family members play in their lives (cf. also Beers Fägersten, this volume). Wood (2007) analyses the behaviour of a daytime television audience in the late 1990s: she shows how her viewers use an array of strategies to create a “mediated conversational floor” when they produce for example second pair parts of adjacency pairs or argue back at the studio.

Most importantly, the many publications based on the German project *Über Fernsehen sprechen* (cf. Holly et al. 2001) funded by the DFG, the central research funding organisation in Germany, describe the various aspects of talk in the television reception situation (cf. Ayass this volume). For our endeavour here suffice it to say that these German studies and my own previous work in this field (Gerhardt 2008a, 2008b, 2009) describe the reception situation as an ‘open state of talk’ (Goffman 1981) where the participants have the right, but not an obligation to talk. Mainly, the participants watch television and talk is only secondary. In this sense, talk in front of the television is often empractical (Bühler [1934] 1999), meaning that it concurs with a non-verbal activity and is only intelligible with regard to that activity.

As far as the role of the television is concerned, the viewers construct different frames (Tannen 1993) or footings (Goffman 1979): for instance, in a story telling frame the viewers’ talk is not different to that in focused face-to-face conversation. Only a number of ‘view signs’ (Scollon 1998) such as gaze or posture indicate that

the participants generally orient to the television. Thus, the ‘watchers’ face the television rather than each other indicating that the television is part of their ‘contextual configuration’ (Goodwin 2000). However, despite these view-signs, coherent talk is possible for the viewers, just like it is possible e.g. on the telephone or when driving a car. Through these view signs, the underlying potential for sudden shifts to the watching football frame is underscored. ‘Contextualisation cues’ (Gumperz 1982) such as interjections mark these shifts to the ‘watching football’ frame.

When the viewers shift their orientation to the media text, formally two different types of groups can be differentiated in the corpus: In those groups who talk more or less throughout, this frame is often realized through side-sequences. In other words, e.g. a story telling frame is interrupted by the watching football frame in the form of a side sequence. In the more taciturn groups where mostly families watch without talking a lot, the football frame makes up what Baldauf calls ‘free units’ or ‘islands of talk’ (2001 ‘Gesprächsinseln’, my translation, C.G.). The most marked feature of talk in this frame is that it is only coherent with reference to the media text, be it the language on television or the pictures. Often, for instance third person pronouns or the definite article are used by the viewers either intertextually by referring to a person mentioned on television by the commentators, or multimodally by referring to someone visible on the screen (Gerhardt 2008a). Furthermore, in the watching football frame, coherence is also constructed interactionally (Schegloff 1990) by the viewers: they sometimes backchannel to utterances on television or they construct adjacency pairs with the commentators, for instance when answering questions asked on television. To phrase it differently, there is also coherence between the media text and the talk at home during these passages which is based on sequentiality.

Against the backdrop of these findings, I will describe the minutiae of the linguistic behavior of the viewers at these moments of sudden shifts to the “watching football frame” just described.

3. Analogies of notability to tellability and related concepts

The term ‘notability’ has been coined in analogy to tellability, reportability, narrativity, also called story- or newsworthiness, concepts which have been treated intensely in narratology (Labov/Waletzky 1967; Norrick 2000, 2005; Baroni 2010). Tellability has already been described in the 1960s by Sacks in his lectures (Sacks 1992a: 773; 1992b: 3, 157, 229) showing that stories or rather events are not tellable per se, but that tellability is an achievement of the story teller. In Sacks’ data, for instance, someone tells the story of a car accident, although they had clearly only seen a wrecked car rather than witnessed the actual incident (1992b: 233). In other words, tellability is not inherent in the world or exogenous to talk-in-interaction,

but an achievement by the teller who has to turn some outside event into something tellable for the specific interaction at hand. The same will hold for the notion to be discussed here: notability. It does not define the relative statistical or empirical peculiarity or distinctiveness of some real-world event, rather it hopes to explain phenomena observable in talk in interaction in the reception situation.

Labov addresses the reportability of events (1972) by pointing out the importance of evaluation in stories:

Evaluative devices say to us: this was terrifying, dangerous, weird, wild, crazy; or amusing, hilarious, wonderful; more generally, that it was strange, uncommon, or unusual – that is, worth reporting. It was not ordinary, plain, humdrum, everyday, or run-of-the-mill. (1972: 371)

This ‘out-of-the-ordinariness’ is at the core of tellability with evaluative comments during story telling, indexing or creating the point of the story. They are the linguistic means story tellers have at their disposal to establish or maintain tellability. We will see in the main part that this kind of evaluative stance taking also plays a role with regard to notability.

Polanyi stresses that the point of a story, i.e. the grounds for its tellability, must be “culturally salient material” (1979: 207). The same will hold with regard to notability: the specific practices of the viewers are shared and genre-specific. Furthermore, she stresses the negotiability of the story point: within the course of a story telling it may change, and the speaker and the audience together work out interactionally what a certain story has been about. Again, we will witness similar workings with regard to notability. What may be notable for one person in one context may not be notable in another. Also, a general interest in notability or, in other words, the conception of the interactions as “open states” where notability has its place is negotiable. One can easily imagine interactions where one speaker conceptualizes a given situation as open to interruptions and another may feel that this is not warranted.

Labov (1997) treats reportability extensively pointing out the inverse correlation between credibility and reportability: on the one hand, the event reported has to be unusual to be reportable. Importantly, “the more reportable the most reportable event of a narrative, the greater justification for the automatic assignment of speaker role to the narrator” (Labov 1997: 406). In other words, a story teller is granted the right to continue talking if this one event that made them tell the story in the first place is interesting enough. On the other hand, however, in inverse correlation, despite its unusualness, a story must also be credible. And if the credibility of a personal narrative fails, the narrator suffers a face loss because of his or her invalid claim to continue holding the floor. Similar working can be found with regard to notability: on the one hand, notability licenses ‘grabbing’ the floor for

the one who claims it for the scene on television. On the other hand, this may result in a face-loss if others present do not affirm this linguistics behavior.

