Formulating and managing neighbourhood complaints: a comparative study of service provision

PLEASE CITE THE PUBLISHED VERSION

PUBLISHER

© Marc Alexander

PUBLISHER STATEMENT

LICENCE

REPOSITORY RECORD

Formulating and managing neighbourhood complaints:

A comparative study of service provision

by

Marc Alexander

A DOCTORAL THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of

Philosophy

at

Loughborough University

October 2018

1

Abstract

This thesis investigates how members of the public report neighbourhood problems in telephone inquiry calls to antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services in the United Kingdom (UK). It provides the first comparative analysis of how similar kinds of concerns (e.g., noise, smells, property access) are designed for different organizations that, in their own way, have a remit to provide service. Despite neighbourhood problems, and neighbour disputes, being such a widespread and pervasive concern in the UK, little is known about the service provided by the somewhat diverse organisations that exist to remedy them. This research examines actual interactions that take place in these institutional settings, focusing on the ways in which people formulate complaints about their neighbours' conduct, and how different services offer (or reject) assistance. In so doing, the thesis contributes in new ways to our understanding of how institutional identities, relationships, actions, and activities are shaped in these encounters. Further, it enriches our knowledge of the organisational features of social interaction.

The empirical basis for the research comprises a corpus of over 340 telephone recordings of interactions between members of the public and antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services. The data were transcribed and analysed using the approach of discursive psychology (DP), as embedded within the methodological framework of conversation analysis (CA). The four analytic chapters are organised around different aspects of service provision, and in their own way, address the two core CA concepts of 'comparative analysis' (i.e., comparing interactional features in or across environments) and 'recipient design' (i.e., formulating talk designed to display an orientation to co-present others).

The first analytic chapter examines how noise disturbance is initially recipient designed and establishes two predominant formulations callers use - 'agentive' (neighbours are invoked) and 'agent-free' (neighbours are omitted). In mediation calls, the agentive formulation is always used, whilst in environmental health calls, agent-free design is predominantly used. The second analytic chapter investigates the emergence of service-side business and demonstrates how 'concomitant shifts' (i.e. from caller experience to institutional concern) by call-takers treat certain information as adequate, and how callers are given interactional space (or not) to complain in various ways. The third analytic chapter comparatively examines how third-party agencies (TPAs) are recipient designed when

making the case for aid – specifically, as 'service-referrals' and 'service-mentions', and brings into focus, the interconnectedness of organisations that manage similar problems. The final analytic chapter investigates call outcomes through 'offers' and 'signposting' to TPAs. Offers might recruit callers in future courses of action or may only be treated as offers by next-turn-proof-procedure. Signposting typically involves rejecting the case for assistance – sometimes in normative terms, or in the vehicle of an offer.

Through comparative analysis, this thesis contributes significantly to our understanding of the interconnectedness of services and underscores the flexible ways in which neighbourhood problems are recipient designed for, and managed by, call-takers in organisations. This thesis lays the groundwork for future research by introducing new institutional environments for service provision – antisocial behaviour and environmental health agencies.

Table of Contents

Table of Tables

Acknowledgements

Thank you to my supervisor, Liz Stokoe. Liz, you have been hugely supportive to me over the past three years. You kindly provided me with data and have encouraged me in so many ways throughout the process of writing this thesis. You have guided and helped me to clarify and develop my ideas. You have given me inspiration, knowledge, and high-quality tea. I feel very fortunate that you have been my supervisor. Thank you so much.

I must also thank my additional supervisor, Rein Sikveland. Rein, you have been so supportive and positive, and given me clear and insightful comments - particularly towards the business end of the writing process, when various chapter drafts were flying around here, there, and everywhere. Thank you.

Thank you to Claire Foster and Olivia Shalofsky from the Press Office at Direct Line Insurance Group, for providing me with full access to the 'Neighbourhood Complaints' study that is citied in this thesis (see Jarrett, 2018).

Thank you to the members of the Discourse and Rhetoric Group at Loughborough, whose insights in conversation analysis and discursive psychology have taught me so much about doing analysis. Thank you to staff members, past and present - Charles Antaki, Michael Billig, Carly Butler, Susan Condor, Paul Drew, Derek Edwards, Alexa Hepburn, Ruth Parry, Elizabeth Peel, Marco Pino, Jonathan Potter, Jessica Robles, Marc Scully, Cristian Tileagă, Sue Wilkinson and everyone else who has attended DARG over my time at Loughborough. DARG is a special environment, which has allowed and encouraged me to try out ideas for this thesis. Thank you to all its members, for your comments and inspiration.

Thank you to my PhD colleagues at Loughborough, who I have shared great memories with - Shani Burke, Kat Connabeer, Mirko Demasi, Ann Doehring, Claire Feeney, Fabio Ferraz de Almeida, Tatiana Gherman, Jack Joyce, Sophie Parslow, Yuening Yang, Louise White, and Lin Wu. To Joe Ford, thank you for my 'DARG coordinator' induction – in particular, your patented 'four-minute rule'. My apologies also, for the unconventional use of condiments. To Emily Hofstetter and Bogdana Humă, thank you for the coffee, the cake, and the endless amount of support you have shown me, both academically and personally. I count myself

Introduction

As members of society, we have a basic human desire to interact with others, to form communities, and to develop relationships with those in our neighbourhoods. Occasionally, social cohesion is disrupted through the stresses and strains of everyday life, leading to disputes over noise, or concerns regarding unpleasant smells, or frustrations over property access through a shared driveway - all of which can negatively impact interpersonal relationships in our communities. Sometimes, these kinds of issues are not resolved between neighbours, which can result in the dilemma of where or who to turn to for help. There are several professional organisations in the United Kingdom (UK) which, in their own way, can and do offer assistance with neighbourhood problems, such as local government services and charitable bodies. However, we know little about how assistance is sought and provided within and across these different types of services.

This thesis is the first comparative study to investigate actual interactions that occur between members of the public and call-takers in different organisations, wherein neighbourhood issues are described so that they may be resolved. I examine recordings of initial intake telephone calls to antisocial behaviour, environmental health and mediation services in the UK to compare how callers report neighbourhood concerns, and how call-takers in these services manage their concerns. This thesis contributes to our knowledge of the ways in which institutional identity is revealed in these interactions, how complaints are formulated and managed, and how offering and rejecting assistance is accomplished (or not), in the provision of service. This thesis supplements our understanding of two core concepts in conversation analysis (hereafter, CA) - *recipient design* (i.e., formulating talk to be displayed as such for co-present others) and *comparative analysis* (i.e., comparing features of interaction across or within settings) (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Sidnell, 2009). Further, this thesis extends our knowledge of key psychological matters in discursive psychology (hereafter, DP), such as script formulations, dispositions, and subject and object-side formulations (Edwards, 2006; Edwards & Potter, 2017).

Although organisations manage similar kinds of neighbourhood issues, antisocial behaviour, environmental health and mediation services have their own remits regarding the ways in which they offer assistance, often relying on callers being involved in the provision of aid. For instance, antisocial behaviour units liaise closely with the police and may also depend on callers being in contact with the police so that assistance can be adequately

provided. Council-run environmental health services have the remit of offering assistance if a neighbourhood problem can be established as a regularly occurring one (e.g., a neighbour playing loud music), and so callers should keep records of problematic conduct in order to determine its recurrence. Mediation services, which are typically charitable organisations, rely on disputing neighbours meeting in person to resolve their differences. And so, there are different procedures and requirements in place that may or may not be known to someone approaching these services. This study is the first that systematically examines interactions in which similar kinds of problems are described for antisocial behaviour, environmental health and mediation services, and *compares* the different ways in which services manage callers' concerns.

However, while services might offer assistance (or not) in their own way, the issue of 'neighbourhood problems' is a widespread and pervasive concern in the UK. So much so, the topic of neighbourhood disputes has entered popular culture – particularly documentary-style television programmes which are dedicated to capturing 'real-life' disputes between neighbours.[1] Yet, neighbourhood problems are matters which effect many peoples' lives. A recent study reported that over a 12-month period, more than 577,000 members of the public in the UK contacted their local council to report a neighbourhood issue (Jarrett, 2018). Moreover, there are associated psychological and physiological health risks through stress and anxiety caused by neighbourhood disputes, conflicts, and neighbour harassment (e.g., Hill, Ross, & Angel, 2005; Shmool et al., 2015; Steptoe & Feldman, 2001). Nevertheless, for such a pervasive social concern, there has been relatively little empirical research on how neighbourhood concerns are reported, managed, and resolved – findings of which might better inform practitioners in service provision.

The research conducted uses, as its empirical base, a corpus of over 340 telephone recordings of interactions between members of the public and antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services. I will compare how neighbourhood concerns are reported, and how concerns are managed, *across* these services. I will analyse the data using DP, as embedded within the methodological framework of CA (Edwards & Potter, 1992a; Sacks, 1992b; Sacks et al., 1974). DP and CA are compatible ways of analysing naturally occurring utterances which focus on *how* people formulate their talk for others in actual interactions, rather than making claims based on, for instance, findings in experimental settings. DP and CA will provide unique and detailed insights into the ways in which callers

---

[1] For instance, "Neighbours From Hell" (2004) and "The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door" (2014).

to services describe their neighbourhood problems, so that help might be offered, and further, how call-takers in these services manage callers' problems.

Chapter summaries

In Chapter 1, I start by exploring neighbourhood concerns in their broadest terms by considering the nature of 'social problems'. I examine the history and etymology of the terms 'social' and 'problem' - how they are conceived, defined, and operationalised within the social sciences. I track the evolution from 'social' and 'problem' to the more contemporary definition 'social problem(s)', and its relevance to society and human identity (Schwartz, 1997). I then consider how social problems, as a topic, is approached across different social sciences. I review literature, in which sociologists endeavour to explain the root causes of social problems (Merton, 1957), or how social problems are socially constructed in ways that are distinct from social conditions (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). I consider how social problems are approached in psychology – for example, through reviewing literature on group behaviour (Lewin, 1947) and community dysfunction (Sarason, 1974). As the analytic thrust to this thesis relies on investigating how talk unfolds in real time, I examine how social problems have been approached through CA and DP in actual mundane and institutional settings, such as teenagers' talk (Sacks, 1979) and police/suspect interviews (Edwards, 2006). I review literature relevant to talking about troubles, complaining, and most significantly, how neighbourhood problems have been studied (e.g., Drew, 1998; Jefferson, 1988; Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005). In the final section, I consider the nature of doing comparative analysis, and detail how I went about the process. This literature review motivates the approach to my thesis, in that I address the issues of how neighbourhood problems are interactionally *designed* for institutions that have, in one way or another, the remit of providing assistance, and how relevant interactional features *compare* across services.

Next, in Chapter 2, to set the scene for explaining how I collected and analysed the data on which the thesis draws, I describe how antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services operate, focusing on their remits for service provision. I then detail the process of data collection, including participant recruitment, before considering relevant ethical issues. Following that, I describe the analytic practices of CA and DP that are used to analyse the data and discuss both approaches as mutually beneficial ways of examining and reporting on how people go about getting things done through the conversational machinery of talk.

In the following four chapters I analyse the data, which in so doing, represents something of a *journey* through regularly occurring interactional features involved in service provision. And so, Chapter 3 focuses on the *beginning* of a complaint sequence. I examine how *noise*, as a particularly widespread neighbourhood problem, is initially described to call-takers in mediation and environmental health services.[2] I consider the grammar of 'initial iterations' of complaints and establish two types of formulations that callers regularly use when presenting their problem – first, 'agentive' formulations where neighbours are invoked, and second, 'agent-free' formulations where neighbours are omitted. I find that agentive formulations are always designed in mediation calls, whilst most environmental health calls are 'agent-free'. I suggest that complaints are *recipient designed* by callers in this way for the agencies being contacted.

In Chapter 4, I move from the caller's domain to that of the service, by investigating how institutional matters emerge within a complaint sequence. I show how different services initially respond to callers' problems, and how these responses shape both the interactional environment and institutional nature of calls. I illustrate how this is achieved through *concomitant shifts* of relevant activities and categories - from caller experience of a trouble, to a problem to be solved by the call-taker. By comparatively analysing instances across mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour calls, I show how certain information is treated as adequate before concomitant shifts are produced by these services, which reveals both the similarities and differences of how call-takers, in their own way, go about providing a service. I demonstrate how interactional space is afforded, restricted, and extended, depending on the organisation contacted, and show how call-taker shifts observably respond (or not) to previous talk through the unfolding of the call.

In Chapter 5, I demonstrate how *other* services regularly feature as part of callers' accounts for calling the *present* service, by examining how 'third-party agencies' (TPAs) are invoked. I show two typical ways in which TPAs are produced - near the start of calls as 'service-referrals' (in which callers explicitly indicate they have been referred by a TPA), or later as 'service mentions' (in which TPA are invoked with reference to a referral omitted). I reveal how service-referrals re-categorise (or not) neighbourhood problems in ways which demonstrate concerns as *actionable* by the service being contacted – for instance, orienting to the urgency of assistance, but also, displaying uncertainty with what the service provides. I

---

[2] Due to the small size of the antisocial behaviour data set (see Chapter 2), there were no usable data specifically dealing with noise, and so are not represented in Chapter 3.

show that service-mentions are, by comparison, more ambiguous in design, and demonstrate how TPAs can be used in building the case for aid as a particular kind of problem, or as part of complainable activities. I show how TPAs are used as devices for recipient design across different agencies, building on the interconnectedness of organisations.

In Chapter 6, I conclude the analytic chapters by focusing on the consequences in calls for assistance. I investigate two typical types of *outcome* in service provision – *offers* of assistance and *signposting* to TPAs. I show how institutions establish grounds for granting aid through the recruitment of callers' accounts of their troubles, and the various ways in which callers accept and resist service outcomes. I reveal how offers are designed by services – for example, by projecting future courses of action that recruit the assistance of callers, or by framing talk in such a way that it is only observably treated as an offer by callers, through next-turn-proof-procedure. I show the ways in which signposting to TPAs typically involves *rejecting* the caller's case for aid - sometimes done by reformulating callers' concerns ahead of a rejection, or by designing rejections in normative terms. Significantly, I reveal how rejections can be designed in the vehicle of an offer - I discuss how this is important for understanding the delicacy of rejecting the case for aid, but also the difficultly in categorising the action of offering.

In the final chapter, I discuss the findings from the thesis, and how my thesis has contributed to our understanding of how *similar* kinds of neighbourhood problems are formulated for *different* services, that have the remit of offering assistance. I underscore how this thesis has significantly impacted our knowledge of two core CA concepts - recipient design and comparative analysis (Sacks et al., 1974; Sidnell, 2009), through the systematic examination of the corpus of calls to different dispute resolution services. I consider the *interconnectedness* of mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services, and, in particular, how services provide assistance in ways that are sometimes ambiguous, but also cross-cut in various *flexible* ways. I discuss limitations of this thesis, including the lack of usable data in the antisocial behaviour data set. I then propose directions for future research, which include expanding the scope to other services that were regularly invoked by callers; in so doing, building the sense of interconnectedness in service provision. I finally consider how my findings might supplement or be designed to create communication training for practitioners in mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services. I offer several findings that could be delivered through the CARM training method (Stokoe, 2011), as ways of enhancing training for professionals in these services.

Overall, this thesis will, for the first time, compare how neighbourhood problems are designed and managed across antisocial behaviour, environmental health and mediation services. This thesis will enrich our knowledge about the relationships between callers and call-takers in these interactional environments and contribute to our understanding of social interaction by revealing new and significant features of talk that people design and orient to in the provision of service.

Chapter 1:

Neighbourhood problems: Background and research

1.0 Introduction

Every year, thousands of people contact various services in the UK to report *social problems* in their neighbourhood, which are the kinds of issues typical in social or community environments that affect members of the public in some way. For instance, a recent survey[3] revealed that more than 577,000 individuals contacted their local council over a twelve month period (August 2016 - July 2017) to register some form of complaint against a neighbour (Jarrett, 2018). Problems are varied, covering such issues as noise disturbance, rubbish, antisocial behaviour, access to property, vermin, and unpleasant smells. Members of the public commonly report these kinds of issues by calling environmental health or antisocial behaviour services, which are run through local councils in the UK. Many people also contact mediation services, which are seen as alternative ways of effectively resolving neighbour disputes (Almeida, Albuquerque, & Santos, 2014).

Although different types of assistance may be offered, depending on the service contacted[4], what ostensibly drives contact with all these services, is that *something* should be done about the problem being reported, in terms of action being taken, or aid being offered. Researchers have established that having good relations with neighbours is seen as positive, in terms of the availability of both emotional and practical support – such as, looking out for each other's homes, loaning items, assisting with tasks, and running errands (Parkes & Kearns, 2006). Yet, relations can also be undermined by poor neighbourly conduct, and as a consequence, can create anxiety, social tension, and lead to neighbour disputes (Cheshire & Fitzgerald, 2015; Michaux, Groenen, & Uzieblo, 2017).

Despite there being a substantial body of interdisciplinary research focusing on the causes and effects of problems in neighbourhoods (e.g., Brenner, Zimmerman, Bauermeister, & Caldwell, 2013; Mankowski, Galvez, & Glass, 2011; Pearson, Breetzke, & Ivory, 2015), there has been limited investigation into neighbour relationships in general, and very little that has investigated the real life depictions thereof – in particular, how people come to

---

[3] Freedom of information (FOI) request issued to 387 local councils across the UK, of which 324 (89.4 per cent) provided usable content. All figures used are extrapolated to cover the entire UK, based on the populations in each local authority. The total population of the councils that provided usable content accounted for 85.9 per cent of the total UK population.

[4] For an overview of how environmental health, antisocial behaviour, and mediation services provide operate (their remit, and the type of assistance offered), see Chapter 2.

contact services for help, due to the problematic nature of their neighbour relations (cf. Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Stokoe, 2006; Stokoe & Edwards, 2009; Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005). How are *social problems* designed, articulated, and situated within the reporting of troubles to services that have the remit of offering assistance – and resolution? The CA research that does exist typically examines complaints, as a type of action, in one setting, or examines multiple instances of an action (e.g., a particular question design) across different contexts (e.g., Firth, Emmison, & Baker, 2005). Significantly, there has been almost no research that systematically investigates how *similar* types of social problems come about, are formulated, and managed, in the course of reporting neighbourhood issues for *different* kinds of service.

By *comparing* social problems across institutional environments, affords unique analytic insights into how people complain about their neighbourhood troubles, how service is offered (or not), and tells us something about how people go about describing their relationships with neighbours. The majority of comparative research in the DP/CA field focuses on studies relating to *universalities* of (embodied) interaction, sometimes across different languages (and species) (e.g., lexical items, actions; see Section 1.3). In this thesis, I aim to do something quite different, which is to examine how similar problems (e.g., 'noise'; see Chapter 3) are designed by callers for different organisations, and how call-takers in institutions (which have their own remits and obligations) design their talk for callers in service provision. In this way, calling services with a neighbourhood problem, can be a *vehicle* for interrogating the core DP/CA topic of *recipient design* – referring to the "multitude of respects in which the talk by a party in a conversation is constructed or designed in ways which display an orientation and sensitivity to the particular other(s) who are the coparticipants" (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 727). In turn, examining recipient design will invigorate our understanding of how members convey the conduct of the self and others (Drew & Heritage, 1992a; Schegloff, 2007).

In this chapter, I will review existing literature which overlaps and cross-cuts in ways that underpin and locate the analysis on 'neighbourhood problems.' First, in Section 1.1, I situate the overarching goal of this thesis by investigating 'social problems' in terms of the way academics have defined its etymology, history, and social scientific approaches that study it. In Section 1.2, I investigate how social problems are formulated and managed, by evaluating literature on troubles-telling, and complaining about others, in everyday and institutional contexts - in particular, services provision in neighbour dispute resolution services. In Section 1.3, I critique comparative analysis, as a way of approaching the data

analysis in this thesis. In Section 1.4, I summarise the main discussion points from the chapter, and establish the research questions that will underpin the thesis's trajectory. I will argue that academic research has generally not focused on the ways in which social problems, institutions, complaints, and conflict interconnect, in context of people going about their day-to-day lives. The review will show the need to understand more about how troubles are formulated and managed, through the interactional work at hand. Further, the review will demonstrate how *social problems* are understood in terms of culturally formulated and institutionally interpreted social conduct.

1.1 Social problems: Theories and approaches

In this section I critically review literature that motivates the research questions addressed in this thesis (p.48). My overarching analytic interest is with evaluating 'social problems' as a term that has been reified in and through academic journals and research activities. How is it understood and theorised by different kinds of social scientists, and in particular, how is it approached as a community or neighbour problem? And so, as a way of introducing the topic, I initially consider the phrase 'social problems', in terms of its origin and history. I trace how meanings of 'social' and 'problem' were combined, through an evolutionary process, to form the contemporary definition 'social problems'. I then illustrate how social problems are studied through three social scientific approaches. First, I examine literature that broadly falls within a sociological conception of social problems and explore how individual deviance can be explained (or not) by societal faults. Second, I will discuss the way social psychologists theorize and understand social problems in terms of causality - in particular, how conduct is explained by underlying psychological conditions. Finally, I investigate the ways in which social problems are approached from the interactional stance adopted in the current thesis; specifically, through CA and DP. Drawing on both sociological and psychological approaches, DP/CA 'respecifies' social problems as members' concerns in talk-in-interaction. Before that however, I consider what 'social problems' *means*, and how did it come about as a field of research?

1.1.1. A brief etymology of 'social problems'

A central dilemma, at least within sociology, appears to concern itself with the matter of whether there is *one* overarching social problem, or social *problems* - essentially, the social *problem* of the inequality between the poor and the rich, or the social *problems* that permeate society through shifts in cultural and political climates (Bernard & Bernard, 1965; B. J. Jones,

Gallagher, & McFalls, 1988; S. P. Turner & Turner, 1990). This tension partly stems from the competing concepts in sociology as a programme for complete restructuring, contrasted with a scientific research endeavour (see Section 1.1.2.), but also the historical environment in which the phrases themselves are used, as well as the origin of the lexical components 'social' and 'problem', that make up these terms (Schwartz, 1997). The English word 'problem', which originated around the Late Middle English (c.1150 - c.1500) period, was considered as a form of academic riddle, maths problem, or philosophic query for theoretical discussion, each soliciting some form of answer ("problem," n.d.). Over the course of the European-lead movement in intellectual Enlightenment (c.1650 – c.1800), the term 'problem' was divorced from the necessity of finding a solution, becoming a topic requiring investigation, for the very reason that there *was no* irrefutable explanation (Schwartz, 1997).

The word 'social' also took on new historical impetus, shifting from the Late Middle English period (taken from the Latin *socialis,* and from *socius* meaning 'companion, associate or ally'), to being regarded in terms of *social morality*; again, around the time of the Enlightenment ("social," n.d.). This movement, in which academics begin to consider the day-to-day activities of laypeople, led to 'social' being incorporated in the descriptions of human qualities and characteristics, of human identity, and agency (Schwartz, 1997). In a further historical move (c.1830), the term 'social' developed into a descriptor for *human aggregation*, in terms of distinguishing social groups within society, and with that, social and territorial boundaries, such as culture, language, and politics (Williams, 1983). Somewhat comparably, scholars began to move away from philosophical and economic writings regarding social matters, to consider 'social' as a *system* that focused on the statistical classification of *the average man* [sic] (Goldthorpe, 2000; Lazarsfeld, 1961). Notable parallels can be drawn with contemporary sociological and psychological methods of statistical analysis, such as using samples to make claims about populations.

Identifying where and when 'social' was combined with 'problem', is not necessarily straightforward (at least in academic writing), as the term itself has gone through a somewhat evolutionary process. There were indications of a *social problem* being under consideration from Belgian demographer Quetelet, who explored the correlation between insanity and age (c.1830). Quetelet argued that the *problem* of the diseased human mind might find a solution to which is of the upmost importance to *society* (cited in Schwartz, 1997). Other developments around this time saw the English "problem" condensed into German plays and poetry. As a consequence, these 'modern' ways of addressing societal matters could be made accessible to the public. Further, German scholars began adapting the French political phrase

le problème social into their writings of *die soziale Frage,* roughly translated as *the social question*, but historically understood as *the social problem* (Sammons, 1975). It was not until some years later (c.1870), that *social problem* made it into the English (written) language, through the work of British philosopher John Stuart Mill, who referred to the Reform Era with "the *social problem* of the future we considered to be, how to unite the greatest individual liberty of action, with a common ownership in the raw material of the globe, and an equal participation of all in the benefits of combined labour…" (Montgomery, 2010, p. 21, emphasis added). This sense of attentiveness to social cohesion (or lack thereof), underpins the *moral* nature of unfolding social problems, reported by those who experience them, as will be demonstrated in this thesis.

Notably, the *social problem* was, at this point in history, considered in the *singular*, in the sense that the only problem was *the* fundamental social problem of 'inequality' - of wealth, of politics, of morality, and such like. However, another move was underway, which begun to address particular problems in society, as a consequence of bourgeois greediness and problematic capitalist structures, such as the work of Henry George's aptly titled "Social problems" (George, 1883). Notions of *the social problem* and *social problems* developed further moral, political, and economical characteristics, and began to be addressed as partitioned off special areas of interest, such as William F Poole's articles (c.1880) investigating how people are fed, and how town rubbish should be managed (see Hannah, 2000). This academic trend of focusing on particular issues within society continued, such that by the end of the nineteenth century (leading up to present day), *social problems* had been adopted as the way of addressing inequality and social justice, while the singular *social problem* had become "the problem of doing sociology itself" (Schwartz, 1997, p. 276). This focus on the *specific* nature of issues within the community, directly relates to how institutions are set up to assist in such matters (as will be shown), in that there is ostensibly one issue which is *service-able* at any one time (see Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990).

In terms of contemporary definitions, the phrase 'social problems' is commonly considered in two ways. The first (provisionally, 'sense 1'; cf. Edwards, 2008) is defined as "any aspect of society that requires alteration or development, especially through some form of social engineering.", and second (provisionally, 'sense 2') defined as "a difficulty in forming or maintaining relationships based on interaction." ("social problem," n.d.). Essentially, a social problem is considered as the consequence of certain factors, which, in one way or another, lead to breaches of (or perceived breaches of) moral or social order,

which in turn can result in some form of conflict or dispute. These definitions observably attend to different social phenomena - a *social problem* is one that necessitates some modifying action being taken ('sense 1'), compared to a *social problem* that is relationally problematic in some way ('sense 2'). And so, 'sense 1' may be more representative of the *problem* aspect of social problems, and 'sense 2', the *social* aspect.

However, these two senses of *social problems* are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as I shall demonstrate in this thesis. For instance, callers to services may orient to or invoke relational problems with their neighbours, but also request that some action should be taken regarding their grievance, all within the same call to a particular service. I will also show that callers to different services (and call-takers from these services) *can* orient to either the *social* or the *problem*, in terms of reporting and/or managing *social problems*. That said, there is a certain apprehension in classifying social problems, as these demarcations have the potential to become an analyst's concern, rather than an interactant's. Nonetheless, these classifications, (even arguably fuzzy ones, as above), provide a basis from which members (and analysts) can and do draw upon in various ways, as will be illustrated.

Having established social problems as something regarded as socially problematic conduct, I now turn to address the central topic of how social problems are located as *neighbourhood* concerns - from sociological, psychological, and social interactional perspectives. However, these approaches have not been selected on an ad hoc basis. The analytic thrust of this thesis uses DP, underpinned by the methodological framework of CA.[5] These approaches to studying social conduct draw on sociology and psychology in various ways, which can be considered in terms of *top-down* and *bottom-up* ways of looking at social phenomena. Simply put, many sociological and psychology perspectives make claims about the world that are theory driven (top-down), whilst DP (and CA) considers the role of language (and embodied action) as central to observing members' methods for making sense of the world (bottom-up). Further, DP analysis reveals how members draw on sociological and psychological phenomena in the course of everyday interactions, displaying *doing* understanding, complaining, thinking, remembering, requesting, and such like. Consequently, by unpacking sociological and psychological perspectives on social problems, is important for allowing us to understand how *neighbourhood* problems are respecified as a member's concern.

---

[5] While briefly glossed here, DP and CA approaches will be given much greater attention in later sections and Chapter 2.

First in this section, I investigate two core approaches to social problems within sociology – the functionalist perspective and the value-conflict perspective. Second, I examine two psychological approaches that have a particular interest in social problems – social psychology and community psychology. Finally, I explore social interaction's role in addressing social problems, from the perspectives of conversation analysis and discursive psychology. I aim to demonstrate how these different ways of looking at the world can co-exist together, such that their similarities and differences can be drawn upon, both in terms of *accounting* for social problems, but also the *investigation* of such matters. In this way, these approaches are fundamental for understanding and addressing the overarching themes of this thesis.

1.1.2 The sociological approach

As with many (if not all) approaches to the study of human interaction within the social sciences, sociology has its share of discussions, debates, and disagreements in regard to collective definitions of social phenomena, including what counts as *a social problem*. I focus on two of the primary theoretical models, and their delineations of the sociology of social problems. Firstly, the *functionalist* perspective proposes that 'problems' are defined as 'social' specifically though societal consensus, and that social problems can be explained by particular social conditions. Secondly, the *value-conflict* view advocates that social conditions should be separated from definition of social problems, with the focus being on the claims individuals or groups make about social issues; essentially, through *social construction*. In the rest of this section, I unpack these two sociological perspectives in turn, regarding the matter of what these different approaches consider as a social problem.

1.1.2.1. The functionalist perspective

The functionalist standpoint concerns itself with identifying certain conditions or behaviours that impede the smooth functioning of society, or that propel society into instability (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). It is an approach that specifically focuses of the macro-level of societal structure and attempts to explain root causes of societal problems. Essentially, functionalism views sociology as the science of *social order,* made up of three main components – values (success, honesty, competition), status positions (gender role, class structure, occupation), and institutions (family, religion, education, economics, governance) (Parrillo, 2005). Each of these components play a central role in society's ability to function as an integrated system. Within the functionalist approach, a *social problem* has been defined as "an alleged situation

that is incompatible with the values of a significant number of people who agree that action is needed to alter the situation" (Weinberg, Rubington, & Kiefer Hammersmith, 1981, p. 4).

It would be helpful to illustrate, from the functionalist perspective, how social problems are approached by way of a 'classic' example concerning deviance (Parrillo, 2005). By drawing on the assumption that Americans value achievement leading to success, Robert Merton poses the question of how it is that society produces those that *conform* and those that are *deviant,* and proposes that societal faults *directly lead* to individual deviance (Merton, 1957). Merton suggests that most of society's members take the 'approved' route of endeavouring to achieve success through education and occupational jobs. However, some members do not have access to these methods of achieving success; likely because of forms of discrimination, such as class, race, or ethnicity. As discriminated members, those that cannot achieve success through legitimate means turn to illegitimate methods. Consequently, *deviance* is the combination of a prejudiced environment and the socialization of powerful motivations to succeed, as forced on them by the mainstream American culture (Merton, 1957).

However, there are those critical of the functionalist perspective, and particularly the notion that social problems are defined in terms of particular *social conditions.* If we consider the problem of gender inequality, why would it be considered important to discuss in the 1970s but not ten years previously? (Best, 2002). Other critiques postulate that consensus is *not* society-wide as functionalists propose, but locally bound. For instance, the matter of deviance is considered through particular social groups (e.g., class or ethnicity) or institutions (e.g., education or family) and the functions they perform. Essentially, the criticism is that each social unit maintains their *own needs* and not those of 'society', and consequently there can be conflict between groups as they seek to maintain their own special interests (Parrillo, 2005). Critiques such as these have led to the broader evaluation that the concept of social problems lacks any kind of clear and coherent definition, and thus, has not stimulated serious research in within sociology (Best, 2002).

1.1.2.2 The value-conflict perspective

Value-conflict theorists endeavour to critique conventional sociology's approach to social problems, criticising Merton as offering "neither a clear definition of the subject matter of the sociology of social problems, nor a distinctive theoretical approach to such a subject matter (Kitsuse & Spector, 1973, p. 412). In contrast to the functionalist approach, the value-conflict perspective draws on *social construction* (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) as a way of detaching

social problems from social conditions. As a consequence, there is a difference in how *social problems* are defined - "the activities of individuals or groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions" (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977, p. 75). In this perspective, studies of social problems focus on behaviours, and importantly, the *claims made* about such behaviours. This definition stands in contrast to the functionalist ('traditional') approach, as observed by the definitional shift from "social conditions" to "putative conditions". Significantly, the focus is on the *assertions* made by groups or individuals relevant to particular social problems, rather than the functionalist view that societal faults *lead to* social problems (Ibarra & Kitsuse, 1993).

Central to the value-conflict approach, is the focus on *claims-making activities*, including complaining about problematic behaviours or making demands for change. Significantly, "definitions of social problems are constructed by members of a society who attempt to call attention to situations they find repugnant and who try to mobilize the institutions to do something about them" (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977, p. 78). There is also the implication that a claimant *has a right* to be heard; for instance, writing a constituent letter to a congress member, a petition to the local council to fix potholes in the road, filling out forms, or filing complaints (Jacobs, Kemeny, & Manzi, 2003; Kitsuse & Spector, 1973). An important factor with this approach to the study of social problems is that definitions cannot be applied by sociologists *without* regard for those members who make claims (or respond to them) – essentially, definitions do not provide sociologists with a set of principles with which they can distinguish claims-making from non-claims-making activities *from the outside*. Rather, it is the *interactional setting* in which claimants make assertions about problems, and thus, sociologists "should ascertain how participants in an activity define that activity" (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977, p. 79).

Critiques of the value-conflict approach are more likely to come from within constructionism, rather than from outside, with the primary criticism being *ontological gerrymandering* associated to the analytic approach of constructionists; Spector and Kitsuse in particular (*see* Woolgar & Pawluch, 1985). The claim of ontological gerrymandering is related to the formulation of certain practices that are used to represent an event, action, person, object or group as having the distinct character suitable for some action, but with concerns regarding the use of particular words or discourses (Potter, 1996). The accusation is that Spector and Kitsuse adopt a theoretically erratic and incoherent stance, making false assumptions about the social conditions in their analysis (Best, 2002), and that realms of argument have been disregarded (Potter, 1996). As the value-conflict approach assumes that

claims-making is made independent of social conditions, there is a reliance on the analyst's assessment of the conditions. Thus, Woolgar and Pawluch's critique poses certain problems for sociologists whose notion of 'social problems' theory derives from the value-conflict model, as there is an insistence that social problems and social conditions must be separated.

1.1.2.3 Interim summary

In this section, I have illustrated how two of the main theoretical models within sociology define *social problems*. Firstly, I have shown the way in which *functionalist* theorists consider that societal faults lead directly to individual deviance. Functionalists endeavour to explain *root causes* of social problems. However, critics argue that the overarching functionalist definition of social problems is not society-wide as proposed, but locally bound relative to the special interests of small social groups. Secondly, I have highlighted that, within the broad *value-conflict* view, social conditions should be *separate* from social problems, with the focus being on how claims-making activities are formulated and managed through social construction of talk. Yet, there are criticisms of this perspective, such as accusations that analysts are disjointed in their false assumptions about social conditions, and that territories of discussion and argument have been ignored. In the next section, I discuss psychology's interest in social problems.

1.1.3 The psychological approach

In endeavouring to segue between sociological and psychological approaches to the study of social problems, it should be noted that psychology is somewhat preoccupied with the sociological study of deviance (Best & Luckenbill, 1982). Consequently, defining the 'boundaries' relative to where sociology stops, and psychology starts (or vice-versa) is not necessarily straightforward. Many mainstream psychologists have a general analytic interest in investigating *cause-and-effect* (some action or event resulting in another action or event). Further, psychology regularly concerns itself with exploring the underlying conditions of psychological matters. With this in mind, "conceptual commonalities" have been suggested (Kohn, 1976, p. 98) between psychology and the functionalist (mainstream) sociological approach to social issues - essentially, society being at fault (cause) for individual deviance (effect). However, an important point to note is that one of psychology's principal motivations is with inference making about populations by conducting experiments with (sampled) individuals, and not, as functionalists would have it, explaining individual behaviour by studying society.

Discussion and debate within psychology (and the social sciences in general) concerning the classification of *social problems* appears to have been neglected in recent years, with a failure to address society's more fundamental concerns, preferring to address smaller, less theoretically challenging questions (Jackson, 2002; Walton & Dweck, 2009). While older research is no less important to this thesis, it is significant (and somewhat concerning) that the topic has not received as much attention as it might; particularly as societal issues are recurrent, are both culturally bound and culturally 'shift', and are regularly problematic for society's members as they go about their everyday lives. In the rest of this section I briefly discuss psychological research on (the boundaries of) the topic through two of the more relevant approaches (in terms of their interest in society's problems) within the field of psychology – social psychology and community psychology. I address the central issue of what is psychology's interest in social problems.

