L2 Interactional Competence as Increased Ability for Context-sensitive Conduct: A Longitudinal Study of Story-openings

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This article sets out to investigate second language (L2) interactional competence and its development over time by zooming into a conversational activity that is pervasive in our social lives: storytelling. We present a longitudinal case study of a German L1 speaking au-pair's conversational storytellings during her nine-month stay with a French-speaking host family. We document how her practices and resources for opening a story change over time: She increasingly uses techniques allowing her to secure recipiency, to project features of the nature of the incipient story, and to display its relation to preceding talk; and she shows increased use of grammatical constructions that are fitted for the task of getting these interactional jobs accomplished. The findings suggest that the development of L2 interactional competence centrally hinges on speakers' increased ability to design talk in a way for it to be attended to and understood by others, and to deploy context-sensitive conduct based on both sequential and linguistic resources. While the study enhances our understanding of the nature and the development of L2 interactional competence, it also critically relates to current discussions regarding longitudinal comparative analysis of social practices.

INTRODUCTION: FROM COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE TO INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

Ensuing from Hymes' classical statement on communicative competence (Hymes 1972), a large amount of empirical second language acquisition (SLA) research has substantiated an understanding of L2 development that highlights the key import of pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences (see Kasper and Rose 2002 for an overview). Yet, the fine-grained techniques that are needed to successfully engage in L2 *interaction* have largely remained unexplored so far.

Since the 1990s, researchers have called for a more dynamic and context-sensitive understanding of communicative competence, based on a systematic concern with the continuous local adaptations and mutual co-ordinations that underpin the process of communication (see e.g. Hall 1993, He and Young 1998). Recently, a growing body of conversation analytic (CA) research on SLA has taken up the challenge to identify what interactional competence (henceforth IC) is and how it develops over time (for overviews see Kasper

and Wagner 2011; Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2015). In this article, we pursue this line of research by focusing on a single L2 speaker's—an au-pair—changing practices, over time, for opening stories in the course of dinner table conversations. While the study is designed to enhance our understanding of the nature and the development of IC in an L2, it also relates to current discussions regarding longitudinal comparative CA.

   In what follows, we first outline our understanding of IC and discuss existing research on IC and storytelling. We then present the data, procedures, and analytic focus of the present study. The subsequent analysis provides evidence of the L2 speaker's development of IC over a period of several months. The findings document change over time not only in the way the speaker puts to use linguistic resources for interactional purposes, but also in the way she sequentially designs story openings, thereby revealing her increasing ability to tailor her talk to the local circumstantial details of the ongoing interaction. We conclude by discussing implications of the findings.

L2 INTERACTIONAL COMPETENCE

Definition and existing findings

Current CA work on SLA (called CA-SLA) is based on a notion of IC that draws on CA's roots in ethnomethodology: IC involves the development of 'methods' for action, in the ethnomethodological sense of the term (Garfinkel 1967), that is, systematic procedures (of turn-taking, repairing, opening or closing a conversation, etc.) by which members of a social group organize their interactional conduct in mutually understandable and accountable ways (Mondada and Pekarek Doehler 2004; Hellermann 2008, 2011; Pekarek Doehler 2010; Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2011).

   Based on longitudinal and in some cases cross-sectional research designs, recent work in CA-SLA has shown that IC is not simply transferred from the L1 to the L2, but is recalibrated in the course of L2 development. For instance, in her case study of a Kurdish child's turn-taking in a Swedish primary school, Cekaite (2007) documents the child's use of more and more subtle techniques for self-selecting at sequentially appropriate moments, as part of her developing L2 IC. In his seminal work on dyadic interactions in ESF classrooms involving adult learners, Hellermann (2008) examines how students, over several terms, change their practices for opening dyadic tasks or disengaging from these, and for opening storytellings (see below): task-openings, for instance, are increasingly sequentially organized and designed in a way to be recognized and accepted by recipients, involving among others increased pre-task opening work. In a cross-sectional study on disagreements in French L2 classrooms (Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2011), we compare intermediate level to advanced students. The findings evidence with the advanced L2 speakers the emergence of turn-designs (such as the 'yes-but' dispreferred action turn-shape) that accommodate the preference organization of talk-in-interaction, as

well as the use of linguistic resources for accomplishing new interactional purposes (see Berger 2016 on the use of *mais* 'but' in the same data).

In a recent review of CA work on L2 IC (Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2015), we suggest that the existing findings converge on the following points: The development of L2 IC rests on a *diversification*, over time, of the L2 speakers' techniques (or: methods) for interaction and an increased efficiency in *recipient-designing* their talk and adapting it to the *hic et nunc* of the interaction, as well as an increased capacity to *monitor the linguistic details* of co-participants' prior turns and actions and to *use grammar as a resource for interaction*.

Noteworthy is the fact that the existing research is almost exclusively concerned within educational settings, mostly classrooms (but see Brouwer and Wagner 2004; Ishida 2011). Little is yet known about L2 interactional development 'in the wild' (cf. Wagner 2015). The present study contributes to filling this gap while at the same time addressing methodological issues for longitudinal comparative CA.

Interactional competence and storytelling

Storytelling is ubiquitous to our social lives. As such, it has been a classical object of CA research. In their pioneering studies, Sacks (1972) and Jefferson (1978) have evidenced storytelling as interactional achievement in which the speaker adapts his or her telling moment-by-moment to the recipient's reactions (or absence of these) and which involves subtle coordination, alignment, and affiliation between storyteller and story recipient. Although SLA research has studied different facets of L2 narratives, their interactional dimension has remained largely unaddressed (but see Ishida 2011 for how an L2 speaker of Japanese engages in another person's telling as a recipient).