The term notable has already been used in connection with tellable: “If you see a crowd standing and looking, you’re able to see that the thing you see as notable is there.” (Sacks 1992b: 174) Sacks is drawing attention to the point here that crowds signal that something noteworthy has happened that may merit being watched and, hence, told. In the reception situation, the watchers also represent a group of onlookers, similar to Sacks’ example. Only here the focus will not be on notability as a prerequisite for tellability, rather it licenses sudden unannounced orientations to the ‘notable’ in the talk.

To end with folk taxonomy, in the field media, the overarching domain of this volume, the term notability is also used. In Wikipedia it functions as a gate-keeping device to limit the inclusion of topics into the program. Hence, notability there determines whether a topic is important enough to be turned into a Wikipedia article. Thus, for instance, the entry ‘Christine Chinkin’, “member of the four person United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict” (Wikipedia 2010a), has been flagged for potential ‘non-notability’. The first property a topic must meet in order to be turned into a Wikipedia article is that the information included on the page must be verifiable, which means there must be reliable third-party sources. Furthermore, the editors point out that notability “does not necessarily depend on things like fame, importance, or popularity”, but “a topic must have received significant coverage in reliable sources that are independent of the subject” (Wikipedia 2010b). Comparing this folk taxonomy to notability as proposed in this paper, there is this general sense of a threshold: a certain scene on TV has to be notable enough to license e.g. other-interruption, just like a person or event in Wikipedia has to be notable enough to license inclusion into the online reference work. Nevertheless, there are obvious differences between my data and Wikipedia based on the distinctive properties and purposes of talk-in-interaction and an online reference work such as for instance (non-)/-fleetingness.

4. The ATTAC-Corpus

The data in this study were recorded in a media reception situation, i.e. on the video-tapes one can witness families and groups of friends watching television in their homes². These different groups of viewers all watch live football matches,

² Transcription conventions for all extracts used in this chapter are provided in the Appendix.

namely the World Cup 2002 Japan/Korea. The ATTAC (Analysing The Television Audiences' Conversations)-Corpus consists both of the talk by the viewers and parts of the talk on television. Also, other modes in the interactions of the viewers (posture, gaze direction, gestures...) as well as the happenings on television (the pictures from the matches) were taken into account if found relevant. All in all, the ATTAC-Corpus consists of the recordings of fourteen halves (each 45 minutes plus allowance) and roughly 23.000 transcribed words. The recorded are primarily non-immigrant English men and women from London and Sheffield with an age range from 18 months to over seventy years. Some of the groups were given the video recorder so that they taped themselves over a period of a few weeks. For other groups the recorder was set up prior to a given match and the families were then left alone during the viewing. Although there is a certain hesitancy to open the private homes for such studies, the intrusion was not felt that strong since watching football is regarded as a pastime activity which is often done in public in Britain. It is not seen as intimate or, much less, embarrassing.

The status of the context and contextual information in the analysis of talk is a highly disputed subject (cf. e.g. Schegloff 1987, Auer et al. 1992). Even though I maintain that notability as I describe it is found in the behavior of the viewers rather than in the context, I will still give the following contextual information in order to allow readers an easier access to the data.

First, there is the viewing of two friends from London, Frank and Tom, middle-class, in their thirties to forties, who are watching Japan versus Russia. This recording is referred to as JR2T. The pairing does not make it a very exciting game for the two. It is a game at the group stage which Japan won 1:0. Hence, the viewers talk about different matters throughout the game: they catch up, discuss the World Cup, and, another important subject in their talk, the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth, which took place at the same time in England as the World Cup.

The second group consists of two middle-class Londoners who are over seventy years of age and used to referee in their spare-time (AE1C and AE2C). They are watching one of the most exciting games of the tournament, Argentina versus England, which for a number of historical and political reasons is followed intensely. Apart from those political issues which culminated in the Falklands/Las Malvinas war in 1982, football fans also recall the World Cup quarter final 1986, where Maradona, one of the best football players of all times, scored an illegal hand goal (later explained by him as having been "the hand of God"). Thus, the viewers concentrate on game-related matters, such as the general performance of the refereeing team. They are the only group who invoke personal experience directly with regard to the media text ("tertiary responses" Wood 2007).

Furthermore, the third group consists of a father together with different members of his family (EB2R). In this case, both his wife and his son are present. They all are rather taciturn. There does not seem to be a need to talk for them during the games since they can always talk about non-game related matters at some other point. For this reason, the conversations from this family consist of short ‘islands of talk’ (Baldauf 2001) only with prolonged pauses in between. Since England plays Brazil in this quarter final, an exciting pairing with two major football nations (England as the founders of modern football and Brazil as the most successful World Cup team) in the knock out stage of the World Cup, anything can wait till after the game.

To continue with the fourth group, they consist of a Malay student, his English landlady, and a German acquaintance of her (GS2L). This is the only group which includes non-native speakers. Their command of English is near-native though, so that the communication can run smoothly. The three are watching Germany against Saudi Arabia, a rather boring game at the group stage. Germany is quickly in the lead and simply too strong for the Saudis. Again, there is a lot of talk about game or World Cup related matters, but also about common friends.

Finally, there is also an extract from the recordings of a young family also watching England versus Brazil together (EB1A). Here only the father is really following the game, doing ‘watching football’. His wife mainly looks after their toddler who plays in the living room. Also, she often leaves to fetch things from the kitchen, for example.

Before starting with the body of my paper, one thought about the fact that the ATTAC-corpus consists of sports data only. I will show that there is a corrective feedback from the protagonists on the match field and the professionals from the media production side with regard to notability in this situation. Also, sports, in this case football, has clear rules that are actually spelt out, i.e. written down, in the “Laws of the game” by FIFA, the *Fédération internationale de football association*. Also there is a rather straight forward objective in this setting, to shoot goals and in that way win games. Thus, it is often these laws of the game which are used as a backdrop to assign notability. I am quite convinced that if one looked at data from people watching for example a feature film, the questions what is notable and what is not would be much more controversial.