1.1.3.1 The social psychological approach

Much of (classic) social psychological research into social problems is concerned with how *groups* conduct themselves, such as group decision making, intergroup discrimination, and social identity (e.g., Lewin, 1947; Tajfel, 1970, 1974). Studies of social problems have tended to focus on the intersection between individual psychology and the problems of group interaction, such as the ways in which group environments can alter the motives or behaviour of individuals, and how group conduct can adapt and change over time (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Some of the more recognised examples are the Robber's Cave experiments on intergroup conflict, and conflict resolution (Sherif, 1958, 1961). The experiments centred on two groups of boys at an American summer camp. When competing for finite resources, hostility between the two groups would emerge, either by word, judgemental bias, or provocative acts. The results of these experiments would come to be known as examples of 'realistic (group) conflict theory' (Levine & Campbell, 1972). These studies inspired many more experiments (and discussions) investigating intergroup conflict within social psychology (e.g., Brewer, 1979, 1999; Dovidio et al., 1997; Gaertner, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996; Halevy, Chou, Cohen, & Bornstein, 2010)

However, criticism has been directed at the methodological approaches to *group conflict* research, in regards to the shifting focus from the individual's relationship with society, onto the experimental group condition - experimental studies must be theoretically relatable to the *real world* and emphasize individual, interpersonal, and social processes (Billig, 1976). That said, previous conceptual patterns of interpersonal behaviour *had*

previously been proposed, such as "the authoritarian personality" (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950) and the "frustration-aggression" hypothesis (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939). Nevertheless, while these theories may, to an extent, account for individual behaviour, they are inadequate for explaining social interaction on a larger (group) scale (Tajfel, 1977). Further, the ways in which group members interrelate, collaborate, and conflict, can be as much to do with the history, character, ideologies and politics of group inter-relations than with in-group identification and out-group threat (Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Aside from observing the *individual-as-group-member*, social psychological approaches also focus on the ways in which social problems can be managed or resolved through effective strategies and cooperation (e.g. Buzinski & Kitchens, 2016; D'Zurilla & Sheedy, 1991; Didier, 1987; Rigby, Cox, & Black, 1997). Further analytic interests include the perceptions, attitudes, attributions, and dispositions of individuals *towards* social problems, commonly via self-reports (e.g., Kahn, Lee, Renauer, Henning, & Stewart, 2017; Prentice & Sheldon, 2015; Skitka, Mullen, Griffin, Hutchinson, & Chamberlin, 2002). One such study investigated how situational and social factors affect the potential for violent behaviour, by assessing Jewish and Muslim males' responses to vignettes of conflict scenarios (Winstok, 2010). Results suggested that, when confronted by 'same-religion' vignettes, responses were less severe than 'cross-religion' vignettes, and that responses were more moderate to 'cross-gender' aggression than 'same-gender' aggression. However, the author concedes *limitations* with the study, in that the results were derived from hypothetical scenarios. First, in terms repeating various encounters from different scenarios (the independent variable becoming 'transparent' over time). Second, is the problem with endeavouring to attribute behaviour in real situations from behaviour in hypothetical ones (Winstok, 2010).

An important point to make is the influence of social psychology in underpinning the discursive psychological approach to this thesis – specifically, the rejection of conventional approaches to social psychology, with the case being made to recruit social scientists (sometimes implicitly) in considering a new social psychology for studying human behaviour and social problems. Research on argumentation and the rhetorical use of language (particularly in areas of ideology, prejudice and nationalism) represents a key strand of

'social psychology'[6] (Billig, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1989), with the importance of language (and thinking) being a resource for arguing about matters in ways which push back against the conventional psychological assumption that language reflects cognitive processes (Billig, 1987). Argumentation and persuasive communication should be seen as a pervasive feature of everyday conduct and conflict – for instance, how holding an attitude should be considered in rhetorical terms as a position to which a counter position is held, with the expectation that another's stance will be criticised in order to justify one's own stance (Billig, 1991). Other research more overtly made the case for a new way of doing social psychology with a focus on the variability of accounts and descriptions through the analysis of social texts, such as how New Zealand's indigenous population of Maoris were discriminated against through Westernised constructions of culture and identity (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Further research showed how traditional methods of doing educational research failed to take into account the socio-discursive foundation of cognition and understanding in analysis of 'real life' school classroom interactions (Edwards & Mercer, 1987). These, different but related ways of respecifying social psychological matters would inform what would shortly thereafter emerge and be defined as 'discursive psychology' (see p.60) (Edwards & Potter, 1992a).

1.1.3.2 The community psychological approach

In essence, community psychology "takes a contextual view of people and *their* psychology", emphasising the need to focus on the thoughts, feelings, actions, health and well-being of individuals and groups within the context of their own communities (Orford, 2008, p. xi, emphasis added). Community psychological research into *social problems* tends to concentrate on the maladaptive (and adaptive) nature of human development, and of individual and group dysfunction and disorder - often within complex social, cultural, economic, and geographic environments (e.g., Sarason, 1981; Weinstein, 2006). Topics include neighbourhood crime (e.g., Allik & Kearns, 2017; Kilewer, 2013; Lindblad, Manturuk, & Quercia, 2013), racial integration issues (e.g, Brevard, Maxwell, Hood, & Belgrave, 2013; Thomas, Caldwell, & Jagers, 2016), and partner violence (e.g, Beeble, Sullivan, & Bybee, 2011; Dworkin, Javdani, & Allen, 2016; Emery, Yang, Kim, Arenas, & Astray, 2017). Studies such as these highlight one of community psychology's main interests,

---

[6] Billig's approaches to rhetoric, argumentation, nationalism and ideology would come to represent a more critical strand of as-yet unnamed 'discursive psychology' (Billig, 2012).

which is addressing *social problems* by emphasising marginalisation and diversity in society (Reyes Cruz & Sonn, 2011).

For example, mixed methods research compared 'community integration' satisfaction levels of vulnerable and homeless individuals, with highly integrated (mostly vulnerable/housed) people reporting their housing or neighbourhood conditions more favourably than those (mostly homeless) with low integration levels (Ecker & Aubry, 2017). While these findings are maybe not surprising, the researchers also highlight linguistic components of participants' accounts of their neighbourhoods. For instance, those who reported themselves as highly integrated also considered their dwellings as "homes", compared to those who reported lower integration who would report "noise" or "disorder" when accounting for their living conditions (in both houses and homeless shelters) (Ecker & Aubry, 2017).

Research within community psychology focuses on *sense of community* (SOC) - defined as "the sense that one was part of a readily available, mutually supportive network of relationships" (Sarason, 1974, p. 1). The SOC approach investigates (mostly through self-reports) members' positive and negative experiences of their own communities, but also, the shared encounters *between individuals* as community members in neighbourhoods (Boyd & Angelique, 2002). Yet, these experiences are commonly considered most relevant to the organisational context of groups, collectives, and neighbourhoods, rather than individual relationships (see McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Relationships between society's members are thus seen as an *element* within larger organisational community structures (Bryan, Klein, & Elias, 2007). This approach to studying the individual signals one of psychology's central (and for this thesis, problematic) methodological interests – that is, the preoccupation with investigating *underlying* psychological (and social) conditions for individual experience.

1.1.3.3 Interim summary

This section has described how social and community psychologists address *social problems*. Both approaches investigate causal relationships mapped to underlying psychological conditions. Individuals are primarily situated at the juncture with *the group* and are thus considered in terms of their membership to that group. Social psychologists also investigate attitudes, attributions, and dispositions of individuals concerning social problems. However, validity concerns include the fact that findings are derived from hypothetical or retrospective scenarios. Community psychology emphasises research into the dysfunction of individuals and groups within their cultural, economic, and social context. Yet, as SOC studies indicate,

individual experience is invariably considered in the context of wider organisational community structures. Studies such as those above highlight mainstream psychology's concern with investigating the *causes of* individual (and group) attitudes and behaviours.

In the next section, I describe the approach to social problems that underpins the thesis, illustrating how social problems are formulated as members' concerns.

1.1.4 The social interactional approach

Studies in language and social interaction bring a different perspective to research into *social problems*, in that traditional sociological (and psychological) topics are evaluated in terms of social order and social action (Maynard, 2005; Sacks, 1992b) and significantly, breaches of social conduct (Garfinkel, 1967). CA and DP[7] are approaches to the study of language and social interaction that enable understanding of how societal issues, such as those highlighted above (for instance, identity, conflict, and cultural diversity), *emerge* in the world through talk-in-interaction (Edwards & Potter, 1992; Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). In this way, interaction can be seen as constituting society and social phenomena, but also, the organisation of interaction, and the way that it demonstrates what *transpires* within the world (Maynard, 1988; Schegloff, 1987; Zimmerman, 2005). Approaches to the study of social interaction, such as CA and DP, help to illustrate the normative and recurrent practices members use in the course of their day-to-day lives, revealing the organisational and institutional conduct of interlocutors (Edwards, 1997; Garfinkel, 1967; Sacks, 1984b, 1992b; Schegloff, 2007). Below, I briefly explore some uses of these methods, emphasising the ways in which *social problems* are made relevant as part of members' everyday practices.

1.1.4.1 The conversation analytic approach

An important point should be emphasised from the outset, in terms of how CA approaches social matters. As illustrated in the subsections above, sociological and psychological practitioners endeavour to explain the world through the behaviour of people, or alternatively, explain peoples' behaviour through studying the world. Thus, there a *causal* relationship being proposed between the individual and society, such that one accounts for the other in some way. In contrast, CA approaches social phenomena by "describing the procedures by which conversationalists produce their own behaviour and understand and deal with the

---

[7] While defining CA and DP approaches to the study of interaction are of upmost importance in relation to the substantive content of this thesis (see Chapter 2), these terms may only be glossed and expanded on briefly here.

behaviour of others" (Heritage & Atkinson, 1984, p. 1). The everyday activities of members are produced and made accountable through common practices of talk-in-interaction, and analysis is generated from the observation of members' methods for interacting. In this way, CA's interest in social matters is grounded in what Sacks refers to as the "microscopic" in contrast to "the usual sociology as *macroscopic*" (Sacks, 1992a, p. 65).[8] This is not to understate the significance of macro-societal matters. Rather, that CA's contribution to social scientific research attends to ways in which *society's members* go about and manage their everyday activities.

Much of what gets labelled as 'social problems' (e.g., group identity, class, and ethnicity; discussed above) comprise sections of a population defined by their membership of particular categories (Schegloff, 2005). Studies in *category membership*, and the ways in which people are classified by themselves and others, form one of the foundational lines of inquiry within CA, as well as DP (Edwards, 1997; Potter, 1996; Sacks, 1992; see also Stokoe, 2012). It should be emphasised that membership categorisation analysis (MCA) primarily treats members' categorisations as *a topic* rather than a resource deployed in order to analyse interactions (Sacks, 1972). For example, an early CA study revealed how 1960s car-owning teenagers categorised their own and others' cars, and the owners of those cars (Sacks, 1979). Vehicle descriptions by the teenagers such as 'Pontiac station wagon' and 'hot-rod' were shown by Sacks to operate as opposing characterisations as ways of indexing identities and social status, not only through describing vehicles and people, but also the speakers doing the describing. Further, categories of 'teenager' and 'hotrodder' are revealed respectively as adults and members evaluations of the same set of people; in so doing, illustrating how distinctions are made between groups, but also the ways in which membership is categorised relative to the accountable actions of such groups (Sacks, 1979, 1992b).

1.1.4.2 The discursive psychological approach
The notion that persons (and ostensibly, their membership to groups) are made accountable through descriptions and assessments, represent one of DP's principal areas of interest relative to investigating *social problems* (e.g., Edwards, 1991; Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). The ways in which *morality*, and the sense of culpability and blameworthiness, are combined with everyday characterisations of people, places, and events, is central to understanding how

---

[8] It should be noted that Sacks qualifies this as a somewhat simplified analogy, in that "social events are not closely enough ordered so that we can get results at the 'microscopic' level of investigation" (Sacks, 1992, p.65).

social problems are displayed and managed in the world. For example, research on police interviews shows how suspects display themselves as disposed to act in ways contrary to accusations of them committing some offence, and how police challenge testimony through using similar discursive practices (Edwards, 2006). When questioned, suspects used modal formulations such as *would* (and variants, such as *should*, *might* and *will*) to show themselves as not the kind of person inclined to offend – for instance, "I wouldn't hit an old lady". In contrast, police officers might deploy *would* as a way of questioning a prior statement – such as, "why would she (a witness) say that you did?" Thus, *would* is a way of making normative-dispositional claims about the moral character of speakers and others, proposing "a kind of back-dated predictability" to a time prior to some event, with the knowledge that some action may or may not expectedly happen (Edwards, 2006, p. 497).

Further *social problems* focused research has examined how moral reasoning and membership categories are used in the context of neighbour dispute mediation (Stokoe & Edwards, 2015). Those complaining about neighbour conduct would do so by invoking normative impressions of category-bound activities and family relationships. For instance, while objecting about vandalism in their street, neighbours would make complaints such as "but the lad keeps getting away with it", with *lad* carrying the implication of laddish (gang-like) behaviour. Further, the ongoing behaviour of *the lad* is attributable to his mother and by inference the father, with comments such as "his mother hasn't got a bloke there" – not only is the lad's behaviour explainable by the invocation that the mother has not provided a father figure, but that the father is not present to provide a role model for the son (Stokoe & Edwards, 2015, p. 175). There is subtle inferential work going on here, illustrating how day-to-day categorisation is woven into the moral order of what is *right* and *wrong*. Observable also, is the linking of categories to *predicates*, in terms of formulating normative characteristics of what lads and mothers expectedly do. In this way, the *complainability* of social problems is made relevant in the course of reporting neighbourhood issues (Stokoe, 2012a; Stokoe & Edwards, 2015)

1.1.4.3 Interim summary
In this section I have demonstrated, through approaches to the study of social interaction, how *social problems* are formulated as members' concerns during their everyday lives. For instance, the ways in which teenagers and adults used *membership categories* to index the identities and social status of themselves and others, and also the ways in which membership is categorised relevant to the *accountability* of persons (Sacks, 1979). Research on police

interviews revealed how modal verbs such as *would* inferred a *back-dated predictability* in moral claims regarding the dispositions of suspects (Edwards, 2006).

Further, studies into neighbourhood disputes showed the ways in which categories and category-bound activities were used when complaining about the conduct of others, such as making dispositional inferences, and assigning blame to family members. Discursive practices such as these can be understood as members' methods for evaluating the character, conduct, and blameworthiness of others, in so doing, displaying the *emergence* of social problems in the world (Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). And so, by utilising DP and CA as approaches to studying neighbourhood troubles, descriptions of people, places, and events can be examined for breaches of neighbourhood cohesion, as revealed by those contacting institutions for assistance, and the service provision by those institutions.

1.1.5 Conclusion

This section has illustrated how sociological, psychological, and social interactional approaches treat the topic of *social problems*, both from a theoretical and analytic stance. In the opening subsection, I presented two sociological approaches. First, functionalist theorists claim that societal faults lead directly to individual deviance, and endeavour to explain root causes of social problems. Second, value-conflict theorists consider that social conditions should be separate from social problems, with the focus being on how claims-making activities are formulated and managed through social construction of talk. Subsequently, I showed that psychological approaches consider social problems in terms of their *casual* relationships, such as how groups behave and interrelate, and the ways in which individual conduct is considered in terms of group membership. Social psychologists also investigate attitudes, attributions, and dispositions of individuals concerning social problems by exploring underlying conditions. Community psychology emphasises research into individual and group dysfunction within cultural, economic, and social contexts. In the final subsection, I showed that social interactional approaches consider social problems as members' concerns. Speakers use membership categories are used to index identities, social status and accountability of the self and others. Dispositional inferences can be made through descriptions and assessments, and categories and category-bound can be used as ways of assigning blame to others.

As discussed above, social scientific approaches to *social problems* are wide-ranging, and in some cases, at odds with each other. By endeavouring to define social problems, 'traditional' theorists and analysts are presented with the empirical problem of what they are,

how it is that they occur, and how to account for them. Are they explained at a societal-macro level, or through group membership, or cultural context, or economic position, or social status, or by assessing underlying psychological conditions? While it may be that particular social issues can be explained by none or all or some of these propositions, what gets seemingly overlooked are the ways in which *social problems* are described, invoked, or inferred. Peoples' everyday interactional practices and ways of talking, manage the local contingencies of social matters, and thus "perhaps big issues have a humble home hidden in plain sight, in the ordinary workings of social life" (Zimmerman, 2005, p. 445). It is by understanding the practices by which society's members are characterised by themselves and others in the course of day-to-day interactions, that reveals the ways in which *social problems* are regularly and recurrently produced (Schegloff, 2005).

By considering how people go about characterising their concerns about the conduct of the self and others, is not only important for understanding social cohesion (or lack thereof), but also the conversational machinery members use as relevant for describing their neighbourhood concerns. In the next section, I examine literature on *how* people articulate their troubles as complainable activities, and how complaining impacts on troubles being resolved.

1.2 Complaints and conflict

This thesis examines how *neighbour problems,* as one subset of social problems, are formulated and managed in calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services in the UK. Members of the public report neighbourhood concerns to these services, such as noise, bad smells, and access to property. Institutions, in one way or another, provide assistance with these kinds of problems, if they fit within the service's remit. Callers describe their concerns in such a way such that help is granted (or not) by these services. Examining how troubles are characterised through the actions and activities when making the case for aid is a central concern for this thesis.

And so, in this section, I begin to explore how analysts have conceived of and examined members' descriptions of their troubles for different kinds of recipients (e.g., family, friends, or institutions), and how troubles are responded to by those recipients, in terms of their obligations (or not) to do so. I do this by reviewing CA and DP literature on troubles-telling and complaining, in both every day and institutional contexts. First, I investigate how peoples' accounts of their day-to-day experiences are built as *troubles* in ordinary conversations. Second, I explore the ways in which speakers complain about others

(both directly and indirectly). Third, I consider how complaints are formulated in institutional settings, ostensibly in the service of getting something done to resolve peoples' concerns. I will argue that by considering how members recipient design their troubles is fundamental for understanding the ways in which people systematically formulate their neighbourhood problems in service provision across institutions, and how call-takers manage peoples' concerns.

1.2.1 Everyday troubles-telling

In the course of day-to-day interactions with others, people display their worries, predicaments, or 'troubles' (Jefferson, 1988). Some of the earliest 'troubles-telling' research can be traced back to Harvey Sacks'[9] PhD dissertation (Sacks, 1967). Sacks collected a corpus of telephone calls to a suicide prevention helpline, and he explored how people talked about their suicidal intentions and inclinations. Sacks demonstrated that callers would, as a way of accounting for their call to the helpline, formulate themselves as alone in the world - having *no one to turn to*.[10] Sacks showed that *categorisations*[11] were used by callers when those close to them (such as family members) were deemed not to understand, or not to have the ability or inclination to help them. Categories are collected together and used to ascribe activities to people within those categories. In the course of a troubles-telling, activities of others were *bound* to particular categories as a systematic way of callers accounting for their call (Sacks, 1992c).

Although troubles-telling was explored by Sacks in the suicide helpline work, he was seemingly more concerned with the mechanics of interaction, such as turn-taking and sequential patterns – further, *troubles* were seen in the context of quasi-institutional interactions, and thus, people call *in order to* talk about their worries (Drew, Heritage, Lerner, & Pomerantz, 2015). The research of Gail Jefferson[12] was transformative in developing CA's generally recognised stance of *unmotivated inquiry*, in that analysis was *not* topically driven, and observations emerged from the data in an unmotivated way. This is not to say this development was from an inductive to a more deductive approach to analysis. Rather, Jefferson's motivation was on particular sequences of talk in which troubles-telling was invoked or oriented to *as a topic* of inquiry (see Jefferson, 1988).

---

[9] Harvey Sacks is considered the founder, and foremost exponent, of CA (see Chapter 2).
[10] Notably, this forms part of Sacks' PhD thesis title, "The search for help: No one to turn to." (Sacks, 1966).
[11] This would lead onto the establishment of what Sacks termed the *membership categorisation device* (MCD).
[12] A close colleague of Sacks, and inventor of the Jefferson transcription system, used in this thesis.

Jefferson focused on mundane interactions, such a telephone calls between friends or family, the ways in which troubles-telling *emerged* through the course of everyday conversations, how troubles were occasioned in talk, and how recipients oriented to speakers' troubles in the course of a telling. Troubles-telling was shown to be *approached* and *exited* through multiple interactional stages – the announcement of a trouble, recipient affiliation to that trouble, a working up of the trouble, then a troubles topic-closing by interactants (Jefferson, 1988). However, it should be noted (as did Jefferson) that these ordered stages should be considered as a *template* rather than a complete sequence that occurs - the sense that an overall 'model' pattern could be established from the corpus of individual (and maybe more problematic) cases. That said, this study was one of the first to demonstrate the *contingent nature* of how troubles-related matters were introduced into conversations; that speakers are not necessarily 'goal driven' regarding the ways in which troubles-telling comes about, but rather, that troubles are generated from talk that happens to be proceeding in a particular direction (Drew et al., 2015). In the next subsection, I review literature which focuses on complaints made about others.

1.2.2 Complaining about others

Often when people complain, they are engaged in the practice of describing the social conduct of others (or even themselves). In this sense, behaviour is being made *accountable* through complaining, bringing into sharp focus moral features of language use (Drew, 1998). Specifically, the *wrongness* of conduct is being evaluated through the reporting of it – for instance, inappropriate use of language such as swearing or a lack of others' empathy about some personal issue. Thus, speaker *rightness* is displayed as a contrastive moral element, sometimes implicitly embedded within the complaint itself, such as reporting another's swearing the speaker is accountably conveying some moral point or judgement on others. The speaker's own conduct can be tacitly understood as morally contrastive even if unstated. Alternatively, *overt* contrasts between the speaker's moral stance and that of the complainee can be made through the topicalization of complaint features. For example, reporting oneself as not the kind of person that swears, embedded within descriptions of others' swearing. There is arguably a significant contrastive dimension displayed in reporting the wrongness of social conduct. Yet, morality as an interactional topic, is a member's concern, and thus analysts are not able to necessarily identify when interlocutors orient to moral phenomena – the matter of morality should be tentatively approached, with the focus on members' every

day and institutional practices of evaluating others' social conduct through 'mundane morality' (Stokoe & Edwards, 2015).

There is a considerable amount of research on complaints, and how talk is interactionally organised by speakers to do complaining both in everyday and institutional[13] contexts. Speakers work to justify, accuse and defend conduct by making the case for complaints, with the complainee's agency typically invoked (Edwards, 2005b). For instance, research indicates a resource deployed to legitimise complaints as compelling are 'extreme case formulations' (ECFs) such as 'every time', ''all the time' or 'forever' – "he swears all the time" for example (Edwards, 2000; Pomerantz, 1986). Pomerantz argues that ECFs are used to portray some issue as a legitimate complainable, and complainers work to display their strongest case to the recipient of what is morally acceptable and unacceptable. Another study (briefly alluded to above) makes the distinction between the rightness and wrongness of social conduct within everyday complaints (Drew, 1998). Drew demonstrates how speakers can build the implicit and explicit character of complaints by the ways in which behaviour is condemned and indignation is expressed, inferring the dubious moral character of others whilst simultaneously the good character of oneself.

Further research explored hostile arguments between adults and how complaints about co-present parties were formulated within the sequential environment (Dersley & Wootton, 2000). The authors focused on responses from complaint *recipients*, which invariably took on the character of two types of denial – 'didn't do it' and 'not at fault' – and how the deployment of these kinds of denial had consequences for the interaction. For example, 'didn't do it' denials were designed as preferred actions in which concessions to the complainant are implied, coupled with no acceptance of culpability on the complainee's part. Whereas with 'not at fault' denials, complainees endeavour to avoid the imputation of culpability in the first place (Dersley & Wootton, 2000). There is the implication of a distinctly moral gloss relating to the organisational features of complaints. Within Dersley and Wootton's corpus of adult arguments, it is evident that complainees attempt to project a moral stance by the ways in which complaints about their own conduct are managed.

Morality has been explored as a DP topic, focusing on the ways in which speakers rather than recipients *manage* morality by portraying themselves as non-complainers – in particular, how indirect complaints are softened to display speakers as not prone to over-reacting or moaning about something in some way (Edwards, 2005b, 2007). When

---

[13] Literature relevant to complaining in institutional contexts is reviewed in subsection 1.2.3

complaining, there is some *object* of a complaint (the thing being complained about) but also the person doing the complaining or the *subject* (invoking experiential accounting). Edwards demonstrates how the subject-side indexes displays of a complainant's characteristics; glossed as attitude, stance, investment, jocularity and so on. For example, just prior to complaining speakers may announce their moral stance towards the complaint and how they are affected, such as "Well ↓and the other thing I wz disgusted b- I'm ↓sorry you're getting'n earful'v this" (Edwards, 2005b, p. 9). Edwards indicates that by marking out this grievance component and how the complainant is affected, speakers are demonstrating their sensitivity as the complaint is produced. In other words, the complainer's subjectivity is a feature of the complaint itself (Edwards, 2005b).

1.2.3 Complaining in institutional contexts

One of the ways talk-in-interaction can be considered 'institutional', typically involves goal orientations which are bound to particular institutional identities - lecturer and student (teaching and learning), doctor and patient (treating and aid-seeking), salesperson and customer (selling and buying), and such like (Heritage & Clayman, 2010a). A second element, is that the interaction is constrained by what is treated as expectable through co-participants' institutional identities, and how they are made relevant through the business at hand – for instance, doctors expectably enact the role of doctor, lecturers expectably enact the role of lecturers, and so on (e.g., Drew & Heritage, 1992; Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). A third element, is that the interaction is related to inferential structures and procedures that are associated with specific institutional contexts – for example, the process of doctoring can be seen as constituting the doctor's role *as doctor* (Heritage & Clayman, 2010a). These elements are not a prerequisite for denoting talk *as institutional*, as defining the boundaries of mundane conversation from other types of talk can be somewhat challenging (Schegloff, 1999). However, these differences are important to underscore, as it is the participants *themselves* who observably orient to these distinctions in the course of interactions, as will become apparent in this and other chapters of my thesis.

As considered previously, speakers and recipients manage subject and object-side relations in complaint sequences (Edwards, 2005b). Yet, these practices are not restricted to everyday talk. Research has explored 'event descriptions' in relationship troubles-talk between couples in counselling sessions, and particularly the ways in which events were formulated either as one-off occasions or part of a typical pattern (Edwards, 1995). Edwards showed how 'script formulations' – that is, descriptions of events or actions that are

characterised as having some expectable, recurrent, pattern (Edwards, 1994) – were used by a couple (Connie and Jimmy) in a counselling session to *work up* their partner's disposition or mental state, to design their talk as a way of rebutting their partner's account, and to formulate 'counter stories'. Connie would describe their marriage as "rock solid", metaphorically invoking the notion that their marriage was stable, and further, that quarrels were routine, as indexed with "we had arguments like everybody else has arguments". These script formulations of past relationship difficulties, are ways of making counter-claims less likely - as the relationship is essentially strong, countering might be seen in resistance to, or at the detriment of, the goals of the session (Edwards, 1995).

In contrast, Jimmy draws on Connie's already invoked "arguments" as a way of displaying their frequency ("every single week") and seriousness (Connie's "argument" is reformulated as Jimmy's "fight"). Rather than using script formulations as a way of *normalising* elements of their relationship, Jimmy's can be seen as *pathologizing* aspects of it, displaying quarrels as abnormal and problematic (Edwards, 1995; see also D. E. Smith, 1978). In this way, script formulations are used to formulate *alternate versions* of the same event or set of events, and done so *precisely* to contrast a prior version, as is evident from Jimmy's displayed awareness of Connie's talk (Edwards, 1995; Potter, 1996). More broadly, this research highlights the moral aspects of complaints and *complainability* (Schegloff, 2005) through 'relationship talk' - of demonstrating, sometimes implicitly, the rightness and wrongness of the self and partner's attitude, behaviour, or disposition. Further, these displays are produced ostensibly *in the service of* some other business – namely, the goal of improving their relationship, through which their institutional identities are revealed (see Osvaldsson, 2004; Stokoe, 2012).

The sense of *goal-orientation* in the formulation of complaints is made more explicit in research which focuses on calls to the emergency services (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990). The article explores how U.S citizens report their troubles in particular sequential positions, in the service of getting some form of assistance (such as an ambulance or the police being sent). Specific attention is given to how complainable matters (e.g. an accident, assault, or disturbance) are treated by call-takers, in which the "vulnerability" of a problem (in terms of a candidate description being open to *scrutiny* by the call-taker), was assessed (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990). It was shown that the type of remedy offered, and the speed with which it was done, was often conditional on the call-taker's evaluation of the complaint. For instance, in the process of reporting an assault, a caller details the incident as happening "inside the house" (p.473). However, it soon becomes apparent that the assault is

happening *next door* to the caller's house. As a result, the caller's "practical epistemology", or "displays of how one has come to know about a particular event" (p.465) of the assault is challenged, leading to a protracted call, ultimately ending in assistance being sent. The authors argue that the caller's stance toward the assault (displaying credibility by *aligning* with the trouble) can be significant for the outcome of the call. Further, that while callers may display an awareness of what is providable by the service being contacted (in that they have called *for* assistance), certain features of how complainable matters are characterised, are vulnerable to examination by call-takers, in the course of attending to, and revealing, their institutional identities (Heritage & Clayman, 2010b; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990).

1.2.4 Neighbour problems as complainable matters

Research on calls to emergency services, such as the article above, demonstrates that complainable matters are formulated in service of institutional redress, as shown through the ways in which troubles are attended to by call-takers from these services callers seek help from (see also, Raymond & Zimmerman, 2007; J. Whalen, Zimmerman, & Whalen, 1988; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987; Zimmerman, 1992). However, there has also been a reasonably extensive amount of research (at least, as approached through CA and DP), which has focused on social problems in the neighbourhood – in particular, neighbour disputes in mediation services, regarding issues such as noise, rubbish, graffiti, smells and access to property (for instance, Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Stokoe & Edwards, 2007, 2009, 2015; Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005; Stokoe, 2006, 2009; Weatherall & Stubbe, 2015).

In disputes over neighbour noise, callers to mediation services would legitimise noise issues by formulating complaints as breaches of acceptable day-to-day social conduct - working to establish grounds for a complaint, setting themselves up as *reasonable complainers* with preamble turns such as "ha:lf seven last↓ni:ght the kids were pla̲y̲ing in their bedroom" (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005, p.651). By determining that kids were playing in the bedroom at seven-thirty, speakers invoke the notion that there is acceptable noise understood by reasonable people (the activity of playing at a reasonable time), which contrasts with the subsequent complaint (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005). The point the authors make is that the conduct of others is worked up *as complainable* by callers – they are reasonable people who are passive recipients of problem noise. Mediation complaints were contrasted to calls to a National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) helpline, where ostensibly the same type of social problem was reported as either a noise *irritant* or noise *concern*. For example, in calls to mediation services, neighbours would

commonly formulate noise (which may include children noise) as a complainable matter, such as "we had loud music, we had banging we had shouting we had, you know, it was every evening". Callers to NSPCC helplines orient to specific concerns about potential child abuse, displaying themselves as troubled callers. Different noise categories were attributed to parents and children – when parents "shout", kids "scream", or when parents "shout and scream", kids "cry". (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005).

Stokoe and Hepburn's (2005) research demonstrates that ostensibly comparable noise complaints are formulated in different ways dependant on their institutional context (see Chapter 3). Further contrastive work has focused on the differences (and similarities) in how complaints are displayed and managed between mediation and policing contexts, such as interrogations (Stokoe, 2006, 2009, Stokoe & Edwards, 2007, 2009). In research which considered if and how 'race' played a part in complaints to mediation helplines contrasted with police interrogations of suspects, it was demonstrated that racial insults in mediation calls were constructed *as a complainable* about the victims themselves and not the purpose of the call, almost always using reported speech (Clift & Holt, 2006). Whereas in interrogations, racial insults were formulated by suspects as *counter-complaints* about others (Stokoe & Edwards, 2007).

Issues of morality, the way in which *rightness* and *wrongness* is constructed and especially how others are worked up as either good or bad neighbours, has also been approached by focusing on how spatial categories and place formulations are oriented to by co-participants (Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003). Essentially, when complaining about neighbours' conduct, speakers collaboratively account for and construct moral assessments of others, which are embedded within talk about neighbouring 'space'. The authors argue that much social psychological research does not consider *the spatial dimension* as anything more than an organisational context in which more important activities occur, and thus the notion that space can *shape* social interaction, especially the legitimisation of complaints about socio-moral order transgressions, is largely overlooked (Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003).

In an example of how spatiality is invoked when describing encounters with a *good neighbour*, participants (from a recording of a television chat show) would formulate talk such as 'talking *over* the garden fence' or '*down* the pub' or 'we never went *into* one another's house (Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003, p. 557). The point the authors make is that neighbour relations are spatially organised. Conversely, the category of *bad neighbour* was embedded within transgressions of normatively ordered space. Complainable matters were worked up as breaches of private space, such as the smell of the neighbour's cat '*coming*

through the walls*'* or visual pollution such as '*seeing* rubbish and animals in the garden'. 'Temporal' descriptions were also observably embedded within these types of complaints – for example, 'they leave the washing on the line *at the back* for *three weeks at a time*'. The inference of this complaint is that there is an unreasonable (and by implication, reasonable) amount of time that washing should be left out for. There is also a suggestion that *moral order* is revealed in and through complaints that link to spatiality. For instance, good neighbours are formulated as having appropriate engagements with fences – talking *over* them or walking *around* them whilst bad neighbours walk *through* them. By transgressing the legal and physical boundaries that fences function as, neighbours are in "violation of the spatial-moral order" (Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003, p. 560).

There is a sense then, that when calling to report concerns, neighbourhood problems can be recipient designed in various ways, which may be fitted (or not) to the service being contacted. However, there is also another important point. Unlike calls to the emergency services, where offers of assistance are typically provided within the first few turns (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987), callers to the mediation or helpline services above work to establish the nature of their concern as one that services can offer help with. Requests are normally not straightforwardly granted, as callers to services must establish their case as legitimate so that aid can be granted (Lee, 2011). In this way, a neighbourhood problem is established *as a problem* by callers and call-takers, through the conversational machinery of talk-in-interaction. And so, what drives this thesis (and is reflected in the research questions), is not just how a complainable matter might be recipient designed to a service provider (although no less important), but how a neighbourhood problem, as a phenomenon, is formulated and managed by participants, through their turns at talk, in the provision of service.

1.2.5 Conclusion

In this section, I have examined literature relevant to understanding how complaints and conflict are approached from a CA and DP perspective, presented in four subsections – everyday troubles-telling, complaining about others, complaints in institutional contexts, and neighbourhood problems as complainable matters. In the first subsection, I showed the ways in which callers to a suicide helpline would account for their troubles by formulating themselves as having *no one to turn to*. After this, I evaluated how troubles-telling emerged through the course of everyday talk, the ways in which troubles were occasioned, and how recipients oriented to speakers' concerns while troubles-telling. In the second subsection, I

reviewed literature on how speakers complain about others (both directly and indirectly). Other research focused on how speakers work to justify, accuse and defend conduct by making the case for complaints, while a further article explored responses from complaint *recipients* in arguments with co-present parties.

In the third subsection, I reviewed literature on how complaints are formulated in institutional settings, ostensibly in the service of other business. Research explored the ways in which *script formulations* were used in couples' counselling session to *work up* their partner's disposition or mental state. Another article examined calls to the emergency services and focused on how complainable matters were treated by call-takers. In the fourth subsection, I reviewed research which focused on how neighbourhood concerns were reported and managed. In an article, which explored calls to a mediation service in the UK, complaints about neighbour noise were formulated as breaches of appropriate everyday social conduct, with callers working to establish credible grounds for complaining, setting themselves up as *reasonable* complainers. Further, I evaluated a study that explored the ways in which *spatial categories* and *place formulations* were oriented to by interlocutors, and particularly how speakers collaboratively accounted for and formulated moral assessments of others, as embedded within talk about neighbourhood 'space'.

An important point to highlight about the research examined in this section, is that it illustrates the key CA topic of *recipient design* – how members go about designing their talk for different kinds of recipients, who themselves are constrained or obliged to offer help in various ways. In turn, examining the core theme of *recipient design* is central for understanding how neighbourhood problems are reported and managed by interlocutors in the provision of service. However, another fundamental element in the shaping of this study, is the notion of comparative analysis. And so, in the next section I briefly consider comparative research, which underpins the structure and organisation of the analytic chapters in this thesis.

1.3 Comparative research

The data collected, and used for this thesis, affords me a unique opportunity to examine how *similar* kinds of neighbourhood problems (e.g., how *noise* is formulated; see Chapter 3) are designed as complainable matters, and managed across *different* conflict resolution services, that in one way or another, have the remit of providing (although not necessarily offering)

assistance. Consequently, in all bar one of the analytic chapters,[14] I examine a particular phenomenon across *all* institutions in the corpus - mediation, antisocial behaviour, and environmental health services. Previous CA and DP research has generally examined complaints as a type of action, in one setting, or examined multiple instances of an action (e.g., a particular question design) across different contexts (e.g., Bolden, 2009; Firth et al., 2005). And so, the way that this thesis has been structured reflects an ability to make novel observations about social conduct by *comparing* service encounters.