A noteworthy exception is provided by Hellermann's (2008) study in which he investigates practices for story-opening in dyadic interactions within ESL classrooms. Hellermann documents that beginner L2 English speakers tend to open stories in *medias res*. They show little or no use of prefatory work (such as story prefaces), and only limited use of grammatical resources (such as adverbials or tense) to frame their story as recounting past events. By contrast, intermediate-level students increasingly use grammatical devices by means of which they frame the story as relating to past events, and they regularly engage in prefatory work, thereby preparing the ground for the incipient story to be recognized as such and oriented to by recipients. Hellermann's study provides evidence for L2 interactional development in terms of the way a given practice is sequentially organized, and thereby better designed to be 'fitted' to the ongoing course of action.

These results converge with Hellermann's (2008) abovementioned findings on task-openings as well as with our own work on disagreements (Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2011) in as far as they indicate that, over time, L2 speakers more finely recipient-design their talk and actions for their co-participants. While Hellermann (2008) studied beginning to intermediate-level L2 speakers within

classroom interaction, the present study scrutinizes mundane conversation, and focuses on an advanced speaker who, at the start of the longitudinal study, had already reached the level of competence documented by Hellermann.

THE PRESENT STUDY: METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES, DATA, AND PROCEDURE

Challenges for longitudinal CA

Analyzing change in social actions or practices over extended periods implies a range of methodological challenges for CA research. A central issue is how to warrant consistency of collections based on longitudinal data. Social actions and practices are context-sensitive, they are intricately tied to co-participants' doings and to the local sequential environments of their occurrences, and therefore they are inevitably variable from one occurrence to the other. A key requirement for longitudinal investigations of participants' actions or practices is to show that a given action is accomplished differently at time X than at time X + 1, yet still enough in the same way so that it can count as the same action. This is somehow at odds with the classical procedures of CA, where saturation of a given phenomenon is reached by maximum convergence of its specifiable features across its occurrences.

Documenting change over time requires looking at comparable 'environments of relevant possible occurrence' (Schegloff 1993: 103), and hence calls for analysis of practices or actions in comparable sequential contexts. Also, comparison over time requires scrutinizing the phenomenon under investigation within comparable or identical 'organizational domains of activity' (Schegloff 1993: 103). Actions and practices vary not only across settings, but also according to specific speech exchange systems, and therefore investigating change over time requires taking into account the conversational organization of the general activity within which actions or practices are indexically related to that activity. The longitudinal study of social interaction therefore calls for a research design suitable for tracking specific conversational actions or practices over a period within specifiable and comparable (or, if possible, identical) sequential environments, speech exchange systems, and more generally social settings. This is what we attempted to do in the present study.

Data

We present a longitudinal case study based on 20 audio recordings, ranging from 15 to 25 minutes in length (total: 7 hours), that have been recorded in regular intervals during the nine months of an au-pair's (Julie) stay with her French-speaking host family. The host family involves Marie, the host mother, Victor, the host father, Manon and Jordan, the two children aged four and seven years, respectively. Julie, aged 18 and whose L1 is German, was a fairly advanced speaker of French when she arrived in the French-speaking

environment. During her stay, Julie followed once a week a French course in a private language school. At her arrival, she was rated B2[1] through a school-administered test compatible with the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) standards.

Data collection was designed so as to minimize the invasiveness of the recordings into family life: the data were collected by Julie herself, without the presence of a researcher, and audio recording was chosen over video recording (this, of course, limits the researcher's access to features of the interaction that may be participant relevant). Julie was instructed to record her conversations with the host family periodically (in principle once a week), and to do so within situation types that she understood as being part of ordinary family routines. This precise setup of the data collection allowed for consistency in the data as to (a) participants, (b) periodicity of the recordings, (c) social setting and speech exchange system. All of the data used for this study were collected during lunch or dinner table conversations in the family's home in regular intervals over a time-span of nine months. To our knowledge, this is a uniquely consistent set of longitudinal interactional data available for CA analysis.

The choice of storytelling as an object of analysis was motivated by its recurrence in the data. Overall, the seven hours of data show 30 storytellings launched by Julie, out of which 4 were solicited by a co-participant, and 26 were volunteered by Julie (see below).

Procedure: narrowing down the analytic focus

The classical definition of narratives as reports of one-time past events goes back to Labov and Waletsky's (1967) pioneering paper on oral narratives. Some scholars have extended the definition to include reports of repeated and habitual past events, as well as of present, future, and hypothetical happenings or states of affairs (e.g. Goodwin 1990; Ochs 1997). In this article, we use the term storytelling to refer to a stretch of talk to which both speaker and recipient orient as a telling about events situated in the past. In the data, this most typically includes reports of one-time happenings but sometimes also reports of repeated or habitual past events.

To maximize comparability over time, we narrowed down the focus of our analysis to the opening of stories told in first position, that is, stories that have not been solicited (Schegloff 1997); also, we exclusively consider stories that recount events that have not been co-experienced between teller and recipient. Control of these two features is decisive for warranting comparability, as opening stories in first position requires different interactional work (e.g. securing recipiency, making recognizable an incipient telling; see below) than stories told in second position, and this is also true for stories that recount events unknown to the recipient vs. stories that recount events that have been co-experienced by teller and recipient.

Based on the above criteria, we have established, across the entire database, a collection of 26 storytellings initiated by Julie in first position that report

events that have not been co-experienced by the story recipients. Based on this collection, we have undertaken sequential analysis of each of the occurrences. The analysis focused on how Julie handles a set of issues that are at stake in opening a story (see below).

The analytic focus: What is at stake when opening a story?

Story-openings are designed in locally contingent ways so as to be fitted to the local circumstantial details of the ongoing interaction. This involves in the first place designing the story in a way for it to be recognized and oriented to as such by the recipient. As Sacks (1992, vol. I) put it, 'The beginning clues you into what sorts of things you should watch for so as to recognize the end, and also what sort of thing you should announce, having recognized the end' (p. 766). The extensive body of research on L1 storytelling, predominantly focusing on English, has documented the following to be particularly relevant for the opening of stories in first position—and this is also what we observe our L2 speaker do at the latter stages of her stay:

 (i) *Sequentially placing the story-opening at a point where such a placement is locally relevant.* Storytellings may be initiated as new sequences after a preceding sequence closing sequence and they may be displayed to various degrees as responsive to prior actions (Sacks 1974, 1992; Jefferson 1978).