5. The workings of notability

In talk-in-interaction in general, listeners have a very good grasp of when it is permissible for them to start their turns (Sacks et al. 1974). A number of prosodic, grammatical, and other signals indicate when a potential transition relevance

place is reached. In the normal course of events, the listener can take the floor when turn-transition is signaled by the speaker. If this is not the case, the listener is only allowed back-channeling behavior, but he or she will have to wait their turn. We will now look at a few examples where notability allows for a markedly different behavior which is not licensed in focused conversations.

5.1. Notability licensing other-interruption

To illustrate the workings of notability, let us first consider a sudden shift from an orientation to talk-in-interaction to a full concentration on the happenings on television. We will see that the current speaker is interrupted in the middle of an utterance, in other words, at a moment when speaker transition is clearly not relevant. Because of the peculiarities of this specific setting, this does not cause any troubles in the conversation though.

In this first example, we witness the talk of Frank and Tom, the two friends who are watching Japan versus Russia. The two talk animatedly all through the game about a number of different topics. Still, their gaze and posture is towards the television indicating that they are ‘watchers’ (Scollon 1998) creating the appropriate contextual configuration (Goodwin 2000) at the same time.



Figure 1: JR1T 07:18

However, there are often moments when the television is suddenly being oriented to in their talk, as in this example:

Example 1: Excerpt JR2T 06:16-07:30

01	Frank	<i>be playing [for Arsenal.]</i>
02	Tom	<i>[oh,</i>
03	Tom	<i>THAt's a] ball.</i>
04	Tom	<i>THAt's a lovely pass.</i>
05	Frank	<i>that WAs,</i>
06	Frank	<i>yeah,</i>
07		<i>(0.9)</i>
08	Tom	<i>yeah that's smart,</i>
09	Tom	<i>that's REally smart.</i>
10		<i>(2.0)</i>
11	Tom	<i>yeah,</i>
12	Tom	<i>that was EVer so cool.</i>
13		<i>(2.5) {Tom's eyes shift from TV to Frank}</i>
14		<i>(1.5)</i>
15	Frank	<i>I can't see,</i>
16	Frank	<i>how he wouldn't be playing for ARsenal,</i>
17	Frank	<i>next year,</i>

Frank, in line 01, is talking about a player who, in his opinion, should be playing for Arsenal in the next season. In line 02, Tom interrupts him. He starts with an interjection (“oh”) drawing attention to the happenings on television (cf. Goffman’s ‘response cries’ 1978, Baldauf 1998, Aarsand et al. 2009). Interjections here function as indexicals. They are “context-bound and they directly index entities in the extra-linguistic context as fillers of the argument positions in the proposition underlying the interjections” (Wilkins 1992:132). This “oh” is indexical because it is tied to the moment and place of utterance, in meaning here, roughly, *I am surprised now about that*. Hence, if an interlocutor uses an interjection, the hearers have to start searching for a referent of *that* in the context that allows them to fully interpret the interjection. Since the viewers constitute ‘a watch’ (Scollon 1998) as indicated by the posture and gaze direction, the first candidate for *that* would be searched on television. After all, the speech situation (Hymes 1972) created by one of the viewers when asking his friend to come over is ‘watching television’. Thus the interjection here really points verbally at a scene on television, i.e. through the medium at the content or the event as such, a particular scene in the game³. Hence, while the viewers’ embodied orientation is per default towards the television in this setting, with the help of the interjection the same is achieved linguistically

³ For convenience, I will simply use ‘point at the television’ at times in this paper. However, readers should be aware that this will always mean ‘at a scene on television’, ‘at the game’, not ‘at the television’ in the sense of ‘Look, they have bought a new TV’.

by one of the viewers. In a sense, the contextual configuration (Goodwin 2000) is turned into a textual one.

In line 03, Tom then accounts for his behaviour “THAt’s a ball.” Mark that Tom and Frank are still in overlap at the beginning here. The forceful uttering of the non-proximate deictic demonstrative “THAt” reinforces Tom’s instruction for Frank to search for something notable in their vicinity. Again, the exogenous setup suggests that it should be found on television. Finally, when “a ball”, used metonymically here meaning “a shot”, is reached, the referent is unequivocally the match scene, albeit the meaning of “that is a shot” referring to “a shot” is indirect and based on implicature. The grammatical subject in Tom’s utterance is the demonstrative pronoun “that” and the property assigned to it, the subject complement, is “a ball”. In other words, also syntactically Tom is first pointing (“that”) and then assigning semantic value (“is a ball”). So this evaluative utterance repeats the mechanism of the interjection: “oh” could be paraphrased roughly as pointing + something like surprise; this utterance then equals roughly pointing + something like skilful ball-game. At the same time, the reference becomes unequivocal at this point because the only potential referent for something which gets assigned the semantic value of a skilful ball-game can be found on television. However, concurrently this unit “That’s a ball” is also doing accounting for the other-interruption. It licenses Tom’s starting in overlap with Frank in the middle of an intonationally, pragmatically, and syntactically unfinished unit. The reason proposed by Tom here is the apparent skillfulness of the move(s) by the players on television. Note the similarity to tellability and the importance of the evaluative stance taking in the process (Labov 1972).

Next, in line 04, Tom uses the very same grammatical unit again: a copular construction with a demonstrative pronoun in subject position. “THAt’s a lovely pass”. Thus, for the third time, he points verbally at the screen. Simultaneously, in these three steps the meaning is also made more and more explicit: after “oh” which is very vague as to its semantic content, and “a ball” which is doubly indirect via metonymy and implicature, Tom now uses a straightforward noun phrase with an adjective denoting what they are witnessing: “a lovely pass.” Hence, at the end of this three-part utterances it is plain that he interrupts because of a remarkable scene in the football match.