However, what is it to *do* comparative analysis? Throughout the process of writing this thesis, I have endeavoured to identify features of talk (whether it be actions, practices or sequential environments) through a similar, often multi-layered, procedure (see Schegloff, 2009). For instance, in Chapter 3, I examine how initial iterations of complaints are formulated by focusing on noise disturbance. First, I established the target phenomenon, which were two in this case – the action (noise) in a particular sequential position (the first point in the call were the problem was reported). Second, I interrogated the openings in calls across the data sets of mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour recordings to establish whether similar features were present, and their distribution (the consequence of this activity meant that antisocial behaviour calls was omitted due to the poor quality of data). Third, I described how the newly identified interactional environment(s) were different (or similar) to the target phenomenon and determined whether there was an empirically rigorous framework for comparability (I found that callers' first turns typically produced the reason for calling). Finally, I specified the interest (or not) in the target phenomenon and established what would be gained by comparing the phenomenon (findings from studying how recipient designing noise disturbance for different services uniquely augments knowledge about a core CA topic).

However, theoretical and methodological concerns have been raised with the comparative approach to data analysis, in that analysts should be wary of making claims about the *relevance* of differences between people or groups through social interaction (Sidnell, 2009). The ways in which speakers invoke or orient to participant *attributes* (e.g., gender or ethnicity) in talk, requires CA analysts to say something about how a particular attribute is consequentially relevant for the ongoing interaction. Utterances are locally designed for talks' production *in the moment*, rather than giving methodological 'assurances' on the basis of how data is analysed and interpreted by analysts and participants alike

---

[14] In Chapter 3, calls to an antisocial behaviour service were omitted, due to quality of data.

(Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). This is not to say that actions, practices, and other social conduct should not be compared, but that adequate justifications should motivate enquiry – such as, whether alternative descriptions or ways of talking *warrant* analysis of some particular utterance (Sacks, 1992b). For instance, discourse markers in Russian data (Bolden, 2009), the Swedish "curled *ja*" (Lindström, 2009), displays of gratitude across eight languages from five continents (Floyd et al., 2018), other-initiated repair across twelve languages (Dingemanse, Kendrick, & Enfield, 2016), and comparing turn-taking in humans and animals (Pika, Wilkinson, Kendrick, & Vernes, 2018). These examples illustrate that doing conversation analysis can be, in a sense, considered as ways of doing comparative research.

In terms of my data corpus, the phenomena under study is not only warranted by its uniqueness due to an absence of the comparative studies across institutions that offer assistance with similar kinds of problems, but paradoxically, the *interrelatedness* of these institutions – as revealed through service-referrals (Chapter 5) and signposting (Chapter 6). Similarly, with the emergence of institutional business (Chapter 4), and initial iterations of noise complaints (Chapter 3), I show how interactional phenomena overlap and cross-cut in various ways across institutional domains, invocations, and orientations. By comparing interactions in different kinds of service provision, allows for an understanding of their particular institutional features, as embodied through the tasks at hand (Stokoe & Edwards, 2007). And so, by approaching this thesis as a comparative study, there is a unique opportunity to examine how similar kinds of everyday concerns are recipient designed for services that in one way or another, have the remit of managing them, and further, the institutional obligations and restrictions, as displayed in recipiency, by call-takers in services.

1.4 Summary and research questions

In this chapter, I have reviewed literature that is relevant to the analytic thrust of this thesis – namely, investigating the conversational practices between members of the public and call-takers from mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services regarding neighbourhood problems. I started by evaluating what *social problems* have been, and are considered as, by examining the etymology, history, and meaning of the term. I then considered how the topic was approached through sociology, psychology, conversation analysis, and discursive psychology. In so doing, I demonstrated that social scientists treat problems in communities and neighbourhoods as part of the everyday activities of laypeople – as a phenomenon that is not fixed, but one that evolves within social and cultural boundaries. This suggests that there is much to explore in terms of the present corpus of

telephone recordings, such as the ways in which social problems are formulated and managed, within social and cultural interactional structures of members' day-to-day lives.

Next, I reviewed conversation analytic and discursive psychological literature on complaining and disputes that is related to the corpus of neighbourhood disputes calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services. I illustrated how characterising the conduct of others, and other neighbourhood troubles, was designed in a variety of ways – in both mundane and institutional environments. Likewise, I showed that complaints about similar problems can be treated differently by recipients – in so doing, highlighting a central theme of this thesis, and core CA topic of *recipient design*. I then discussed the importance of comparative research, and how comparing the design and management of similar kinds of problems across services enriches our understanding of recipient design and institutionality. More broadly, issues of morality, rightness and wrongness, and of identity, are seemingly inextricably linked to the business of reporting and managing conduct of the self and others relating to problems within neighbourhoods. Further investigation in these areas would provide further insights into social interaction, the organisation of language within the area of neighbour disputes, and the negotiation of identity within one's neighbourhood environment.

The body of research outlined above has had important implications for studies in interaction, such as furthering understanding of neighbour relationships, police/suspect interviews and especially in mediator training (Stokoe, 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2015). However, there has been very little (if any) systematic comparative research on how similar neighbourhood problems are recipient designed by speakers and managed by different agencies (see Chapters 3 and 4). For example, how are noise complaints designed when calling a mediation helpline compared with calls to other services, and what are the ways in which different organisations manage these complaints? (see Chapter 3) It is of course problematic to categorise complaints as somehow alike in terms of reference to certain (arguably arbitrarily grouped) agencies, as talk is designed to do perform certain actions and display different identities in particular interactional moments (Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). However, distinctions can be made between the agency of interlocutors, the spectrum of institutional legality, and the overall practical outcomes for the interaction (see Chapters 5 and 6). The interactional consequences between callers to services such as environmental health, anti-social behaviour and mediation are (at least institutionally) more 'balanced' in that regard, or at any rate less divergent. Thus, by comparing how complaints are managed by these kinds of local government/charitable organisations, analytic findings may provide a

useful resource in terms of supplementing the database of training materials, as well as potentially expanding the demographic of trainable staff.

The datasets provide a propitious opportunity to examine the how callers' domains (i.e., reporting neighbourhood problems) and call-takers' domains (i.e., assisting with neighbourhood problems through differing obligations and restrictions) are interactionally revealed within calls for assistance *in* services, but also *across* services. And so, by comparing the formulation and management of neighbourhood problems in calls to services serves as a vehicle for understanding recipient design in service provision – both for services (making the case for aid), and by services (managing the case for aid).

While CA and DP are largely inductive approaches, nevertheless these research questions, informed the trajectory of the thesis.

1) How do callers initially formulate their concerns when contacting different services, in and for those services? (see Chapters 3 and 5).

2) How does institutional business emerge from callers' initial formulations in the provision of enactments of different possibilities for service? (see Chapter 4).

3) How and when do callers invoke other services and their interconnectedness (or otherwise) when making their case for aid? (see Chapter 5).

4) What are the interactional and practical outcomes of calls for assistance? (see Chapter 6).

The next chapter focuses on the methodological and analytic approaches used to address these questions and the overall aim of the research.

Chapter 2:
Methodology

2.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I reviewed existing research on neighbourhood troubles and how they are reported and managed between participants – in the wider context of social scientific approaches to the topic of 'social problems.' More broadly, I showed that there has been almost no systematic investigation of how the same type of social problem gets mobilized and defined by members of the public and managed by call-takers *across* different kinds of service provision. My overarching concern is to show how people define, formulate, and account for neighbourhood concerns to different services that have the remit of offering service - in this way, uniquely illustrating the business of service provision across multiple agencies, and showing a new way of examining recipient design in antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services. In this chapter, I consider the way the data were collected, stored, analysed, and worked with, according to guidance for ethically conducted research. I also explain the settings in which the data were captured, by describing each of the institution's remits regarding service provision.

The structure of the sections below reflects the importance in qualitative research of *starting* with the data, from which methods and ways of analysis can be applied. And so, in Section 2.1, I describe the institutional responsibilities and scope of antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services in the UK. In Section 2.2, I detail the process by which the data was collected, including the recruitment of participants. In Section 2.3, I consider the ethical issues which were relevant throughout the data collection process. In Section 2.4, I discuss the analytic practices used to analyse the data, which is divided into subsections. In Section 2.4.1, I describe conversation analysis as a way of examining social interaction. I explain data transcription, and the analytic procedures used. In Section 2.4.2, I discuss discursive psychology as analytic approach intertwined with conversation analysis. In Section 2.4.3, I consider how CA, as a methodologically, serves to underpin DP, and examine how CA and DP are mutually compatible and beneficial, in terms of making claims about the world, and how members interact within it. In Section 2.4.4, I outline the method by which I transcribed the data, and how I went about the analytic procedure. And so, by considering the ways in which DP/CA operates as ways of doing analysis, allows for an understanding of how this thesis has been motivated.

2.1 Dispute resolution services

In this section, I outline the ways in which antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services in the UK manage reports of social problems from callers to their services. The kinds of problems reported are typical everyday neighbourhood issues, such as loud noise, rubbish, access to property, and bad smells. I explain the remit of these services, in terms of what and how assistance is offered to callers who ostensibly seek aid from these services. Summarising these organisational approaches are helpful for showing the ways in which similar kinds of neighbourhood concerns are managed by these different agencies.

2.1.1 Antisocial behaviour services

In terms of statutory definition, *antisocial behaviour* has been classified as "behaviour by a person which causes, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household as the person" (Home Office, 2003, 2011). This broad definition is reflected in the typology of behaviours that are considered 'antisocial' – for instance, drug misuse, drug dealing, prostitution, kerb crawling, public sexual acts, noise, rowdy behaviour, hoax calls, intimidation, vandalism, dog fouling, and littering (National Audit Office, 2006). Antisocial behaviour can be considered as both criminal and non-criminal, and thus, behaviour that is complained about by members of the public need not be conduct that is prohibited (Donoghue, 2010). In this way, there is not always a single organisation that deals with a particular incident (or set of related incidents). Agency collaboration, such as local authority agencies working with the police service, is a common occurrence (Burney, 2009). Consequently, as a social phenomenon, antisocial behaviour may be simpler to identify as transgressive social conduct, rather than categorised as *antisocial* (Hough & Jacobson, 2004; Millie, 2009).

Specific local authority departments in the UK have the remit of dealing with complaints about antisocial behaviour, and have powers of enforcement (through a multi-agency approach) in relation to crime prevention (Burney, 2009). Responsibilities of these departments include applying for court injunctions to prevent or stop antisocial behaviour, taking action to stop nuisance, noise, and threats to health, taking action to evict local authority tenants, offering victims alternative accommodation, and prosecuting criminal behaviour (Citizens Advice, 2017). The police service tends to become involved when (alleged) criminal behaviour has been reported – for example, people being physically or psychologically attacked, property damage, threatening and abusive behaviour and incitement of race hatred or violence (Home Office, 2017). Further, police services (in conjunction with

local authorities) can also be involved in more preventative policies, such as community liaison and neighbourhood patrols, which form part of larger strategies of social control and promoting social values (Donoghue, 2010).

2.1.2 Environmental health services

In many ways, environmental health services have a broader institutional scope than antisocial behaviour issues, which in part, may be due to how the *environment* is defined – "the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity" ("environment," n.d.). Environmental health services are funded though UK government (as with antisocial behaviour services) and are managed through public health and local authorities. Environmental matters that fall under the remit of environmental health protection include population and human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air and climate, material assets, cultural heritage, and the landscape (Cave, Fothergill, Gibson, & Pyper, 2017). In this way, environmental health approaches to social problems place more focus on *outcomes* of human behaviour (and ecological events), rather than human behaviour *itself*, as is the remit of antisocial behaviour services.

In contrast to antisocial behaviour services, environmental health agencies do not have express powers of enforcement, and would not, for instance, become directly involved in applying for court injunctions. Environmental concerns are commonly reported through one of two channels. First, a national telephone hotline for issues concerning the natural environment, pollution, poaching, flooding, collapsed or damaged rivers and canal banks. Second, local council services/utility companies that deal with burst water mains, noise, waste, fly-tipping, pest nuisance, discarded syringes and dangerous buildings, and such like (UK Government, 2017a). Councils are also required to investigate complaints about issues that are a *statutory nuisance,* covered by the Environmental Protection Act (British Government, 1990). Problems that count as a statutory nuisance must either "unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use or enjoyment of a home or other premises" or "injure health or be likely to injure health" (UK Government, 2017c). As a consequence of this type of service provision, members of the public who contact environmental health agencies are often asked to keep a record of the time, date, and length of the problem, so that action may be taken if it is deemed appropriate (e.g., City of Westminster, 2017).

2.1.3 Mediation services

'Mediation' is a process by which a trained impartial person acts as an arbiter in a dispute, with a view to the dispute being resolved in some way ("mediation," n.d.). In contrast to both environmental and antisocial behaviour services in the UK, mediation services focus on facilitating two parties solving a conflict *between themselves* (such as neighbours, family members or workplace disputes), as opposed to dealing with reports from a complainant *about* a complainee (or some transgression) through more legal channels (Stokoe & Sikveland, 2016). Mediators should not take sides between the two disputing parties, but should help neighbours to consider what issues there are, and to look for solutions (UK Government, 2017b). In comparison to environmental health and antisocial behaviour agencies, mediation services can be run as profit or non-profit organisations, are funded from a variety of sources (such as charities, grants, and local authorities), and employees can be either paid or unpaid (Stokoe, 2013).

The process by which mediation happens varies, but commonly, members of the public initially contact mediation services by phone. After a callers' concerns have been reported, and aid has been offered and accepted, round-table meetings are typically organised at neutral locations, whereby disputing parties meet together and endeavour to resolve their issues (Stokoe & Sikveland, 2016). In comparison to environmental health and antisocial behaviour services, there are *two* disputing parties with *two* ostensibly competing versions of some event or state of affairs (Van de Vliert, 1997). Thus, there is an *asymmetry* that must be resolved in some way, as conflicts are, by their very nature, subjective and moral experiences (Ufkes, Giebels, Otten, & Zee, 2012). For instance, the same music noise may be considered a 'dreadful din' to some and 'delightful' to others – indicating that social problems (such as noise), as reported, are not neutral, but rather, *disputable* (see Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005). Consequently, mediators face the challenge of encouraging callers to pursue the service after an initial contact, whilst not necessarily being in a position to offer an immediate solution to a particular problem (Stokoe, 2013).

2.1.4 Summary

In this section, I have a briefly illustrated how antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services in the UK are structured, and the ways in which social problems are treated. Antisocial behaviour services deal with both criminal and non-criminal matters, and commonly work with other agencies, such as the police. They also have certain powers of enforcement, as well as being involved with neighbourhood crime prevention strategies.

Environmental health services tend to place more focus on the outcome of ostensibly transgressive behaviour, rather than the behaviour itself. Environmental services do not have powers of enforcement; however, they are required to respond if social problems are deemed to be a statutory nuisance. Mediation services are not part of local government and are funded from a variety of sources. Trained meditators act as neutral third-parties, endeavouring to help disputants resolve their own issues.

It should be noted that the descriptions of the services above may not be representative of *all* comparatively categorised institutions in the UK. However, outlining these organisational approaches are useful in demonstrating how similar kinds of social problems in the neighbourhood are ostensibly treated by these different agencies, in the service of providing (grantable) aid to those who seek it. In the next section, I consider how the data was collected, and discuss the practicalities of going about participant recruitment.

2.2 Data collection

In this section, I consider the process by which participants were recruited (Section 2.2.1), and the practicalities of doing data collection (Section 2.2.2). It should be stated that *all* the data used in this thesis was originally collected by Professors Elizabeth Stokoe and Derek Edwards in 2006 as part of an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project which had the overall aim of developing knowledge of how social and personal identities are relevant to neighbourhood disputes.[15] The focus for the original study was largely on examining mediation calls, and so there was a unique opportunity to compare service provision *across* antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services.

2.2.1 Participant recruitment

As the corpus comprises of data from three different institutions (antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services), recruitment of participating organizations[16] was multifaceted. Initial contact was made via letter/email between investigators and prospective services. If prospective organisations indicated an interest in taking part in the project, information sheets were sent out which included the aims, procedures, and ethical considerations of the project (e.g., Appendix A). Of the services contacted, permission was

---

[15] Project investigators: Professor Elizabeth Stokoe and Professor Derek Edwards. Project title: "Identities in neighbour discourse: Community, conflict and exclusion". ESRC funding award number: RES-148-25-0010
[16] Note that 'participants' here, refers to call-takers in these services. Callers to these services gave consent (and were effectively 'recruited' as participants) in the call itself (see Section 2.3.1).

given, and data collected, from a total of five institutions - three mediation services (transcripts and extracts identified by prefixes DC, EC, and HC) one antisocial behaviour service (transcripts and extracts identified by the prefix AC), and one environmental health service (transcripts and extracts identified by the prefix EH).

2.2.2 The practicalities of collecting data

Data for this thesis consists of 'naturally occurring'[17] audio recordings of telephone calls between members of the public, and call-takers from five dispute resolution services. The vast majority of recorded calls were *initial intake* calls, in that there had been no observable indication of previous contact between caller and call-taker. However, in some calls, participants revealed (either directly or indirectly) there had been previous contact between the two parties (for a breakdown of the number, and type, of recordings by institution, see Table 2.1 below).

Call-takers were responsible for recording calls, in all services. Relying on call-takers to control the recording of calls can be beneficial, in terms of having the ability to swiftly turn off the recording device if callers do not give their consent to record their call. However, through the initial analytic phase, it became apparent that occasionally, call-takers did not, for whatever reason, start recording *before* answering the call. For instance, sometimes greeting sequences were only partly captured, or missing altogether. While these 'incomplete' recorded calls can provide a rich data source for many discursive practices and activities, initial turns in calls (in both mundane and institutional settings) can and do frequently reveal *reasons for calling* and other important interactional business (Schegloff, 1979; Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987; cf. Emmison & Danby, 2007).

---

[17] By *naturally occurring* I mean that the data was present, whether or not the researcher was. As Potter (2002) helpfully proposes as a benchmark for data gathering, "I have suggested a (conceptual) *dead social scientists test* – would the data be the same, or be there at all, if the researcher got run over on the way to work? An interview would not take place without the researcher there to ask the questions; a counselling session would whether the researcher turns up to collect the recording or not." (p. 451, emphasis added).

Table 2.1: Service calls by call type[18]

	Antisocial	Environmental	Mediation	Total
Property access	0	0	16	16
Bonfires	0	23	0	23
Damage	5	2	15	22
Drugs	3	3	1	7
Flies	0	6	0	6
Graffiti	2	2	0	4
Harassment	10	4	42	56
Loitering	1	0	0	1
Neglect	0	0	1	1
Noise	5	57	44	106
Racial abuse	0	1	12	13
Rubbish	0	28	13	41
Smells	0	20	3	23
Trees/fences	0	3	14	17
Vermin	0	3	2	5
Total calls	26	152	163	341

2.3 Ethical considerations

When members of the public contact antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services to report neighbourhood troubles, reasons for calling are ostensibly *problematic* - for instance, callers may report arguments with neighbours, or verbal abuse, or damage to property. And so, there are certain ethical *sensitivities* that should be recognised and adhered to, when working with these data recordings (see British Psychological Society, 2018). In this section, I outline the procedures by which informed consent was obtained, how the data was anonymised storage of the data, and the withdrawal procedure.

---

[18] While these calls have been categorised by call type (*one* category of complaint per call), they are representative of the raw data set. Due to the quality of some recordings (e.g., calls not being recorded from the start, calls not being initial intake calls, inter-agency calls) the number of calls above do not necessarily represent suitable data used in this thesis (e.g. see Chapter 3 regarding omitted antisocial behaviour calls). However, the table provides a fair representation of the overall spread of calls to services, by call type.

2.3.1 Informed consent

Obtaining consent to record participants[19] was done in two ways. In the first instance, *call-takers* gave consent (or not) prior to calls being recorded via a Permission Form, which included consent to use the anonymised recordings for presentations, grant reports, and research publications (e.g., Appendix B). In the second instance, *callers* gave consent (or not) during the call itself, wherein the call-taker would typically seek consent via delivering versions of an 'ethics script' close to the beginning of calls (see Appendix A). In calls where no consent was given by callers, recordings were not used. In a few recordings, consent was obtained either near the end, or at the end of calls. It is worth noting that, although informed consent is sought near the start of the vast majority of calls in the corpus, delivery of the ethics script might be more appropriate near the end - callers are better placed to know *what* information they are consenting to being recorded (Speer & Stokoe, 2014).

2.3.2 Data storage and anonymisation

All primary audio recordings were stored on an encrypted hard drive. Recordings that had been anonymised (e.g., for data sessions, conferences, publications) were kept on a password protected computer. Each recording was orthographically transcribed by a professional transcription service. As these transcripts were produced verbatim (and thus un-anonymised), they were also kept on an encrypted hard drive. Anonymised versions of transcripts (e.g., for data sessions, conferences, publications) were stored on a password protected computer.

The process of anonymising audio recordings and transcripts was slightly different. For audio recordings, names, addresses, and any other identifying information was *silenced*, and the pitch of anonymised recordings was adjusted, making potential recognition of voices more difficult.[20] For transcripts, names, addresses and any other identifying information were *replaced* with pseudonyms.

2.3.3 Participant withdrawal

Both sets of participants (call-takers and callers) were able to withdraw from the project[21] at any point. Call-takers would have been able to contact the original investigators, and have

---

[19] Note that 'participants' here refers to call-takers in services and callers to services.
[20] For this process I used 'Audacity' software, which is a multi-track audio editor and recorder. https://www.audacityteam.org/
[21] By 'project' I refer to the original ESRC-funded study, indicated earlier.

their recordings deleted. Callers who did not wish to be recorded during calls would inform call-takers, and the recording would be stopped.

In the next section, I focus on how I approach the analytic process. First, I discuss conversation analysis, which not only is a way of *doing* analysis, but serves to act as a methodological framework, through which discursive psychology can be operationalised.

2.4 Data analysis

In this section, I describe the ways in which I approach analysis of the data corpus – CA and DP. Both these analytic practices are concerned with the study of *social interaction* – how members go about their everyday lives, and attend to each other through talk, text, and embodied action. I discuss how CA and DP contribute to the study of social interaction, but also, how CA and DP are both mutually beneficial and compatible, as ways of *doing* analysis. First, I consider CA in terms of the systematic way it is employed to study social interaction, and how the method of transcribing recordings of data is approached. Second, I describe DP, and its focus on psychological matters in and for interaction. Third, I briefly discuss the relationship between CA and DP, and the way in which they are conjointly relevant for analysing the corpus of recordings. Finally, I outline how I transcribed the recordings, and summarise the analytic procedure.

2.4.1 Conversation analysis: Method and analytic framework

Although CA is primarily concerned with the study of language, it has its roots within *sociology*, and not, as might be anticipated, in such disciplines as 'communication' or 'linguistics'. CA emerged in the 1960s, through the collaborative work of Harvey Sacks, Emmanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson, who in turn drew their inspiration (for the most part) from two significant sociologists - Garfinkel (1967) and Goffman (1963). While Garfinkel and Goffman worked independently of each other, there were significant parallels in how they drew attention to the interactional environments or *situations* in which co-present parties were engaged in "mutual monitoring" of each other's talk and actions (Goffman, 1963, p. 18). Goffman would later develop the notion that members attend to each other, but do so in an *orderly* way, through the "interaction order", which encompassed a multifaceted set of rules, expectancies, and standards of conduct (Goffman, 1983). By comparison, Garfinkel's critique of sociology led him to develop ethnomethodology (EM), which focused on *practical reasoning* – challenging traditional sociology's sense that conduct is regulated

by 'norms', but that members are accountable *to each other*, and determine the norms and 'methods' of conduct in a particular context or situation (Garfinkel, 1967, 1974).

The work of Goffman and Garfinkel[22] led Sacks (1992), with Schegloff and Jefferson, to develop CA as a way of showing that the fined grained details of talk can be examined for its rules and procedures, illustrating how the orderly features of human conduct are produced and oriented to by members *at all points* in a given interaction (Sacks, 1984b). In this way, CA allows analysts to investigate the ways in which social life is ordered in a particular context - essentially, how people go about *doing* things. For instance, early CA research on telephone calls examined how participants display recognition (or not) of each other in call 'openings' (Schegloff, 1979). Research developed from more technically focused work (e.g., Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977) to specific institutional settings, such as courtrooms, wherein accusations and denials of wrongdoing were analysed (e.g., Atkinson & Drew, 1979). Research also expanded to other institutional contexts, such as calls for assistance in the emergency services (e.g., J. Whalen, Zimmerman, & Whalen, 1988; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987) and advice-giving in healthcare encounters (e.g., Heritage & Sefi, 1992).

One of the most basic, and important, features of CA is that the way we communicate is organised through *turn-taking*. Turns are fundamental for getting things accomplished in talk, such as *social actions* (e.g., greetings, requests, and offers), but are done so within an *economy* of potential speaking opportunities – in this way, there is *value* to turn-taking, with activities being coordinated and monitored between participants (Sacks et al., 1974). Turn-taking figures in ways that provide for sense-making between interlocutors, and are designed with features that are not only relevant for future courses of action, but also, are responsive to prior talk –through *intersubjectivity* (Heritage, 1984a). Essentially, in interaction, utterances display (or not) a hearing of some previous talk by the way in which the present talk is produced – for instance, prior talk being analysed by a prospective speaker as a 'greeting' and responded to with a 'greeting'. Speakers might also *request* something from another, and it be hearable as a request, by the way it may be displayed through a *granting* or *rejection* of the request. And so, the turn-by-turn design and organisation of talk-in-interaction is continuously monitored and updated by speakers and recipients as ways of confirming (tacit) understanding of other member's talk (Heritage, 2005).

---

[22] But also, philosophers, psychologists and anthropologists (Maynard, 2014).

While turns may respond to previous talk, and project further talk, they are also connected through patterns or sequences that are systematically organised by speakers and recipients – or *sequence organisation* (Schegloff, 2007). The simplest type of sequence is an *adjacency pair*, in which pairs of relatively ordered actions are produced by different speakers – one speaker produces a certain action, and another speaker is 'expected' to respond with a paired action (Sacks, 1992b). For instance, a *greeting* to a prior greeting. Turns can be designed to project future courses of action, such as requests which may be granted or rejected by recipients, or an invitation, that a recipient should either accept or decline. These examples show an 'expectation' that a recipient should respond with an appropriate action. In this way, there is a *conditional relevance* of a response (a "second pair part") on the production of an initiating action (a "first pair part") (Schegloff, 2007). However, these pairs are *constrained,* in the sense that if the responding turn is not designed as an appropriate response, this absence is noticeable and potentially accountable (Drew, 2005a). In turn, this may lead to interactional *trouble* arising between participants – which may relate to problems with understanding or hearing, but also disputes, challenges or initiating *repair* on prior talk (Jefferson, 2015; Schegloff, 1992; see also Chapter 1).

A further, more recent, move in CA is the analytic focus on *epistemics* - how participants display *knowledge* of the world through their turns-at-talk, and how claims of knowledge can be asserted, challenged or defended by interactants (Heritage, 2014). Epistemics features in the business of designing talk that orients to what recipients ostensibly *know* or have *rights to know* – for instance, displaying expertise or authority when making assessments about people, places, and things (Heritage & Raymond, 2005). The ways in which we go about designing *knowledge* to be recognised by others "is clearly a precondition for much of what we take for granted in social interaction" (Heritage, 2014, p. 370). Essentially, without our understanding of the world, we could not make reference *to* the world that would allow others to comprehend it. In this way, *epistemics* affords another layer of analytic insight in how talk is designed *for* recipients in the course of conversational activities (Enfield et al., 2007; Sacks & Schegloff, 1979).

While the resources described above are not representative of every means for *doing* CA, they are the fundamental building blocks of CA's method for analysing talk (and embodied action). Below, I describe discursive psychology, and its relationship with CA in terms of analysing social interaction.

2.4.2 Discursive psychology

As with CA and its *sociological* origins, DP has its roots in one predominant discipline - emerging as a way of reworking the nature of *psychological* matters (Edwards & Potter, 1992a). In particular, DP developed as a means of challenging cognitive psychology's notion that mental states are reflected in action and behaviour, and that human conduct can only be understood by examining underlying cognitive processes (Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007). In contrast to the traditional psychological assumption that action and discourse are mediated though, and as a consequence of, mental structures, "DP *begins* with discourse (talk and text), both theoretically and empirically. Discourse is approached, not as the outcome of mental states and cognitive processes, but as a domain of action in its own right." (Edwards & Potter, 2001, p. 12; emphasis in original). In this section, I briefly discuss DP's core principles and themes. Further, I consider DP and its relationship with CA, and how they can be mutually beneficial ways of investigating social conduct.

DP takes its motivation from a variety of approaches within social science and philosophy, such as social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), speech act theory (J. L. Austin, 1962), as well as EM (Garfinkel, 1967) and CA (Sacks, 1992b) discussed above. However, arguably a greater influence originates from theoretical and methodological debates and controversies that developed around the sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK) (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984; Mulkay & Gilbert, 1983), which led to the discourse analytic (DA) work on the construction of accounts and descriptions through talk and text (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Research around SSK was concerned with *scientists' distinctions* of their (and others') research – namely, that social conditions produce 'true' facts, and any scientific errors are related to social prejudice or psychological factors. In this way, scientific knowledge is *assumed* and requires no social explanation, and is accounted for within the natural context of the phenomena being studied (Collins, 1981). The ways in which scientists (and in particular, biochemists) sustained rhetorical accounts that ostensibly *pre-supposed* scientific knowledge, led researchers to examine how these accounts were formulated through fact construction, or 'empiricist discourse' by examining research paper and interview transcripts (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984). In turn, researchers began to analyse interview data and rhetorical approaches to psychology – not in the traditional sense of treating utterances as a means of gathering opinion on a subject (such as through interviewing), but rather, examining talk and text for its variability and (in)consistency, as ways of saying something about *how* people went about displaying prejudice or attitude (Billig, 1987; Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

The foundations of the DP programme are set out by Edwards & Potter's (1992) seminal publication *Discursive Psychology*, which draws on previously mentioned influences, but also social-discursive studies on memory and remembering (e.g., Edwards & Middleton, 1988). While DP has developed in a way that has encompassed various approaches (e.g., critical discourse analysis, rhetorical analysis, and CA methods), there are three fundamental principles that bind and motivate DP's study of discourse (Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007; Tileagă & Stokoe, 2015). First, discourse is the principle way in which conduct is coordinated, and so DP focuses on the *action orientation* of descriptions. Second, discourse is *situated* in terms of its sequential environment (see Section 2.4.1, this chapter), institutionality (e.g., speaker/recipient identities in a given context), and rhetoric (e.g., in terms of undermining/countering prior alternate descriptions). Third, discourse is both *constructed* (e.g., from categories and repertoires) and *constructive* (e.g., the formulation of alternative versions of people, things, and the world) (Potter & Edwards, 2001).

In terms of *how* I apply the core components outlined above to my data analysis, there are observable commonalities with CA in how discourse is treated as the primary source of scholarly inquiry. However, the practice of *doing* DP also draws on three distinct themes, which serve to steer its application (Edwards, 2005a). The first is *respecification and critique* – essentially, that psychological topics are reworked through discourse, and mental phenomena are considered as objects in and for interaction (Edwards, 1994). For instance, topics such cognition and emotion (Edwards, 1997; Locke & Edwards, 2003; Potter & Hepburn, 2003), memory and remembering (Edwards & Potter, 1992b, 1992a; Edwards, Potter, & Middleton, 1992; Middleton & Brown, 2005), and assessments (Puchta & Potter, 2002; Wiggins & Potter, 2003). Second, is the *psychological thesaurus*, revealing how words, descriptions and categories are produced in ways that traditionally would be considered as 'psychological'. For instance, 'Jimmy is extremely *jealous*', 'I was real *angry*', and 'very *upset*', and the way in which idiomatic expression is formulated to rhetorically enhance emotion talk (Edwards, 1999). Third, the *management of psychological business* – how psychological themes are implicitly handled by participants, and the ways in which themes (e.g., emotional investment, prejudice, evaluations) can be worked up or undermined through descriptions, categories, and accounts of the world (Edwards, 2005a). For instance, how the matter of how subject-side (experience, stance, attitude) is managed in terms of object-side (reality, facts) status when making assessments – thus, avoiding giving offence or disagreement regarding some state of affairs (Edwards & Potter, 2017).

Like the various sociological and psychological approaches to the study of social problems discussed above, there are different strands of DP, which are generally compatible, although somewhat diverse (Tileagă & Stokoe, 2015). It would therefore be helpful to clarify my approach in the context of these different orientations. First, is a strand which focuses on the critical analysis of interviews and social texts, covering social psychological topics such as prejudice, attitudes and gender (e.g., Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Seymour-Smith, Wetherell, & Phoenix, 2002). Second, is an approach which rhetorically appraises topics such as ideology, racism, argumentation and obedience through the examination of actual utterances and social texts (e.g., Billig, 1987, 1988b; Gibson, 2019). Finally, is the approach that I use in this thesis, which draws on the discursive practices mentioned above, underpinned by the methodological framework of CA, to examine predominantly naturally occurring interaction and sometimes textual materials. Social psychological phenomena (e.g., emotion, cognition, attitudes) are respecified through situated practices and embodied action which reveal members' methods for talk-in-interaction (e.g., Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 1992a; Hepburn & Potter, 2011; Stokoe & Edwards, 2007). It is with these matters in mind that I briefly consider the practicalities and potential problems of *doing* DP analysis, underpinned by CA's methods of studying social interaction.

2.4.3 Conversation analysis and discursive psychology

As noted earlier, the ways in which CA and DP approach analysis, overlap and cross-cut in various ways, by treating talk (and text) as the primary site of investigation. However, there are potential tensions between the two disciplines, which I consider for doing DP/CA analysis. The matter of how descriptions are *constructed* in talk varies in terms of emphasis. For instance, in DP, the focus is on how collective remembering in conversation is organised as mutually referential social activities (Edwards et al., 1992; Middleton & Edwards, 1990), or in therapy sessions where *anger* and *upset* are constructed as ways of attributing relationship problems to others (Edwards, 1997). CA commonly pays little attention to constructionist themes, although not necessarily disregarding them altogether. Another potential issue is in how *cognition* is considered. As indicated before, DP approaches mental states by completely reworking them in and for interaction – displays of (for instance) emotion, memory and attitude are examined *as* objects in the production of talk (Potter, 2006; Potter & te Molder, 2005). While CA analysts have generally avoided making inferences about mental states, there has been some analytic slippage in terms of inferring links between interactional and cognitive phenomena – for instance, the observation of a "cognitive

moment" between interlocutors (Drew, 2005b, p. 170). A further area of difference between the two disciplines is DP's emphasis on participants' categories/formulations, and CA's focus on turn-taking and sequence organisation. Yet, while DP has 'traditionally' been less rigorous in its treatment on the local organisation of turns at talk, it has, at least by its originators, embraced CA as a robust methodological framework, from which empirically rigorous DP-focused analysis can be conducted. In this way, developing the DP/CA approach,

> "will allow further insights into the organisation and sequential placement of particular phenomena that are generated through a corpus of materials, and their relationship to constructions of mind and world. This will facilitate development of both discursive psychology and conversation analysis." (Hepburn & Wiggins, 2007, p. 11).

And so, by incorporating the combined resources of CA and DP, allows for a richer, but also, a more empirically robust analysis of the corpus of calls to dispute resolution services. Next, I briefly describe how the data was transcribed, and the way in which I went about the analytic process.

2.4.4 Transcription, data selection, and analysis

Recorded data were transcribed using the Jefferson system of transcription (see Appendix C). This is a system which includes various features that mark out *how* talk (and embodied conduct) is delivered – for instance, word stretches, pauses, gaps, laughter, and volume (see Jefferson, 2004b). The system is widely used in CA and DP research, and provides a way of illustrating the conventions of social interaction, as displayed by its participants and observed and textually reproduced by analysts. It is also a way of transcribing that has developed (and is developing) over time, with notation being continually updated (for an overview, see Hepburn & Bolden, 2014).

The procedure for analysis relies on approaching the data from an *inductive* stance – essentially, by *observing* the world through the data (potentially aided by transcripts), and how people go about doing things through talk (Sidnell, 2014). This is an approach to analysis that has been long established in CA (and DP/CA), in that analysts should consider "actual conversation in an unmotivated way" (Sacks, 1984a, p. 27), in which features or patterns in data emerge as relevant for participants, through their turns-at-talk. For instance, identifying particular *actions* (e.g., offering, requesting, or inviting), or broader *practices* of

talk – the way a turn is designed, its character, its location within a sequence, and "its consequences for the nature or the meaning of the action that the turn implements" (Heritage, 2011, p. 212). Instances of talk (through the iterative process of deciding what to collect) are then organised into collections, whereby they are examined further. For example, Chapter 3 focuses on *initial iterations* of complainable matters – essentially the first point in the call in which callers describe the nature of their trouble. I initially collected every instance of *initial iterations* across the corpus, examining each instance for how the turn was designed, identifying any pervasive features, from which a 'phenomenon' could be established (see Schegloff, 1997; also p.54 for an overview of the procedure I used).