(ii) *Projecting an incipient storytelling.* When telling stories in first position, speakers typically work toward making the story-opening recognizable as the opening of a story. This is key to securing the ground for the telling and to suspending the turn-taking machinery so as to allow the teller to produce a multi-unit turn (Sacks 1972; Mandelbaum 2013).

(iii) *Displaying relatedness to prior talk.* Speakers use a variety of techniques to display the fittedness (or disjunctness) of the incipient story with regard to what precedes, including 'disjunct markers' (Jefferson 1978: 221) such as 'oh' or 'but' or repetitions of prior talk in responsive utterances of the type 'speaking of X' (Jefferson 1978: 221). These provide for the story to be heard as relevant for the ongoing interaction (Sacks 1992, vol. II: 229) in a way that may project it as continuous with prior talk, or as disjunct from it (Jefferson 1978: 223).

(iv) *Securing recipiency and ground for the telling.* Speakers routinely design openings so as to secure the ground for recipients to attend to the telling. They use, for example, story prefaces (Sacks 1974, 1978) to establish that the recipient does not already know the story (Sacks 1974: 349) or that he or she knows some of the terms necessary to understand the story (e.g. referents). Story prefaces include offers to tell, request for a chance to tell, and so on. Recipients in turn regularly cooperate by displaying readiness to attend to the story, and they orient to the story under way.

(v) *Projecting aspects of the nature of the telling.* When opening a story, speakers may project aspects of the nature of the upcoming telling (e.g. a complaint story, a 'stupid me' story, a funny story), and thereby index how the story is expected to be oriented to by recipients: 'Tellers shape recipient responses' (Mandelbaum 2013: 498). Openings are key to cuing recipients into anticipatable points of recognition of the story climax and the closing of the story, and hence provide opportunities for anticipating relevant places for recipient reactions of a certain type (cf. Sacks 1992: 766).

In a nutshell, then, as Jefferson (1978: 237) put it, 'features of the story's emergence are consequential for its reception and its sequential implicativeness'. These features contribute to projecting the story as tellworthy and they provide for the possibility for co-participants to specifically align as story recipients (Jefferson 1978: 225).

ANALYSES

In what follows we provide analyses of selected excerpts documenting how the au-pair Julie goes about opening stories. The analyses focus on the features (i) through (v) listed above. To provide a clear picture of what, in the data, appears as a gradual change, we first illustrate how Julie designs story-openings at the start of her stay (months 2 and 3), and then turn to how she designs them toward the end of her stay (months 7 and 8).

Initial stages: months 2 and 3

In the start of her stay, as a relatively advanced L2 speaker, Julie deploys means to frame the story in terms of place and time in a way that closely resembles Hellermann's (2008) intermediate-level speakers (see above). Yet, she typically opens her stories *in medias res*, without prefatory work or indications of how the upcoming telling is to be understood or how it fits the ongoing conversation. This in turn affects how recipients orient to her telling.

Excerpt 1 shows a story produced as a response to a prior story (i.e. a second story, Sacks 1992). The excerpt starts with Jordan, one of the family's children, bringing to a close a story about the water temperature in the swimming pool they had gone to that afternoon. According to Jordan, 'you stay nevertheless' (l. 01) in the pool even though the water might feel cold if you do not move.

(1) boulangerie 'bakery store' (Julie_091012)

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01 JOR: mais-  (0.3) .hh si tu bouges pas tu restes quand même
        but                 if  you  don't move  you stay     nevertheless

02      l'eau c'est un petit peu froide °(alors;l'eau)°.
        the water it's  a  little  bit   cold      (so; the water)

03 MAR: mh=mh.

04      (0.3)

05 MAN: [((shouting in the backround))]

06 JOR: [(xx)] au nid-du-crô.
         (xx)   at the nid-du-crô ((name of a swimming pool))

07  (0.6)
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→  08 JUL: à: la b:oulangerie elle   m'a- (0.3)
              at   the bakery        she    to me-

→  09       euh: j'ai demandé deux (0.4) euh cacaos?
                  I    asked for   two           hot chocolates

   10  (0.6)

   11 JUL: et puis ehm (0.3) elle m'a [demandé&
           and then          she   asked me

   12 JOR:                             [DEUX cac[aos.
                                        two    hot chocolates

   13 JUL:                                      &[ah je l-
                                                  oh  I

   14       je les fais <ti↑èdes>.
            I   do them      lukewarm

   15  (0.3)

   16 JUL: et moi j'ai- (0.3) <tièdes>?=hh[hhh.]&
           and me  I  AUX-        lukewarm

   17 MAR:                               [heh heh

   18 JUL: &je ne savais pas qu'est-ce que ça °veut dire°°.=
            I   didn't know       what it meant

   19 MAR: =ah ouais.=
            oh yeah

   20 JUL: =↑oui lauwarm.
            yes  +lukewarm ((in German))+

   21 (0.3)

   22 JUL: c'est- ouais.=

              it's     yeah

   23 VIC:  = ↑mh=

   24 JUL: =c'est pas ch↑aud pas f[roid.=
            it's    not   warm   not cold

   25 MAR:                        [>ouais ouais<.
                                   yeah   yeah

   26 JUL: hhhh.

   27 +(6.1) ((Manon jumping and laughing))+

   28 JOR: mais ma↑non c'est pas <drô:le> hein.
            but    Manon  it's not    funny    PRT

   29  +(8.1) ((Manon laughing))+

   30 MAR: ouais c'est bien comme ça dans l'après-midi
            yeah   that's  fine   this way  in   the afternoon

   31       on peut se donner un rendez-vous en ville
            we  can      arrange  to  meet         in town
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Julie places her telling after the preceding storytelling sequence has reached a mutually recognizable end (see lines 2–7). The initial turn of the telling, at line

8, starts with the adverbial *à la boulangerie* 'at the bakery', which frames the story in terms of place and can be heard as an opening marker (the bakery shop was not mentioned in prior talk). This is followed by the locally subsequent reference form *elle* 'she' (cf. Sacks and Schegloff 1979) in a locally initial reference position, which is then self-corrected (*elle* is replaced by *je* 'I', line 9), and the use of past tense. Thereby, the beginning of the telling is made only minimally recognizable as opening a story by means of reference to place and time.