Frank immediately ratifies in lines 05 and 06 “that WAs yeah”. This ratification of Tom’s stance towards the media text concurrently licenses Tom’s other-interruption. There is no “WAIT” (cf. Lerner’s example of other-interruption 1989: 172) or “Let me finish this briefly” (cf. Bilmes 1997: 516) or other signs indicating that Frank as participant views Tom’s turn as a (rude) interruption. Following Bilmes (1997), there are three ways of “doing being interrupted”. Besides these kinds of direct claims, participants can also display interruption

through various verbal or non-verbal means such as stopping in mid-utterance (cut-offs), annoyed glances or facial expressions, head-turns, opening and closing the mouth, restarting with the same item after a cut-off (at the next transition relevance place), or restarting in overlap with a grammatical continuer (Bilmes 1997: 520). A third way of signaling that one feels interrupted is achieved by ignoring what the interrupter has said. None of these can be found in Frank's turn (l. 05-06).

In lines 08-09, a replay of the scene is shown on television (see the use of the present tense) "yeah that's smart. that's REally smart." This makes Tom repeat his earlier evaluation of the shot. Again he uses the same construction, a copular clause with the demonstrative "that" in subject position. In lines 11-12, the past tense indicates that the scene is now over: "that was EVer so cool". Note the recurrent shift between present and past tense in this scene: first they watch the scene live (present tense). Once it is over, the past tense is used, similar to a coda in a narrative. Then a replay is shown signaling that indeed the production crew also establishes this scene as notable (present tense). Once the replay is over, again the past tense is used. Also, the evaluative weight is amplified in these parallel constructions: from "that's a ball" to "that's ever so cool".

The following pause of 2.5 seconds is not unusual in the reception situation. Tom then shifts his eyes from the television to Frank signaling closure of the side sequence and a shift of speaker (cf. Kendon 1967). Other modalities to create meaning in interaction will be treated later in this chapter. Finally, in lines 15-17, Frank resumes his earlier talk "I can't see how he wouldn't be playing for Arsenal this year." The cohesive tie "he" links back to his earlier statement (l. 01). They are now back again at the point in their talk before the notable happened.

This example shows that sudden shifts from talk-in-interaction to watching football are not felt as interruptions by the co-viewers. Although Franck's unit is semantically, pragmatically and intonationally unfinished at the moment when Tom interrupts, no signs of dispreference can be found. Since the viewers gathered to watch football, the game may always become primary at any given moment in their talk. This shift is achieved through the use of interjections as contextualization cues functioning as indexicals pointing to the screen. The sequentially following accounting clarifies the exact referent of the utterance. Also, together with the interjections, they signal the stance of the viewer. Furthermore, the accounting may help forestall potential discussions about the relative notability of the witnessed scene or, may this prove futile, they may be taken as a starting point for negotiations concerning the notability. This absolute orientation towards the television pre-positioned in the contextual configuration of their bodies is signaled through an array of linguistic means: syntax (subject complements), deixis (demonstrative

pronoun “that”), interjections and their indexical force, tense (simple present), and sequentiality (e.g. accounts).

5.2. Notability licensing self-interruption

In the following, the focus will move from the listener signaling the notability of the media text to a speaker interrupting his own utterance because of the events on television.

The next passage is taken from the recordings with the two pensioners from London, who are over seventy years of age. They are watching Argentina against England which is probably one of the most important games in this World Cup from an English perspective (Gerhardt 2010). They have both been referees in their time, so they like to talk about the refereeing. Just as in the group from the previous example, the two talk more or less continuously without any longer pauses. Since they met explicitly to watch the game together, it seems understood that they share this experience through talk to turn into a common past-time activity (Klemm 2000). The following self-interruption happens right at the beginning of the game.

Example 2: Excerpt AE1C 01:10-01:31

- | | | |
|----|---------|--|
| 01 | Henry | <i>Pierluigi Collina is referee today.</i> = |
| 02 | Darrell | [=yes.] |
| 03 | Henry | [<i>there's</i>] <i>absolutely NO coincidence,</i> = |
| 04 | Darrell | = <i>yeah,</i> |
| 05 | Henry | <i>in his being appointed to this game.</i> |
| 06 | | (1.9) |
| 07 | Henry | <i>he's uh-</i> |
| 08 | Henry | <i>OUH,</i> |
| 09 | | (1.2) |
| 10 | Henry | <i>close one,</i> |
| 11 | Henry | <i>right across the goal,</i> |
| 12 | Henry | <i>talking to some of our premier league referees,</i> = |
| 13 | Henry | = <i>they have NOthing but admiration for him,</i> |

Until line 7, there is a focused conversation between the two. The topic has been triggered by the media text itself (Fritz 1987, Klemm 2000). Both continuously index their expertise in football (Goodwin 1986, Gerhardt 2006, cf. also below) by talking about game-related matters. While Henry is relating his opinion about the choice of referee by FIFA here, Darrell is only back-channeling (Yngve 1970) signaling consent. Apart from the view-signs discussed above (Scollon 1998), their conversation seems as focused as e.g. at a dinner table at this point in the data.

Nevertheless, in line 08, the interjection indicates that one of the viewers, here the speaker, finds the scene on television notable enough to interrupt himself in the middle of an utterance. This shift may already be foreshadowed by the glottal closure in line 07. Parallel to the first example, again the interjection which indicates the notability is followed by an account stating why the scene merits to be assigned notability according to Henry. In this scene, it is the fact that there nearly was a goal: it was a “close one”, i.e. a close shot, “right across the goal.” In contrast to the first example, no other modalities or changes in modes are used by the speaker.