Deciding which extracts should be selected for inclusion in this thesis has a been somewhat delicate balance between showing the prevalence of a particular interactional feature and the more practical affordances of space (i.e., chapter length), as governed by the comparative approach. For instance, in most analytic chapters, around three extracts showing a particular phenomenon have been analysed in each organisation (mediation, environmental health and antisocial behaviour). However, in Chapter 3, only two organisations were included, which meant around six extracts per organisation could be reasonably included for analysis. There are costs and benefits to each of these chapter formats. The ability to compare a feature across three different organisations provides a robust empirical underpinning from which claims can be made about the occurrence of a phenomenon across a variety of institutional (and interactional) environments. However, this format provides less opportunity to take a deeper dive into the data and examine edge cases of a particular phenomenon in a collection. This opportunity is taken up in Chapter 3; in so doing, enriching our understanding of initial iterations of complaints in these services in ways that may not be practically possible in other chapters.

I consider CA and DP as interconnected ways of observing the world *out there* through talk and transcripts, and so I do not have one clear-cut way of approaching the data. That said, DP affords me the opportunity to say something unique about psychological matters in talk. Consequently, part of the business of *doing* analysis allows me to identify and make empirically-evidenced observations about members' occasioned use of DP-relevant descriptions, ascriptions, categories, and activities, within the situated organisation of social interaction. The combined approach of DP/CA is particularly relevant for analysing data in this thesis – not only in terms of showing how action, turn design, and sequence are produced, but also, illustrating the ways in which psychological states (e.g., stance, attitude, and blame) are attributed to the self and others when complaining about neighbours (see

Wiggins, 2017). While it might be argued that data analysis is manifestly approached through an analyst's stance to, or stake in, the enterprise (see Potter & Hepburn, 2005), my observations, whether CA or DP informed, are grounded *in* the data itself. And so, the analytic endeavour in this thesis is driven by the matter of what is going on *for participants* in talk-in-interaction.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have described the institutional responsibilities and scope of antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services in the UK. I have summarised the process by which the data was collected, including the recruitment of participants. I have also considered the ethical issues throughout the data collection process. I discussed the analytic practices of conversation analysis discursive psychology, as mutual ways of examining social interaction. Further, I briefly explained data transcription, and the analytic procedures used.

Across the next four chapters, I will analysis the data, addressing each research question (see Chapter 1, p.48). Each chapter will be presented in ways that feed into the themes of my thesis, representing the way in which calls to dispute resolution services typically unfold. In Chapter 3, I examine how *initial iterations* of complaints are produced by callers across different services. In Chapter 4, I investigate how neighbourhood concerns shift from callers' descriptions of their experiences, to matters for institutional redress. In Chapter 5, I explore what and how third-party services are invoked and oriented to by callers when accounting for calling. Lastly, in Chapter 6, I examine call outcomes – specifically how offers of assistance are designed by call-takers, and also, how callers are signposted to other services when no offer is made. Using the approaches of CA and DP described above, I will provide novel insights focusing on *how* the interactional business of reporting and managing neighbourhood troubles is displayed for service provision in different institutions.

Chapter 3:

Formulating noise complaints
across dispute resolution services

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I begin to examine the different ways in which similar types of neighbourhood complaint can be designed by callers when contacting institutions that may offer assistance. In so doing, there is a unique opportunity to examine the core CA topics of recipient design and comparative analysis in regard to how similar kinds of social problems are formulated in service provision across agencies. I address how it is that *noise*, as the most common reason for neighbour complaints (see Table 2.1, p.55), is formulated to mediation and environmental health service in the UK, when calling for help with a neighbourhood problem.[23] In so doing, I begin to explore the social structure of complaint sequences as revealed through the institutional context of talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 1992a).

This chapter represents the start of a journey through different macro-organisational phases of complaints to services that, in one way or another, offer assistance with problems in the neighbourhood. In Chapter 4, I examine how callers' reports of their experiences of troubles shift to matters for institutional redress through actions done by the call-takers. I then compare the interconnectedness of services in Chapter 5, by investigating the ways in which callers characterise third-party agencies – both in terms of service-referrals (to the present service) and service-mentions (when accounting for calling). In Chapter 6, I compare the consequences of calls for assistance across services by examining two of the more prevalent outcomes: offers and signposting. However, I begin in this chapter, by exploring how the *reason for calling* is mobilised by the call-taker, as typically produced in institutional encounters (e.g., Cromdal, Osvaldsson, & Persson-Thunqvist, 2008; Schegloff, 1968, 1979; Sikveland, Stokoe, & Symonds, 2016; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987).

With the initiation of callers' concerns in mind, I have organised this chapter to show in Section 3.4, how interactional slots are opened up by call-takers, for *initial iterations*[24] of neighbourhood troubles to be formulated by callers. In Sections 3.5 and 3.6, I focus on how the case for aid is built through the complainable activities of the call, and what is being made

---

[23] Due to the quality of the antisocial behaviour dataset, there were no usable data specifically from noise related calls, and so are not represented in this chapter.

[24] The first point in the call where reason for the call is observably topicalized or oriented to by callers.

interactionally and institutionally relevant by speakers for recipients. In Section 3.7, I discuss the data analysis, and locate findings within related research. Before all that however, I consider the particular analytic focus (Section 3.1), the phenomenon under study (Section 3.2), and set out the framework for analysis itself (Section 3.3).

3.1 The pervasiveness of noise as a neighbourhood problem.

As a practical neighbourhood concern, *noise pollution* overwhelmingly represents the highest percentage of received complaints in a recent nationwide study[25], with 48% of callers to UK local councils reporting noise problems (Jarrett, 2018). Thus, noise disturbance is a social problem that not only effects peoples' everyday lives, but an issue that people seek help with – a point underpinned by the prevalence of noise complaints in the corpus of calls to mediation and environmental health services (see Table 2.1, p.55). And so, concerns about noise provide form a natural starting point in the selection of data, but also, the prospect of addressing the research question of how similar social problems are designed for two different services.

As a social phenomenon, noise is unique in that it permeates neighbourhood boundaries – for instance, loud music does not cease being heard once it reaches an adjoining wall (see Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003). Further, while noise can be treated as something physical and measurable (e.g., by its volume or frequency), noise is also culturally and socially interpreted – "what one person counts as 'delightful music' may be defined as a 'hideous cacophony' by another" (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005, p. 648; see Chapter 1). While previous DP/CA research has examined noise as designed for, and managed by, different institutions, such as constituting complaints *or* child abuse (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005), there are virtually no studies to date which explore how noise is treated by interlocuters as a complainable matter *across* services.

And so, focusing on noise affords me the opportunity to contribute to a body of research on the discourse of neighbourhood disputes (e.g. Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Stokoe, 2006; Stokoe & Edwards, 2007; Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005; Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003), by showing that and how different interactional strategies may be used when building complaints about noise and 'noisy neighbours'. More broadly, examining noise complaints

---

[25] Freedom of information (FOI) request issued to 387 local councils across the UK, of which 324 (89.4 per cent) provided usable content. All figures used are extrapolated to cover the entire UK, based on the populations in each local authority. The total population of the councils that provided usable content accounted for 85.9 per cent of the total UK population (Jarrett, 2018).

adds to, and compliments, the wide-ranging literature in CA and DP on calling for assistance and help (e.g., Baker, Emmison, & Firth, 2005), and especially, the core CA work on recipient design (Schegloff, 2007) and comparative research (Sidnell, 2009). Further, findings could enhance the suite of trainable materials for call-takers from dispute resolution services (e.g., Stokoe, 2013), who, according to Jarrett (2018), predominantly receive and manage calls about noise disturbance.

In the next section, I determine what an 'initial iteration' of a complaint can be considered as. I focus on *grammar* as site of inquiry, as evidenced in different ways across the dataset of mediation and environmental health calls.

3.2 Establishing an 'initial iteration' of a complaint

In terms of analysing the grammatical structure of complaints in the context of calling for aid, callers often implicate others as in some way to blame; occasionally, callers do not. Descriptions can be built as *devices for complaining* in different ways, and thus, by reporting others' conduct (or not), there can be competing or alternative versions of what the world is objectively like (Potter, 1996; Stokoe & Edwards, 2015). Consequently, there is an ambiguity through which representations of events, people and things can be displayed by callers to these services, and the ways in which these noise problems are formulated are central to my analytic approach. When complaining about others, a common feature is for accountability to be assigned by speakers (Drew, 1998), and so my analysis is directed to examining the degree to which culpability is formulated through the activity of complaining. In this way, by assigned blame to neighbours for transgressive conduct, can be seen "with regard to the causation of actions: the sense of doing something *agentively*, deliberately, or to some kind of end or purpose, rather than, say, by accident or happenstance." (Edwards, 2008, p. 177; emphasis added).

As a way of establishing the basis for the distinction between what might be deemed agentive or not, I consider how the world is made relevant through members' descriptive resources – specifically, in terms of how *action* (making noise), and *objects* (what the noise is) are grammatically tied to *actors* (the neighbour) through *transitivity* (Halliday, 2004). Transitivity is a device which can reveal how action, actors and objects are related, as produced through cohesive grammatical categories. For instance, 'the teacher (actor) taught (action) the pupils' (object) is an *active* form of the transitive process, whereas 'the pupils (object) where taught' (action) is a *passive* form (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). In this way, *agency* (whether the teacher is doing the teaching) is grammatically tied (or not) to particular

actions by either adding or omitting the teacher, which may be to maximise or minimise the rhetorical impact of some particular description (Edwards, 2005a).

In addition, the categories used to formulate the neighbour are relevant to complaint-building. The selection of a particular category from myriad possibilities (e.g., 'neighbour', 'mother', 'single woman', 'slut'; see Stokoe & Edwards, 2007) is important because of the identity-bound implications that categories carry (Jayyusi, 1984; Sacks, 1992c; Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). Complaints are built from the outset, partly by inferring (and often not spelling out) the moral character of the neighbour – as the kind of person disposed to be inconsiderate or badly behaved in general, and therefore noisy in particular.

As a way of clearly demarcating *agency* as a descriptive device, I shall refer to utterances in which neighbours are invoked as 'agentive' (e.g., 'my neighbour is creating noise'), and utterances in which neighbours are omitted (e.g., 'I've got a problem with noise'), as 'agent-free'. However, it should be noted that these categories should be considered on a continuum which feature as participants' descriptions of others (or not) and their conduct. Matters of agency are practices treated as relevant by participants through their turns-at-talk in various ways, as will be revealed. In the next section, I turn to the data corpus, and lay the groundwork for my analysis.

3.3 Analytic preliminaries

From the corpus of calls to mediation and environmental health services, initial-contact complaints (i.e., no observably prior contact between caller and call-taker) about neighbourhood noise were formulated by callers as either agentive or agent-free. In the first instance, neighbours are reported as accountable for problematic social conduct. Essentially, that culpability is assigned by callers when reporting some particular noise disturbance. In this sense, the action of being noisy is attributed to the neighbour (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003). In the second instance, reporting noise nuisance can be made without (at least initially) reference to the neighbour. For example, callers may report that there was some noise in the area. By either adding or omitting the neighbour when describing a problem, callers can be seen as assigning more or less criticism, accountability or blameworthiness for the social actions of others (Edwards & Potter, 1993).

In respect of the agentive/agent-free distinction outlined above, there are observable trends in how initial iterations of complaints are designed, depending on the institution being called. In mediation service calls, the neighbour was always invoked prior to the complaint component. Environmental health service calls were more mixed, with the agent-free form

mostly, but not always, produced (see Table 3.1 below). This distinction is important, as it indicates that complaints about similar social problems are potentially designed for particular institutions – which may in turn reveal how members display knowledge about a service, making particular institutional responses relevant. This distinction is confirmed in the following sections, both in terms of the agentive/agent-free design of initial iterations, and the services in which they are produced. And so, in Section 3.5, I show how problematic noise is attributed to neighbours in mediation and environmental health calls through the agentive formulation. In Section 3.6, I focus on agent-free initial iterations of troubles in environmental health service calls. However, first, I show how callers are oriented to the business of the complaint by examining a selection of turns by call-takers that directly precede and facilitate initial iterations of complaints.

Table 3.1: Initial iterations of noise complaints by service

	Agentive	Agent-free
Mediation	14 (100%)	0 (0%)
Environmental health	15 (42%)	21 (48%)

3.4 Opening up the complaint slot

In this section, I examine interactional slots which are essentially *opened up* by mediation and environmental health services in my data corpus. I show a range of standard call-taker turns which are sequentially produced just prior to callers' troubles talk. The purpose of this section is to show how professionals from these services facilitate 'first moves' by callers, as standardised ways of displaying *a reason for calling* in telephone call openings (Schegloff, 1968). And so, below, I show how complaint-facilitating turns essentially provide for a "first topic slot", in which complainable activities are produced by callers to these services (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 173).

It should be noted that all noise complaints in mediation services analysed in this chapter are in *outgoing* calls; that is, the mediator is calling and initiating the current encounter. This is because they are returning a call due to the caller leaving an answer machine message, or because the mediators have been asked to call disputing neighbours by another service, such as a housing association. All bar one (Extract 3.11) noise complaint in

70

the environmental health calls data set are *incoming* – members of the public have called the service. While participants' shared knowledge or otherwise regarding a complaint, caller, or any such related circumstances are not available for analytic inspection, the facilitation of first topic slots provide the *first* opportunity for callers to convey their concerns to call-takers, through the conversational machinery of the troubles-telling sequence, and thus, are analytically accessible (Jefferson, 1988). My focus therefore, is not to deliberate on what may or not be known about the circumstances of these calls, but to examine what is relevant for participants in the context of describing and managing neighbourhood problems, through their turns-at-talk. I start then, by showing how complaint slots are facilitated by call-takers in mediation services.

3.4.1 Complaint-mobilising turns in mediation services

In calls which involve mediation services, a common feature is that the service identifier is established, then the reason for the call determined, as shown in fragment [1]. Only then, is the complaint sequence facilitated - here, with no direct elicitation of the problem.

[1] DC-57
```
01   M:   Hi, my name's Anna I'm calling from mediation in
02        Newtown.=.hHH u:m You r- you rang yesterday and
03        left a message.
```

In another call, mediators may orient callers to there being a problem that needs addressing, as illustrated in fragment [2].

[2] DC-73
```
01   M:   <Hi.=How >can I< help.
```

Alternatively, mediators may formulate more explicit requests for information, such as contextualising the talk in terms of an already determined problem, as shown in a fragment from a further call [3].

[3] EC-58
```
01   M:   Uhm: w- w- wha- wha- jus- just very briefly wha- what
02        sort've: problems.=What's been happening.
```

These complaint-mobilising turns in mediation services show how the interactional environment can be shaped in ways that project future talk as troubles-relevant.

3.4.2 Complaint-mobilising turns in environmental health services

In calls to environmental health services, call-takers' first turns commonly mobilise callers' initial iterations of complaints. These opening turns typically comprise a greeting and service identifier and are illustrated in fragment [4] below.

[4] EH-164
```
01   E:   ↑Mor:ning.=Environmental health?
```

Greeting turns are sometimes 'through-produced' (i.e., greeting and service identifier are produced as one intonational unit), and shown in [5].

[5] EH-27
```
01   E:   Good afternoon environmental health?
```

Additionally, call-takers may offer person identification, shown in fragment [6].

[6] EH-08
```
01   E:   Morning environmental health.=Deirdre speaking?
```

There is only one *outgoing* call in the environmental health data, which is a call-back in response to a caller-initiated inquiry (answer machine message). Note how the complaint-facilitating turn is initially designed as a generalised problem elicitor, before being framed explicitly as an already-established problem C has with the neighbour.

[7] EH-166a
```
01   E:   Right how can I help you then.=B'lieve you've got a
02        problem with the neighbour or something.
```

The environmental health fragments above demonstrate that callers treat call openings as the basis for establishing the nature of the call, as will be revealed below.

Thus far, I have shown that complaint-mobilising turns by call-takers are observably produced in ways that frame upcoming talk as a troubles-relevant, or not. In mediation

(outgoing) calls, services display some awareness of there being trouble, by the way in which a concern is invoked or oriented to [1, 2, 3]. In environmental health calls, call-takers design their turns as a greeting and service identifier [4, 5, 6]. While these incoming calls are observably different in nature, comparisons can be drawn with emergency services, in that it is "a built-in feature of emergency call openings that provisions are made for the caller to state the nature of the emergency in the very first turn." (Cromdal et al., 2008, p. 937). However, the final outgoing fragment [7] shows the contrast in turn design with incoming environmental health calls. There is an explicit orientation to C having a neighbour problem. In this way, C is accountable for reporting the details of what is knowable regarding the trouble.

In respect of CA's interest in displays of epistemic knowledge (Heritage & Raymond, 2005), some fragments (e.g., fragments [1, 7]) show that agencies are potentially primed with information relating to a dispute they are calling about. In contrast, call-takers in incoming calls display *not knowing* the details of a callers' troubles until they are reported. Whilst it is observably unclear what may already be known about a particular neighbourhood problem, the fragments above demonstrate what is knowable, depending on whether complainants receive calls or initiate contact. Consequently, an area to focus on in the analysis below is whether those calling (environmental health) services have to do more interactional work to establish the nature of their trouble through the recipient design of their troubles, in contrast to complainants who are called back (typically mediation services). In their own way, the design of these complaint-facilitating turns may regulate access to, and project the shape of caller-troubles (Schegloff, 1986; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987).

While these fragments invite further comment, the following sections and chapters illustrate a much richer contextual picture of what is occurring interactionally - for the service provider, for the caller, and for the co-management of the call. I shall return to these fragments and others in Chapters 4 and 6, where my analysis is directed more toward the service rather than caller. In the next two sections, however, I begin to explore how callers orient to the business of building complaints. In Section 3.5 specifically, I investigate the ways in which neighbours are implicated as the source of the noise disturbance.

3.5 Assigning agency in complaints about noisy neighbours

In this section, I demonstrate how the neighbour or *agent of control* (Sack, 1986) is invoked as the source of noise problems in callers' first substantive turns. These initial iterations serve

as a frame for the further unfolding of complaint narratives. In a mediation service call in Extract 3.1, the mediator (M) is returning a call from a member of the public (C).

<u>Extract 3.1: DC-57</u>

```
01   M:   Hello:.= Can I speak t' Mrs Richards ↓please.
02   C:   ↑Speakin[g,
03   M:          [.hh Hi, my name's Anna I'm calling from
04        mediation in Newtown.=.hHH u:m you r- you rang
05        yesterday and left a message. .HH
06   C:   Ye:a[:h.      a couple of days ago:.
07   M:       [#U- um    a-#
08   M:   Ye:ah.
09   C:   It's about the neigh:bour.
10   M:   .HH ri:ght,
11   C:   Um it's um HHh I'm in Newtown Park.=.hh An:d to the
12        right side of me there's some fla:ts.
13   M:   Rig[ht.
14   C:      [.hhh and <directly at the side of me at the top
15        flat hh there's um there's a man: in the flat there:.=
16        .hh[who plays music.=.hh[h           (              )
17   M:      [Yeah.                [Can I just stop you for a
18        moment and just <tell you that we're recording all our
19        calls today for: training an rese[arch purposes.=Are=
20   C:                                    [˚ o k a y. ˚
21   M:   =you okay with that.
```

After the preliminaries, C describes her reason for calling mediation services: "It's about the neigh:bour." (line 9). Note that C produces the referent 'the' (and not 'my') neighbour, such that, right from the start of her account, any relationship between the two parties is pushed apart – the neighbour is displayed as not in C's 'here-space' (Stivers, 2007a). Note M's "Ri:ght," (line 10), which is sequentially positioned to receipt the caller's prior talk but also marks out something previously said as being epistemically built upon (i.e., evaluated in some way), rather than "merely progressing the interaction with a relevant next" (Gardner, 2007, p. 319). C provides some information about the location of her property (lines 11-12) and the orientation of the neighbour's property relative to hers (line 12, 14-15), before reporting what is latterly confirmed as the main issue (lines 15-16). Note that 'a man' (line 15) replaces the initial referent, 'the neighbour', once this locational work is done.

Conversation analysts have found that, following an initial reference, subsequent references regularly take the form of a third-person pronoun, such as 'he' (Fox, 1987). In Extract 3.1, 'the man' is also an *initial* reference, but in *subsequent* position (Schegloff, 1996), thus enhancing the agentive status (and consequently, the accountability) of the neighbour. "A man" is also, like 'the' neighbour, a description that serves to minimise any sense of a pre-existing relationship between parties, and thus any pre-existing circumstances in which the caller's own neighbourliness is hearably relevant to the current situation. Note also, "in the flat there:." which further pushes apart the connection between C and the neighbour.

From the start, then, noise is directly attributed to 'the neighbour' as the source of the problem that C is calling for help with. C indexes the agent ('the man'); the spatial orientation to C's property ('in the flat there'), and the problem activity ('who plays music'). Note also that C's first formulation of the problem does not contain a detailed report of the time and date of music being played, but a summary description of the neighbour's general behaviour, in that he "plays music" – by implication, as he dispositionally would (Edwards, 2006). Furthermore, C's description is not initially framed as a *complaint* per se, as she reports that the neighbour "plays music" but does not assess this negatively. However, this formulation is enough for M to hear it as complete, and relevant to the mediation service, as she stops the caller explaining further and moves to the ethics script and consent-gaining to record the conversation (lines 17-19).

Extract 3.1 illustrates that indexing the neighbour at the first interactional opportunity not only assigns blame, implying that C is a passive recipient of unwanted noise, but can be a strategy for effecting the call's outcome - projecting others as morally in the wrong, and self as morally in the right. In another example of an agentively formulated initial iteration, the neighbour is formulated explicitly in the 'reason for call' slot, shown in Extract 3.2.

Extract 3.2: DC-73
```
01   M:   <Hi.=how >can I< hel[p.
02   C:                      [.hh U:m mcht I've complained
03        about (0.2) <the girl downstairs with her mu:sic.
04   M:   .HH righ[t.
05   C:          [To the council n'they've give me: (.) your
06        numbe[r.
07   M:        [.hHH right okay.
08        (0.2)
09   M:   Mcht #I: e- i- i- i- <is it loud noise that
```

```
10        you've [complained about.
11   C:         [y e : a h   I ph:oned up security again last
12        night. b[u- i- i- .hh hh from mornin' to night it's on=
13   M:           [Right.
14   C:   =(.) now.
15           (0.3)
16   M:   Right.
```

Following M's generalised problem elicitor (line 1), C begins to formulate her reason for calling mediation (lines 2-3) – a turn grammatically completed by an increment (lines 5-6), notwithstanding M's treating of C's prior talk as potentially complete (line 4). The source of the noise disturbance ('the girl') is, then, identified right at the start of the call. Unlike Extract 3.1, in which the caller described the neighbour's noise but did not explicitly formulate her stance towards it, in this case C makes her stance clear in her first iteration of the reason for calling. The 'music' is of a nature that has warranted a complaint; she has "complained" to the council. Compared to Extract 3.1, C refers to '*the* girl downstairs', and not '*my* neighbour', which potentially minimizes the relationship between them and, indeed, reduces their relationship to an artefact of proximity. Like Extract 3.1, C provides information about her location relative to the complainee ('downstairs'), before formulating the problematic behaviour ('with her music'). The spatial information is the warrant for C's complaint; coming from 'downstairs' the music is near enough for C to be disturbed (Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003). Also significant is how agent and action are fused together: in contrast to 'the man who plays music' (Extract 3.1), here 'the girl' is tied to the action itself – it is '*her* music' that is being played. This formulation can be considered in terms of how subject/object (neighbour conduct/music) relations are invoked, and the ways in which experience and reality are managed by speakers when building descriptions of the world (Edwards & Potter, 2017).

     Note that, like many callers to mediation, C has phoned somewhere else before calling mediation (Stokoe, 2013) - the council has given C the number of the mediation service. When M pursues C for clarification of the complaint's nature, C reformulates 'music' as "loud noise." (lines 9-10). While 'music' may or may not be a complainable activity, 'loud noise' is better fitted as a problem requiring a solution. C confirms M's reformulation in overlap, before providing further unsolicited details about her neighbour's behaviour, and the steps she has already taken to endeavour to address the problem (lines 11-12, 14). C supplies evidence that this is a problem that might be recognised as such by an

external third party ("I ph:oned up security";) as well as the regularity ("again last night), persistence ("from mornin' to night") and immediacy ("it's on (.) now.") of the noise.

Extract 3.2 demonstrates how accountability can be attributed to the neighbour, but also shows how opening turns can implicate the present service as accountable for providing a service, in the face of a rejection of assistance elsewhere (see Chapter 5). Extract 3.3 illustrates similar features in another example of a mediation service call. The caller is reporting loud music, amongst other domestic issues, that are adding to the overall problem.

Extract 3.3: EC-37

```
01    M:    .HH Hh Okay missis Willoughby.=I'm just really would
02          like to know what it's all about?=.hh is now a good
03          time to ta[l:k? .h  h    h    h
04    C:             [↑Yeah no no it's fine.=Uh:m .hhh w- we moved
05          I moved in to ā:: (.) this: flat. We bought this flat
06          back in December. >I' was< myself my husband and my
07          daugh:ter.
08    M:    Okay,
09    C:    Uh:m:, .hh mcht .h (.) from the s:tart of us movin' in:
10          uhm: (.) the neighbours upstairs were .hh #uh:# makin a
11          h:ell of a racket with loud music an' bangin:' an'
12          shoutin' and arguin',
13    M:    Myeah.
```

Note the initial 'scene-setting' from C relating to the property (lines 4-7), including the repairs 'we' to 'I' to 'we', and 'a' to 'this' flat (lines 4-5), which although replacing something 'incorrect' with something 'correct', do not display obvious errors (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2007). Observe also, the shift from *moving* to *buying* the flat and the inclusion of all C's family members. There is a sense that these unsolicited 'category-relevant descriptions' give greater rhetorical weight to C's complaint – not only is she a responsible home *owner*, their home is a *family* home (see Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). By bringing into the narrative these morally implicative details, the complaint that follows can be seen as a breach of certain reasonable standards and expectancies afforded to house owners and responsible parents (see Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005; Tracy & Robles, 2013). Furthermore, C reports that the problems occurred "from the s:tart of us movin' in:" (line 9), and so, by implication, the neighbours were noisy "back in December" (line 6), which infers an (undisclosed) period of time the problem has been persisting for. In this way, and like callers

in previous extracts, C describes events in such a way as to reduce or remove any sense of a relationship (or even contact) between the parties. This has the advantage of locating the cause of the noise in the neighbour's ongoing, pre-existing behaviour, which has no connection to a two-sided relationship with their neighbour (i.e., is not done in response to anything the caller does, or in a retaliatory way – this is *just how they behave*).

The source of the noise is initially formulated as "the neighbours upstairs" (line 10). As with the previous example, 'the' (and not 'my') neighbours are tied directly to the noise as they "were .hh #uh:# makin' a h:ell of a racket with loud m<u>u</u>sic" (lines 10-11). Notable also is the listing format of "b<u>a</u>ngin:' an' sh<u>ou</u>tin' and arguin'," (lines 11-12). A complaint about a primary noise source such as music (played for pleasure) is potentially less complainable than secondary noise sources such as banging, shouting and arguing (the consequences of something else, such as a dispute), and in its own way, a three-part list of sorts (Jefferson, 1990).

Extract 3.3 illustrates how the category 'family' (through its invocation and orientation), can be a strategy for framing the unreasonableness of neighbour behaviour, which in turn displays, for the call-taker, the grantability of assistance to C as 'good' neighbour. The next mediation service example is different to the previous cases, in that a relationship with the neighbour is built as part of the initial complaint component. In Extract 3.4, C is reporting loud music and general noise from a next door flat.

Extract 3.4: EC-47

```
01   M:   If you'd like to tell me: in your own words in your own
02        time what's been goin on.
03   C:   Um: well the problem is Kathy we know is uh alcoholic,
04   M:   O:kay,
05   C:   Mcht .HH an:d so it's not constant.=I mean (there) for
06        one thing I've gotta sa:y,[.hh ahm we can go months 'n=
07   M:                            [Y:eah.
08   C:   =months without an incident, [an' an' then we get (.)=
09   M:                                [Ah ha,
10   C:   =(i:t,) mcht[.hh  uh::m,.hh (.) she's VERy very (.)=
11   M:              [Yeah.
12   C:   =disrespectful.
```

In comparison to the minimised formulation in previous extracts ('the neighbour', 'the girl downstairs'), in this case, the neighbour is explicitly marked out as the source of the problem

by name – "w<u>e</u>ll the pr<u>o</u>blem is Kathy" (line 3). Further, "Kathy" serves as a 'pivot' (Walker, 2007) for C's characterisation of her – "Kathy we kn<u>ow</u> is uh alcoh<u>o</u>lic," (line 3). This kind of identity work might be a way of aligning with the neighbour as a *victim*, in a similar way as C is, regarding the problematic noise. In this way, there is a *familiarity* built into this description of C's relationship with the neighbour – the neighbour's name, the ascription of a social problem, but also, indexing what is already known with the pluralised "we kn<u>ow</u>". Demonstrating this kind of knowledge may be a way of building entitlement to complain, in the sense of having access to the specifics of the circumstances. Further, by drawing on the relationship with the neighbour, marks out the *mediatability* of the situation (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007) – Kathy is portrayed in terms that index her accountability (for the noise), but also her vulnerability (for being an alcoholic), and thus, potentially *helpable*.

In turn, Kathy's alcoholism seems to be drawn on as the reason for the trouble, as revealed in C's *and*-prefaced next turn "an:d so it's n<u>o</u>t c<u>o</u>nstant." (line 5), which can indicate "what is being formulated is claimably inferable from the prior talk" (Bolden, 2010, p. 5). Presumably 'it' refers to the neighbour's problematic, yet inconsistent, conduct. This sense of unpredictability is characterised further over the next stretch of talk (lines 5-6, 8), framed by the concessionary "<u>o</u>ne thing I've g<u>o</u>tta sa:y," (line 6), which may mitigate the characterisation of the neighbour's conduct. Note also, C's description of her neighbour as "V<u>ER</u>y v<u>e</u>ry (.) disresp<u>e</u>ctful." (line 10, 12) which may serve to underpin the neighbour's behaviour as problematic. And so, by initially displaying knowledge of, and aligning with, the neighbour's personal circumstances, may be a way of building a case which implicitly works to contrast the neighbour's discourteousness with C's respectfulness.

So far, the mediation cases reveal that when agentively formulating initial iterations of complaints, neighbour relationships are rhetorically worked up, or minimised. In different ways, these kinds of turn design can be seen as assigning blame for noise disturbance. The last two extracts in this section are from calls to an environmental health service and reveal some similarities, but also differences in recipient design. In Extract 3.5, C has called to complain about some noisy students next door.

Extract 3.5: EH-59
```
01   E:   Morning envi̱ronmental health?
02   C:   Hello.
03           (.)
04   C:   Good morning.=I wo̱nder if you could he̱lp me
```

```
05        please.=U:m .hh we're ↑having problems with our
06        neighbours m[aking a lot of noise[e. (u:m)
07   E:              [Ah-                [Oh r:ight.=↑C'n: uh
08        be↑fore you j's sorta go into detail we're um recording
09        for training an: research pur↑poses for university at
10        the moment?=.Hh have you got any objection to that?
11   C:   No none whatso[ever.
12   E:              [Mcht okay then.
13        (.)
14   E:   .hh So you've got a problem with yer neighbour.
```

Following the preliminaries, C frames the initial iteration the complaint as a modal form of a pre-request for assistance (lines 4-5), reminiscent of 'low entitlement' requests in patient doctor consultations (Curl & Drew, 2008). In contrast to the mediation extracts above, the 'problem' element of the complaint is explicitly foregrounded as constitutive of the caller rather than the neighbours with "we're ↑having problems…" (line 5), before the agentive iteration "our neighbours" (lines 5-6). In mediation calls, the grievance component is constitutive of the reason for calling itself – 'it's about the neighbour' (Extract 3.1), 'I've complained about the girl downstairs with her music' (Extract 3.2), 'the neighbours upstairs were making a hell of a racket' (Extract 3.3), 'the problem is Kathy' (Extract 3.4). Another distinction with some mediation calls, is the use of the possessive *our* (as opposed to the definite article *the*) in "our neighbours", displaying a less minimised relationship, potentially casting C as less resistant. Further, in contrast with mediation calls, the noise element is not specified in the initial iteration in Extract 3.5, and so there is some ambiguity as to what the noise actually is. These variations in turn design might, of course, be accounted for in terms of whether the call is outgoing or incoming (and thus, being more or less familiar with what the service provides).

Extract 3.5 shows how blame can be agentively assigned to neighbours in a more ambiguous way to the mediation calls presented so far. In the final extract in this section, C is calling to report loud music coming from a neighbour's house and shares similar features with the previous case, and also demonstrates a vagueness in the design of an initial iteration of a complaint.

Extract 3.6: EH-54
```
01   E:   Good afternoon environmental health?
02        (0.5)
```

```
03   C:   ↑Hi.=Uhm ↑I'm jus' wondering what I would need t'do if
04        I've got a n:eighbour th't sort've constantly plays
05        their music too loud.
06   E:   Okay, >↑can I just< b'fore you start >can I just say
07        we're< (0.2) recording at the moment for training an:
08        research purposes?=.hh have you [got any objection?
09   C:                                   [(      )
10        (0.3)
11   C:   (      )that's fine.
12        (0.2)
13   E:   Okay.
14        (.)
15   E:   .hhh Right.=So: ˚#uhh#˚ yer neighbours what.=
16        Playin' music is it¿
```

Following the greeting and return greeting (lines 1, 3), C initiates the agentively formulated
initial iteration turn with a similar type of modal use as with Extract 3.5 - ↑I'm jus'
wondering" (line 2) – minimised by 'just'. However, in contrast, here, C builds her turn as
advice-seeking in the service of a future course of action by C herself – "what I would need
t'do if…" (line 3), rather than a request for aid. That said, the initial framing of the concern in
both environmental health calls above is designed as constitutive of problems *callers* have,
rather than built as troubles for institutional redress. It is particularly clear in this example, as
the burden for resolving the neighbour problem is explicitly and normatively marked out as
such – as something C *would need* to do. The target component - "n:eighbour th't sort've
constantly plays their music too loud." (lines 4-5) - characterises C's neighbour as the source
of the trouble. However, as with the previous example, there is an ambiguity with which the
concern is described, as shown with the contrastive "sort've constantly", in that the
pervasiveness of the music is rhetorically downgraded through the hedged 'sort of'. Note
also, the contingent "if I've got a…" (lines 3-4) which, in contrast with the mediation
examples, is designedly vague in their being a reportable problem, and possibly, if they are in
the right place for service provision.

3.5.1 Interim summary

One way to complain about neighbour noise is, then, to attribute noise directly to its source.
However, my analysis shows that callers deploy particular features in the design of their turns
to maximize 'complainability' (Schegloff, 2005). For example, in mediation service

encounters, when one is in the business of making a complaint, minimizing the relationship one has (or might be expected to have) with the other party is a robust rhetorical strategy (in terms of assigning blame). Conversely, by marking out the bond with a neighbour, callers can draw on knowledge of the particular circumstances of a relationship; in turn, building entitlement to complain. In addition, complainants describe the agents of noise using definite articles ("*the* neighbour") rather than possessive pronouns (e.g., "*my* neighbour"), and include details to attribute the noise to the routine behaviour of the neighbours. However, in environmental health calls, callers design agentive formulations in ways that arguably assign *less* culpability to the neighbour for the trouble, in the sense that the problem is constitutive of the callers themselves. Environmental health formulations were also designedly ambiguous, as illustrated through contingency and the generalised characterisation of the grievance component. And so, it might be that the agentive design of initial iterations of complaints in these environmental health service encounters reflect a lack of knowledge about the what the service provides. In turn, the variation in turn design between these two services may not necessarily be related to the specific service, but rather, whether these calls are outgoing (a problem is already known by the service, potentially affording agency to the complainant) or incoming / call-back (the problem is unknown by the service, potentially restricting agency to the complaint).

With matters of institutional design and call type in mind, I shall now turn to examining complaints about neighbourhood noise in which blame is not directly assigned (at least initially) to the neighbour.

3.6 Reporting neighbour noise without assigning agency

How are complainable matters formulated by callers *without* the agent of the noise being attributed directly? In this section, I examine calls to an environmental health service (E). In these cases, I will include in the transcript any *subsequent* attributions of agency when they occurred. However, our primary interest is on callers' first formulations of their problem. Consider Extract 3.7, in which C has called to report loud music, amongst other neighbourhood problems.

Extract 3.7: EH-43

```
01   E:  Good afternoon environmental health, Deirdre speaking?
02   C:  Hi I ↑don't know whether you can help me:, um I need to
03       speak to s'meone .Hh about uh: disturbance an:d=
```

```
04          (0.3)
05   E:   Oka[y:.
06   C:      =[Some loud music?
07   E:   Okay.=Um:: we're recording at the moment for training
08        and research purposes.=Is that okay with y[ou?
09   C:                                               [↑That's
10        ↓fin[e.
11   E:       [.HH okay then, well how can I help.=Have you got a
12        neighb↑our: or: is it.
13   C:   Yeah.=It's actually: the person backing onto my house.
```

Following the preliminaries (line 1), C frames her upcoming complaint with a pre-request "Hi I ↑don't know whether you can help me:," (line 2), which shares distinct similarities in turn design with Extract 3.5 in the previous section. Note the lack of displayed knowledge about the grantability of any upcoming request, entitlement to ask this service for help, or knowledge about what the particular service provides. However, this is followed by an account ("I need to speak to s'meone"; lines 2-3), demonstrating a degree of urgency C may hold in resolving the issue – specifically the declarative 'I need'. That said, the ambiguity of 'someone' displays the interactional complexity, and C's potential uncertainty, of who can offer assistance.