As opposed to what we will observe for the latter months of her stay, Julie makes no use of techniques to display the relevance of the story to the ongoing course of action. Nor does she use discontinuity markers to project what comes up as disjunct from the preceding talk or action. This provides a sense of the story as coming in *in medias res*. For the specific case of second stories, Sacks notes (1992, vol. I: 767): 'the *second story* very nicely picks up the point of the first story', that is, it 'stand[s] as an analysis' of the prior story (p. 771). This is clearly not what Julie does in the first months of her stay; on the contrary, in excerpt 1 her story's topical relation to the preceding story about the swimming pool is indicated only further on in the unfolding telling: in line 14, the lexical item *tièdes* 'lukewarm' can be heard as vaguely related to the preceding talk about water (see line 2). Furthermore, the telling is not projected as a telling of a given type (a complaint story; a 'stupid me' story...), and therefore no cue is provided for the recipient to anticipate how the story is meant to be responded to, nor what its possible climax may be.

Also, from its very onset, the telling encounters a noticeable absence of recipient's display of alignment to the ongoing telling. While the pause in line 10 might indicate the recipient's giving time to Julie to pursue her telling, what appears to be designed as the story climax (line 16; see the slowing down of pace, the laughter, combined with the use of direct reported speech) is responded to merely normatively by laugher (cf. Jefferson 1979, for laughter as a normative response to laughter). Julie herself observably orients to problems with recipiency. Following up minimal recipient responses (lines 17, 19, 23), she expands the telling in pursuit of recipient uptake (lines 18, 20, 22, 24), thereby making available further opportunities for recipients to respond to its punchline. Yet, she again receives only minimal responses (lines 23, 25) before Marie turns to other business (lines 30–31) while the children are teasing each other (lines 27–29).

In sum, Julie encounters trouble with getting her telling through to the recipients, and ultimately the telling just fades out (lines 25–30). Jefferson (1978: 229) has discussed what she calls a 'dramatic instance' where 'the story is treated as utterly irrelevant to the ongoing talk and is sequentially deleted'. She comments:

> Routinely, the relationship of a story to subsequent talk is negotiated between teller and recipients. For example, recipients will not actively move to delete a story, but will withhold talk that demonstrates the story's sequential implicativeness, and tellers will search

for ways to elicit recipient talk, deploying story components as story exit devices.

This is exactly what we see Julie do from line 20 on, yet her telling fails to elicit adequate recipient uptake, and, ultimately, bears no sequential implicativeness (l. 30–31). This may be due to the fact that Julie does not project the story as relevant to the here and now of the ongoing conversation, nor as a given type of story that normatively can be expected to receive a given type of recipient reaction.

Similar features are shown in excerpt 2. The excerpt starts with the last bit of Marie's preceding telling about her daughter's crying fits (lines 1–6), which comes to a close with Julie's affiliative *oui a:h* (line 7).

(2) pour rien 'for nothing' (Julie_091028)

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01 MAR:  ↑non mais: c'est- c'est tellement (con) quand elle ↑pleure
            no   but    it's    it's    so       stupid  when  she   cries

02       comme ça [pour ↑RIEN,]&
         like   this  for     nothing

03 JUL:           [(r::)e:::h]
                    ((non-lexical))

04 MAR:  &et [<↑FOrt>],
          and     loud

05              [((noise of a fork))]

06       et [ah::=
         and  oh

07 JUL:     [ou↑i:] a:h.
              yes       oh

08 (0.2)
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→ 09 JUL: et puis- euh une fois on est allé à l'école,
              and then   one time we   went   to school

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10   (0.8)
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→ 11 JUL: et:: ehm ils   ont <couru:>?
              and   they were running

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12   (0.7)

((storytelling continued; Julie reports what they did while running,
and how that ended with one of Manon's fits))
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In line 9 Julie opens a storytelling after the prior telling comes to an end. Just as in excerpt 1, she thus displays orientation to sequentially appropriate moments for placing a story. The opening of the story is done by means of the continuity marker *et puis-* 'and then' which suggests continuation of the prior course of action, yet is highly unusual for the opening of a story, even a

second story; also, what comes next is hearable in its sequential context as doing something different than continuation. As Jefferson (1978) and Norrick (2001) have shown, the discourse markers used at story-openings are typically disjunct markers such as 'but' or 'oh'. This is also what we observe Julie do at the later stages of her stay, both in first and second stories (see excerpts 4 through 6 below), yet not at the earlier stages. In the quoted excerpt, the story is then projected as a telling by means of temporal framing (*une fois* 'once') and the use of past tense *(on est allé à l'école* 'we went to school'). While at the start of the telling, no indication is provided as to how the story connects to the preceding talk, that connection will be made recognizable only in the further course of the telling, where Julie reports on one specific crying fit of Manon's that she had herself witnessed.

Similar features are shown in excerpt 3, which starts with the closing of a preceding sequence in which Marie had talked about the parking problems in town. This is a first story volunteered by Julie.