Since there is no protest on the part of Darrell and the conversation proceeds without any signs of trouble, here again notability seems to license this interruption of a “big package” (Sacks 1992a: 354) or a longer sequence. Just as in the previous example, an interjection instantiates and signals the shift to the media text. Interjections in this context should not be thought of as announcing a coming shift, as pre’s (Sacks 1992a: 674), but the ‘watching football frame’ is already in order the same moment they occur. Since notability is negotiable, i.e. what may be found notable by one viewer may not be attached the same value by another, the interjection is again followed by an account.

In conclusion, both examples reveal the same sequence in stretches where notability is signaled: an interjection is followed by accounting. Both self- and other interruptions can be smoothly achieved and signaled in this way. Notability can be assumed ratified if no trouble signals ensue and the new frame is instantiated smoothly.

5.3. Simultaneousness between the viewers’ talk and the media text

With the next example, we will move from form to function, from sequentiality to positioning (Bamberg 1997). We will see that signaling notability can be used to create a local identity of a knowledgeable football fan. By interrupting at exactly the right moment in the games, the viewers can index their expert position in football matters.

So far the happenings on television, the language and the pictures, the particular scene in the match, have been left out of the discussion here. In this third example, again from the recordings with the two older men, we can witness the astounding simultaneousness of the television text, both the game i.e. the pictures and the sports announcer talk, and the talk of the viewers at home. This is a reflection of the relative stability of notability in the context of football matches. So similar to “the point” of a story, notability is also based on “culturally salient material” (Polanyi 1979). Although here the viewers are not talking at the moment when the incident happens on television, hence there is no interruption, still the same pattern can be observed as in the earlier examples.

Example 3: Excerpt AE2C 03:30-01:33

01 TV *Zanetti,*
02 TV *to Aimar.*
03 *(0.8)*
04 TV *challenged by [Butt,]*
05 Referee [{whistles}]
06 Darrell [*oh,*]
07 Darrell [*clob]bered*
08 TV [*foul.*]
09 ...
10 {replays start}

The first four lines represent play-by-play announcing (Ferguson 1983, Gerhardt 2008b) by the commentator. The term ‘challenged’ (l. 04) may already adumbrate the coming foul. Then lines 05 and 06 display a concurrent marking of a scene as notable, both by the referee through the whistling and by Darrell through the interjection “oh”. Hence, both Darrell and the referee draw attention to a scene in the match at exactly the same moment and presumably for exactly the same reason. In lines 07 and 08, synchronicity continues: in this case between Darrell and the commentator. Darrell’s use of the verb ‘to clobber’ implies that a foul has been committed, since ‘clobbering’ i.e. ‘hitting or thrashing someone’ is against the rules of the game. Thus, Darrell’s assessment of the scene as notable is exogenously ratified by the commentator and by the referee in the game itself. As indicated above, Darrell used to be a referee. Here he shows that he can still evaluate the game at the same time as the professionals on television and the officials on the pitch. Their coming to the same assessment signals he is on a par with them.

According to Goodwin, a display of “precise independent knowledge” in the appropriate form makes participants part of “a domain of expertise and knowledge” (1986: 289). A very specific kind of ‘precise independent knowledge’ can be witnessed here which does not consist of a simple statement: instead, first the assignment of notability to a scene establishes such a claim for expertise. In a second step, the following accounting indicates what kind of knowledge is being displayed. In extract 3, for instance, one could reformulate Darrell’s short contribution as follows: I am witnessing something notable and what one can witness is clobbering and clobbering is notable in this context. Hence, the kind of expertise displayed in the context of notability is not only based on factual knowledge (cf. Drew 1991), but, foremost, it is the application of some ‘precise independent knowledge’ to the media text.

In conclusion, by claiming notability for a scene, the viewers concurrently claim expertise for themselves. Through the instantiation of shifts to the media text at the appropriate point in the match with the appropriate interjection and

the appropriate accounting the viewers index an expert identity and claim membership in the community of football fans⁴. In general in the ATTAC-corpus, those scenes which are marked as notable by the viewers at home are also marked by other participants in this mediated context through their various means. The commentators, for one, often discuss those very scenes in detail establishing their notability in like manner. Furthermore, during play-by-play announcing they signal the notability of certain moves on the football field through an increase in loudness and pitch. Also, mostly replays of those exact scenes are offered by the production crew or, more precisely, by the assistant to the sports broadcast director. In addition, there are usually reactions by the fans in the stadium: booing, cheering, clapping, etc. The noises they produce can usually be heard on television. Often, the fans are also shown during these notable scenes. Finally, the protagonists themselves, the players, the referee, or the linesmen also have their means of establishing the notability of a scene: they too may flag occasions as notable. The players for instance sometimes celebrate goals by simply banging a fist on their chests or, more elaborately, by dancing around the corner flag with their team mates or by doing back flips or somersaults⁵. The referees also have a range of signals at their disposal, also with regard to those scenes which are notable due to their unlawfulness (fouls and misconduct): whistle blowing, flag waiving, pointing and so on. Whistle blowing for instance is often more or less forceful (loudness and duration) depending on the occasion. Also, to give another example, a referee who is quickly running across the field while the game has been stopped is a clear indication that something notable has occurred. The notion which circumstances in a football match are assigned notability seems for the most part well-established and in the main uncontroversial between those groups responsible for the production of the television text and those in the reception situation: the BBC (the commentary) and, in the World Cup, the Swiss production company responsible for the internationally televised pictures as well as the viewers both at home and in the stadium. So, when a viewer marks a scene as notable in this setting, there are four exogenous levels outside the talk itself, which in the long run function as a corrective feedback: the game itself and what happens there, the refereeing and the behaviour of the audience in the stands, the commentary, and, finally, the replays on television. So it will become clearer and clearer through watching with friends at

⁴ Hepp describes a case where a father and his son are watching football. Through similar behavior as the one found in the ATTAC-Corpus the son tries to signal his expertise to his father, in that way indicating that he is part of the male world of football. (1998: 159 ff)

⁵ cf. Wikipedia for a long list of common rituals or celebrations, some of which are deliberately planned or choreographed http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goal_celebration

home and in the stands which “material” on the pitch or respectively on television is “culturally salient” (Polany 1979) and merits being assigned notability. Through the display of this knowledge, by identifying and interpreting notable scenes in the match, the fans can position themselves as football experts (Gerhardt 2006).