Like Extract 3.2, which starts with C reporting that she called "the council" before calling mediation, C displays a lack of knowledge regarding who to turn to for aid, what each service does, or whether or not they can help. Also, like Extract 3.2, and in contrast to Extract 3.1, the caller in this example builds her stance towards, or assessment of the noise, in her report of the issue - it is "disturbance". Taken together, the grievance components "about uh: disturbance an:d some loud music?" (lines 3, 6) omit the source or agent of the disturbance, and, further, are interestingly ambiguous. That is, a 'disturbance' can be a mild disruption or annoyance, or a major disruption and disorder.

The term 'disturbance' also has 'pseudo-legal' connotations, as designed by members through "specialist vocabularies associated with particular territories of expertise" (Kitzinger & Mandelbaum, 2013, p. 176). Speakers formulate their utterances in ways that might be commonplace in more legally consequential settings (e.g. a courtroom, a police station, by invoking matters of the law, legality, citizens' rights, and so on). Accordingly, "legal discourse is a creative speech which brings into existence that which it utters" (Bourdieu, 1992, p. 42). And so, by framing her neighbour's behaviour in pseudo-legal terms, C's

concern is reinforced in terms of its *factual* status (see Edwards & Potter, 1992, 2005; Potter, 1996). The word 'disturbance', used in C's turn as a noun, is also nominalized, serving "important ideological functions such as deleting agency and reifying processes" (Billig, 2008, p. 783). Thus, the design of C's complaint is demonstrably oriented to the relevance of a particular kind of legal discourse, and a particular type of aid that may be 'offerable' (e.g. Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990), although, not necessarily by *this* service.

After C has given her consent to record the call, note that it is the call-taker who introduces a candidate cause of the disturbance, asking if C has "got a n<u>eigh</u>b↑<u>ou</u>r:." (lines 11-12). However, E immediately adds another (incomplete) component to her turn, "or: is it." (line 12), which transforms her question from a yes-no interrogative that prefers a 'yes' confirmation, to one that leaves much more open the possible agent of the noise (Raymond & Heritage, 2013). In so doing, E upgrades C's entitlement to know the details of the problem, including the agent of the noise, and downgrades E's own entitlement to make assumptions about it (Koshik, 2002). In response, C confirms E's initial candidate answer, that there is "a neighbour", who is "It's actually: the person backing <u>on</u>to my house" (line 13). It might be that the production of the agentive referent 'the person' subsequent to confirming that it is C's 'neighbour' C has called to report is a practice for revealing a minimised relationship – unpinned by the contrastive "actually" (line 13), displaying potential dispreference (Clift, 2001).

In contrast to examples in the previous section, Extract 3.7 shows how noise concerns are designed as factual, objective, and in terms of the call's consequences, potentially more difficult to challenge. In Extract 3.8, C is reporting loud music and shouting from the property next door.

Extract 3.8: EH-104

```
01   E:   G̲ood afternoon env̲ironmental health?
02   C:   Mcht hh ↑hell̲o̲.=>N'd t'sp̲e̲ak to some'n f'some< adv̲i̲ce:
03        uh: concernin' (.) distu̲rbance.
04            (.)
05   C:   [Or (wh't'ver) it's called,
06   E:   [R : : i : : g  h  t¿
07   C:   <Duh:m (0.6) breach of the p̲e̲ace ( [          )
08   E:                                    [.HH okay:, we're
09        rec̲ording for tr̲aining and r̲esearch at the mom̲e̲nt, is
```

```
10       that okay:?
11  C:   Yeah >th's fine< yes: I don't mind at all.


         ((21 lines omitted for address details))


33  E:   What's the problem then Mr Johnson.
34  C:   Right.= um:: (.) wl the last nights worst of uhm::
35       (0.4) them all really.=.hh Uhm: >it w's comin about< t-
36       half past two: (.) >lady sorta< comes back with
37       friends,
```

C's complaint is initially characterised as 'advice-seeking' (lines 2-3). Although this turn is more straightforwardly a request, there are similarities with Extract 3.7, such as declarative 'need to', contrasted with the ambiguously designed referent 'someone'. Note also "f'some< advice:" – specifically the mitigated 'some', and lexical 'advice', which may frame matters of aid being *offerable*, rather than *requestable* and thus, displaying the agency of the service rather than caller. The complainable element of C's turn "uh: concernin' (.) disturbance.", is also similar to the previous extract, in terms of its nominalization and pseudo-legal terminology. And again, the neighbour is omitted and no action (how the disturbing is being done) is included.

The increment "Or (wh't'ver) it's called," (line 5), does further rhetorical work in C's production of the complaint, treating "disturbance" as a category that belongs to another discourse he does not have full access to. But by using the category in this way, C formulates the noise as an object that is classifiable by other professionals in their category system. By not knowing exactly what the correct category is (line 5), C positions himself as not overly invested in the complaint (Edwards, 1995). Notably, E's information receipt "R::i::ght¿" (line 6) is in overlap, indicating that C's turn-final "disturbance." (line 3) is treated as adequate enough to move on with the call, although potentially indicating assessment of the prior talk (Gardner, 2007). Yet, C takes another interactional opportunity to re-characterise the trouble (line 7). Note C's jumpstarted and stretched word search "<Duh:m", followed by a long pause. In conversation analysis, this indicates a move to take, and hold, the interactional 'floor', so that further talk may be produced – in this case, another pseudo-legal term "breach of the peace". Thus, as with the prior example, an agent-free initial iteration of a complaint can be produced with two contrasting elements – the use of pseudo-legal terminology that is simultaneously mitigated or downgraded in some way.

Following the disclosure of C's address, E pursues further details (line 33). Note that E frames the upcoming talk by pre-categorising the matter *as* a "pr<u>o</u>blem" (in a similar way that the "n<u>ei</u>ghb↑<u>our</u>:." in Extract 3.7 is a candidate cause of the disturbance). There is a tacit acceptance of there being a problem, as indicated with C's discourse marker "Right." (line 34), which may prepare the ground for a complainable matter (Schiffrin, 1987). C describes the incident as an 'extreme case formulation' - "worst of uhm:: (0.4) them <u>all</u>" (lines 34-35) (Edwards, 2000; Pomerantz, 1986). Yet the delivery of C's turn is problematic; littered with perturbation, word searching, and pauses. As we have seen in other cases, complainability is enhanced by pushing apart C's relationship with the neighbour as source of the problem; in this case, a "lady" who "sorta comes back with fr<u>ie</u>nds," (lines 36-37). As with 'the person' (Extract 3.7), 'lady' is characterised in a *prototypical non-recognitional* way "designed to do virtually nothing else but convey non-recognition-ality" (Schegloff, 1996, p. 459), and further, is *not* grammatically tied to the action (how the noise is being made) or object (what the noise is). In this way, 'the lady' (and 'the person') may be a strategy when recipient designing the case for aid to this environmental health service, to display, in a different way to the mediation examples, the minimalization of the relationship between caller and neighbour.

And so, Extract 3.8 (as with Extract 3.7) shows how noise is designed in terms of factual status, but also illustrates how callers display themselves as non-complainers which in turn, reinforces the activity as just reporting events as they objectively are. In Extract 3.9, C is reporting loud music from a vehicle. The extract begins just after a technical issue with the answer machine message starting, and E's apology for the interruption, to which C is responding.

Extract 3.9: EH-06

```
01   C:   ↑No problem at al[l.=It's just a query.
02   E:                    [t c h   o k a y.
03   E:   Yeah.
04   C:   ↑Um what is the law regarding um (.) noi:se nuisance
05        during the daytime.
06           (.)
07   E:   [↑Wh-
08   C:   [Or isn't there any law.
09   E:   .hh ↑well.=Ooh yes there- there ar(h)e some l[aws yeah.
10   C:                                               [It's just
```

```
11          that I'm ah this its[so f- .HH it's quite a long way=
12   E:                         [mm hm
13   C:   =from my house.=But we've jus[t moved into a house=
14   E:                                [hm¿
15   C:   =an t[here's someone .HH with um ex:tremely loud=
16   E:        [righ:t,
17   C:   =stereo- I th- I've got a feeling it's actually .HH in
18          his car outside the house.
```

Compared to previous environmental health calls, in which pseudo-legal terms and categories were built into callers' initial descriptions of problems, in Extract 3.9 the *(il)legality* of particular kinds of behaviour is foregrounded explicitly. C makes a request for information ("It's just a query."). The low entitlement indexical word "just" frames this request as something that may be more grantable by the service than any other action or intervention they may be able to offer. After E's go-ahead (line 3), C produces her inquiry (lines 4-5). Not only is there an explicit invocation of legal matters ("what is the law regarding"), C uses another pseudo-legal formulation, "noi:se nuisance". 'Nuisance' (not 'disturbance') is, in fact, the category applied to problematic noise in UK legislation under the Environmental Protection Act (1990), though 'disturbance' appears in USA noise ordinances. Again, C omits both action and agent, though includes a timeframe for the problematic noise ("during the daytime.", line 5). C does not observably wait for a response to her query but produces another turn (in overlap) which reformulates her request for information as an alternative interrogative question: "Or isn't there any law." (line 8). By adding this turn construction unit, C orients to the presupposition built into her prior request, that there *are* laws, as being potentially incorrect – possibly due to the occurrence of noise in the daytime, rather than more antisocial hours of the evening. Like Extract 3.8, C treats the call-taker, rather than herself, as the expert in such matters, while simultaneously prefacing any subsequent descriptions of a neighbour's noise as potentially illegal, and the agent of the noise as objectively 'in the wrong'.

The beginning of E's response indicates an upcoming problem in selecting either option formulated by C. She says, ".hh ↑well.=Ooh yes there- there ar(h)e some laws yeah." (line 9). While the "↑well." is likely to be a redoing of E's earlier "↑Wh-" (line 7), other elements, particularly the aspiration or 'laugh particle' in "ar(h)e", index something problematic with C's prior turn. While hearably *doing* laughing, these particles may orient to there being interactional trouble in some way (Potter & Hepburn, 2010). Note how C's

response, which is in partial overlap, seems oriented to E's potential stance: the turn-initial "It's just that" (lines 10-11) and "it's quite a long way from my house." (lines 11, 13) which somewhat mitigates the strength of her request (although might be designed as a more grantable bid for aid). As with previous examples in this section, the neighbour is indexed subsequent to the initial iteration of the problem - here, that "there's someone .HH with um ex:tremely loud stereo" (line 15, 17). In addition, while the 'someone' *is* grammatically tied to the object of the noise, there is no explicit invocation of the stereo being *played* (action) by the neighbour (actor).

Extract 3.9 shows that framing a complaint as an information request, followed by invoking the neighbour as noise source, can be a strategy for casting C as prioritising matters of law, which in turn, may serve to minimise C's stance towards the neighbours' conduct; in so doing displaying the neighbour as doing some objectively wrong. The next example is different, in that it demonstrates how previous efforts at contacting the environmental health service can be built into an initial iteration of a complaint.

Extract 3.10: EH-44

```
01   E:   Good afternoon environmental health¿=Deirdre speaking?
02   C:   .Hh Hello good afternoon.=U:m I called the other day
03        and left a message >on your< answer machine at the
04        weekend (it was).=Hhh[An:d it was regarding um .HH the=
05   E:                        [M m : .
06   C:   =noise from the area.=Mcht at the weeken:d.
07          (0.3)
08   E:   Noise in the area.
09          (.)
10   C:   Well where- where I li:ve,
```

Following the preliminaries (lines 1-2), C begins an account of her reason for calling by reporting that prior contact with the service was attempted and an answer phone message left (lines 2-4). This type of framing of an upcoming complainable matter can operate as various functions in talk. For instance, C is demonstrating her concern as urgent enough to call at the weekend, when it is commonly knowable that council offices are closed. This kind of framing might be designed to do implicit *admonishing* - orienting the call-taker to the effort C has made at reporting the problem, but without a response from the service. This type of preliminary work can be seen as a way of shifting the *burden* of accountability (see Stokoe,

Sikveland, & Symonds, 2016) from caller (making the case for aid) to call-taker (offering assistance with the trouble).

The neighbourhood concern is reported (lines 4, 6). While not as strongly formulated as the pseudo-legal talk in previous extracts in this section, note the formal preposition "regarding" (line 4), as opposed to 'it's about…' for instance. Observe also, the ambiguity of the problem itself - "noise from the area." (line 6), which is not only vague in terms of its proximity to the caller, but its general description of "noise", which does not convey what kind of noise it is (see also, Extract 3.9). The increment "at the weeken:d." (line 6) arguably augments the ambiguity of the complaint component – there is no day or time slot given. That said, it does provide some evidence for C's originally attempted contact being done in a timely manner (as opposed to reported noise occurring on Wednesday, for instance). However, this component is treated as problematic by E, as shown by the pursuit "Noise in the area." (line 8). Note that C's 'from' is now reformulated as E's 'in', which may indicate something hearably problematic in terms of proximity between complainant and neighbour. C's clarification "Well where- where I li:ve," (line 10) seemingly acknowledges E's prior pursuit for more specific locational information, as the noise is now tied to where C lives.

Extract 3.10 indicates how callers to an environmental health agency may be unsure of what the service provides, by the way in which details of the trouble are not explicitly revealed, but only vaguely referred to (Stokoe, 2013). That said, the kind of generalised formulation of C's trouble may be a recipient-designed strategy for opening up the offerability of service – in so doing, countering (or making less likely) a rejection from the call-taker due to the un-specificity of the request.

And so, this example illustrates how formal (although not pseudo-legal) talk can be designed as constitutive of initial iterations of complaints. In the final example, C is being called back by an environmental health service after leaving an answer machine message. As previously indicated, this extract is an outlier in the environmental health corpus, in that it is the only noise-related outgoing call.

Extract 3.11: EH-166a
```
01   E:   Right how can I help you then.=B'lieve you've got a
02        problem with the neighbour or something.
03   C:   Yeah:.=What it is (0.3) u:m (0.3) the wife runs a
04        neighbourhood watch, (0.3) an:d the resident's
05        association,
06            (.)
```

```
07   E:   Y̲our wife.
08          (.)
09   C:   Y:up.
10   E:   Ah ha:,
11   C:   A:nd (.) at the t̲op of the street there:s (0.3) a
12        dis̲abled lady and her family,
13   E:   Mm hm.
14   C:   .HHh uh:m (1.0) they've: (0.7) been (.) <g̲ettin
15        distu̲rbed, (.) in the early hours of the mo̲rning.
16          (0.6)
17   E:   Mm hm.
18   C:   C̲ar:s revving their engines, (1.3) a:nd (.) uh: (0.4)
19        b:a̲ngin and sla̲mmin of (.) vehicle do̲ors.
20          (1.1)
21   C:   And it's (0.3) c̲omin from, (1.4) on: the dr̲iveway,
```

Following E's complaint-mobilising turn (lines 1-2), C describes his wife's status and involvement in various neighbourhood groups (lines 3-5). While this type of framing might be seen as a way of validating the neighbourhood problem as a warranting reporting, there is also a sense in which C is building a narrative of someone calling on behalf of others and not himself. In this way, "proposing a reversal of the default relationship between caller/call-taker" by portraying himself as an "incipient benefactor" – thus, orienting E to the legitimacy of C's project of providing help to others (Raymond & Zimmerman, 2016, p. 10). This benefactive stance is worked through C's description of the neighbour and her family as being recipients of the problem noise (lines 11-12), before reporting the consequences for them, with the initial iteration "they've: (0.7) been (.) <g̲ettin distu̲rbed, (.) in the early hours of the mo̲rning." (lines 14-15). As with previous examples in this section, note the use of pseudo-legal terminology with "distu̲rbed", as well as the indexing of the 'unreasonableness' of the time the disturbance was occurring (line 15; see Extract 3.8). Observe also, how the neighbour is omitted in the reporting of the grievance component (lines 18-19), and further, the locational information of the noise (line 21). Thus, while this extract exemplifies the only outgoing environmental health call in the corpus, it shares greater grammatical and rhetorical similarities with other (incoming) environmental health calls, rather than *outgoing* calls from mediation services.

3.6.1 Interim summary

The analysis in this section shows that people can complain about noise in the neighbourhood without directly and immediately attributing the source of the noise to the neighbour (or agent). More interestingly, *agent-free* initial formulations – even when agents were introduced subsequently – appeared exclusively in calls to environmental health services. What might account for this difference? The way callers formulate their initial reasons when in contact with mediation and environmental health services may demonstrate, in various ways, that they do not have a clear sense of the remit of these services. For instance, callers often call somewhere else before calling mediation ("I called the council and they give me your number"; see Chapter 5) and downgrade their entitlement to make a request for help when calling environmental health ("I don't know if you can help"). The starts of these calls are very different to, say, calls to general practice surgeries, in which callers' first turns formulate direct, high entitlement requests (e.g., "can I make an appointment for Friday afternoon please"; see Stokoe, Sikveland, & Symonds, 2016). They are more like calls to the constituency offices of members of parliament (e.g., "I was ↑told to ring you by a friend"; see Hofstetter, 2016). And so, it might be that mediation and environmental health services are somewhat 'unknown institutions' (Stokoe, 2013), (or at least, institutions that callers display a "lack of familiarity" with; Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2018, p. 566) on a continuum of services that people show they know and use regularly, or do not know and use occasionally or just once.

Given a general lack of familiarity, I nevertheless suggest whatever knowledge callers do have is displayed in the way they build their initial reasons when accounting for their troubles. When calling environmental health services, callers describe a situation or issue in nominalized, vague, minimised, and pseudo-legal terms – both, agentively and agent-free. By establishing first, the law around noisy behaviour (i.e., the legal aspects that can constrain the behaviour of those making problematic noise), the agent is, by implication, doing something that is objectively problematic. In contrast, when calling mediation services, callers prioritize naming the neighbour, source of the problem, pre-categorizing behaviour as problematic, and distancing themselves from any pre-existing relationship with 'the neighbour' that might be regarded as a potential cause of a dispute between two parties. That said, callers to environmental health services in the corpus routinely distance themselves from neighbours *subsequent* to initial iterations of complaints. Unlike environmental health services, mediators do not have any authority to constrain the behaviour of parties to a dispute. All parties are equally accountable in terms of identifying a solution. For these reasons, ensuring that the

problematic party is identified and categorized as such as soon as possible, and as often as possible, is a priority for callers to mediation (Edwards, 2005b).

3.7 Discussion

This first analytic chapter represents the start of a journey through different institutional encounters, in which I examine of organisational structure of calls for assistance to services that have the remit of providing help with neighbourhood troubles. In this chapter, I have examined the way that people construct neighbourhood noise as the basis of dispute in complaints to the organizations that provide solutions to such problems.

In my analysis of telephone calls to mediation and local council environmental health services, I identified two distinct but recurrent ways in which callers formulated initial iterations of their noise complaints. In mediation calls, callers attributed problematic noise directly to its agent (e.g., "it's about my neighbour"), but in calls to environmental health services callers typically produced agent-free descriptions (e.g., "I need to speak to someone about disturbance"). In mediation calls, the agent was always invoked prior to the complainable matter, while in most environmental health calls reference to the neighbour was omitted or attributed only after the complainable matter. Callers to environmental health also used pseudo-legal terminology, fitting their case for aid to that particular service (which has some legal remit, unlike mediation).

Both types of practice launched a complaint sequence, and demonstrate the transitional arrangement between actors, actions, and objects (Halliday, 2004; Hopper & Thompson, 1980). In the *agentive* form, neighbours are invoked as the source of the problem from the outset; 'it's about the neighbour' (actor), 'the girl downstairs with her music' (actor + object) and 'the neighbours upstairs were making a hell of a racket with loud music and banging and shouting and arguing' (actor + action + object). In contrast, in the *agent-free* form, callers characterise similar social problems without initial reference to the neighbour - 'I need to speak to someone about disturbance and loud music' (object), 'I need to speak to someone for some advice concerning disturbance' (object), and 'what is the law regarding noise' (object). By either adding or omitting an agent when reporting neighbourhood problems, callers can be seen as assigning more or less criticism, accountability or blameworthiness for the social actions of others (Edwards & Potter, 1993). However, these features should not necessarily be regarded as distinct categories (i.e., agentive *or* agentive-free). Rather, these differences provided a foundation from which a transitive relationship could be framed. And so, I consider this distinction as one of a range of agentive/agent-free

interactional practices, through which the relatedness of actors, actions, and objects are combined (or not) to various extents.

Whether neighbourhood noise is formulated differently for a particular service, and whether accountability is assigned to neighbours or not, complaints to organisations are occasioned *in the service of* other interactional business – that something should be done about the caller's concern (e.g. Antaki, Barnes, & Leudar, 2007; Clayman, 2010; Edwards, 1997; Mondada, 2009). A common feature of service encounters is that some particular problem is institutionally recognised as appropriate for the service being contacted (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). Essentially, there is an established normative framework in which a certain problem requires a certain type of service, and vice-versa. Members work to establish the nature of their particular grievance *as a problem* for the service they seek help from; for instance displaying "doctorability" when they have a particular medical issue (Heritage & Robinson, 2006), "policeability" when seeking aid relating to criminal matters (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990), or "mediatability" when characterising and managing disputes with neighbours (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). And so, it might be that particular features of calls to environmental health services, such as pseudo-legal talk (followed by the subsequent introduction of neighbours), display and project an "environmental health-ability" in callers' accounts of their troubles.

There is significant discursive psychological interest in how subject-side (S-side) and object-side (O-side) relations are managed between co-participants (Edwards, 1997). When people talk (and in text), they sometimes formulate subjectivity (S-side), such as stance and attitude displays, and connect them to a 'reality' of what the world is like (O-side) (Edwards & Potter, 2017). In this way, descriptions can be designed in relation to objective and subjective status, which can work to undermine or strengthen claims about something, someone, or some state of affairs. As a means of making the case for aid, callers to mediation, and sometimes, environmental health services above, systematically invoke the neighbour as *the source* of the noise, and so it is the neighbour's *character* that is the focus of the trouble, rather than the noise itself. Accordingly, the neighbour is portrayed as *disposed* to be noisy through the caller's 'factual' accounting for it (Stokoe, 2009). In a different way, callers to the environmental health service regularly use pseudo-legal terminology when reporting noise problems, which may can be used to strengthen an account against potential challenge, in the sense of invoking moral distinctions between right and wrong. In addition, concerns are framed as other actions, which display *callers* in characteristic terms; as non-complainers, non-exaggerators, and "not disposed to say too much" (Edwards, 2007, p. 2).

Overall, then, through this comparative analysis, I have shown that people use different strategies when building complaints about noise in the neighbourhood, and making the case for assistance, to help resolve problems and disputes. My findings show that people carefully craft their descriptions of problems, and do not simply 'dump' a complaint, including a perpetrator, into a conversation, regardless of setting, recipient or context. I have shown the value in comparing how ostensibly similar social problems are formulated and managed across *different* institutional contexts, each with different implications for the unfolding aid that may be provided. My fundamental concern is not with callers' underlying motivations for characterising their troubles to particular services in particular ways, but the kind of explicit and implicit *moral* work that callers' do when complaining about others (Drew, 1998; Stokoe & Edwards, 2015). The examples above demonstrate that characterisations of neighbours' conduct are not 'mere descriptions', but are rhetorically accomplished through the ways in which the case for aid is built (Edwards & Potter, 2012). Consequently, this chapter uniquely illustrates how the phenomenon of *noise*, is not a neutral category, but culturally and institutionally formulated social conduct.

However, in terms of service provision, what does assigning an agent (or not) accomplish, and why does it matter? I would argue that showing how these initial turns are produced by callers, demonstrates an investment in the *goal orientedness* of the call – callers design their talk in ways that demonstrate they are calling to complain, but also that something should be done to resolve their concern (Drew & Heritage, 1992b). In the next chapter, I explore sequences of talk that regularly occur when callers contact services for help, by examining how initial iterations such as those presented here, 'shift' to matters for institutional redress.

Chapter 4:
The emergence of institutional business in neighbourhood complaint sequences

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I compared how callers in mediation and environmental health services initially designed their complaints about noise disturbance. In this chapter, I focus on the call-taker's domain - in particular, how service-side matters emerge in calls for assistance. This chapter marks a progression from designing complaints for institutional recipients, to displays of recipiency by call-takers in these different institutions, as will be revealed.

When members of the public contact organisations to report a social problem, transgression, or some other concern in their everyday lives, they do so in the service of assistance being granted – for instance, an ambulance being sent, a police car being dispatched, or a doctor appointment being made (e.g., Stokoe et al., 2016; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987; Zimmerman, 1992). In a similar way, when mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services are contacted, the reasoning for calling is not only that people should report their neighbourhood concerns, but that something should be done to resolve them (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). Whether calling to complain about a neighbour or to report a crime, these utterances are "anchored in the surrounding, ongoing world" (Goffman, 1974, p. 500). And so, the environment for service provision provides for institutionally relevant matters to be co-constructed and navigated by its members within the context of talk-in-interaction (Drew & Heritage, 1992a; Sacks et al., 1974).

Consider that when calling for assistance (as with mundane calls), each sequence of talk performs different interactional functions - such as a summons, greeting, reason for calling, and a potential remedy for a problem (Schegloff, 1979). Yet, the advancement from, say, a caller's description of a problem on the one hand, to an institutional matter, is one that is negotiated by participants through their turns at talk, potentially in non-straightforward ways. For instance, after a caller has requested help from the emergency services, the dispatcher typically begins a series of questions (i.e., the caller personal details, and the location of the problem), before responding to the request – in this way, dealing with the "contingencies of response" relevant to the provision of assistance (Zimmerman, 1984, p. 213). Expectations are placed onto the caller to provide the relevant information, before the request can be granted. Thus, there is an orientation to *progressivity* within the interactional

environment, in the sense of members "moving from some element to a hearably-next-one" (Schegloff, 2007, p. 17) by attending to each other through of the organisational machinery of the call.

And so, in this chapter, I investigate the *emergence* of institutional talk, through the affordances of the turn-taking structure, in calls to mediation, antisocial behaviour and environmental health services. In particular, I examine how service-side matters come into being, following callers' accounts of their neighbourhood troubles. This chapter is a somewhat 'expectable' progression from Chapter 3, in which callers' experiences of their neighbourhood troubles were explored. In this way, Chapter 4 represents the next step on the journey through typical kinds of calls to services that manage neighbourhood problems. The organisation of this chapter is as follows. In Section 4.1, I establish the phenomena by reviewing the literature relevant to the emergence of institutional business. In Section 4.2, I analysis the corpus, focusing on the interactional environment, including callers' and call-takers' turns prior to, and post, emergence. In Section 4.3, I discuss the findings and offer some concluding remarks.

4.1 The emergence of institutional business

In Chapter 3, I examined how neighbourhood concerns were formulated in mediation and environmental health service calls. Analysis revealed that callers' initial iterations of complaints were designed in two distinctive ways: *agentive* and *agent-free* formulations. Callers' troubles were ostensibly reported in the service of assistance being offered and are typical of call openings in institutional encounters whereby the reason for calling[26] is established at the first interactional opportunity (e.g., Firth, Emmison, & Baker, 2005; Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987). However, the fulfilment of service provision relies on certain tasks being completed by call-takers answering the phone in organizations, and so they do interactional work to establish whether or not aid can be granted, and *what* aid can be offered, on the basis of whether the caller's concern is an 'actionable' one (Heritage & Clayman, 2010b).

In this chapter, I examine how call-taker turns at talk attend to caller troubles through a *shift* of relevant activities and categories (Jefferson & Lee, 1981). I explore how

---

[26] While complainants may have been called by services, and previously referred to as 'complainants' (see Chapter 3), for the benefit of clarity henceforth, members of the public in contact with antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services will be described as 'calling' services, feature in 'calls' to services, or as 'callers' to services.

institutional matters *emerge* within callers' accounts of their troubles. I focus on the moment in calls where service providers orient to matters that, in their initiation and unfolding, reveal the institutional concerns and tasks at hand (such as the caller's name, address, or locational information). Further, I examine the ways in which call-takers respond to callers' descriptions of their troubles, in ways that hearably treat neighbourhood problems as *practical* concerns relevant for service provision, rather than matters of mundane talk – for instance, initiating repair, or requesting clarification of some mishearing or misunderstanding. These matters are observably designed in ways that do not display call-takers' subject-side stances towards callers (e.g., empathy, sympathy) or pursue callers for extended accounts of their troubles (e.g., second stories).

Each shift activity is required to be recognisable such that a shift can be seen. I consider the phenomenon I describe to be aligned with Jefferson and Lee's (1981) take on shifts. They indicate:

> "an incipient or ongoing Troubles-Telling converges with a Service Encounter, with the concomitant shift of relevant categories and activities, and, as well, the concomitant shift of focus, away from the troubles-teller and his or her experiences, to the trouble itself, as a 'problem to be solved'" (Jefferson & Lee, 1981, p. 416).

In respect of how 'shifts' operate, there is a *convergence* of participants' fundamental concerns, with the caller moving from troubles-teller to request-recipient, and similarly, the call-taker moving from troubles-recipient to information-requester (Jefferson & Lee, 1981). And so, for the remainder of this chapter (and this thesis), I shall refer to this interactional phenomenon as a "concomitant shift", which I unpack in detail, below. My fundamental interest is with examining the *first* point in calls where these concomitant shifts are produced - the design of call-taker turns that shift from caller experiences, but also, how they attend to callers' troubles, through the sequential structure of talk. However, it should be noted that concomitant shifts are not necessarily *fixed* (i.e., a trouble is described, and a solution is offered), but rather, there is a 'back and forth' between interlocutors, in the service of managing the trouble (Jefferson & Lee, 1981).

The way in which relevant matters shift between participants, has also been considered in terms of a members 'frames' and the tension that can occur between them in emergency calls – essentially, the sense in which there is a mismatch between what callers to services draw on (i.e., a customer service frame) and the institutional structure call-takers

operate within (i.e., a public service frame) (Tracy, 1997). The frames themselves are not dramatically different, yet particular features of calls to emergency services can present problems for its progressivity – for instance, the caller's location, the prioritisation of other calls, or the requirement of certain kinds of information (Tracy, 1997). The way in which 'frames' are presented by Tracy shares similarities to other emergency service research, in which *expectations* are brought to the call by members, and that service would be provided on the basis of callers describing their reason for calling (J. Whalen et al., 1988). However, Tracy argues that matters of transitioning between interlocutors should be considered in terms of interactional *frame mismatch*, rather than the notion that members' expectations (which are analytically inaccessible) are always in flux and open to change (Tracy, 1997).

Before moving onto examining the corpus, it would be helpful to show and describe the design and format of two examples of concomitant shifts that regularly feature as part of mundane talk and service encounters. In their own way, both examples illustrate how a description of a problem by one speaker interactionally shifts to a remedy for it by another. For instance, in a telephone call between two friends in Extract 4.1, Emma (E) is complaining to Lottie (L) about her toenails falling off.

Extract 4.1: NB:IV:l0:31-34
```
01   E:   I'm brea- hhh I- my toenails are falling off,
02        I [don't kno_w,
03   L:     [Oh::. Wait a minute. That's- I'm glad you mentioned
04        that. You know Isabel had her nail taken off, like you
05        had your toenail=
06   E:   [Yeah?
07   L:   [=taken off? and it just about killed her you know,=
08   E:   [Yeah,
09   L:   [=she nearly died a thousand times and I was telling
10        her about you.
11   E:   Yeah,
12   L:   hhhh So anyway, she got this, Vi:dafoam, and, I bought
13        some down there and I put some on my nails last night
14        and I put on some tonight, hh and she said that was
15        the only thing that healed them.
16   E:   Vi:dafoam.
```
(Jefferson & Lee, 1981, pp. 411–412)

In the example above, Jefferson and Lee focus on E's announcement of a candidate trouble "I'm brea- hhh I- my toenails are falling off, I don't kno_w," (lines 1-2). In response, L, as the prospective troubles recipient, introduces a story relevant to the trouble with "Oh::. Wait a minute. That's- I'm glad you mentioned that…" (lines 3-4), culminating in the activity of offering a solution to the problem; again, relevant to the teller's trouble with "hhhh So anyway, she got this, Vi:dafoam,…" (lines 12). The important point to note is that there is a shift of related activities, as the interaction progresses from E's *experience* of the trouble to L's *remedy* for the trouble. Further, there are displays of participants essential interests (E's essential interest in providing an experiential account, and L's essential interest in offering of remedy), but also displays of *essential indifference* to the troubles-teller by the troubles-recipient, and "utterly bland attention" to the problem as presented by E (Jefferson & Lee, 1981, p. 412). Notably, following this section of the transcript, there is the onset of a dispute, in which L's apathy or unconcern towards E's trouble is observably 'escalated'.

In Extract 4.2, I show a straightforward example of an institutional encounter which, in so doing, provides a contrast to the examples from my data set, as will be revealed. In the example below, a patient (P) from a general practitioner's (GP's) surgery, is calling to book an appointment with the receptionist (R) to see the doctor.

Extract 4.2: GP-143
```
01   R:   Good morning,=Limetown ↑Surgery,=
02   P:   =Good morning,= ↑Could I have an appointment t'see
03        Doctor <Wilkinson plea:se>¿=
04   R:   =.ptkhhh hh°uh:m° >Let me< see when the next available
05        one is.=I don't think I've got anything pre bookable
06        this wee:k, .h[h h   ] ↑D'you want me to look for the
07   P:                [(Okay)]
08   R:   week after:¿
```
(Sikveland et al., 2016, p. 1316)

Following the call-taker greeting, service identifier (line 1) and return greeting (line 2), P requests an appointment to see the doctor (lines 2-3). Note how the request is designed in a such way that shows it is grantable. There is no displayed uncertainty whether P is entitled to request help (e.g., 'I was just wondering…') (Curl & Drew, 2008; Stokoe, 2013). Further, the delivery of the request is hearably unproblematic in terms of perturbation – no 'ums', 'uhs' or word stretches that may signal the caller's trouble in some way (Cromdal, Persson-Thunqvist,

& Osvaldsson, 2012; Schegloff, 2007). In response, P treats the request as grantable, as illustrated by the way in which caller's essential concern of getting an appointment shifts to a service-side matter of searching for an appointment slot (lines 4-5). Note that, it is the call-taker who initiates the concomitant shift from the caller's domain (requesting an appointment) to an institutional matter (granting a request for an appointment).

In contrast, I will show (and have shown in the previous chapter) that when people contact dispute resolution services, they might not be familiar with what the service provides, which may be displayed through turn-design (Stokoe, 2013). Further, call-takers work to determine an institutional basis for addressing the caller's concern, as it might not fit within the remit of the service (see Chapter 2). And so, in the next section I examine calls to antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services, focusing on *how* the caller's experience of a neighbourhood concern *shifts* to a matter for institutional redress.

4.2 Shifting between troubles-related activities

We start by examining the *first* point in the call where call-takers shift away from one activity (callers' experiences of their troubles) through a mode of transition to another activity, in the service of addressing their concerns. I examine the interactional environment in which concomitant shifts occur; not only in terms of where in calls they are produced, but also the design of callers' talk that directly precedes shifts. A common observation regarding the organization of the calls analysed, is that call-takers shift to deal with service-side business at points in the interaction where callers are already beginning to characterise the complaint or the ostensible source of the problem. In the sections below, I show how these shifts occur by focusing on the turn design of participants' talk, and how call-takers' turns are oriented to callers' proceeding utterances. The first cases are from calls to an antisocial behaviour service, and demonstrate in a particular way, how certain features of callers' accounts of their troubles are treated *as shift-able* by call-takers.