(3) cadeau gift (Julie_091028)

```
     01 MAR: °°ou[ais°°.
                 yeah

     02 JUL:    [°okay:°
                  okay

     03  (4.4)

     04 MAR: [hhh.

     05 JUL: [°oui°.
              yes

     06  (3.3)

     07 JUL: +↑mh ((eating))+

     08  (1.0)

  →  09 JUL: et:=on^a décidé qu'on va: ehm (1.0) euh euh bricoler
              and   we  decided    that we are going to          make

     10      >quelque chose< pour .hh e:hm (1.0) eh- eh- e::h noël.
              something      for                                Christmas

     11  (1.1)

     12 JUL: pour euh not- no::s familles.
              for           our   families

     13  (0.5)

     14 MAR: ah ouais?=
              oh really
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15 JUL: =comme ca- cadeau=ouais.
            as        a gift    yeah

16  (0.2)

((storytelling continued; Julie recounts what practical preparations
they took ensuing the decision to make something for their families))
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Just like in the preceding excerpts, Julie's story is introduced (line 9) after a jointly oriented to sequential closing (lines 1–8). Like in excerpt 2, it is launched by means of a continuity marker *et* 'and', although the story is topically unrelated to preceding talk. And again, the story is only minimally framed by means of past tense (*on a décidé* 'we decided'). Also, note the use of a locally subsequent referential form *on* 'we' in locally initial position. As so often during the first months of her stay, Julie's story-opening encounters trouble with recipiency (see the absence of recipient reaction at line 11, and Marie's delayed response by means of a change of state token at line 14, in which she orients to the start of the telling as an informing).

Excerpts 1 through 3 illustrate recurrent features of the story-openings accomplished by Julie during the initial months of her stay in the French-speaking environment:

(i) Observable *orientation to issues of sequential placement*.
(ii) *Minimal projection of the incipient telling* by means of past tense and adverbial expressions that frame the story in terms of time or space, based on a recurrent structural pattern: [(discourse marker) + temporal/spatial framing + story].
(iii) *No display of the 'locally occasioned'* (Jefferson 1978) *character of the telling*, that is, of the *hic et nunc* purposefulness or relevancy of the incipient story; the relevance to prior talk—if at all—is displayed only late in the telling-in-progress.
(iv) *No observable means designed to secure recipiency and ground for the telling* (e.g. story prefaces, Sacks 1974).
(v) *No indications further characterizing the story* and allowing recipients to anticipate how it is meant to be received.

In short, the story-openings during the initial months of Julie's sojourn are only minimally tailored so as for the story to be received as relevant in the course of the ongoing interaction, and so as for it to be anticipatable for the recipient as a telling of a specific type. Also, Julie observably faces difficulties with receiving alignment on the part of recipients *as story recipients*. And this is so despite the fact that she does not encounter any substantial communicative problems due to gaps in her linguistic repertoire.

Latter stages: months 7 and 8

Over time, Julie develops techniques allowing her to render the storytelling recognizable as a telling, and to project it from its onset as relevant to the ongoing interaction and as a telling of a given type.

Extensive prefatory work preceding the launching of the story proper is typical for the latter months of Julie's stay. Excerpt 4 shows the start of a first story volunteered by Julie (see excerpt 3 above for the opening of first stories in the earlier stages of her stay). The excerpt starts with Marie, the mother, disciplining her two children (lines 1–5). As Marie is currently dealing with the children, one particularly pressing interactional issue that Julie has to tackle when launching the story is to secure recipiency. Although the possible upcoming of a telling is projected from lines 6/8 on, the story proper is opened only in line 28, preceded by substantial prefatory work.

(4) le belge 'the Belgian' (Julie_100315)

```
      01 MAR: =alors tu prends le tien pis vous arrêtez:
                 so     you   take    yours    and you    stop

      02      de vous énerver pour rien.
                 getting annoyed    for   nothing

      03 JOR?:mais toi t'as celui-là- bon moi j'ai celui-là.
                 but   you you have this one    well  me  I have this one

      04  (1.1)

      05 MAN:  moi je prends celui-[là?
                 me  I    take     this   one

  →   06 JUL:                       [mai:s euh [ce weekend&
                                     but           this week-end

      07 MAR:                                  [mhm

  →   08 JUL: &il y avait aussi un belge,
                 there was      also    a Belgian guy

      09 +(1.0) ((dish noises))+

  →   10 JUL: de: un flamand,
                 from   a  Flemish

      11 +(1.1) ((dish noises))+

      12 MAR: à ski?
                 skiing

      13 +(0.5) ((dishes noises))+

      14 JUL: non mais euh euh (0.7) avec nous,
                 no   but                 with    us

      15 (1.1)

      16 JUL: avec l'↑uni  ouais.
                 with   the university yeah
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        17 MAR:  ouais.
                 yeah
        18  (0.2)

        19 MAR:  ah::
                 oh
  →     20 JUL:  mais il était en jeans hhhh.
                 but    he was    in  jeans

        21 MAR:  +ah ouais? ((smiley voice))+
                  oh  yeah

        22 (1.0)

        23 MAR:  [ah=ouais.
                  oh  yeah

        24 JUL:  [.hhhhh +ou:i:: ((smiley voice))+
                          yes

        25       =[et puis:(hn)
                   and then

        26 MAR:  [+c'est bien les belges ça. ((smiley voice))+
                   that's typical of Belgian people

        27       hhhh=

  →     28 JUL:  =ouais (0.4) .hh et puis euh (0.4) OUais: j'ai dit=euh
                  yeah               and then            yeah    I  said

  →     29       si: euh ouais (.) si  il peut >skier avec ça< h.
                 whether    yeah    whether he can   ski    with  this

        30       et il a dit OUAIS ÇA VA TRES BIEN ET TOUT
                 and he said    yeah   it works very well   and all