6. Multimodality: more than words

Just like any other message communicated by humans, notability too can be signaled through other mean besides language. So in the next example the viewers use a wealth of other modalities besides talk itself to indicate the notability of a scene on television. Gerard, a middle-aged man from Sheffield, is watching with his wife and his son who both do not talk in this short excerpt. It is roughly 9 o'clock on a Sunday morning. The family is having tea. The couple shares a sofa and the son sits on another sofa, so that there is roughly a triangle between the couple, the son and the television.



Figure 2: EB2R 01:04

As stated in the data section, the viewers here represent one of the more taciturn groups. Hence, the following ‘island of talk’ is quite typical for their interactions.

Example 4: Excerpt EB2R 36:03-36:12

01	TV	<i>free kick to England.</i>
02	TV	<i>(2.6)</i>
03	TV	<i>David Beckham will-</i>
04	TV	<i>presumably u:h,</i>

05	TV	(1.6 tv)
06	Gerard	<i>upfff</i> , {moves arm in direction of TV, palm turned upwards}
07	Gerard	<i>yellow</i> [<i>CArd</i> , {ever so slight head-shakes, “sneering” facial expression, increased pitch movements}
08	Gerard	<i>SUrely</i> . {all continued}
09	Gerard	<i>why (?) picking this up</i> , {headshakes, sneering continued, flat intonation contour}
10	Gerard	{turns face towards son, moves arm back}

At the beginning of this excerpt, the commentator announces a free kick to England (l. 01). Lines 03-04 indicate the beginning of color commentary while there is a break in the game. While replays of the disputed scene are shown, Gerard draws attention to the scene in question with the help of different linguistic and other means. Looking at his verbal behavior, the first item in Gerard’s utterance is this interjection “upfff” (l. 06). Gerard starts with a mid-central vowel and then he exhales after a short complete closure of the lips. The long drawn-out fricative that is produced at the end seems to have a dental quality. Turning to the embodiment (Goodwin 2000) of this utterance, we find that a gesture accompanies this sound which reinforces the strong (re-)focusing character or indexical nature of the utterance in this context. Gerard has been sitting with his elbow on the armrest of the sofa and his head resting in the palm of his hand. While he utters the interjection, he concurrently moves his arm towards the television pointing with his palm turned upwards.



Figure 3: EB2R 36:06

This gesture underlines that interjections in this context serve as contextualisation cues referencing the notability of a given scene in the match by verbally pointing there.

In line 07, Gerard follows the pattern for notability described above by accounting for his interjection: “yellow CArd”. This is accompanied by a change in his facial expression: Gerard puts on a sneering face which reinforces the contempt that the interjection predicates. This facial expression also helps his interlocutors to retrospectively assign meaning to the semantically vague interjection. Gerard’s stance towards the television text is stressed further through the excited tone of his voice and an increase in pitch movement which strongly mark Gerard’s talk here. Furthermore, Gerard produces what I would like to call ‘ever so slight headshakes.’ This movement of the head from the right to the left is not easy to spot on the video recording, since Gerard moves his head within a range of not even a centimeter. Lateral headshakes have been described as assessment markers used for intensification (McClave 2000). Here, these ‘ever so slight headshakes’ seem to underscore the contempt he feels towards the decision by the referee. The next intonation unit “SUREly” (l. 08) is rendered in the exact same fashion: ever so slight head shakes, a sneering face, and a very marked pitch movements. All this indicates that Gerard continues signaling his stance towards the television text. His final utterance, which is partly unintelligible, has a markedly flat intonation contour. Line 10, finally, extends the excerpt by one line (in contrast to a purely verbal transcription), since after the utterances themselves, Gerard shortly turns



Figure 4: EB2R 36:12

to his son as if asking for consent or inviting in a reaction (Kendon 1967). Concurrently, he moves his arm back into the original position signaling closure of this contribution.

In the earlier examples we could see that this extra-verbal reinforcement is not necessary. Depending on the position of the viewers towards the television and towards one another, on their age and other exogenous factors (cf. Gerhardt 2007), there may indeed be language only. For some viewers, the gain they seem to assign to using other modalities does not seem to outweigh the strain of e.g. having to move their bodies into a body torque position (Schegloff 1998) and into the sphere of intimate distance (Hall 1966) (as for instance the elderly men in transcript AE2C).

7. Notability and its connection to the exogenous event

At the end of the fifth section, I have drawn analogies between the behavior of the fans in the stadium, the protagonists on the football field and the viewers at home. So one could easily be misled into thinking that notability is an exogenous category independent of talk-in-interaction, but rooted in the event on the pitch. The following two goals however show that it is not the event as such that creates notability, but its treatment in the talk by the viewers.

This first example is from the game Germany versus Saudi Arabia, one of the first matches in the World Cup. As we will see, the viewers, a landlady, her lodger, and a friend, are more concerned with the commentary here than the actual game.