4.2.1 Concomitant shifts in antisocial behaviour service calls

In this section, I analyse extracts from calls to an antisocial behaviour service for the purposes of showing how concomitant shifts emerge when complaining about neighbourhood issues. In Extract 4.3, a shop owner is calling to report young people loitering and smoking drugs near her business.

```
01   A:   Julie Smith >good afternoon?=Can I< ↑help you,

02   C:   ↑Hello yes.=Um: I'm ringing up actu'lly about some

03        antisocial beha:viour.

04   A:   Uh huh?

05   C:   U:m >to do< with: um w'th, (.) I've got one of the

06        shops on the Newtown La:ne on the shop parade on

07        Newtown [La:ne.

08   A:          [Tcht Uh huh?

09   C:   .hh We've had l:oads of problems with the kids in the

10        area.=>We've< .HHh we've got them out there every

11        night.=They're smoking drugs and everything an: we've

12        ph↑oned the police, (0.3) done everything (.) w- we can

13        rea↓lly in that (0.2) area.=But .hhh we're just not

14        getting any [response at all really.

15   A:              [H H H h h  mtcht okay.=An' what's your

16        name?

17   C:   Right.=My name's Gloria Williams, (0.2)[an' I've got=

18   A:                                         [<O   :   :   :

19        [:  :  k  a  y  :  :>,       a h   h a:,

20   C:   =[the fish and chip shop. .HHh on Newtown Lane,=

21   A:   =Okay.=What num:ber is tha[:t.

22   C:                             [It's number twenty Newtown

23        Lane,( [    )

24   A:          [<Okay> mcht HHh

25         (0.4)

26   A:   .hhhhh okay.=An- s:- (0.2) #eh# and the problems are

27        occurring m:ainly in the evenings?=
```

Following the preliminaries (lines 1-2) C designs her initial action to summarise her reason for calling (lines 2-3). Note the use of "actu'lly" which is generally considered a contrastive device – in this case, marking out the significance of the antisocial behaviour (Clift, 2001). Following a go-ahead from A, C volunteers property details (lines 5-7). Another continuer from the call-taker is produced at line 8 with "Tcht Uh huh?". Notably, the "Tcht" is hearably a click or 'tut', which may indicate *stance* towards C (or the what C is reporting), particularly as there is no subsequent inbreath delivered (Ogden, 2013). The caller then reports the complainable matter of the 'kids' (lines 9-10), the frequency of the trouble (lines 10-11) and its severity (line 11). Observe the use of the extreme case formulation (ECF) "everything"

(line 11), which can be used to rhetorically legitimise a complainant's case by marking it out as 'complaint worthy' (Pomerantz, 1986). After reporting previous efforts at problem resolution with another service (see Chapter 5) (lines 11-13), a similar ECF is produced (line 12). The final component of C's turn signals that resolution of the trouble has not been successful, despite C's endeavours (line 13-14). At this point, in partial overlap, A produces a shift from the caller's experience, to establishing the callers' name (line 15) – in so doing, introducing a sequence of shifts between participants relevant to the caller and the caller's trouble (line 17-27). Note the *and*-prefacing (line 13), which is seemingly designed to frame the shift as an emergent activity and contiguous with C's prior talk, rather than the starker 'what's your name?' (see Heritage & Sorjonen, 1994).

Regarding the use of go-aheads (lines 4, 8), it is reasonable to suggest that A might have produced the shift (line 15) at either of these transition-relevance places (TRPs) – in their own way, marking out turn completion prosodically, syntactically, and pragmatically (Schegloff, 2007). And so it might be that the shift's production at line 15 is tied to, and the consequence of, 'enough' information being required by A – in this case, particular details of the complainable matter. Another point relates to the last component of C's turn, prior to the first shift (lines 13-14). As indicated before, ECFs can be used to rhetorically enhance the status of talk. However, they can also be used to mark out a turn's completion (Edwards, 2000), and so "not getting *any* resp<u>o</u>nse *at all* really." (emphasis added), may be a way of signalling that C has finished her turn. Further, note how C describes prior efforts made at resolving the problem – by phoning the police, by doing everything she can – in the face of the pervasiveness of the trouble. Both characterisations are formulated in extreme terms, and show "how insider-outsider issues are worked up and attended to in talk, how descriptions can perform 'membership' business, and how that can perform further, local, interactional business in the current talk." (Edwards, 1998, p. 33). In this case, how C casts herself as a responsible neighbour in contrast to the irresponsible kids (see Stokoe & Wallwork, 2003).

Extract 4.3 illustrates how concomitant shifts emerge through the use of ECFs and categorisations of the self and others by callers and can be designed as 'softened' shifts through *and*-prefacing. In another example of a concomitant shift, C is calling an antisocial behaviour service to report problems with her neighbours.

Extract 4.4: AC-11

```
01   A:   Mcht Julie Smith <good=afternoon >can I< help you,
02   C:   Yes.=It's missus Richards speaking.=I've bee::n. <given
```

```
03        your <telephone number because I've been involved with
04        so- ↑social services about antisocial behaviour with my
05        neighbour, .h[hh (.) <↑problems an:d uh I've done what=
06   A:              [R:ight,
07   C:   =they've already requested.=.HH uh- With n:o such luck
08        I've not got anywhere.=So: he':s (.) sent me on to you
09        next to see what w'can: (.) dea- how we can deal with
10        it 'n .HHH concerned for the health of th- the lady who
11        lives next door t' me as well as how she treats us
12        badly.=.HHHh [So: um: #i- i-#
13   A:                [Right.=So y- yer name again sorry.=
14        =J[ust (   )
15   C:     [Missus Diane Rich[ards.
16   A:                        [.hhh Diane Richards.=And what's
17        your address Di[ane.
18   C:                   [Fifty-two Oldtown Road.=Ne[wtown.
19   A:                                              [.h H H H H=
20        =Hh (0.3) °that's [f i f t y - t w o:,°
```

Extract 4.4 starts at the beginning of the call with a greeting sequence (lines 1-2). Note C's self-identification "It's missus Richards speaking." (line 2) - in so doing, marking out the identity-relevance of the information as a 'recognitional', despite this being a first encounter between participants (Stivers, Enfield, & Levinson, 2007). This might also be a device for (unsuccessfully) building rapport, particularly in context of sales calls (Humă, 2018). C provides an account of her reason for calling, initially by indicating that contact to the present service was made via a *service-referral* from social services (see Chapter 5) (lines 2-5). Following an 'information receipt', prosodically designed as a continuer (see Gardner, 2007) from A (line 6), C characterises herself as motivated to seek help, but also that she has been unsuccessful – in this way, showing how troubles can be designedly aligned for the service being contacted (*see* Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Stokoe, 2013). This type of device is similarly produced in Extract 4.3 in respect of previous contact with the police. Following C displaying apprehension for her neighbour, and herself (lines 10-12), A produces a concomitant shift in pursuit of C's name (line 13), resulting in a sequence of shifts between interactants (lines 14-20).

The interactional environment in which concomitant shifts are produced in Extracts 4.3 and 4.4 share similar features. In both examples, initial shifts are produced at transition relevance places (TRPs). In the same way, both shifts might have been produced earlier in the

call - in this extract, after "requested." (line 7) or "anywhere." (line 8). Also, in both examples, initial shifts are produced subsequent to the consequences of callers' previous, but reportedly unsuccessful, actions with other services. However, in Extract 4.4, C also describes she is "concerned" for the lady who lives next door, which can be designed to constitute the reason for calling, projecting the unpacking of troubles relevant to a particular kind of service (Potter & Hepburn, 2003). However, the subsequent shift (line 13) is oriented to practical, rather than experiential information (see Edwards & Potter, 2017). Observe the design of the initial shift – particularly the falling pitch "Right" (line 13) which hearably does something other than change-of-state (Heritage, 1984a), serving as an 'idea connector' which transitions to some other business (Gardner, 2001). Also, "so" may orient to or introduce an upshot of prior talk (in this case, C's volunteered name on line 2), whilst possibly functioning as a demarcation device for transitioning to a new topic (Bolden, 2006; Raymond, 2004; Schiffrin, 1987). Further, as with the *and*-preface in Extract 4.3, note the use of "again" (line 13), which may serve to make the shift to another action emergent, by explicitly connecting back to C's prior turn – in this way, demonstrating a kind of collaboratively (as opposed to unilaterally) designed concomitant shift (see West & Garcia, 1988).

Extract 4.4 (as with Extract 4.3) illustrates how shifts occur by be being designed *as emerging* from, and oriented to, callers' experiences of their troubles. However, the case below is different, in that the shift component is designed as more overt, and thus disconnected from the caller's previous action. In Extract 4.5, C is reporting a neighbour causing trouble with his vehicle. The recording is started just after the opening of the call.

Extract 4.5: AC-25

```
01   C:   Put me in touch >with the< environmental health who
02        then put me back in touch with the police [an' then=
03   A:                                             [((tuts))
04        [A h :  d e a r.
05   C:   [=they put me back in touch .HH but now I'm ringing
06        y↑(h)o[(h)u .H  H  H  um:
07   A:        [Okay.=Right well let(h)s .HH £let's see if we
08        can s- prevent you havin' to make another
09        p(h)o(h)n[e call.=Te-.hh Tell me what the=
10   C:           [£HHh huh huh huh
11   A:   =pro[blem is then.
12   C:       [.h  h  h  O:kay.=It was this young l- I live at
13        the end of a cul-de-sac.
```

```
14   A:   What's y- what's your address.
```

In Extract 4.5, C is accounting for calling the antisocial behaviour team by reporting experiences with other services (lines 1-2, 5-6) (see Chapter 5). Note A's display of alignment (Stivers, 2008) with a hearably affiliative 'tut' (line 3), followed by "Ah: dear." (line 4) as C characterises her troubles, indicating a sympathetic stance towards C (Hepburn, 2004; Hepburn & Potter, 2007). (Note the 'tut' in this example is phonetically hearable as *doing tutting* as opposed to the 'tut' in Extract 4.3; thus, transcribed as the action it is doing). The characterisation by C of being passed from one service to another, culminating in an 'online commentary' of sorts (see Heritage & Stivers, 1999) - "now I'm ringing y↑(h)o[(h)u" (lines 5-6) - may impute A as accountable for addressing C's concern. In turn, A aligns with C by attending to, and removing the burden of pushing for assistance from the caller; in so doing, indicating that an offer of aid may be forthcoming (lines 7-9). Note also, the (reciprocal) laughter (lines 6-7, 9-10), which might modify problematic talk in a way that makes it less dispreferred or confrontational (Jefferson, 1979). Following a request for an account of the trouble (line 9, 11), C volunteers geographical information (lines 12-13), before A produces a shift in order to clarify C's address (line 14).

In contrast to Extracts 4.3 and 4.4, a mutually affiliative stance emerges between interactants in this example, as exhibited through displays of empathy, sympathy, and laughter. As a further contrast, the initial shift in Extract 4.5 is hearably fitted with the prior turn as a way of establishing the details of where C lives in the cul-de-sac[27]. However, like the previous extracts in this section, the initial shift serves as a launch pad for a sequence of related shifts (in this case, C's personal details). In terms of C's concomitant shift initiating turn, observe C's in-breath (line 12). In examples of calls to a mediation service below, clients commonly begin an account of their troubles with a pre-telling stance marker, such as a long sigh or laugh (Hoey, 2014). Stance markers can be used to frame a storytelling in a particularly overt way. In this extract, however, it is notable that C is *not* given the interactional space to detail her experiential account, at least, at this point. Further, note how C begins her account by indexing the ostensible perpetrator of the trouble with the abandoned "It was this young l-" (line 12), hearably a cut-off of "lad". C's repaired talk - "I live at the end of a cul-de-sac." (line13) - may serve to contextualise C's trouble as a way of legitimising her concern as an *actionable* one - it may not be enough to index the perpetrator

---

[27] A cul-de-sac is a street where there is only one entrance/exist. Typically, cul-de-sacs have a circular area at the 'dead end', where vehicles can turn around.

in a troubles-telling, but the environment in which the perpetrator acts. And so, it might be that C reconfigures her talk in a way that orients to A's prioritisation of 'factual' information (the caller's address details) over a pursuit of further details of C's experience of her trouble (the caller's neighbourhood problem).

4.2.1.1 Interim summary

These initial examples from the antisocial behaviour dataset, show how call-takers monitor the unfolding actions of callers, such that their responses are an analysis of what is 'sufficient' in order to produce concomitant shifts in the unfolding of the sequence – such as the aspects of callers' first turns call-takers' treat as requiring a response and what type, and what kind of next action is relevant, and when to do it. Callers build entitlement to complaint through providing reasons for calling, produce ECFs which can indicate turn completion, and can display themselves as responsible and good neighbours. Call-takers sometimes do not produce shifts at the earliest interactional opportunity, as shown through the use of continuers at TRPs. In this way, callers' troubles-talk is observably treated as 'shift-able' following receipt of particular information; in so doing, warranting a shift at the point at which it occurs. Further, shifts can observably respond to a prior turn at talk (e.g., the caller's address; Extract 4.5), or might index previous talk in some way (e.g., clarifying the caller's name; Extract 4.4). Significantly, the features of doing shifts reveal how (in Extracts 4.3 and 4.4) call-takers can design their actions as emerging from caller's experiences of their troubles (e.g., the use of *and*-prefacing and "again") once previous information has been receipted (e.g., the use of "okay" and "right") – in so doing, softening the shift to institutional business. That said, sometimes shifts are not explicitly connected to the caller's prior talk and are more unilaterally produced (Extract 4.5).

Having started by examining antisocial behaviour cases, in the next section, I compare how concomitant shifts are produced in calls to environmental health services. As I will show, there are some similarities in how the shifts are designed which display in recipiency, how the phenomenon as oriented to, and emerging from, prior talk.

4.2.2 Concomitant shifts in environmental health agency calls

As this thesis is revealing, people can seek help with neighbour disputes by contacting a variety of organizations. This section features calls to an environmental health agency (E), wherein callers report neighbourhood problems. As with antisocial behaviour services, environmental health agencies are part of the local council. However, they do not have

powers of enforcement. Typically, letters are sent out to problem neighbours, making them aware that potential egregious behaviour is being monitored (usually by complainants keeping diary sheets).

In the first example, C has called an environmental health service to report music noise and other disturbance from a neighbour's house.

Extract 4.6: EH-43

```
01   E:   Good afternoon environmental health, Deirdre speaking?
02   C:   Hi I ↑don't know whether you can help me:, um I need to
03        speak to s'meone .Hh about uh: disturbance an:d=
04             (0.3)
05   E:   Oka[y:.
06   C:     =[Some loud music?
07   E:   Okay.=Um:: we're recording at the moment for training
08        and research purposes.=Is that okay with y[ou?
09   C:                                             [↑That's
10        ↓fin[e.
11   E:       [.HH Okay then, well how can I help.=Have you got a
12        neighb↑our: or: is it.
13   C:   Yeah.=It's actually: the person backing onto my house.
14   E:   R:igh:t,[is it private council do you know?
15   C:          [Um:
16   C:   It's private.
17   E:   Mm hm¿
18             (0.5)
19   E:   Uh:m and what is it loud music?
20   C:   Yeah:.=Very loud.=I mean #I- I've:# sort of rang
21        because it's gettin' to the point where I can't (.) have
22        the back door open.=In t[his heat.
23   E:                           [R i g h t.=.hh Is it a regular
24        occurren[ce.
25   C:           [Ye:ah.=Most days.=From sort've <ten in the
26        mornin til about five in the evening
```

The focus of Extract 4.6 begins[28] with a request for an account of C's trouble, directly following the ethics script – here with an upshot (line 11). Notably, E claims another turn

---

[28] See Chapter 3 for an analysis of the initial iteration of this call.

with the 'designedly incomplete' (Stokoe, 2010) "Have you got a n̲e̲ighb↑o̲ur:'or: is it." (lines 11-12), marking out the relevance of the neighbour as potential trouble source. This may be a way of establishing whether the reason for calling is 'environmental health-able', in the sense of the problem being both diagnosable and treatable (Chapter 3; Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006). After a confirmatory "Y̲eah.", C provides specific, unsolicited locational information regarding the neighbour's house in relation to C's house (line 13). Note the contrastive "actually", which foregrounds the nature of what "actually" references. In this case, the specific location of the problem "person" – a characterisation that seemingly minimises the relationship between caller and neighbour (Hacohen & Schegloff, 2006; Schegloff, 1996).

A concomitant shift is then produced, operating as a request for the neighbour's occupancy status (line 14), seemingly responding to the prior turn. Note the design of the shift – the turn-initial "R:igh:t," serving as an 'idea connector', which shares similarities with Extract 4.4. Also, observe the use of the subsequent reference "it" which, in linking back to C's prior troubles-telling, displays E's shift as *knowable* and emerging from the C's account of the problem (see Schegloff, 1996). In turn, this shift operationalises a sequence of further concomitant shifts between participants, such as establishing the grievance component (line 19) and its frequency (lines 23-24). Notably, all these shifts index "it" as a referent in the unfolding sequence.

Observe the way in which C implicitly characterises herself as a non-complainer (Edwards, 2005b). Consider E's "Mm h̲m¿" (line 17), which hearably constitutes the upturned intonational features of a continuer. Significantly, C does not produce an expectable utterance, as illustrated by the 0.5 second gap (line 18). And so, it may be that C is not oriented to the project of *complaining about the neighbour* at this point in the call, but instead, responsive to institutionally driven concerns. Note also, the spatial metaphor "gettin' to the p̲oint" (line 21), which can be seen as characterising emotions in a way that displays that a choice was not made – essentially, that C is constrained by her circumstances (Drew, 2006; Edwards, 2005b). In this way, C formulates herself as the kind of person that would only complain when it was warranted. Idiomatic expressions can also be designed as ways of marking out complaints as recognisably complete (Edwards, 2000). And so, it might that E orients to this completeness by C, through the production of the shift at lines 23-24.

Extract 4.6 illustrates that shifts can be produced *as emerging* from caller's experiential accounts, although dealing with institutional matters. While similar features of

the shift environment can be seen in the next case, what constitutes 'a shift' is less clear. In Extract 4.7, C has contacted the service to report problems with neighbours making noise.

Extract 4.7: EH-59

```
01   E:   Morning environmental health?
02   C:   Hello.
03            (.)
04   C:   Good morning.=I wonder if you could help me
05        please.=U:m .hh we're ↑having problems with our
06        neighbours m[aking a lot of nois[e. (u:m)
07   E:              [Ah-              [Oh r:ight.=↑cn: ah
08        be↑fore you j's sorta go into detail we're um recording
09        for training an: research pur↑poses for university at
10        the moment?=.Hh have you got any objection to that?
11   C:   No none whatso[ever.
12   E:              [Mcht okay then.
13            (.)
14   E:   .hh So you've got a problem with yer neighbour.
15            (.)
16   C:   Yeah.=U::m: (0.3) well the worst problem actually was
17        Saturday when it all .hh w- we ↑do have problems with
18        the loud noise (.) in the week y'know.
19            (.)
20   C:   With the [back windows open and the [music   so   loud.
21   E:           [R:i:ght.                   [What is it music,
22        (0.2)
23   C:   I'm sorry?
24   E:   Is it music.
25            (0.4)
26   C:   Ye:ah as[well as e(h)verythin else.(h[mm
27   E:           [Yeah.                    [Oh is it ri:ght.
28        =.hh Is it council or a private (.) property?=
29   C:   =O'no it's a private property for st[udents but=
30   E:                                       [Mm:,
31        =(as[you can guess)
32   E:       [O h   r i g h t.
```

The focus of Extract 4.7 begins in a similar sequential position as Extract 4.6, with a reformulation (line 14) of C's earlier initial iteration of her complaint (lines 5-6) – pluralising

problems to the singular *problem*, orienting C to the service's capacity of logging *one* problem per call. Note also, the use of "so" (line 14; see also Extract 4.4) which can both orient to the prior talk and act as a transition to other business (Bolden, 2006; Raymond, 2004) - in this case, operating as a request for account of the problem that C *dispositionally* has (Edwards, 1994). C's responding turn (lines 16-18) is designed as unmotivated and agent-free (see Chapter 3) – the problems are with loud noise, rather than the neighbour. In this way, pushing back against the implication of the problem resting with C herself – displaying the caller as the type of person not disposed to moan, as a *non-complainer* (Edwards, 2005b). Observe also, C's "w<u>o</u>rst problem actually" - orienting back to her initial iteration of the complaint (there were *problems*), and also the somewhat contrastive or correcting "actually" (Clift, 2001).

It is unclear if "What is it m<u>u</u>sic," (line 21), produced in overlap, can be considered a concomitant shift by E. For instance, consider Extract 4.6, where "and wh<u>a</u>t is it loud music?" (line 19) is indicated as a shift. However, while it can be argued that both questions share similar grammatical properties, the previous request is designed to establish the grievance component (the music's loudness). In this case, E is seeking to categorise the type of noise. Music, on its own, is not something that warrants intervention, and only does so on the basis of establishing it as an actionable problem (i.e. it fits within the remit of the service as warranting assistance) by the organisation being contacted. In this way, shifts are displayed through speakers' entitlements to know and account for their troubles (the caller's domain) or entitlements to request information in the service of granting assistance – e.g., the caller's personal details, or occupancy status, or what can be considered 'a problem' (the call-taker's domain). And so, "What is it music," is not hearable as a "problem to be solved" (Jefferson & Lee, 1981, p. 416), but rather the establishment of grounds for it. Further, "What is it music," is observably treated by C as accountable by the way other neighbour issues are indexed (line 26) – thereby marking out "What is it music," (or the redone "Is it music."; line 24) as *insufficient* for C, in warranting its assistance as a problem.

After working through potential mishearing or misunderstanding issues (lines 21-26), E performs a concomitant shift to the action of requesting C's occupancy status[29] (lines 27-28). Note the similar design with Extract 4.6 – the turn initial information receipt/idea connecting "<u>O</u>h <u>i</u>s it ri:ght." and the use of the subsequent referent "it", marking out the link

---

[29] This is pertinent information for environmental health services, as they typically do *not* offer assistance to council tenants.

to C's prior talk. Although, in this case, "it" does not refer to the immediately prior turn as in the previous extract and is arguably ambiguous in who's property "it" refers to. That said, C treats the request about occupancy status as relating to the neighbour's house (line 29), which in turn is treated unproblematically by E as a relevant response to the request (line 32). And so, while "it" might be an ambiguous referent as part of a shift, it could be a device for connecting back to prior talk on the one hand and aiding the projection future talk on the other.

In a similar way to callers' characterisations of themselves as good neighbours in Extracts 4.3 and 4.4, C works to design herself as having a particular identity - in this case, as someone not disposed to complain about her neighbours, but her neighbour's actions. As illustrated in Chapter 3, callers to environmental health services predominantly design initial iterations of their complaints as agent-free. In the same way, when accounting for the reason for calling, callers to environmental health services might design accounts in ways that display themselves as non-complainers. In terms of the design of C's turn just prior to E's shift, there are also similar elements to shift prefacing turns in previous examples. In particular, the ECF 'everything' in "Ye:ah as well as e(h)verythin else." (line 26), marking out possible turn completion whilst neatly orienting back to the implication of several problems in C's initial turn (line 3). In this way, C observably displays stance and possible resistance to the implication that music noise, as determined by E (line 24) represents the only trouble C has. Note also, the laugh particle "(h)", indicating potential trouble for the unfolding interaction (Potter & Hepburn, 2010).

Extract 4.7 shows the ways in which shifts can be designed as emerging from caller's experiences of their troubles, and how callers can display themselves in dispositional terms. In the final environmental health example, C is contacting the service to report music disturbance. This call is different to previous calls in this section, in that the details given by C about the neighbour will turn out not to fall in with the remit of the service. However, the concomitant shift and the interactional environment in which it is produced share features similar to the other environmental health cases presented above.

Extract 4.8: EH-54

```
01   E:   Good afternoon environmental health?
02        (0.5)
03   C:   ↑Hi.=Uhm ↑I'm jus' wondering what I would need t'do if
04        I've got a n:eighbour th't sort've constantly plays
```

```
05        their music too loud.
            ((9 lines omitted for the ethics script))
15   E:   .hhh Right.=So: ˚#uhh#˚ yer neighbours what.=
16        Playin: music is it¿
17           (0.4)
18   C:   Yeah.= Uh it's jus' like I've been rou:nd [loa- loads=
19   E:                                            [Mm hm.
20   C:   =and sort've asked her t' turn it down.=She just has a
21        strop.=↑She does turn it down but she has: a .HHh
22        l[ast time I just got a- (.) ver:bal abuse.
23   E:    [Y:e:ah.
24   E:   R:i:ght.=Okay:.=I- #a# is she in a private house or
25        council or d' y' kno[w:,
26   C:                       [It's council.
27   E:   Oh it's counci[l.
28   C:                 [Mcht I thin:k >I mean I know< my l-
29        <they're all council up 'ere but some people have
30        bought (them.)
```

The analytic focus in Extract 4.8 begins directly following the reading of ethics script. As with Extract 4.7, observe the reformulation (line 15-16) of C's initial iteration (lines 3-5). Note also, that the design of the reformulated concern omits the frequency of the music ("constantly") and the grievance component ("too loud"); in so doing, categorising the complaint by removing any stance attributed to it. This objective reworking of the trouble by E might be a way of orienting C to providing factual details of the problem, rather than subjective experience of it (Edwards, 2005b), in a way that is fitted to the service being contacted. Following a confirming "Yeah." (line 18), C describes the efforts she has made at resolving the problem by talking to the neighbour – both in terms of frequency of visits (line 18) and the way the neighbour has been approached (line 20). Like the vast majority of extracts of calls in this chapter, C characterises herself in dispositional terms – here, as someone considerate. Note also, how C constructs the consequences of the neighbour's actions on her – the "ver:bal abuse." (line 22). This kind of formulation is seemingly designed as a way of portraying the neighbour in extreme terms, set against her own neighbourliness – working to contrast C has reasonable in the face of unreasonable conduct.

   As with Extracts 4.6 and 4.7, E produces a concomitant shift to the action of requesting the neighbour's occupancy status (lines 24-25). Observe too, the similar design of the shift – the turn-initial information receipt/idea connector "R:i:ght.=Okay:." (line 24) and

the use of a locally subsequent referent "she" (line 24). Further, that "she" also links back to C's use of "she" in the previous turn (lines 20, 21), which may be another way of softening a shift by designing it as a frame-maintaining continuation and emergence from unfolding talk. Note C's response (line 26), which highlights a potential future problem, in that service provision is not offered to council tenants, as indicated earlier. Also, the call-taker's "Oh it's council." (line 27), which not only receipts the prior talk as *new* news but marks it out as potentially accountable. This may be reflected in C's response, which contrastively displays an uncertainty "I thi̲n:k >I mean I know<" (line 28), with the previously unproblematic delivery of "It's co̲uncil." (line 26).

As with the previous environmental health examples in this section, there are similarities in the way callers build the case for aid in that they design themselves in dispositional terms, such as reasonable neighbours. In this extract however, C implicitly constructs herself as a victim, through the volunteering of "ve̲r:bal abu̲se.", which may be a way of *re-establishing* an experiential account of her reason for calling in light of E's previous reformulation – that the neighbour is objectively "Playin: mu̲sic" (line 16) (see Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005). While not explicitly formulated as an ECF in definitional terms, the consequential upshot of the trouble (as with the idiomatic *getting to the point* in Extract 4.6), serves to mark out the turn as recognisably complete in extrematised terms (see Edwards, 2000), thereby operationalising the concomitant shift by the call-taker.

4.2.2.1 Interim summary
The environmental health extracts in this section show a variety of ways in which concomitant shifts are produced, within their interactional environment. For instance, callers can rhetorically enhance accounting for their troubles in extreme ways - in so doing, signalling possible completion of a complaint component. Callers can also construct themselves as victims of neighbour conduct, which may serve to facilitate call-taker shifts to institutional business. In all environmental health calls, callers design experiential accounts in ways that display themselves as reasonable and responsible neighbours – implicitly casting their neighbours as unreasonable and irresponsible. In contrast to the antisocial behaviour calls, environmental health call-takers give callers less interactional space to account for and expand their troubles-tellings (e.g., no continuers). Call-takers in environmental health services reformulate caller's talk in a way that is seemingly more directed to establishing particular details from callers – displayed in these calls where the *same* details (i.e., occupancy status) are the subject of initial shifts. However, in similar ways to the antisocial

behaviour cases, call-takers design shifts in ways that connect back to pervious talk (e.g., through idea connectors or locally subsequent references in initial position).

The cases in this, and the previous section, show how concomitant shifts are designed as emerging from callers' experiences, whilst projecting future talk relevant to dealing with the trouble to be solved, such as requesting personal details, and other practical information. The next section demonstrates stark differences the ways in which shifts are produced, and the type of actions that are displayed by call-takers, as I compare calls to mediation services.

4.2.3 Concomitant shifts in mediation service calls

The final collection of extracts in this chapter are from calls to mediation services. Unlike the antisocial behaviour and environmental health services, mediation services are typically funded by charitable organisations, and not run through the council. The remit of these services is to act as 'intermediaries' between disputing neighbours, and towards a successful resolution. A common feature of initial concomitant shifts in mediation calls is that they are produced some time into the call. And so, for the sake of space, call openings are glossed but not included in their entirety, in the examples below.

In Extract 4.9, C is reporting verbal abuse and spitting from one of the neighbour's children. We join the call after C has begun to describe her concern, in which one the neighbour's sons is being blamed for the abuse, in contrast to the mother as innocent party.

Extract 4.9: EC-07

```
01   C:   Sh:e works nights very of'↑en so [sh- she doesn't=
02   M:                                   [Oh: righ:t.
03   C:   =know what's happening.
04   M:   Y:eah.=Yeah,
05   C:   And he denies obviously he tells her it didn't happen,
06        he making me like y'know I'm m:aking big deal out of
07        nothing an:d .hh she sticks with her ↑boys so what can
08        y'do.
09   M:   Mcht .hh Y:eah.=Yeah, mcht .hh (.) yeah as it sounds
10        like you'll probably need to meet with h:im as well as
11        with her.
12          (0.4)
13   M:   Hum, .H uh ↑Shall I explain: basically what we d[o and=
14   C:                                                   [S:↑ure.
15   M:   =um, (0.8) mcht and then we can take it from there.
```

Extract 4.9 begins with C explaining that the mother (who reportedly, is a nurse) works nightshifts at a local hospital, so is unaware and thus an innocent party to her son's conduct (lines 1, 3). Note the design of M's turn at line 4 – the production of two 'yeahs', hearable as one downturned information receipt and one with the upturned prosody of a continuer. These kinds of lexical items (and others, such as "right", "okay", and "mm") are considered in some counselling contexts as "supportive continuers" (Hepburn, 2005, p. 263). C continues her account by projecting the son as intentionally deceiving his mother regarding his transgressions, and casting C has overdoing it by exaggerating her claims (lines 5-7). In turn, this characterisation of the son may orient back to C's earlier report (line 1); in so doing, establishing a contrast between the mother as unaware, and the son as deceptive. Further, this comparison works to cast the mother/nurse as responsible/caring, in the face of the dishonest son. Note how the mother is characterised as being loyal to her sons (line 7), projecting the sense that even if she were aware of any transgressions, she might side with her children. Further, consider the category-bound activities of 'mother', invoking her as loyal, and as protective – the kinds of practices that members hearably orient to as linked to particular categories (Cromdal & Osvaldsson, 2012).

The next turn illustrates a common practice used in mediation data set, whereby mediators formulate, summarise and produce upshots of caller's experiential accounts - here by proposing a meeting between C and the mother and son (lines 9-11). Note also the similar production of the two earlier 'yeahs' in line 4 – however here, M hearably and quickly moves to other matters, as indicated by the lip parting sound and audible inbreath. After no uptake from C (line 12), M uses the interactional slot to shift from caller experience to one for institutional redress, by proposing to outline the remit of the service (lines 13, 15). (It should be noted that typically in calls to mediation services, personal details of callers are requested at the end of calls, if and when mediation has been granted and accepted). Observe C's acceptance of the offer at the first projected TRP – with the production of "S:↑ure." (line 14) occurring in early onset overlap, which can be a sign of participants electing to re-gain the floor (Schegloff, 2000). By formulating C's account of the trouble, this kind of summary can be seen as doing *pre-shift* work, prior to the shift itself. Further, observe M's use of locally subsequent references in initial position – here, with "him" (line 10) and "her" (line 11). And so, like examples in previous sections, concomitant shifts in this mediation call is observably another way of connecting back to preceding utterances, whilst projecting future talk as emerging from callers' experiences.

There are evident similarities between Extract 4.9, and the majority of examples already shown in the chapter, in how the self and others are characterised in dispositional terms, and sometimes cast at odds with each other. The sense in which the putative source of the neighbourhood problem (the son) is contrasted with his mother, is maybe is starkest characterisation, particularly due to the moral work being done by C. Focusing on the environment in which the concomitant shift is produced, note the idiomatic formulation "she sticks with her ↑boys" (line 7) and appeal for 'social solidarity' (Heritage, 1984b) "so what can y'do." (lines 7-8). As previously mentioned, the use of idiomatic expression can mark out complaints as recognisably complete (Edwards, 2000), and so it might be that the idiom's production works to operationalise a concomitant shift to a new action. In this way, M's formulation of C's prior talk may feature as a way of shifting to service-side business – albeit, more delicately than in other services.

Extract 4.9 illustrates how giving upshots of caller's troubles can mark out a shift from one action (the caller's account) to another (the call-taker's proposition). The next case shares similar features in shifts to institutional business. In Extract 4.10, C is reporting noise disturbance from a neighbour's property. The extract starts around five minutes in to the call, in which C has been giving an account of her trouble.

Extract 4.10: EC-37

```
01   C:   I phoned up um:: (0.5) the noise team again:.
02   M:   Mcht Y[eah:.
03   C:         [Um:: .hh (0.3) twice because of the noise at
04        night.=We[ll-
05   M:             [Mm::.
06          (0.2)
07   C:   Uh: the first night I was home.=.hHH It ↑wasn't music
08        it w's like um::: .hh like a tee vee or radio >y'know
09        when you c'n< hear that sort've v:oices,
10   M:   Mcht Y:eah::.
11   C:   R:eally really loud.=>I mean< I had my tee vee on in
12        the front room >an' I got the baby playin' an'< all I
13        can hear is their:s.
14          (0.3)
15   M:   M:m::.
16   C:   Um:::, (.) an' I phone- I phoned them up an' reported
17        it.=It was quite late at night, (.) an:d then: nobody
18        sort- again nobody came round.
```

```
19   M:   Y:eah:.=Yeah.=[.hHHH ((cough)) Again very frustrating=
20   C:                 [Um::,
21   M:   =for you:, I suppose you feel like you- you wanna see:
22        something being done.=.HHHh [About it.=Yeah.
23   C:                              [I do yeah.
24        (0.3)
25   M:   .HHh Hm::.=Mcht .hhh ↑Okay well do you know anything at
26        all about us:?
```

The extract starts with C reporting repeated previous contact with the noise team at the council regarding the noise (line 1, 3). As with Extract 4.9, note the use of supportive continuers by M (lines 2, 5). C then begins to describe an incident in which the neighbour's television could be heard after she had returned home from staying with family (lines 7-9). Observe how M is forewarned that the noise "↑wasn't music" but "like a tee vee or radio", indicating C as unsure what the noise is. Note also, the recruitment of M ("y'know when") in aligning with C's ambiguously described experience of hearing "sort've v:oices,". Following M's aligning "Y:eah::." (line 10), C gives an account of the loudness of the noise (line 11), and a describes the proximal environment in which the neighbour's television could be heard over C's television and her baby playing (lines 11-13). Note the ECF "all" in "an'< all I can hear is their:s." (lines 12-13). In contrast to call-takers' uptake in response to the use of ECFs in other services, in this extract, M does not shift to service side business, but produces another continuer – this time, with "M:m::." (line 15). C continues by seemingly orienting back to the start of her account of calling the noise team (line 1), with the subsequent reference "them" (line 16) (Schegloff, 1996), before producing an ECF "nobody came round." (line 18).

The sense in which C orients to her initial introduction of the noise team story (line 1) can be seen as projecting a *completeness* to the complainable matter, where prior use of ECFs (lines 12-13) may have not been treated by M as such. In any case, M's responding turn shares some of same characteristics as the previous example, in that a summary assessment of C's prior talk is produced (lines 19, 21-22). However, in contrast to the practically constructed formulation in Extract 4.9 (i.e., meeting with the neighbours), here, M characterises a summary (here, an upshot) in psychological terms. Note the rhetorical work being done invoking different psychological phenomena – on the one hand, invoking (arguably) cognitive concerns (that it's "very frustrating for you:,"; lines 19-20) yet, delicately orienting to C's emotional state ("I suppose you feel like…"; line 21), before

moving on to practical matters of C wanting to "s<u>ee</u>: something being done" (lines 21-22).
Following confirmation by C (line 23), C produces a concomitant shift, on the matter of
whether she is aware of what the remit of the service is, and by implication, that a description
is forthcoming (see Stokoe, 2013), similarly topicalised in Extract 4.9 (line 25-26). Thus, in a
similar way to Extract 4.9, the summary produced by M in this case serves as a *pre-shift* to
the upcoming shift, connecting back to the caller's experiences.

Extracts 4.9 and 4.10 show how shifts can emerge as a sequence of actions – caller
account, call-taker upshot, and proposition. However, the final example of a mediation
service call illustrates how shifts are produced without pre-shifts. In Extract 4.11, C is
reporting some unpleasant smells from a neighbour's house. The extract starts around three
minutes into the call, after C has described an attempt by her neighbour to rectify the problem
and reported the health consequences of the smell for her.