        ((storytelling continued; Julie recounts how the Belgian fell while
        skiing))
```

Julie's turn in lines 6 and 8 is designed so as to anticipate a potential telling about a given referent. She starts off with the discourse marker *mais* 'but', frequently found in story-openings (Norrick 2001). The *mais* 'but' is here not used to introduce a disagreement or a contrast, but rather as a disjunct marker (Jefferson 1978) indicating that what comes up somehow differs from the course of action so far. This is followed by the adverbial phrase *ce weekend* 'last week-end' (literally: 'this week-end') which frames a possible telling in terms of time; additionally, it refers to the participants' shared knowledge about Julie having spent the past week-end skiing with friends. The subsequent presentational construction *il y avait aussi un belge* 'there was also a Belgian guy' introduces a brand new referent as a possible tell-about. The turn-start is thus organized on-line in a way so as to successively project something new coming up, to project it as dealing with happenings in the past, and to frame it as being about a precise referent.

Julie's pausing (lines 9 and 11) exactly at this point provides the opportunity for her co-participant to either ratify the referent and the projected telling or to display trouble or unavailability for the telling.[2] What Marie does in line 12 is exactly displaying trouble—or at least offering a candidate understanding that invites confirmation—thereby opening a side sequence (lines 12–19) and at the same time showing her interest in the circumstantial detail of the incipient telling. It is only after the close of the side sequence, and hence after having secured the ground for her upcoming telling in terms of reference/ circumstantial detail and recipiency, that Julie actually proceeds to announce *mais il était en jeans* 'but he was in jeans' (line 20). This piece of information will turn out to be centrally relevant for the gist of the story, as Julie will report on this guy racing like crazy until he falls into the wet snow, wearing only jeans. Julie's informing in line 20 hence projects features of the type of telling she is about to engage in (something unexpected, unusual, possibly funny[3]; see Julie's laughter tokens at line 20 and Marie's alignment at line 21). It thereby establishes the tell-worthiness of the events to be reported. By the same token, it cues the recipient to how the story is expected to be attended (as a troubles-telling, or else as making fun of someone; cf. Goodwin 1984), and thereby foreshadows possible points of recognizability of the story's punch line. Also, Julie clearly receives Marie's alignment and affiliation (lines 21, 23, 26–27).

Excerpt 5 exhibits similar features. This is again a first story, but here it is triggered by the ongoing course of the conversation (cf. Jefferson 1978; Sacks 1974, 1992) and is displayed as such:

(5) moi je connais une fille 'I know a girl' (Julie_100216)

```
01 MAR: ts. >bon< c'est clair que dans l'idéal c'est mieux de prendr-
             well    it's    clear   that   ideally    it's    better   to take

02          (0.4) d'avoir un peti:t job le: week-end et pis:=
                   to have  a   little   job   on the week-end  and then

03 JUL: =ouais.
          yeah

04 (0.5)

05 MAR: .h mais moi je trouve- je pense tu trouves pas si facilement
            but   me   I  find     I  think   you  don't find   so    easily

06          °°hein.°°
             PRT

07 +(3.3)((drinking sound))+

→  08 JUL: °mais° MOI je connais une fille qui euhm <travaille
            but    me   I  know    a   girl   who         works

→  09       à la ga::re>?
            at  the train-station
```

```
→  10 JUL: dans=le: (1.4) °dans le petit bar là dans le:::° (0.2)
              in    the          in   the little bar there in  the

→  11       °tu peux aussi euh boire un thé° [ou boire une bière  hh.
             you can   also      have  a  tea    or have   a    beer

   12 MAR:                                  [m↑hm.

   13 (1.3)

→  14 JUL: et:=euh: (0.4) ouais (1.0)
            and            yeah

   15       elle gagne <vingt francs l- l'↑heure>?
            she   earns   twenty francs    per  hour

   16 MAR: mh=c'est pas mal?
               that's  not  bad

   17 JUL: ouais.
            yeah

   18 (0.8)

→  19 JUL: mais elle a dit que: c'est le prix normal pour un étudiant.
            but  she  said  that   it's  the normal price  for  a  student

   ((in the subsequent turns, the telling fades out))
```

In the start of the excerpt, Marie presents a pessimistic assessment of the possibilities for students to find *un petit job* 'a little job' on the week-ends (lines 1–6). Julie's subsequent turn (from line 8 on) is designed as a reaction to that assessment. Aspects of the relevancy of that turn to prior talk are displayed by Julie's turn-initial *mais* 'but' that functions not merely as a disjunct marker, but also projects upcoming talk as disagreeing with Marie's prior assessment. The lexical item *travaille* 'works' serves as a topical back-linking device alerting the recipient to how the turn-in-progress is related to preceding talk. The presentational construction *MOI je connais une fille qui* 'I know a girl who', in turn, has the effect of proposing a referent (note its accentuation in line 8 and its incremental specification in lines 9–11)—and possibly of submitting it to co-participants' ratification (see the try-marked intonation at line 9)—before pre-dicating something about it. The use of the presentational construction (see also ex. 4 above) as well as Julie's providing further information about the girl suggest that she is doing more than informing: She is setting the scene for an upcoming telling. Julie actually launches the report on the girl's doings (see the past tense in line 19) only after having received Marie's *mhm* (line 12), which confirms both Marie's availability as a recipient and the accessibility of the referent introduced by Julie, followed by Marie's assessment *c'est pas mal* 'that's not bad' (line 16), which in turn displays her active engagement as a recipient. So, in this excerpt, the storytelling emerges as part of the teller's dealing with other business, namely disagreeing with a prior assessment.

Similar prefatory work before the actual launching of a storytelling is shown in excerpt 6, documenting the start of a second story told by Julie that is remarkably different from the second stories shown in excerpts 1 and 2 taken from the first months of her stay:

(6) les enfants 'the kids' (Julie_100315)

```
   01 MAR: t'as l'impression qu'ils  tiennent pas sur leurs jambes,
           you get the impression    that they  won't manage to stay on   their     legs

   02      ils sont tellement petits: que:
           they are    so           little      that
   03  (0.4)

→  04 JUL: +mh ((eating))+ (0.9) mais ((eating; 2.4)) .hh euhm (0.2)
                                   but

→  05      les: enfants de: de robert giroud là?
           the    kids      of      Robert  Giroud  you know

   06  (1.1)

→  07 JUL: le: (1.2) le- le chef de sport [°je sais pas quoi°
                       the head  of  sports      I don't know what

   08 MAR:                                 [mh

   09  (1.3)