Example 5: Excerpt GS2L 45:45-46:08

01	TV	<i>Christoph Daum,</i>
02		(1.0)
03	TV	<i>who was uh briefly,</i>
04		(0.6)
05	TV	<i>in control of Germany,=</i>
06	TV	<i>=but was forced out by a-</i>
07		(0.6)
08	TV	<i>scandal,</i>
09	TV	[(?)]
10	Sabine	<i>[that's not] true,=</i>
11	Sabine	<i>=what they're saying.=</i>
12	TV	<i>oh that's it.=</i>
13	Musa	<i>=ooch.</i>
14	TV	<i>seven.=</i>
15	Musa	<i>=seven.</i>

16	Sabine	<i>Bierhoff?</i>
17		<i>(1.6)</i>
18	Musa	<i>the the drug s- scandal?</i>
19	TV	<i>Bierhoff,</i>
20	Sabine	<i>yeah</i>
21	Sabine	<i>but it's not true,=</i>
22	Sabine	<i>=that Daum was in control,=</i>
23	Sabine	<i>=he was never in control.</i>
24		<i>(0.5)</i>
25	Sabine	<i>of the German team.</i>

In line 11, Germany shoots its seventh goal against Saudi Arabia: “oh that’s it” (l. 12). This is noted by a compassionately sounding interjection by Musa “ooch” which may be indexing his stance towards the Saudi team. Also, Musa repeats the commentary, or he may actually be counting himself at this moment: “seven” (l. 14 and 15), which is also accounting for his interjection. After that Sabine ensures that her interpretation of the pictures is correct: “Bierhoff?”, meaning “is Bierhoff the scorer?” This first pair part of a question-answer adjacency pair which usually makes an answer relevant is not taken up though. This is quite typical for the reception situation. Indeed, it is the television, through the commentator (l. 19) and probably also through the replays, which provides the second pair part. Musa then returns to an earlier point in the talk closing the side-sequence which was caused by the notability of the goal. In this way he also signals that this goal is not very notable: it may be worth being mentioned in talk by virtue of being a goal,



Figure 5: EB1A 25:40

but it is not notable enough to interrupt the talk for more than a short moment. So Musa reconnects intertextually (Gerhardt 2009) to Sabine's earlier utterance in lines 10-11 ("that's not true what they're saying") by stating "the the drug scandal?" (l. 18). Then Sabine signals her recognition of that connection ("yeah", l. 20) and the closing of the side-sequence.

Let us now consider the following sequence in contrast: While watching the match, the young family's mother Ursula is often playing with the child. The match is England against Brazil, one of the most exciting pairings from an English perspective. The couple are sitting on a sofa together in front of the television.

Example 6: Excerpt EB1A 25:40-26:57

01	TV	<i>Mills,</i>
02		(1.3)
03	TV	<i>Heskey.</i>
04	TV	<i>Owen's sprinting away, =</i>
05	TV	<i>=for the left here, =</i>
06	TV	<i>=to get to [Lucio.]</i>
07	Andrew	[<i>OH</i>] [{jumps up}]
08	TV	<i>MICHAEL OWEN,</i>
09	TV	<i>GREAT HEA[DER,...]</i>
10	Ursula	[<i>I can't-</i>
11	Ursula	<i>I can't see, =</i>
12	Ursula	{jumps from left to right on the sofa to see past husband}
13	Andrew	<i>=YEEEEEEEEAAAAAHHHHHH.</i>
14	Andrew	{screams at the top of his voice finishing in laughter}
15	Ursula	<i>I didn't see,</i>
16	Ursula	<i>you were [blocking it from] me {laughingly}</i>
17	Andrew	[<i>I'm sorry,</i>]
18	Andrew	{laughs hysterically, jumps up and down}
19	Andrew	{laughs}
20	Andrew	{jumps with his head on his wife's lap}
21	Ursula	<i>stop that. {smiles}</i>
22	Andrew	{laughs hysterically}
23	Ursula	<i>what is (?)ing you. = {smiles}</i>
24	Andrew	<i>=well I can't help that {in a high pitched coarse voice}</i>
25	Ursula	[<i>but you should HAVE</i>]
26	Andrew	[{laughs }] {sits down again}
27		(4.6h)
28	Andrew	{clears throat}
29	TV	<i>look at Owen here,</i>
30	TV	<i>it's Lucio,</i>

31 TV *who's made the mistake.*
32 TV *and Trevor?*
33 TV *the (poacher's?) goal?...*
34 Andrew {giggles hysterically}
35 Ursula *poacher's goal.*
36 Andrew *don't you know what this is.*
37 (0.8)
38 Ursula *no {high voice}*
39 Andrew *(look it up in the internet?) {laughingly}*
40 Ursula *(I know?)*
41 Ursula *(you should?) (?)*
42 Ursula *(my point of view?) {laughingly}*
43 (3.4h)
44 Ursula *yeeaaaah Laurie. {turns to toddler, claps}*
45 Ursula *yeah, = {claps}*
46 Ursula *=we scored {claps}*
47 Ursula *yeeaaaah, {claps, high pitched voice}*
48 (22.8h)

Because of its length, I will not be able to discuss this example line by line. Suffice it to say that the notability of the scene is already indexed before the actual goal in line 07 by Andrew's loud interjection "OH" and his jumping up from the couch.



Figure 6: EB1A 25:52

On television also there is a marked rise in loudness and pitch (l. 08-09). Ursula at this point is alerted. In contrast to her usual behavior in the corpus, here she concentrates intently on the televised match since her husband's behavior indexes the relevance of the television text. However, he is blocking her view at this moment. In line 13, there is the goal for England. The notability of this goal is then signaled through a plethora of practices: screaming, increase in loudness and pitch, his jumping around, his laughter and giggling. All the while, Andrew is including his wife in his celebrations, such as when he puts his head into his wife's lap (l. 20) concurrently jumping with his feet in the air. His wife greets his enthusiasm with a wide smile (cf. picture below).