Extract 4.11: DC-74

```
01   C:   =Wh\u{e}ther she's: concreted the l- cracks or:: ↑I don't know.
02   M:   .HH Righ:t. O[kay.
03   C:                [I've no idea wh\u{a}t shes done love.
04        (0.5)
05   M:   Mcht .hh right.=
06   C:   =An' I <d\u{o}n't want any ↑b\u{o}ther.
07   M:   .hh R\u{i}ght [okay:.
08   C:                [~I've never f\u{e}ll out with anybody,~
09        (0.8)
10   M:   .h [Right.
11   C:      [Long as you're (child↑ish) I don't want to ~fall out~
12        wi' neighbours?
13   M:   .HH R\u{i}ght okay.=.Hh I'll just tell you a little bit
14        about mediation how w\u{e} can help and [then you can=
15   C:                                          [Y\u{e}s love.
16   M:   =decide if you want to cont\u{i}nue an' you want to go ah\u{e}ad.
```

Just before this extract, C has reported that her neighbour had told her she had filled in some
cracks in an adjoining wall, where smells might be getting in. Extract 4.11 begins with C
questioning her neighbour's actions, as the smell has apparently persisted (line 1). Note the
supportive continuer ".HH Righ:t. Okay." (line 2), which, unlike similar lexical forms in
Extracts 4.9 and 4.10, is produced here as a double-lexical utterance – possibly as a way of

overtly *doing* empathy through emphasising the reformulation of it. C's re-characterisation of 'not knowing' (line 1) with the ECF "no" in "I've no idea what shes done love." (line 3) is similar to the ECF produced in Extract 4.10 ('*all* I can hear is theirs'), in that its use does not operationalise a concomitant shift by M - displayed by the production of another supportive continuer (line 5). C complies, constructing herself as not disposed to complain – of not wanting "any ↑bother." (line 6). Following another double-lexical continuer from M (line 7), C does further moral work, portraying herself as a reasonable person – "~I've never fell out with anybody,~ (line 8). Note the 'wobbly voice' prosody in the delivery, emphasising the displays of emotion, described in extreme terms 'never' and 'anybody' (Hepburn, 2004). After a notable gap (line 9), C does further moral work, this time with the addition of not *wanting* to fall out with neighbours – although not necessarily clear in turn design (lines 11-12). The implication being that contacting the mediation service was done so *despite* not wanting to.

The turn-initial ".HH Right okay." (line 13) by M shares similarities with previous continuers in terms of lexical components and prosodic delivery (lines 2, 7). However, in this case, following a short inbreath, a concomitant shift is produced (lines 13-14, 16) – thus, is hearable as doing 'idea connecting' (Gardner, 2007) work as in previous examples of shifts (Extracts 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8). As with Extracts 4.9 and 4.10, the remit of the service is topicalised by M in this example. However, here, the shift is designed as a proposed course of action – "I'll just tell you…" (line 13), rather than an offer "↑Shall I explain:" (Extract 4.9) or a pre-offer "do you know anything at all about us:?" (Extract 4.10). In contrast to the two prior mediation calls, a 'pre-shift' summary or upshot of C's prior talk is missing heres, signalling a more unilateral shift (West & Garcia, 1988). The concomitant shift follows C's characterisation of herself as not the type of person to get involved in disputes, portraying herself as a *good* neighbour. Indeed, this particular shift-operationalising turn shares more similarities with C's display of *concern* in an earlier antisocial behaviour call (Extract 4.4). That said, the shift component in this extract overtly demonstrates how *agency* is afforded to callers in electing whether to use the service – "you can decide if you want to continue an' you want to go ahead." (lines 14, 16).

4.2.3.1 Interim summary

The mediation examples in this section have illustrated how the production of concomitant shifts are somewhat different in design and action to antisocial behaviour and environmental health services in the corpus. For instance, how the shift from caller experience to service-

side concern is (temporarily) transitioned, through the use of summaries or upshots of callers' talk – which can serve as doing *pre-shift* work. Further, the shifts in these examples are designed to establish the remit of the service, and what it can offer, rather than requesting personal details from callers to these services (as is typical in antisocial behaviour and environmental health). In terms of shift-operationalising talk, note the use of idiomatic expression, which not only can signal completeness to a complainable matter, but also, as a way of anticipating potential resistance. Notably, in contrast to examples in previous sections, shifts do not necessarily occur following the use of extreme terms by callers. However, callers use other strategies to mark out turns as possibly complete, such as characterising themselves in dispositional terms, such as good neighbours. Callers are given the interactional space to describe their experiences, commonly displayed through a supportive stance; in so doing, displaying alignment with callers' troubles. It might be that these shifts reflect an orientation in how mediation agencies provide service provision, in the sense that the management of calls is shaped by shifting to what is *offerable* (service remit) rather than what might be *requestable* (personal details). Significantly however, the design features of shifts across the data set share overarching commonalities and are discussed below.

4.3 Discussion

In this chapter, I have provided strong conversational evidence that addresses and contributes to core areas within DP/CA, by uniquely comparing the emergence of institutional business (through design and recipiency) across antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services. I have illustrated how different services initially respond to callers' problems, and how these responses shape both the interactional environment and institutional nature of calls. There is an attention to caller troubles through *concomitant shifts* of relevant activities and categories; moving from caller experience of a trouble, to a problem to be solved (Jefferson & Lee, 1981). These shifts reveal how call-takers determine an *actionable* basis for service provision, through the accomplishment of relevant tasks in antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services (Heritage & Clayman, 2010b).

I have identified features of concomitant shifts which show where and how they occur, and what turns call-takers treat as relevant for a shift to occur, across the corpus of calls to these services. For instance, in the antisocial behaviour extracts, shifts were sometimes responsive to prior talk from callers (e.g., treating address talk in a previous turn as shift relevant, or clarifying the caller's name from earlier in the call), or seemingly produced as unmotivated by prior talk by callers (e.g., requesting name and address details).

The use of continuers at TRPs by caller-takers showed that callers were given the interactional space to describe their troubles. In this way, certain information was observably treated as adequate before shifts were produced by call-takers, revealing how conversational slots can be exploited as a means of dealing with practical business. Callers to antisocial behaviour services regularly designed their troubles by including ECFs, which can be seen as legitimising some stretch of talk; in so doing, signalling account completion. Callers also characterised themselves dispositionally – as good neighbours.

In calls to environmental health services, there was sometimes interactional misalignment between participants in the shift environment – for instance, the use of the contrastive 'actually' by callers (e.g., Extracts 4.6 and 4.7). Also demonstrated, was the sense in which callers' troubles were seemingly *recategorised* as service-side concerns; in so doing signalling possible misalignment - the singularised "problem" (call-taker) leading to "worst problem" (caller) (Extract 4.6), "a neighbour" (call-taker) leading to "the person" (Extract 4.7), and "playing music" (call-taker) leading to "verbal abuse" (caller) (Extract 4.8). These displays of misalignment might signal callers' attempts to legitimise their cases, as worthy of assistance. There are similar features with antisocial behaviour calls, in the design of turns, prior to shifts. For example, the use of ECFs and the characterisation of themselves as reasonable people, and not disposed to complain. The topic of the shift itself (i.e., the occupancy status of the neighbour) was consistent in all the environmental health extracts. Further, less interactional space seemed to be afforded to callers to account for their troubles, in comparison to antisocial behaviour calls.

In the mediation examples, a common feature was how callers' troubles were summarised by call-takers, just prior to the production of shifts (e.g., Extracts 4.9 and 4.10), serving as a launchpad for the shifts themselves through *pre-shifts*. Callers' turns just prior to shifts (or pre-shifts) were designed in different ways – for instance, the use of idiomatic expression which can signal possible complaint completion (Extract 4.9), displays of self-help by callers (Extract 4.10), and callers characterising themselves in dispositional terms (Extract 4.11). However, while these turns show a variability in how callers design their talk as ways that may facilitate shifts, the shifts themselves are formulated in a way that project a similar trajectory for the calls. Essentially, what agencies can provide and what is *offerable* (e.g., describing the service remit) rather than collecting details about callers through what is *requestable* (e.g., names and addresses). In this way, preconditions have already been displayed as met for service provision, in how these shifts are designed.

The ways in which participants go about shifting from complaining to requesting to offering, reveals the *progressivity* of talk in services (Schegloff, 2007). The examples above show that the business of service provision is formulated by callers and call-takers in various ways. If we consider that callers' troubles alternate between interlocutors, and if we contemplate the different ways in which service providers' talk shifts from troubles experience to institutional problem as shown above, then it would be reasonable to suggest that troubles can be formulated and managed along a range of service provision. This is not to say that the outcomes of shifts are especially different between services. Call-takers, in their own way, are engaged in dealing with the practicalities within a particular institution - the caller's personal details (antisocial behaviour), or occupancy status (environmental health), or service remit (mediation).

However, there are observable variances by the way in which provision is revealed (or not) through concomitant shifts. For example, affording space (antisocial behaviour), or not (environmental health) for callers to elaborate an account of their experiences, sometimes by using supportive continuers (mediation). Or the action orientation of how shifts are designed – as requests for information (antisocial behaviour, environmental health) or predetermined as offers of aid (mediation). In this way, shifts operate along a continuum in ways which orient to the subject-side on the one hand (e.g., aligning with caller experience), and object-side business (e.g., dealing with factual matters) on the other (Edwards, 1997; Edwards & Potter, 2017). I am not proposing that the ways in which services orient to callers' concerns are an indication of the quality of service on offer, and that somehow a continuum represents good-bad customer service. On the contrary, these concomitant shifts are observably produced in ways that demonstrate the type of service callers seek aid from, and the kind of assistance each service might provide. For instance, aligning with callers' experiences may display call-takers as attending to the importance of *doing listening*, which is particularly relevant for mediation services, in that disputing parties are encouraged to *listen to each other*, and find solutions together. Alternatively, foregrounding factual matters might be more relevant for services that put less weight on relational aspects of service provision – such as environmental health services, wherein callers are typically sent diary sheets so problematic conduct can be monitored remotely.

Previous research on how talk in service encounters can transition between participants through the relevance of some particular interactional business, has been examined in terms of, for example, frame mismatch (Tracy, 1997), caller expectations (J. Whalen et al., 1988) and the focus for this chapter, concomitant shifts (Jefferson & Lee,

1981). These studies demonstrate that, in calls to emergency services, resistance and tension can occur between interlocutors, as calls unfold. As a general observation, resistance was not a regular feature of the cases shown above. This analysis reveals how the matter of service provision is *collaboratively* accomplished between callers and call-takers in various ways (and sometimes over a number of turns) – for instance, through the use of ECFs and idiomatic expressions, which not only are features which add legitimacy to the reporting of troubles but work to operationalise concomitant shifts through signalling turn completeness, or the affordances given to callers to report troubles relevant for the services contacted (e.g., through continuers, and establishing the nature of the transgression).

The relevance of concomitant shifts in the data set, illustrates how members can cooperate with each in service provision. I would argue that the findings from this analysis are more comparable to research on service encounters, rather than emergency services. For example, a study which focused on recordings of telephone calls to a flight bookings hotline, found how requests for flights were collaboratively accomplished by callers and call-takers over the course of specifying the request (Lee, 2009). The author suggests that requesting involves two 'contingences of specification' – what the customer/requester wants, and what the agent/recipient can grant (Lee, 2009). However, I would go further, and argue that the emergence of concomitant shifts in my corpus, reveals the joint production of *shared goals*. A significant and pervasive feature across the cases in this chapter is in how concomitant shifts are, in their own way, designed by call-takers as *emerging* from caller's experiences – for example, through *right*-idea connectors, *and*-prefacing, and *formulating* callers' experiences. And so, by binding callers' troubles to institutional concerns in this way, can reveal how concomitant shifts are produced through collaborative and coordinated experiential and institutional activities.

Having examined how interactions in service provision progress from callers' experiences to institutional concerns, I now turn my attention to the institutions themselves – in particular, how services, other than the present one, are invoked when making the case for assistance.

Chapter 5:
Invoking third-party agencies:
Referrals and mentions in service provision

5.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I examined the points in service provision where service-side matters emerged in various ways in calls for assistance. In this chapter, I shift the focus of the analysis back to the caller's interactional domain. When people call a service to help resolve their problem, they may have previously been in contact with *another* organisation, or 'third-party agency' (TPA). This might be due to the cooperative nature of service provision – for instance, inter-agency collaboration with child welfare issues such as substance abuse (B. D. Smith & Mogro-Wilson, 2008) or mental health concerns in foster care (Garland & Besinger, 1997). Occasionally, people are guided to TPAs that can better help them, such as directing primary health care patients to voluntary agencies, while still remaining within the healthcare system (South, Higgins, Woodall, & White, 2008). When people call mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services to report neighbourhood concerns, callers sometimes reveal that they have contacted TPAs before the present call. However, contrasted to other institutions such as those above, agencies that offer aid to those with neighbourhood problems do not typically collaborate in the delivery of assistance (see Chapter 2). And so, the ways in which institutions are interconnected (or not), can reveal the affordances and constraints of service provision for those with neighbourhood concerns.

In many ways, the present chapter crystalizes the importance of this thesis's comparative approach within the field of DP/CA, in that I reveal how members embody the institutionality of their troubles by invoking TPAs when recipient designing their talk for call-takers. While there is some research on comparing interactional features and practices across services in institutional encounters, there are very few empirical studies to date which examine how members explicitly invoke TPAs when contacting a present service (cf. Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). When TPAs are marked out by callers in the course of complaining about neighbourhood problems, they are observably drawn upon to do some kind of interactional work. In this way, the forming of a triadic 'three-party association' (caller, call-taker, and TPA) may have consequences for the interaction where a dyadic relationship (caller and call-taker) once operated (Simmel, 1950). A comparison can be made with patients in neurology consultations reporting third-party observations about their

memory, in the course of attempting to demonstrate the severity and legitimacy of their memory deficits (Alexander, Blackburn, & Reuber, 2019). The availability of multiple data sets in the present corpus provides a unique opportunity to show the interactional environment in which callers are situated between the provision of service in one organisation, and that of another.

In this chapter, I investigate the ways in which TPAs are reported[30] in the unfolding of calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services. Specifically, I explore *how* services, other than the one being called, are made relevant by callers when reporting neighbourhood problems[31]. I do this in two ways. First, I examine if and how callers report they have been *referred* by a TPA. A referral is when someone (or something) is referred or directed for consultation, review, or further action ("Referral," n.d.). So, a patient may be referred to a voluntary organisation by a primary healthcare service, such as the example above. This extends related research on mediation services, which shows how callers display lack of knowledge with service provision when reporting they have been *referred* from another agency (e.g. "I've been given your number by Citizens Advice Bureau") (Stokoe, 2013). Second, I investigate the points in calls if and how callers *mention* a TPA. A mention is when there is reference to something briefly, without going into detail ("Mention," n.d.). In contrast to the action orientation of referrals, *mentions* are locally produced utterances, that typically operate as part of a narrative or storytelling (see Lerner, 1992).

And so, this chapter is organised as follows. In Section 5.1, I examine how previous research has approached members' displays of knowledge about the service they are contacting for help, in which I locate the focus for this chapter. In Section 5.2, I explore how TPAs are designed as constituting service-referrals to the present service. In Section 5.3, I show how TPAs are mentioned by callers in the course of accounting for their trouble. In Section 5.4, I discuss the ways in which TPAs are relevant for actions and activities, when building the case for aid.

---

[30] These may include antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services, or other agencies such as the police, housing department or Citizens Advice Bureau.

[31] This chapter is the first of two chapters which focus on *service-interconnectedness*. Chapter 6 examines 'signposting' to TPAs by call-takers in the present call.

5.1 Establishing grounds for assistance

In terms of designing talk as a means of getting assistance for similar neighbour problems, the ways in which named services are invoked by callers is significant. Sacks (1992) notes that by naming *another* service within the current call for assistance, comprises informing the call-taker that the present course of action is not the first step in the search for aid. And so, callers contact services "about which they have the most rights to have an expectation that they'll get help." (Sacks, 1992b, p. 74). In this way, invoking TPAs at the first interactional opportunity (or not) can be seen as "accountable actions" (Sacks, 1992b, p. 73). By disclosing prior efforts at problem resolution, callers may display themselves as unsure of who can best help them (Stokoe, 2013). In this way, the indexing of TPAs may be consequential, in terms of displaying callers as having *less* rights to make the case for aid in the present call, which in turn may be significant for whether assistance is granted or rejected by call-takers.[32]

The sense of displayed uncertainty with who to call for help with troubles-related matters has been investigated empirically using CA methods, in various institutional settings. For instance, in calls to a children's helpline, online counsellors place the onus on callers to describe their trouble, rather than explicitly offering help – callers regularly display themselves as *not knowing* what to do, which can be seen as sequence closing devices, in the service of showing a readiness for counselling (Emmison & Danby, 2007). Uncertainty can also be displayed when contacting the emergency services for assistance. For example, consider the case below, in which the caller (C) is reporting chest pains to the operator (O).

Extract 5.1: [15 v13]

```
01   C:   .hhh ((deep breath))
02   O:   <esoes:> one one >two whas
03        occ↑ured?<
04            (.65)
05   C:   e::h <I go:t a really bad (.)
06        chest pai:n> >I don't know<
07        if I need an ambulance
08        >>or if one of those<<
09        <medical-care-transports> (will do)
10   O:   hm
```

(Cromdal, Landqvist, Persson-Thunqvist, & Osvaldsson, 2012, p. 386)

---

[32] The matter of rejecting callers' cases for aid, as well as signposting callers to ostensibly more appropriate services, is examined in Chapter 6.

The authors highlight C's turn-initial displays of uncertainty ("e::h", line 5), and C's lack of knowledge relating to what service would be best placed to offer aid for her emergency, subsequent to the problem presentation (lines 6-9) (Cromdal, Landqvist, et al., 2012). Significantly however, is that C's action of offering a candidate diagnosis, is "designed…to satisfy the operator's opening query" (Cromdal, Landqvist, et al., 2012, p. 387). And so, while displaying uncertainty as to whether the trouble falls within the remit of the institution, C is oriented to the procedural elements of service provision by a particular service, by giving a type-conforming response to a regular opening turn in this environment.

The analysis above, stands in contrast to more common types of call openings observed in calls to the emergency services (e.g., Wakin & Zimmerman, 1999; J. Whalen, Zimmerman, & Whalen, 1988; Zimmerman, 1992). Callers to these services (and call-takers) regularly design their talk in terms of a *constrained focus* to the interaction, as demonstrated below.

Extract 5.2: [MCE/21-9/1 2/simplified]

```
01   D:   Mid-City Emergency
02   C:   Um yeah (.) somebody jus' vandalized my car,
03   D:   What's your address.
04   C:   Thirty three twenty two: Elm.
```
(M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 174)

As Extract 5.2 shows, following the institutional identifier - "Mid-City Emergency" (line 1), the reason for calling is produced at the earliest sequential opportunity by the caller "Um yeah (.) somebody jus' vandalized my car" (line 2), which serves as a request for help. Significantly, C's opening turn displays *familiarity* with the what the service provides – namely, assisting with a vandalised car. These opening two turns represent one of five sequential components that regularly occur in these kinds of calls, and display a distinctive organisation through an alignment of respective institutional identities, which effectively launches the call's trajectory (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987). The call-taker then moves onto a new phase, to deal with more institutional concerns (see Chapter 4) – in this case, a request for information regarding the caller's address (line 3), to which the caller unproblematically provides (line 4). This fragment demonstrates how callers display both knowledge about the kind of assistance the service can provide, and the rights to request help, by the way they make the case for aid.

Significantly then, when there is one (ostensibly) obvious service to call to report a vandalised car, it might be that callers typically (cf. Cromdal, Landqvist, et al., 2012) display grantability of aid by the way in which they design their problem. In this way, the notion of being referred to other services might appear out of place. In contrast, service provision in mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services might be treated by callers as less clear and undefined. And so, callers to these services (and call-takers in these services) work to establish whether aid is actionable on the basis of the characterisation of the trouble, in a similar way to mediatability, doctorability, or policeability (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990).

In the next section, I begin to examine the data. I start by exploring how TPAs are invoked when callers design *service-referrals* as part of accounting for calling.

5.2 Service referrals in calls for assistance

An initial inspection of the data corpus of calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services, which focused on identifying what (and, to some extent, how) TPAs were made relevant, revealed two significant trends. First, callers may volunteer the names of other agencies that have *referred them* to the present service (e.g., "the police have asked me to give you a ring). Second, callers may *mention* other services *without* reference to being referred (e.g., "we've phoned the police, done everything we can really"). And so, in this section, I explore the instances in which callers' report (or orient to) being referred by named TPAs, or *service-referrals.* In Section 5.3, I investigate calls in which callers' reference (or orient to) named TPAs, but *not* that they have been referred, which I call *service-mentions.* While TPAs are invoked in the course of callers' accounting for their troubles, there are observable differences in the actions and activities they perform, as will be revealed.

In order to situate the current analysis, I present a published example of a call opening to a mediation service (M), in which the caller (C) reports being referred by the Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB).

Extract 5.3: DC-96

```
01   M:   <Mediation in Newtown, g'd morning,
02   C:   .hh ↑Hello. (see) I've been given y'r number by:
03        Citizen's Advice Bureau.
04   M:   Ri:ght,
```

```
05   C:   Um: that you do: mediation service or something,
```
(Stokoe, 2013, p. 294, transcript adjusted)

After the service identifier and call-taker greeting (line 1), the caller provides a return greeting, before indicating she has been referred from another service - "I've been given y'r number by: Citizen's Advice Bureau." (lines 2-3). Following M's information receipt, which has the upturned prosody of a continuer (line 4), C displays some uncertainty of what this mediation service provides, and is potentially unfamiliar with the topic altogether (for an extended analysis, see Stokoe, 2013). However, the point I want to highlight is the sequential position of the service-referral, which occurs directly following a return greeting. This appears to be somewhat typical of call openings, in that this kind of utterance (in this case, invoking another service) in early sequential position, displays the caller's stance towards the concern as important enough to raise early in the interaction, as a *reason for calling* (Halkowski, 2006; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; Zimmerman, 1992).

And so, I begin the analysis by drawing on the research above, examining those instances in which TPAs are invoked as reasons for calling the present service. First, I explore service referrals in mediation calls, which in their own way reveal a particular kind of design to the referral component, as shown below.

5.2.1 Service referrals in mediation services
The opening calls in this section are to mediation services. In the first call, C is contacting the service to report a dispute over a neighbour wanting to build houses on land next door to C's house.

Extract 5.4: DC-41
```
01   M:   Mediation in Northwoo:d, g'd afternoon,
02        (1.2)
03   M:   Hello?
04        (1.4)
05   C:   Hi:. mcht .hh um: the council has just gimme this
06        nu:mber?
07   M:   .Hh right, (.) o[kay,
08   C:                    [An:d they said you might be able to
09        help me.
10   M:   .Hh righ:t oka#y#.=Are yer havin' problems with a
11        neighbour.
```

```
12   C:   £Ah huh yes huh you could say that.£
```

Extract 5.4 starts at the beginning of the call, with an institutional identifier and call-taker greeting (line 1). This is followed by an extended gap where a return greeting might expectably occur (line 2), perhaps indicating a mishearing or misunderstanding problem from C. M's redone greeting pursues a response with "Hello?" (line 3), which does get a return greeting from C (line 5), but only after a further extended period of unresponsiveness (line 4). C's first turn encompasses the target stretch of talk - "Hi:. mcht .hh um: the council has just gimme this nu:mber?" (lines 5-6), which contains both the TPA "council", and an indication that the caller has been referred by them "just gimme this nu:mber?". The reference marker *just* is considered a type of *spatial deixis,* which in linguistic terms, commonly occurs in contexts where there is a shared understanding of some state of affairs (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). However, in this context, it might be that this formulation is designed to rhetorically enhance the caller's case for assistance as pressing.

There is also the sense that "just gimme" orients to something *urgent* being reported – a temporal implication that the caller has not waited between being referred and calling mediation, which in turn displays the caller's case for aid as a pressing problem. Further, "just gimme" projects the caller's willingness to resolve the problem, potentially placing additional responsibility on the present service for managing the caller's trouble. The call-taker responds with a continuer ".Hh right, (.) okay," (line 7), treating C's turn (also a continuer) as unproblematic. Note that C produces generalised reported speech of the council's recommendation to call (lines 8-9), which may be a device for reinforcing the validity of the call to the present service (Clift & Holt, 2006). Significantly, M's responding turn, solicits a troubles-telling from C (lines 10-11) – framed specifically as a (as yet, unnamed) 'neighbour' problem. C confirms the prior turn's correctness with hearably jocular idiomatic expression (line 12).

Extract 5.4 illustrates how a service referral can be designed as an *urgent* matter; in so doing, placing more accountability on the present service for dealing with the caller's concern. The next example is somewhat different, in that less responsibility is hearably assigned by C in the service referral's production. In Extract 5.5, C is calling to report a dispute regarding who is responsible for a water leak from a neighbour's property and begins after the ethics script has been read.

```
01   M:   .Hh Yeah- so (.) how can I help you.
02   C:   .Hh ↑I j'st uh wanted some advice u::m I was uh: given
03        your number from uh:: .hhh (.) South Hill#::# uh one of
04        the solicitors I phon:ed, .hh [um #uh:# I woulda come
05   M:                                [Oh: okay w- which one
06        was that?=Mat- matter °of interests,°
07   C:   #Ughm::# mcht .h[h   (.)   A h  di- di- di- di- di- di=
08   M:                  [Oh not to worry if you're not sure,
09   C:   =di uh:: where was it Hhhh mcht .hhh South Hill so
10        Johnson and James.
11   M:   Oh Johnson James yes okay °yes [uh°
12   C:                                 [Right uh I ↑got a
13        problem uh:m I just wanted some advice #uh#
14   M:   .h Okay:,
15   C:   Advice (on it.) mcht .hh my neighbour: about uh five
16        years ago: has bought a property h mcht .hhh and
17        they've uh::: rented this property out through a
18        letting agent.
19           (.)
20   M:   R:ight,
```

Extract 5.5 starts with M's request for an account of the problem (line 1). As with Extract 5.4, C's responsive turn contains a TPA, and orients to some form of service referral (lines 2-4). However, observe "↑I j'st uh wanted some advice" (line 2), which in contrast to Extract 5.4, presents the trouble as less pressing – C is advice-seeking, rather than making the case for help. That said, observe the temporal *just*-preface, which, like the previous example, may shape the upcoming talk as warranting immediate attention. A further contrast to Extract 5.4 can be seen in the agent-free referral component "I was uh: given your number" (lines 2-3), which is produced before the TPA is named. Also, there is displayed ambiguity with the specific organisation C has been given the number from – "South Hill#::# uh one of the solicitors I phon:ed,", which is observably recipient-designed in terms of M's potential lack of knowledge about who South Hill are.

However, there are observable similarities with the previous case in terms of action formation of the service referral element. Note how "gimme this nu:mber?" (Extract 5.4; lines 5-6) and "given your number" (lines 2-3) both ascribe the action of C being *given* or conveyed the number by a TPA with the expectation that C will contact the present service –

essentially, that the decision to call was not done so on basis of the caller's own volition. In their own way, by describing that the number was *given*, implicitly marks out the triadic association (Simmel, 1950) between the parties through a sequence of events – the number was *given* (by the TPA), the call is *made* (by C), projecting *assistance* for the trouble (by M). And so, designing service-referrals in this way, may be a strategy for legitimising a push for the *mediatability* of assistance through a three-way relationship (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). Also, there are similarities in delivery with the prior example, indicated by extensive perturbation through both accounts – signifying potential uncertainty with what the service can provide.

A further but no less significant point is the framing of C's turn as advice-seeking (line 2) and is particularly notable with reference to the institution 'solicitors'. As with "I just wanted some adv<u>i</u>ce" (line 13) and "Adv<u>i</u>ce (on it.)" (line 15), this type of turn design projects a *limited engagement* with the service; which in so doing, might not be seen as ultimately solving the caller's concern. In terms of the remit of mediation services, disputing neighbours are encouraged to meet to resolve their differences, and so callers to these services commonly build a relationship with mediators, in the service of meetings being arranged (see Chapter 2). By framing the call as *advice seeking*, it projects a different kind of service from the one being contacted – calling for advice may indicate no more contact after this call, as information may have been obtained. Further, formulations such as "I just wanted some adv<u>i</u>ce" are *category-relevant* descriptions, that project the kind of assistance commonly offered by the category 'solicitors' – a service which is explicitly indexed by C. And so, this type of formulation may function as a feature of "members' methods for accomplishing action", in terms of C building the case for aid (Stokoe & Edwards, 2009, p. 95), but not necessarily from this service.

Extract 5.5 shows how callers can invoke TPAs somewhat contrastively - by pressing for assistance on the one hand, while framing there bid for aid as potentially unfitted to the present service on the other. Extract 5.6 is different to previous mediation calls in this section, as the service-referral occurs in later sequential position. However, it may be oriented to earlier in the call. C is calling to report neighbour harassment and verbal abuse. The extract starts just after the ethics script has been administered.

Extract 5.6: <u>DC-97</u>
```
01   M:   <H<u>o</u>w can I h<u>e</u>lp.
02        (0.3)
```

```
03   C:   (Well see) I- I've just been talking t'somebody else I
04        don't think there's anything th't y'might be able to-
05        y'can do w's- w's- th' thing is we're havin' some (0.2)
06        sorta trouble with the neighbour y'see.
07   M:   Righ:t, okay, .hH
08   C:   It's just it's like abusive language and (.) sort've
09        (.) doing things and threat'ning behaviour sort've
10        things y'know,
11   M:   Right, okay.
12           (0.3)
13   C:   See I went to the police first y'see and they sorta
14        put me t'you y'see.
15           (.)
16   M:   Yeah.=Yeah.=.hh Right, what I'll do Mr Smith, I'll-
17        I'll just explain a l'ttle b't about mediation an' how
18        we can help.
```

Following M's request for an account of the concern (line 1), C indicates that he has "just been talking t'somebody else" (line 2); in so doing, indexing that another person or service has been previously contacted. As with Extract 5.5, the sequential position of this, yet unclarified 'other', occurs following a solicitation of the reason for calling. Further, as with both previous examples, is the inclusion of 'just', orienting M to the concern as a pressing one for institutional redress. In the next stretch of talk, C produces a candidate understanding of the present service not assisting (lines 3-5) - hearably awkward in terms of its delivery (e.g., hedged, word cut-offs, grammar production). In this way, compared to the previous case, here, C demonstrates in more *overt* terms, that the trouble is unfitted to the present service - reinforced by the ECF "anything". That said, in the final element of the turn C, initiates the reason for the call, which, following a continuer (line 7) is extended into his next turn (lines 8-10). Note how C draws on the 'common knowledge component' "y'know," (line 10) – an categorical upshot of his prior description of the trouble as recognisable and mutually shared (Edwards & Mercer, 1987; Stokoe, 2012b).

Subsequent to a further go-ahead (line 11), C names a TPA as part of a service referral (lines 13-14). It is unclear whether this is the same 'somebody' reported earlier. However, we can note that the police are constructed as being contacted 'first', and so projects the sense that this call is the 'second' service being contacted. Further, the referral component "and they sorta put me t'you y'see." (line 13-14) marks out this call as the next

service contact. At this point M produces a concomitant shift (see Chapter 4) to explain the service's remit (lines 16-18) – in so doing, treating C's case for aid as a potentially actionable one. This example is an edge case in the dataset, as typically, service remits occur later in calls, following a more detailed account of the neighbourhood problem. Notably, the call continues for several more minutes, in which C describes specific examples of the problem, and also, the consequences for him.

5.2.1.1 Interim summary

In their own way, the mediation examples in this section illustrate how the indexing of TPAs in service referrals implicate expectancies that callers contact the present services. In so doing, assigning accountability for managing the problem to call-takers in the current call. There is sometimes a caller pay-off for this activity, in terms of call-takers' next actions – for instance, soliciting accounts or proposing to explain service remits. And so, it might be that callers design their troubles as mediatable, and call-taker treat them as such, as displayed through being buffeted to the appropriate service. Callers also display uncertainty when describing themselves as being caught between one service and another. In the next section, I examine service referrals in environmental health calls. These calls share some similarities in design with mediation examples in terms of being *manoeuvred* from one service to another, as well as displays of uncertainty regarding who is best placed to offer help.

5.2.2 Service referrals in environmental health calls

The next examples are service-referrals in calls to an environmental health service. In the first example, C is reporting a privacy concern regarding a neighbour's closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera. Extract 5.7 shows how C characterises being steered to the present service through observably hedged delivery of the service referral element.

Extract 5.7: EH-103

```
01   E:   <Good afternoon, en↑vironmental health,
02            (.)
03   C:   Hello, um:, I've been given- your um: um: y'know
04            to get in touch with you from the Citizen's Advice
05            because I- I- I was inquiring to them .hh about my
06            neighbour's cee cee tee vee camera.
07            (0.5)
08   E:   Mm:.
```

```
09          (.)
10   E:   .hHHH u:m well we're recording for training purposes=at
11        the moment, is that okay with you?=
12   C:   =Y:es that's fine yeah.
13   E:   Y:e:ah, oh um: is it a private house, hh
14   C:   Y:eah,
```

As with some of the mediation calls above, C's first turn orients to a referral, and the TPA she has been referred by (lines 3-4). There are further similarities also, with the design of the referral component - the inclusion of "given" (line 3) characterising the sense of being buffeted from one service to another. However, the production of the referral in this case is hedged, as shown with the omission of the word 'number' following the abandoned "your", and perturbation (line 3), which may indicate uncertainty with what is offerable by this service. Observe also, the projected course of action grammatically tied to obtaining the number - "to get in touch with you" (line 4), which is delivered before the TPA. In this way, C can be seen as prioritising the action of calling, over disclosing the service she has been referred from.

An additional component of C's first turn, which is missing from the mediation examples, is an account for the referral, with "because I- I- I was inquiring to them .hh about my neighbour's cee cee tee vee camera." (lines 5-6). Further, note C's use of the action 'inquiring', which has the category-relevant character of *information-seeking*. While this implicitly orients to the appropriateness of her previous call to the CAB, 'inquiring' to an environmental health service displays C as unsure as to whether this is now the relevant service to resolve her neighbour problem. And so, in contrast to the *mediatability* of cases above, C does not display similar kinds of 'environmental health-ability' – service referrals are more designedly ambiguous here.

Extract 5.7 shows how service referrals can be produced in ways that display uncertainty with what the present service provides – through hedging, and ambiguous turn design. In the next environmental health example, C is calling with concerns about animal welfare. The extract is different to the previous case, in that C describes prior *self-help* efforts in attempting to rectify the problem with a TPA. The start of the call is cut-off, and so the extract begins at the beginning of the recording.

```
01   E:   Speaking,
02          (.)
03   C:   Mcht Oh: good morning.=My name's Rachel Jones (.) and I
04          live at ((address))
05   E:   Y:es,
06   C:   I've just rang the are ess pee cee ay.
07          (0.3)
08   C:   .hh Because for over an hour (.) there's been a do:g
09          literally s:creaming.
10          (0.2)
11   E:   R[:ight.
12   C:    [Not- not just howling s:creaming.
13   E:   Mm:,
14   C:   I've been told it's ↑not a welfare issue .hHH that I'm
15          to get in touch with you because it's n[oise pollution.
16   E:                                            [Right.
```

Following interlocutor identifications (lines 1-4), C reports she has contacted a TPA prior to the present call with "I've just rang the are ess pee cee ay." (RSPCA[33]) (line 6). While the lexical *just* is produced as with an earlier mediation example (Extract 5.5), here, *just* references a past course of action ("I've just rang"), rather than a projected future one ("↑I j'st uh wanted some advice" Extract 5.5). Further, having *just rung* another agency marks out a semantic difference from the less urgent *just wanting* some advice, implicating C as more or less entitled to request assistance (see Curl & Drew, 2008), and E as more or less accountable for providing it. In this way, C displays herself as self-helping through taking previous steps to resolve her trouble (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). Nevertheless, as with Extract 5.5, *just* projects a pressing need in moving from one service to another, and so may serve as a device for making a case for aid across dispute resolution services. Further, by initiating her reasoning for calling in this way, C pre-frames the category of problem as a particular kind of concern – hearable for E as warranting a call to RSPCA due to the seriousness of the problem. And so, by designing her opening turn in this way may be a resource for assigning accountability to E for managing the problem.

As with the previous environmental health example, C provides an account for the referral (line 8-9). Note how the account is framed in terms of C's urgency in calling –

---

[33] Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

"Because for over an hour" (line 8). Observe also, "there's been a do:g literally s:creaming." (lines 8-9) - particularly the use of "s:creaming.", which is reiterated with "Not- not just howling s:creaming." (line 12). The ascription of 'human' characteristics to a dog, can be seen as enhancing its rhetorical impact by *overdoing* an action description; in this case, making the case for help (Drew, 1987).

In contrast to the examples shown thus far in this chapter, the referral component comes in later sequential position (line 14-15). Note C's "I've been told it's ↑not a welfare issue" (line 14), which omits the relational aspect of the trouble (the dog), with the impersonal pronoun "it". Also, observe how the category of concern is marked out as not fitted to this service, but the previously invoked RSPCA – it's *not* a welfare issue. Further, as with Extract 5.7, consider "I'm to get in touch with you". In this way, C can be seen as reporting her neighbour problem as incompatible with the present service, by the way in which her trouble must be re-fitted to fall within its remit. Note also, "because it's noise pollution.", which, as with the initial turn component, is designed as non-relational - no reference to the dog, or consequences for the dog. This turn is seemingly designed in contrast with C's earlier plea, potentially as a way of making the case for aid by explicitly marking out what is offerable (or not) by the RSPCA, in contrast to the present environmental health call (see Schegloff, 1991). And so, C is hearably a passive recipient of institutional categorisations, rather than definitions of the concern that she may hold herself – again, displaying the sense of being caught between one service and another.