→  10 JUL: eux ils vont euh partout.
           they      go         everywhere

   11 (0.9)

   12 MAR: les petits [ou:
           the little ones     or

   13 JUL:            [euh l'autre: moniteur >il a dit que< (0.6)
                       the other    instructor   he  said    that

   14      ils vont partout.
           they go    everywhere

   15  (1.1)

   16 JUL: >parce-< moi: je les ai vus aussi,
            because     me I    saw them      also

   17      et: ouais c'était +incroyable,
           and   yeah    it was      unbelievable

   18      i:ls allaient là où moi je- je- je vais même pas.
            they were going   where   I              don't  even   go

   19      ((smiley voice))+
```

Marie has just reported on a story about a very young skier. Her telling comes to a close with a critical assessment (line 1), suggesting how absurd it is to ski at such a young age. Julie then provides a counter-example that is delivered as a story about children she knows (lines 4–19). This second story shows recurrent features of Julie's practices for story-opening during the latter months of her stay. Julie starts off with a pre-start (*mh*, line 04) followed by the marker *mais* 'but', while still chewing on her food. The *mais* 'but' here functions not merely as a disjunct marker but possibly also as a disagreement marker.[4] Again, the key referent is try-marked (line 5), allowing Julie to check the ground for referent accessibility. The subsequent absence of recipient reaction (line 6) is oriented to by Julie as indicating potential referential trouble, since Julie extends her turn (line 7) so as to specify the prior referent. Just as in excerpts 4 and 5, it is only after such extended referential work that Julie actually offers a predication on behalf of the referent (line 10). Also, the referential work is again accomplished by a complex syntactic pattern: While in excerpts 4 and 5 we saw Julie use a presentational construction to introduce the protagonists of her telling, here she uses a left dislocation spreading over several turns (the NP 'the kids of Robert Giroud', line 5, is then co-referred to by the pronoun 'they', line 10). Clearly, at this point of her L2 IC, Julie uses grammatical constructions for the purpose of better designing her story-openings to be received, understood, and accepted by co-participants.

The design features of Julie's story launchings during the latter months of her stay with the host-family are as follows:

(i) *Observable orientation to issues of sequential placement.*
     Projection of the incipient telling, as part of extensive prefatory work (see iv below).
(ii) *Display of the relatedness of the incipient story to prior talk*, of its 'locally occasioned' character (Jefferson 1978): Julie displays her stories as responsive to prior actions, based on a variety of techniques that have been documented for story-openings accomplished by L1 speakers (Sacks 1974, 1992), such as topical back-linking and the use of disjunct markers.
(iii) *Securing recipiency and ground for the telling* by means of extensive prefatory work, similarly to what has been observed for L1 speakers (Sacks 1974).
(iv) *Projection of aspects of the nature of the telling*, that is, as being about some noteworthy issue, or about something funny, etc. This enables Julie to establish, from the onset, the tell-worthiness of her incipient telling and to foreshadow how that telling is expected to be oriented to by recipients—which again brings Julie's practices for story-opening close to what has been documented for L1 speakers (Sacks 1972; Mandelbaum 2013).

As evidenced throughout these points, what changes over time is both the sequential organization of the story-openings and how linguistic resources are put to use within these. In the latter stages of Julie's stay, we see for instance

the use of discourse markers that are 'fitted' to the interactional task of index-ing relation or disruption with regard to preceding talk (see e.g. *mais* 'but' in excerpts 4 through 6), while this was not the case in earlier stages (see *et puis* 'and then' in excerpt 2 and *et* 'and' in excerpt 3). What develops here are not linguistic forms, but a grammar-for-interaction, that is, a grammar that is used as a resource for organizing actions and making that organization mutually recognizable (Ochs *et al.* 1996). Similar observations pertain to the emerging use of presentational constructions to secure referent recognition in story-openings. As evidenced in particular in excerpts 4 and 5, what is at stake is not the mere use of the construction for introducing new referents (we find such uses even during the earlier months of Julie's stay), but its effective use in story-openings in which the construction is part of an interactional negotiation that consists in the teller's (a) proposing a new referent, and then (b) waiting for that referent to be acknowledged by the recipient before (c) predicating something about it (see e.g. Julie's pausing after the presentational construc-tion in excerpt 4). Grammar and the sequential organization of actions are here inextricably intertwined. On that basis, the story-openings accomplished by Julie in the latter stages of her sojourn are better tailored to the local cir-cumstantial details of the ongoing interaction, and are better designed to be understood, oriented to, and accepted by recipients.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION: L2 IC AS A GROWING ABILITY TO MANAGE THE LOCAL CONTINGENCIES OF TALK-IN-PROGRESS

In this article, we set out to document progressive change over time in how a (fairly advanced) L2 speaker accomplishes a given social action or course of action, and thereby to provide evidence for the development of L2 IC.

Analyzing change in social actions or practices over extended periods implies a range of methodological challenges for CA research (see above). A systematic collection-based description of changing actions or practices presupposes a large enough set of occurrences of a precisely defined action, course of action, or practice, which share consistency in terms of sequential and con-textual features of their particular occurrences across the examined period.

Based on the ubiquitous nature of storytelling in social life and its recurrence in the data, we have chosen in this study to explore how an L2 speaker, the au-pair Julie, goes about opening storytellings during dinner table conversations over the nine months of her sojourn with a French-speaking host family. The consistency of the recorded interactions in terms of setting, speech exchange system, and participants, as well as the narrowing down of our analytical focus onto how Julie opens stories told in first position (cf. Schegloff 1997) about events that have not been co-experienced by the story recipients, have pro-vided for a high degree of comparability over an extended period. Although each storytelling is uniquely locally contingent, and each practice is indexically

bound to that very local contingency, context-independent features of how Julie launches her storytellings at different moments in time were identified, based on the analysis of collections documenting systematic practices for different moments in time.

The observable change in Julie's practices for story-opening is summarized in Table 1.