Figure 7: EB1A 26:13

Note that no emotion words are used in this setting: instead the couple's outburst of feelings is expressed through non-semantic non-lexical means only. Andrew's jubilating laughter all through this scene demonstrates the general keying (Gerhardt 2009) and the emphatic speech style instantiates his heightened involvement (Selting 1994). It is not a single instance like e.g. jumping that in itself is meaningful and interpretable for the co-interlocutors. Rather it is a bundle of practices that, taken together, display emotions to the others present. Furthermore, it is the marked difference between Andrew's usual behavior in this setting and his jubilation here which produce the notability of the scene. In other words, jumping around can be used to index the extraordinary notability of the scene because Andrew has not been jumping around right before this scene and because he stops jumping around in line 26. "The more cues are produced, and the more

saliently marked these are, the greater the likelihood that a sequence of units will be interpreted as emphatic”, as Selting writes (1994: 404), and I would add, in this setting, as displaying the notability of scene in the game. This overflow of positive feelings seems to also find a vent in the playful teasing of the couple (l. 35-42). At the end of this excerpt (l. 44-45), the mother is then celebrating the goal with her daughter in a somehow ritualistic manner: she seems to be teaching the girl how to celebrate rather than actually celebrating the goal with her daughter. Furthermore, there is no accounting in this sequence. A goal for England is so clearly notable in this situation that accounting is not necessary. This kind of embodied performance of feelings (Goodwin/Goodwin 2000) is typical for this setting. Not only do football matches provide one of the contexts in which a display of emotions conforms to hegemonic masculinity (Walton et al. 2004), also their very nature as competitions with national teams fighting vicariously for their people provide excellent ground for excitement.

To conclude with regard to the connection between notability and the exogenous event, we could see that an exogenous occurrence such as a goal does not determine its treatment in talk. Instead I would like to propose that the viewers create the notability or non-notability of events in their talk through various means. Germany’s seventh goal against Saudi Arabia is treated as relatively un-notable (for a goal), only Musa goes on record with some compassion for the Saudis. In contrast, the goal by England is constructed as highly notable and a ground for jubilation and bonding in the family. Clearly, each behavior would entail a face loss if shown for the other goal situation. So the viewers have to be able to read events in the world, to assess and interpret the happenings on television, to make them available to each other through talk.

8. Conclusion

I have proposed the term ‘notability’ to account for sudden shifts one can witness in talk in the television reception situation: shifts from a focus on talk-in-interaction to a full concentration on the television. When the viewers decide that the media text offers a ‘notable’ scene, they may shift frame without any prior interactional work. In other words, no pre-sequences, discourse markers or other means of signaling new agendas are used. Interjections suffice to instantiate these reorientations to the media text. Their indicative nature shows that a viewer is at that moment orienting to the media text and no longer to his/her co-viewers’ interactions. These interjections do not represent ‘pre’s’ marking an upcoming action, but their employment signals that such a shift has happened at that very moment. If the co-viewers ratify the ‘notability’ of a given scene in the match, no

signs of dispreference or repair work can be found in the ensuing interaction. Even the highly marked case of other-interruption goes unnoticed.

Notability is principally negotiable. The notion is not based on the relative noteworthiness of the actual scene in relation to some real-world average; rather it is a concept which accounts for the verbal behaviour of the participants: they can flag events, make them available for talk and construct them through talk. Because of its negotiability, often accounts are added after the interjections. Hence, besides the interjections which are indispensable since they instantiate the shift, some more optional units are likely to occur, some of which are expressed through language, others through different modalities such as gestures or gaze shifts. This allows for notability to be scalar in nature, i.e. events can be created through talk as more or less notable. However, on the lower end of the scale there is also a threshold over which events have to pass to be considered notable at all (cf. also its use in Wikipedia).

To come back to the well-established notion of tellability and its relation to notability, in a sense notability is a prerequisite to tellability: if I do not note something, I cannot talk about it either. This goes with Sacks' idea that crowds index that something noteworthy has happened which then may merit being told (1992b: 174). So first, events must be notable to, then, become tellable. Also, the stance towards the narrative, the evaluation of the story, has an equivalent in notability. Already the interjection often carries such an evaluative load. Also, the accounts can be used for this purpose by the interlocutors. Finally, notability can be seen as the live equivalent of tellability. It does not construct past worlds, but it creates current happenings through talk: not what was witnessed, but what is being witnessed and whether something is being witnessed. In a narrative, the complicating action explains "And what happened (then)?" (Labov 1997), i.e. earlier. Notability explains "What is happening (now)?" and also "Is anything happening (now)?"

Future research with other kinds of data sets may be able to answer the question whether notability is as interactive or interactional as tellability. I have been told repeatedly (by football fans) that they also cuss and sigh when by themselves. Different notions may account for this behavior: one could argue that practices are taken over from one situation into another even though they may have lost their more immediate purpose (cf. nodding on the telephone). Also, such behavior could be explained with the idea of a world-spanning community of practices (Eckert 2006) of football fans: whether in the stands, in a pub, or home alone, a true fan enacts his or her identity with the help of specific practices (which will vary locally). Moreover, football has been argued to have a cathartic function (cf. Aristotle's *Poetics*). Especially the national teams (as in the data here) are understood as fighting vicariously for their country and its inhabitants

(Sloan 1979, Gerhardt 2010). Hence this behavior may well be a reflection of a psychological state which is disconnected from the immediate physical surrounding. In that sense, such blurtings would have no interactional function. Only by studying other talk with regard to notability, talk in the reception situation (listening to the radio, watching films, TV shows, the news, and so on) as well as in other settings, e.g. coffee shops or when travelling in cars or trains (watching landscapes or people), will we be able to answer to what degree notability is interactionally accomplished.

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Appendix: Transcription Conventions

One line represents one intonation unit (or one distinct action)

<i>she's out.</i>	falling tone in the preceding element; suggesting finality
<i>oh yeah?</i>	rising tone in the preceding element; cf. yes-no question intonation
<i>so,</i>	level, continuing intonation; suggesting non-finality
<i>bu- but</i>	a cut-off or truncated intonation unit
<i>DAMN</i>	high pitch and a rise in volume.
(2.0)	timed pauses in seconds (tv on television/ h at home)
[<i>and so-</i>]	overlapping talk
[<i>WHY</i>] <i>her?</i>	
<i>and=</i> latching	
<i>=then</i>	
(?)	incomprehensible or questionable parts
{laughs}	para- and non-verbal behaviour and contextual information
...	talk continues, but is not transcribed