In a nutshell, Table 1 indicates that Julie's practices for story-opening get increasingly closer to what has been documented for storytelling in L1 interactions, mostly based on English data. Of course, there is likely to be cultural variation in how stories are launched, and speakers' linguistic resources to do so vary among languages. However, issues such as recipient design, projection, and sequence organization are part of generic features of human social interaction and need to be dealt with when launching a story. Our data suggest that speakers of French deal with these issues in ways that converge with the findings for English. The change in Julie's practices of story-opening as she becomes a more proficient French L2 speaker provides evidence of exactly this.

Over time, extensive prefatory work emerges by means of which Julie displays relatedness to prior talk, secures recipiency, and establishes the tell-worthiness of her story, and thereby gets co-participants' specifically aligned as story recipients (cf. Sacks 1972; Jefferson 1978). She also shows increased use of grammatical constructions that are suited for getting exactly these interactional jobs accomplished. With this latter regard, our findings suggest that what changes over time in terms of certain linguistic resources of the advanced L2 speaker is not the availability of a given form, but the emergence of new interactional purposes that form is used to fulfill: A grammar-for-interaction can be observed to emerge. This latter point deserves close attention in future research.

Table 1: Change in the advanced L2 speaker's story-opening practices over time

	Months 2–3	Months 7–8
(i) *Sequentially placing the story opening at a point where such placement is relevant* (Sacks 1974, 1978; Jefferson 1978)	√	√
(ii) *Projecting incipient storytelling* (and securing grounds for a multi-unit turn; cf. Sacks 1972; Mandelbaum 2013)	(√) (Minimal: adverbials; tense)	√
(iii) *Displaying relatedness to prior talk* (cf. Jefferson 1978: 'methodic displays')	—	√
(iv) *Securing recipiency and grounds for the telling* (Sacks 1974, 1978)	—	√
(v) *Projecting aspects of the nature of the telling* (Sacks 1992; Mandelbaum 2013)	—	√

   Our study explored levels of IC beyond those documented by Hellermann (2008) in his study of storytellings in EFL classrooms (see above). If we relate our findings to Hellermann's (2008), a developmental path from beginner through intermediate to advanced and very advanced L2 speakers emerges. Taken together, the two studies indicate that at the very beginning of L2 learning, the L2 speakers' effort is centered on the delivery of informational content, at intermediate-to-advanced levels of competence, techniques start to emerge by means of which speakers make the launching of a story minimally recognizable to co-participants to secure their attention (basically: temporal and spatial faming by means of adverbials and tense), while at more advanced levels of competence, speakers more and more subtly tailor the story-opening to the ongoing interaction and to the recipient to make the incipient telling recognizable as a telling, as relevant to the here and now of the interaction, and as a telling of a specific type.

   Over all, the documented change in the L2 speaker's practices for opening a story indicates that, over time, L2 speakers deploy more context-sensitive conduct by means of which they manage more effectively the local contingencies of the talk-in-progress, and they show a growing ability to project upcoming actions to make them recognizable for co-participants (see Berger and Pekarek Doehler, forthcoming). We interpret these findings as indicating that L2 IC basically involves a growing ability to design turns and actions so as to provide for their fittedness to the local circumstantial detail of the ongoing interaction, allowing for increased 'local efficacy' of interactional conduct (cf. Brouwer and Wagner 2004).

   A last word is in order: Over the duration of her stay, Julie gets to know the family, moves from being a 'stranger' to establishing an increasingly central membership in the family. This is likely to affect not only the type of story she tells (for instance, in the start she typically tells about her own personal experiences, while in the end she tells about others); it is also likely to affect the way she delivers the story, and how she tailors it to the specific others that attend to it (see also Brouwer and Wagner 2004 for L2 speakers' elaborating 'joint practices'). The question then is: how can we tease apart what, in the observable change in Julie's storytelling practices, is related to L2 IC, and what is related to larger processes of socialization, including Julie's place in the family? This is not a problem of analysis, but a problem of interpreting the findings, that is, relating the documentable change in the speaker's practices to issues of development and competence.

   It is our understanding that the development of IC, along with the development of linguistic competence, are integral parts of an ecology of tightly interrelated strands of people's acting with others in the world while they move through their social lives. Interactional development—and SLA also for that matter—is profoundly bound to that ecology and cannot be extracted from it. The documented change in Julie's story-opening practices is symptomatic of this intertwinedness: it is indexically tied to the changing circumstantial details of the interactions she engages in. Therefore, if we chose here to focus

on L2 IC, we did it to shed light on one facet among a complex ensemble of interrelated facets of how people adapt to the ever-changing social world.

Symbols used in transcripts

[　]	onset and end of overlap
(1.5)	measured pause, in seconds
=	fast follow-up
&	turn continuation after overlap
coul-	cut-off
ce:	lengthening of preceding sound
chemin?	rising intonation
temps.	falling intonation
train,	continuing intonation
b<u>e</u>soin	accentuation
↑alors	rise in pitch
NON	louder
.h	in-breath
°ça fait tout°	softer voice
>et ça ça<	faster
<tout ça coûte>	slower
((laughing))	transcriber's comment

NOTES

1 The B2-level speaker's spoken competence is described in the CEFR (p. 74) as follows: 'Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively in a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. Can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances [...] Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationships with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party.'

2 This opportunity is given although the dish noises suggest that, momentarily,

co-participants might be orienting to business other than talk.

3 While informings such as 'he was skiing wearing jeans' may not be attended to in the same way in different contexts, in Switzerland—where skiing is a favorite pass-time—it is general wisdom that skiing in jeans is inappropriate: to the public eye, it basically qualifies you as a total dilettante.

4 As noted earlier, Julie's story is delivered as a disagreement with Marie's prior assessment regarding young children's skiing. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Julie quite efficiently offers both third-party (line 13) and eye-witness evidence (*moi je les ai vus* 'I saw them', line 16) to support her claim that 'they [i.e. the young children] go everywhere'.

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