Extract 5.8 illustrates that, although previous efforts at problem resolution have been reported, there can be a sense of disparity regarding the appropriateness of the trouble for the service being contacted. Another environmental health example involves problems with pet smells, and is an outlier in the collection, as the caller is responsible for the issue, rather than calling to report it. Extract 5.9 is included as a way of illustrating the prevalence of the phenomena across the environmental health corpus. However, the case shares similar features with previous calls in this section.

Extract 5.9: EH-145

```
01   E:   Good afternoon, environmental health¿
02             (3.0)
03   E:   Good afternoon, environmental health,
04   C:   Hello.=.hHH um the police have asked me to give you a
05        ring.=[.hh um: I've- I've just rang up 'n made- we-(.)=
06   E:         [Police? y:eah,
```

```
07   C:   =w- uh I live on Old Village Roa:d and we have a
08        private, (.) I'm >in a< council house, .HHh
09   E:   Mm hm,
```

Following the service greeting/redone greeting, the caller responds with a return greeting, reporting she has been referred by a TPA (line 4-5). Note that C has been *asked* to ring, which can be seen as more oriented to C's domain by placing less burden on the caller, than Extracts 5.7 and 5.8. However, as with the previous environmental health examples ("*to* get in touch with you"), the service-referral is designed as a projected course of action "*to* give you a ring." (lines 4-5). Another significant feature, is the awkwardly produced, abandoned "I've- I've just rang up 'n made- we-" (line 5), which may have been heading for an account for calling the police. While making specific claims about omitted talk is speculative, there are observable similarities in sequential position with previous examples, as the abandoned account is directly subsequent to an indexed TPA, in the same turn. However, the abandoning of an account may orient to the status of caller. C is *not* making the case for assistance within the remit of the service being contacted, and so her abandoned turn may orient to uncertainty with what the service can provide on basis of her reason for calling.

Further, the design of the service-referral foregrounds the service doing the referring with "the police have asked…" (line 4). In nearly all the cases so far (cf. "council has just gimme this nu:mber?"; Extract 5.4), actions are ascribed by callers to TPAs or themselves (e.g., 'I've been *given'*, 'I just *rang'*) before TPAs are invoked. And so, it might be that these initial components of service-referrals are designed in terms of what is appropriate for the interaction – essentially, by framing the talk as *action*-orientated in the majority of cases, rather than *service*-oriented in this one. Thus, the position of the action component within service-referral might be a relevant feature when designing a case for aid as (in this case) environmental health-able.

5.2.2.1 Interim summary

The examples in this section show how service-referrals are produced in calls to an environmental health service and share some similar features with mediation calls – for instance, callers displaying being buffeted between services through designing referrals as unfolding courses of action. However, service-referrals in environmental health calls are observably more hedged and ambiguous in delivery. Further, callers give an account for being referred in these cases. And so, callers to environmental health services in the data set

potentially display less certainty as to whether the service they have been directed to can provide assistance, in comparison to mediation examples. In the next section, I explore how service referrals are designed in calls to an antisocial behaviour service. While there are some similarities with previous examples in terms of action ascription, the service-referrals below are framed by callers as part of broader ongoing issues.

5.2.3 Service referrals in antisocial behaviour calls

In the final extracts in this section, I examine how service-referrals are invoked in calls to an antisocial behaviour service. In Extract 5.10, C is reporting abusive behaviour from a neighbour, and demonstrates how a TPA can be produced to index the unresolved nature of a concern.

Extract 5.10: AC-11
```
01   A:   Mcht Julie Smith <good'afternoon >can I< help you,
02   C:   ↑Yes.=It's missus Richards speaking.=I've bee::n. given
03        your <telephone number because I've been involved with
04        so- ↑social services about antisocial behaviour with my
05        neighbour.=.h[hh (.) <problems'an:d'uh'I've done what=
06   A:                [R:ight,
07   C:   =they've already requested.=.HH ah- with n:o such luck
08        I've not got anywhere.=So: he':s (.) sent me on to you
09        next to see what w'can: (.) dea- how we can deal with
10        it'n .HHH concerned for the health of th- the lady who
11        lives next door t'me as well'as how she treats us
12        badly.=.HHHh [so:=um: #i- i-#
13   A:                [Right.=So y- yer name again sorry.=
14        =J[ust (   )
15   C:     [Missus Diane Rich[ards.
```

After the call-taker identifier/greeting, C responds with "I've bee::n. given your <telephone number" (lines 2-3), and orients to a TPA "because I've been involved with so- ↑social services about antisocial behaviour" (lines 3-4). There are similarities with previous service-referrals – C has been *given* the number (see mediation calls), and there is an *account* for the referral (see environmental health calls). Note also, that C's concern is designed as an ongoing issue – she has *been involved* with social services, which marks out an extended timeframe of the unresolved trouble. C reports efforts made to resolve the problem herself,

with "I've done what they've already requested.=.HH ah- with n:o such luck I've not got anywhere" (lines 5, 7-8), which shares similarities in turn design with a study examining constituents accounting for seeking help in their MP's[34] office – "'I just can't seem to ↑get ↓anywhere with them" (Hofstetter, 2016, p. 71).

The referral element follows, designed as an consequence of C's self-help – "So: he':s (.) sent me on to you next" (lines 8-9). Notably, this element has the character of an *instruction* ("sent me…") rather than then more implicit courses of action (e.g., "asked me…" or "gave me…"). This is not to say that the activity is doing anything observably different in other cases shown in this chapter so far. However, reporting being instructed to call the present service may be a strategy for displaying C as having limited choice in the matter. In so doing, orienting A to the complainability of the activity C has a stake in but has constrained resources in deciding to call. There is also a temporal move – being *next* invokes a sense that contact with the present service has conditionality ascribed. Notably, C's "to see what w'can:" shifts to caller involvement in resolving the issue, which projects a sense of future, as well as past, self-helping – in this way, characterising C as the kind of neighbour disposed to be helpful (Stokoe & Edwards, 2007; Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005).

Extract 5.10 shows how service-referrals can be designed in ways that explicitly mark out extended activities in service provision. In the final antisocial behaviour example, C is calling to report a neighbour's noisy motorbike exhaust, and similarly illustrates how TPA can be designed to show C's trouble as an ongoing (and thus, unresolved) issue. Extract 5.11 begins at the start of the recording (not the call), and so the exact sequential position of this fragment is unclear.

Extract 5.11: AC-25

```
01   C:   Put me in touch >with the< environmental health who
02        then put me back in touch with the police [an then=
03   A:                                             [((tuts))
04        [A h :   d e a r.
05   C:   =[they put me back in touch .HH but now I'm ringing
06        y↑(h)o[(h)u.=.H  H  H  um:
07   A:        [Okay.=Right well let(h)s .HH £lets see if we
08        can s- prevent you havin' to make another
09        ph(h)o(h)n[e call.
```

[34] Member of Parliament

From the start of Extract 5.11, note that C invokes more than one TPA as part of the service referral – environmental health (line 1) and the police (line 2). Consider also, how the activities of being directed to different services are designed - "Put me in t<u>ou</u>ch" (line 1), "then put me b<u>a</u>ck in touch" (line 2), and "then they p<u>u</u>t me back in t<u>ou</u>ch" (lines 2, 5), before the present course of action "but n<u>o</u>w I'm ringing y↑(h)o(h)u." (lines 5-6). As one of the only 'multi-agency' service-referral calls in the corpus, note the 'listing' format of C's account – in particular, the neat way in which the temporal adverbs *then*, and *then*, and *now* are used to reference past and present actions and events, and their deictic relationship with the *reporting* of such actions and events (Schiffrin, 1987). As with Extract 5.10, temporality is explicitly invoked by the caller – *next*, *then*, and *now*. In this way, those calling for help are not only building the case for aid, but also, making the case for not getting it. In turn, highlighting the complainable element to the service referral's design, as with Extract 5.10. A then orients to C's account by offering reassurance with "£l<u>e</u>ts see if we can s- prev<u>e</u>nt you havin' to make another ph(h)o(h)ne call." (lines 7-9). Note, the design of A's turn, marking out the activity of future service provision as something to be jointly accomplished between participants.

5.2.3.1 Interim summary

We have seen how callers to an antisocial behaviour agency, recipient design service-referrals as part of extended activities in service provision – particularly the use of temporal adverbs which rhetorically enhance the sense of the callers self-helping, but also, the complainability of not getting the assistance they seek. More broadly, this comparative analysis of service-referral production across institutions, reveals the extent to which neighbourhood problems are re-categorised (or not) to fit in with, and recipient designed for, the current service – as something *actionable*, as warranting assistance (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990). Callers reported *self-helping* in some calls – potentially defending against the sense that they were unable to resolve the matter themselves (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). In calls to environmental health services, service-referrals were *accounted* for by callers – indicating the relevance for calling the present service by giving an account for it. However, a feature common across service-referrals, is the display of uncertainty with what services provide - an observation that shares similarities with previous research in mediation calls (Stokoe, 2013). In their own way, the practice of reporting service-referrals by TPAs is an accountable matter, as callers are making the case for aid in the *face* of a rejection by another institution (Sacks, 1972).

The matter of invoking other services when calling for help, is extended in the next section. However, as will be revealed, these next cases involve TPAs being 'mentioned' by callers, but without reference them being referred to the present service. I examine examples of *service-mentions* across the corpus for their relevance within the unfolding of calls for aid.

5.3 Service-mentions in calls for assistance

Having shown that and how TPAs are produced as part of service-referrals, I now explore how TPAs are indexed by callers, *without* reference to being referred. A typical feature of service-referrals is their sequential placement at or near the start of calls, as displayed in initial turns, as reasons for calling, and pre-framing activities. However, the cases below commonly occur *subsequent* to these initial turns, as will be shown.

5.3.1 Service-mentions in mediation service calls

The first extracts are taken from calls to mediation services and demonstrate how TPAs are used as ways of displaying the *consequentiality* of callers' troubles. In Extract 5.12, C has called to report noise and drinking from her neighbours. The example begins after the ethics script has been administered, and C has begun to describe her concern.

Extract 5.12: DC-11

```
01  M:  So it's the children that are drinkin'.
02  C:  ↑No: the mother and [father (    ) the kids are only=
03  M:                      [.HH  th' mother'n-
04  C:  =four:'n fi:ve.
05  M:  R:ight.
06          (.)
07  C:  >An' I mean if< the mu:sic goin' all night (.) the
08      children aren't goin' to school.
09          (0.3)
10  C:  .h They're out in the gar:den all day havin' to fend
11      for themselves.=.hh because when I went out the other
12      mornin' I said "oh where's mammy and daddy".=.hh (0.2)
13      "Oh sleepin inside".
14  M:  Mcht r:ight.
15  C:  >Now I mean< ↑these are small children like.
16          (0.3)
17  C:  But'ah course when you're drunk'n actin:' (0.2) like
18      that I mean y'can't see to your children.
```

```
19          (.)
20   M:   My:eah.
21   C:   .hHH (.) <But I dunno >I mean I've< a:sked them, I've
22        been to the cou:ncil, .hh I mean I've bought me house
23        now.=.hH[H y'know I've been to the cou:ncil and she=
24   M:          [.HH right.
```

Extract 5.12 begins part way through the caller's description of her troubles, with interlocutors dealing with some ambiguity around who was drinking (lines 1-5). In the next few turns, C moves to report specific upshots of the parent's actions – such as, the consequences for the children (lines 7-8, 10-11). Note, the subsequent direct reported speech (DRS) on lines12-13, displaying an authenticity in talk's production, in so far as C is *doing the voice of* (Holt & Clift, 2007). DRS is observably used in ways which constructs C as a *concerned neighbour*, in the sense that C's projected reason for the call is from worry for the children, rather than a comment on the parents' behaviour (see Potter & Hepburn, 2003).

After C delivers upshots of the consequences for the neighbour's actions (line 15, 17-18), C produces the target section in the next turn (lines 21-22). After displaying initial uncertainty ("<But I dunno"), C produces a rushed through "I mean". Sacks argues that "I mean" is used to clarify some prior talk in the current turn (Sacks, 1992b). However, the following "I've< a:sked them, I've been to the cou:ncil," does not explicitly tie back to a previous utterance, and may be designed as a gloss of C as a concerned neighbour, in terms of the kind of actions she would take (see Maynard, 2013). Further, notice that the TPA "cou:ncil," is produced subsequent to C's reported attempt to resolve the matter directly with the neighbour - "I've< a:sked them,". In this way, the TPA is observably designed as a way of *upgrading the consequences* for the neighbours – in terms of displaying them as unreasonable in the face of C's efforts, escalating to involvement from council which would have more legal ramifications. The framing of the TPA also displays C as *self-helping* - she has taken the step of contacting the council after endeavouring to talk to the neighbours first.

The notion that indexing 'the *council*' orients to a particular *type* of service is significant for *service-mentions*. As the production of TPAs are not explicitly bound to the activities of other services, as in the previous section (e.g., 'X gave me this number'), the relevance of TPAs in *service-mentions* is less clear for the interaction, and its outcome. In this way, the category-bound activities of particular institutions can be implicated by speakers as relevant for the TPAs that are produced – categories are *inference*-rich, to be drawn on by members (Sacks, 1992b). By reporting 'the *council*' without the attribution of other factors

(e.g., a referral), can be seen as 'designedly ambiguous' (and thus, defeasible) on the one hand, whilst orienting to what is knowable by recipients (e.g., the legal ramifications of naming the 'council') through its implication, on the other (see Stokoe, 2012). And so, by not explicitly tying the TPA to an action, can be a strategy for *building* the trouble as a particular type of problem.

Extract 5.12 shows how TPAs can be used to implicitly upgrade the consequences for neighbourhood issues. The next example reveals similar kinds of features in the *service-mention* component. In Extract 5.13, C is calling a mediation service to report a dispute over water being used by himself and a neighbour, and the dangers of it freezing on a jointly accessed path.

Extract 5.13: DC-80

```
01   C:   What it is my neighbours behind this abuse an' that
02        an' what it is is .hh she wants t'try'n get me done
03        for throwin' water on floo:r.
04           (.)
05   C:   B'cause (        ) (cleanin' wall went all over.)
06           (0.6)
07   C:   Right.=.HH now what it is is she jips- she's jet
08        washin' path. .hh[hh
09   M:                    [Rig[ht.
10   C:                        [Now, (0.2) she jet washed it in
11        summerti:me and now (lots o' men) come out an' I've
12        told highways he said there's nowt I can do about it.
13        =.hhh unless weeds start growin' through.=.hh Now she
14        jet washed it (0.5) an' um police have been up an'
15        everything.=.hh She jet washed the path on Sun:day.
16        .hh an' it took a few hours to dry, luckily it drie:d
17        before it got- (0.2) y'know col:d at night otherwise
18        it'd have fro:ze.=.hh[h so it's not that.=When she=
19   M:                        [Yeah.
20   C:   =jet washed it all the water went into me cellar again.
21        =.hh so I ended up with a big puddle o' water in me
22        cellar.
```

Extract 5.13 begins with a counter-accusation by C - essentially, by invoking the neighbours as engaged in ongoing mistreatment of C, (lines 1-3). Not only does C report the neighbours'

behaviour ("this abuse"), but also the *intended* legal consequences for the abuse ("she wants t'try'n get me d<u>o</u>ne")[35]. This may work to build C's case for help in terms of casting the neighbour as the perpetrator, and caller as the victim. Note also, the use of "abuse", which has connotations of physical and/or mental trauma for C. The inclusion of these *category-relevant* terms, orient to a particular kind of service that assists with a particular kind of trouble (although not necessarily by this service) (see Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). C begins to give an account of the neighbour's behaviour (lines 7-8), which is respecified (lines 10-11). C's account moves to the consequences of the neighbour's behaviour, which includes the TPA "highways"[36] (lines 11-12). Although the matter remains unresolved "he said there's nowt I can d<u>o</u> about it." (line 12), C mitigates with the conditional "unless w<u>ee</u>ds start growin' through." (line 13).

Note that the next element of C's turn (lines 13-15), contains another TPA – "pol<u>i</u>ce", and marks out a similar device used in Extract 5.12, in terms of a *consequential upgrade* for the neighbour. However, in contrast to the *caller's* actions in the previous case, here, it is the *neighbour's* actions that are made relevant – jet washing results in 'highways' being called; further jet washing leads to the 'police' arriving. Notice the TCU-final "an' <u>e</u>verything", which may indicate a form of claim legitimisation (Pomerantz, 1986). However, as with 'or something', the turn-final category *general extender* "an' <u>e</u>verything" may signal a lack of familiarity with a topic (Stokoe, 2013, p. 294). Further, this turn design is relevant for building a particular kind of problem through an orientation to what is *commonly knowable* about the police (Stokoe, 2012b). A further account is produced - "She j<u>e</u>t washed the path on S<u>u</u>n:day." (line 15). Subsequent to this, the neighbour is characterised as behaving recklessly - essentially, by describing then discounting the path freezing (lines 16-18). C marks out the neighbour as someone irresponsible - the path *could have* frozen as a consequence of washing. C completes his turn by revealing the consequences of the neighbour's actions, further working to legitimise his grievance (lines 20-22).

Extract 5.13 (like Extract 5.12), shows how TPAs can be incrementally produced to work up a neighbourhood concern as a particular type of problem for institutional relief – in this case, inviting M to consider what is *commonly knowable* about the police. Extract 5.14 is a little different to the previous cases, in that TPAs are indexed in responding turns, rather

---

[35] The term "get me done" is a colloquial expression, commonly used to refer to an arrest, criminal charge, and potential conviction.
[36] The term "highways" is hearably an abbreviation of the (formally) Highways Agency - charged with operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major roads.

than built within a narrative. In this call, C is reporting litter and excrement in a communal stairwell.

Extract 5.14: EC-56

```
01   M:   Y:eah.=So they just gather'an:d drop litter
02        an[d mess'nd (.) [˚yeah.˚
03   C:      [↑↑Yeh       [They just sh:it.
04           (0.4)
05   M:   Mm:.=
06   C:   =L:itter the whole place.
07           (.)
08   C:   Smoke sometime you find condoms everywhere.
09   M:   Ah:.
10           (.)
11   C:   Y['know.
12   M:    [Y:eah.
13           (0.6)
14   M:   .hhhhh Yeah: so you're- you're wanting something done
15        about t[hat.
16   C:          [↑Ye:h'we'want somethin' done.=i- i- i- it's
17        takin' i- h- how many years an' I've been complain
18        about this.=.h And every year council will send me
19        bills.
20           (0.2)
21   M:   [Mm:.
22   C:   [Public charge:.=This and that.
23           (0.3)
24   C:   <Have to pay.
25           (0.3)
26   M:   Mcht .hhh ↑Yeah.=Yeah.
27           (0.3)
28   M:   .hh ↑So: um:. mcht <h- <how did you hear about
29        u:s.=[uh:
30   C:        [↑↑Uh::.=I- I- got- I got uhm a bookle:t, covering
31        thi:s,
32           (.)
33   M:   .h Oh right,
34   C:   Yeah:, I was sent a bookle:t,
35           (0.9)
36   M:   Um ↑Oh right.=A booklet (.) f:rom the council
```

```
37        [th-   that  mentions.=hh ↑Oh   okay,
38  C:  [Yes from the council.   A- and they'I've spoken to
39       the h:otline (.) s:ection as we:ll,
40  M:  The- the antisocial beha:vio[ur hotline,  ↑oh ↓yeah.
41  C:                              [Yeh yeh and they said (.)
42       they will log it in:,
```

Note, the turn-initial "So" from M (line 1), which initiates an upshot of C's concern, while indicating a potential shift to a more institutional agenda (Bolden, 2008). Subsequent to a confirming "↑↑Yeh", C provides further details of the trouble with "They[37] just sh:it." (line 3), which seemingly replaces M's earlier "they just gather…" (line 1) with a caller-side summary. In turn, this may work to hold off M's move to institutional tasks, illustrated by the speaker gap (line 4), and M's information receipt (line 5). Indeed, C goes on to list other grievances (line 6, 8) with minimal uptake from M (line 9). Only after a lengthy gap (line 13), which may signal that C has completed his turn, is another "so" prefaced upshot produced by M, with "so you're- you're wanting something done about that." (lines 14-15) - a move that makes 'assistance' more germane, as the call progresses.

In contrast to the previous two mediation examples, in which TPAs are invoked within accounts of the trouble, here, a TPA is embedded within a responding turn to an upshot. After an initial confirmation of M's formulation (line 16), C reinforces his stance with a complainable (lines 16-18). Observe that C has not only reportedly aired his concern previously, but has done so on multiple occasions, indicating he has potentially been unsuccessful in resolving his problem beforehand. The turn is completed with the TPA "And every year council will send me bills.". While it is not made explicit that C has complained to the council about his present trouble, the "council" is identified as the source of a complaint about financial costs, underlined on lines 22 and 24. Note a third so-prefaced shift from M which orients to potential ambiguity over C contacting other services (lines 28-29). After confirmation that contact details were obtained from the council (line 38), C volunteers another TPA – "and they'I've spoken to the h:otline (.) s:ection as we:ll," (lines 38-39). As with previous mediation examples, there is an observable *consequential upgrade* of services – C called the council, then the antisocial behaviour hotline. The upgrade also shows prior *self-helping* by C to resolve the problem himself by calling the hotline, rather than any implication of being referred by the council.

---

[37] "They" appears to be a reference to 'local youths', as indicated earlier in the call.

Extract 5.14 demonstrates how building a concern as a particular kind of trouble, can be produced over extended turns rather than as part of a narrative account. Extract 5.15 is different again to previous examples - illustrating how service-mentions are *solicited* in response to requests by call-takers. C has called a mediation service to report noise from a neighbour's house.

Extract 5.15: DC-71

```
01   M:   Ri:ght.h So what's the main problem:.
02            (0.4)
03   C:   It's her noise.
04            (0.3)
05   M:   Noi:s[e.
06   C:        [Y[es,
07   M:          [Ye:h o[ka:y, ]
08   C:                 [It's e]very single wee:kend.
09        >I mea[n< I work permanent six two
10   M:        [Uh hu:h
11            (0.7)
12   M:   Y[e:h
13   C:    [on a mor:ning.
14   M:   Yeh.
15            (0.3)
16   C:   An' (0.4) she's coming home in early hours of
17        morning and having parties.
18   M:   M:m.
19   C:   And I've had enough:.
20   M:   And- and uh what've you done so far to try and-
21        (.) u-u:m (.) you know. t'resolve the issue.=
22   C:   =I've phoned poli:ce, I've phoned environmental
23        health,=
24   M:   =Oka:y .hhh and have you spoken to ↓he:r?
25            (1.3)
26   M:   about this,= H've you spoken to your ↓neighbour
27        abou[t it?
28   C:       [>If I< went round (.) she wouldn't live.
29            (0.6)
30   C:   Believe me.
```

The bulk of Extract 5.14 deals with C describing her grievance (lines 1-19)[38]. Observe that the noise is characterised by C as a persistent problem (line 8), occurring at unsociable hours (lines 16-17). Notably, these interactional features figure as significant factors in establishing whether assistance is granted in contact with *environmental health* services (see Chapter 2), and so C's account of her concern may be fitted to a particular kind of grantable assistance, although not necessarily by this service. The key section of talk begins with M's query regards C's prior efforts (lines 20-21), which, from the outset, projects an expectation that C has already tried to resolve the issue herself. C's responding "I've phoned poli:ce, I've phoned environmental health," (lines 22-23) has an potentially disjunctive quality – two TPAs are listed, but no further account is offered for how or why the matter was not resolved. M's pursuit (line 24, 26-27) attempts to clarify displayed misunderstanding of M's prior question, which is met with a defensive ">If I< went round (.) she wouldn't live." (line 28).

This example can be contrasted to the *troubles-accounting* in previous service-mentions. Here, C appears resistant to the basis for M's question, in so doing revealing a disparity between what the service encourages (neighbours talking to each other), and what the caller is not observably prepared to do (talk to the neighbour). Further, this case shows how TPAs can display a *downgrade* in the consequences for the neighbour – from police and to environmental health. And so, it might be that, when responding to *self-help* queries, callers present the most legally consequential TPA first, as a way of defending against accusations that reasonable efforts were *not* made to solve the problem previously (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Sacks, 1972).

5.3.1.1 Interim summary

When callers to mediation services mention TPAs in the course of reporting social concerns, they regularly design their talk in terms of *consequential upgrades* – either by casting their actions as self-helping, or their neighbours' actions as serious enough to warrant an 'escalation' of services. The design of TPAs omits actions by other services (e.g., 'I was given…'), and so service-mentions can be seen as devices for doing category work through the inferential structures bound to particular TPAs - in this way, typically *building* a case for grantable assistance. That said, sometimes TPA production can be 'reversed' in severity of service – potentially as a device for countering accusations of not self-helping. In the next

---

[38] For an extended analysis on this section of talk (lines 1-19), particularly the lack of affiliation by M, see Stokoe (2013, p. 303).

section, I examine how service-mentions are designed in calls to an environmental health service. Service-mentions in these calls are generally different in design to mediation cases, by the way in which TPAs are validated when accounting for calling.

5.3.2 Service-mentions in environmental health calls

The following cases are from calls to an environmental health agency. In the first example, a member of the public is calling to report noise from students next door.

Extract 5.16: EH-59

```
01   E:   .hh So you've got a problem with yer neighbour.
02            (.)
03   C:   Yeah u:m: (0.3) well the worst problem actually was
04        Saturday when it all .hh w- we ↑do have problems with
05        the loud noise (.) in the week y'know.
06            (.)
07   C:   with the [back windows open and the [music   so   loud.
08   E:            [ r:i:ght                   [What is it music,
09            (0.2)
10   C:   I'm sorry?
11   E:   Is it music.
12            (0.4)
13   C:   Ye:ah as[well as e(h)verythin else.(h[mm)
14   E:           [Yeah.                        [Oh is it ri:ght.
15        =.hh is it council or a private (.) property?=
16   C:   =O'no it's a private property for st[udents but=
17   E:                                        [Mm:,
18        =(as[you can guess)
19   E:       [O h    r i g h t.=
20   C:   =Yeah.=but I have been in touch >with the< university.
21   E:   Yeah,
22   C:   And they said because the house is not registered to
23        them there's nothing they can do¿
24            (0.3)
25   E:   ↑Oh really.
```

Note the so-prefaced turn design, in this case, as an upshot of prior talk, with "So you've got a problem with yer neighbour." (line 1). Over the next turn (and increment), C begins to develop the reason for calling (lines 3-5, 7). Following participants dealing with a hearing or

understanding problem about the type of noise (lines 8-13), and after C reveals there are potentially more issues (line 13), E shifts (see Chapter 4) to the matter of establishing the type of dwelling the students live in (lines 14-15). Notice the use of the news receipt "ri:ght" here, which is commonly produced as a 'change-of-activity' token, in the same way that 'alright/okay' does (Gardner, 2007). C responds with "O'no it's a pri̱vate property for students but (as you can guess)" (line 16, 18), which has a corrective character - the turn-initial dispreferred "O'no" followed by a replacement of E's "private property" with the repaired "pri̱vate property for students". The target turn, seemingly responds to E's partially overlapped information receipt "Oh right." (line 19) with "Yeah.=but I ha̱ve been in touch >with the< university." (line 20). As with E's previous 'right' which initiates an activity shift (line 14), C may be orienting to a projected activity change here. Note the "Yeah.=but" formulation, which is a systematic way of doing disagreement – agreement token ("Yeah") plus expression of doubt ("but") (Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987). In this case, C displays *self-help* by indicating she has already contacted the "university." (line 20), although they are unable to offer assistance due to a registration issue (line 22-23).

The matter of demonstrating previous efforts made at problem resolution shares similarities with mediation calls above. However, in this example, *service-mentions* refer to a single TPA, rather than a succession of incrementally consequential (or not) agencies. Yet, consider C's final turn (lines 22-23), in which the university is characterised as not helping – in particular, the use of the ECF "nothing" (line 23), which may be a way of *legitimising* C's prior self-help efforts (see Pomerantz, 1986). That said, ECFs are factually 'delicate', and are in danger of exposure if an exception is produced by another speaker, which in so doing, runs the risk of speakers being taken non-literally. Further, that ECFs "may be treated as an index of the speaker's attitude (subjectivity) rather than as a straightforward description of the world." (Edwards, 2000, p. 352). Nonetheless, designing ECFs into an account for calling the university may be a strategy for *bolstering* service-mentions as a way of validating prior efforts to resolve a neighbourhood problem. Further, the framing of a service-mention with "Yeah.=but" potentially pushes back at the implication of C not making reasonable efforts previously, or at least, manages some kind of interactional trouble.

Extract 5.16 shows how pre-framing and accounts are designed as ways of validating service-mentions. In Extract 5.17, the design of this element is different in terms of action formation. C is calling to report loud music from a neighbour's house.

```
01   E:   What's the problem then Mr Johnson.
02   C:   Right.= um:: (.) wl the last nights worst of uhm::
03        (0.4) them all really.=.hh Uhm: >it w's comin about< t-
04        half past two: (.) >lady sorta< comes back with
05        friends, .hh uh::[m
06   E:                    [>In the< morning,
07   C:   Oh yeah.
08   E:   Mm:.=
09   C:   =Noise.=Noisy.=Uh:m (0.3) a group o' them o- others
10        (0.3) arrived in a van, (0.4) ah::m turned the music
11        on, (0.7) right through.
12          (0.6)
13   C:   #Er (I don't know) (  ) (I think it was) four in the
14        morning (and we went) fine had enough a[n (.) asked=
15   E:                                          [R:igh:t.
16   C:   =them to be quiet.=.hh An:d they said oh yeah sorry
17        shut the door turned the music up 'n carried on t'
18        seven o'clock this morning.
19   E:   Ri:ght=.h[h An is this:
20   C:            [Ah: p'lice w' call:ed, there's incident
21        number,
22          (0.2)
23   E:   Mm hm.
24          (0.4)
25   C:   Ah::m but obv'sly they couldn't get involved because
26        it's: (0.7) it was contained in the house whatever huh
27        I don't know how the law states it's a bit .hh a [bit=
28   E:                                                    [Mm:.
29   C:   =crazy coz they [couldn't do anythin' they'd just come=
30   E:                   [Mm:.
31   C:   =out an',
32   E:   And was it causing widespread disturbances or was it
33        just yourself that was distur:bed.
```

The example begins with a call-taker request for an account of C's concern (line 1). The next few turns can be glossed as C describing an instance of the neighbour's noisy behaviour (lines 2-18). Notice the use of "Right" (line 2), which, compared to the call-taker's "Oh is it ri:ght." and "Oh right" in the previous example, is more clearly marked as a move to a new

activity, in that C's turn is a response to a request, rather than explicitly receipting prior information. Observe also, the framing of C's trouble as "last nights worst of uhm:: (0.4) them all really." (lines 2-3), which, not only indicates that there have been other occasions, but that C has called in response to the severest case of the disturbance, in this way, marking himself out as not disposed to complain, only doing so when the trouble is a *complainable* one (Edwards, 1997). Furthermore, the self-help element "<u>a</u>sked them to be quiet." (line 14, 16) displays C as a *reasonable person*, seeking to resolve the matter himself.

Following C's reported efforts to resolve the noise disturbance, E produces a "Ri:ght" news receipt (line 19), which is followed by the target turn from C - "Ah: p'lice w' call:ed, there's incident number," (line 20-21), in partial overlap with the abandoned ".hh An is th<u>i</u>s:" (line 19). Note that the action of calling the police, is not assigned to anyone in particular - orienting to the kind of *pseudo-legal* 'factual' category relevant descriptions discussed in Chapter 4 (see Extract 4.8). As with Extract 5.16, the production of the TPA could be in response to a projected course of action by E's "Ri:ght" – a point reinforced by E's abandoned request, displaying an activity shift in progress (line 19). Observe also, C's turn-initial "Ah:" (line 20), which may be a way of holding the interactional floor through doing a word-search. Indeed, C observably extends his turn (lines 25-27, 29, 31) before E moves on to other business (lines 32-33). Significantly, the production of the service-mention here is hearably different to Extract 5.16, in that it is built as relevant for making the case for aid, rather than a device for defending previous efforts at problem resolution. The service-mention might be designed as a pre-emptive action which *anticipates* E's line of questioning – not only demonstrating that C has contacted the police, but that his neighbour problem is legitimate enough to warrant an incident number.

Extract 5.18 illustrates how the action design of service-mentions can be intrinsic elements when building the case for assistance. The final example of an environmental health call involves a problem with noise coming from a local pub, and the caller's concerns over an entertainment license that has been applied for. This case shares similarities with Extract 5.16, in that the service-mention component is observably designed to manage interactional trouble.

Extract 5.18: EH-156

```
01   E:   Mm'hm ↑How >can I< help yer.
02   C:   Right.=Well'it it's it's ↑in connection with with a
03        pub.
```

```
04            (0.3)
05   C:   .hH[HH  An::d it's thee Beehive Ar:m:s <at'hh u:m=
06   E:      [Hm,
07   C:   =Newtown.
08            (0.2)
09   E:   Mm hm,=
10   C:   =.HHh Now they've app↑lied for extra (.) licencing
11        hours.=.HH and also for:: .h u:m:: (.) <to get an
12        entertainments licence.
13            (.)
14   E:   Mm hm, mcht Yeah.
15   C:   Now is it you that I need to speak to.
16   E:   Wl'tht depen::ds um:,
17   C:   Because this application I've I've s:poke to thee:'um
18        (.) thee <council themsel:ves,[(      )
19   E:                                 [Well this is the
20        council,
```

Extract 5.18 begins with a generalised request for an account of C's trouble (line 1). Over the next few turns, C begins to outline the nature of his concern (lines 2-12). Note the turn-initial "Right." (line 2) which, like Extract 5.17, launches the account sequence. In this case, over three separate turns – a general description of what the property is (lines 2-3), the name and location of the property (line 5, 7), and the complainable matter (lines 10-12). Yet, these turns are *non-straightforward* in terms of C forming a case for aid, seemingly oriented to a lack of uptake, or 'lukewarm' responsiveness from E - the 0.3 second gap (line 4) leading to a delayed continuer from E (line 6), and the 0.2 second gap (line 8) resulting in another delayed continuer from E (line 9). Observe also, the design of E's "Mm hm, mcht Yeah." (line 14), which, unlike the two prior continuers, has a turn-final *downturned* intonation, indicating that news has been receipted, rather than projecting an expectation of further information.

The news receipt from E might then account for C's move to other matters (line 15). The turn-initial "Now", which not only functions as a discourse marker, can register a speaker's (disjunctive) stance towards forthcoming information (McKinlay & McVittie, 2008). Observe the pressing "I need" declarative form, and additionally, "is it you", which operates as a candidate understanding that there *is* someone she needs to speak to. The responding turn by E marks out this interactional misalignment (line 16), regarding C's displayed uncertainty with whom her concerns should be directed to, the problematic unfolding of C's account, and E's push-back on C's request. In turn, this orients to *not*

enough information being given by C, for a fitted response to be grantable. The target turn (line 17-18) is seemingly designed to claim post-hoc rights for C's prior turn in line 15. Note the TPA "c<u>ou</u>ncil" is followed by the turn-final "thems<u>e</u>l:ves,", which invokes a relational aspect of contact – *people* were spoken to, not only *a service*. In this way, the service-mention hearably deals with some kind of trouble, produced to claim primary epistemic rights *to know* (Heritage & Raymond, 2005).

5.3.2.1 Interim summary

Extract 5.18, like Extract 5.16, shows how service-mentions can be produced in ways which observably manage interactional trouble or potential misalignment between interlocutors in calls to an environmental health service. However, Extract 5.17 demonstrates that service-mentions can also be designed as part of building the case for aid through giving an account of the trouble. That said, each case illustrates that, in their own way, callers deploy service-mentions as ways of showing previous efforts at resolving problems – either as responsive actions, or as part of accounts. And so, service-mentions are observably produced as devices for demonstrating the *action-ability* of bids for help, and the accountability for call-takers to provide it. In the final section of this chapter, I examine service-mentions in calls to an anti-social behaviour service. These cases are generally different in design to the examples in other (largely mediation) services, in that TPAs are produced as part of complainable activities.

5.3.3 Service-mentions in antisocial behaviour service calls.

This section features calls to an antisocial behaviour service, in which TPAs are reported within complaints related to service-mentions. In Extract 5.19, C is calling to report several transgressions from one of the children next door.

<u>Extract 5.19: AC-07</u>
```
01   A:   Oka:y, (.) an' what's the problem.
02   C:   Um: HH we've ↑basically just been havin' an ongoing
03        problem with thee uh people of ((address)) since .hHH
04        the summer of two thousand and three.=Um (0.3) >w'l
05        th're was a< dispute regarding the children basically,
06        (.) there eldest child was hittin my son with: um .hH
07        a plastic toy.=U[m: (.) I kept tellin' my son to come=
08   A:                   [Mcht right,
```

```
09   C:   =away from I wasn't havin' a go at .hHH um the other
10        child.=I just wanted my son to remove himse- self away
11        from the situation s[o he didn't get hur:t.=.HHh um:=
12   A:                       [Mm hm.
13   C:   =and it's all basically stemmed from then, um: (.)
14        we've had anti vandal grease put over: um our side of
15        the property, we've had cars scratched .hh we've had
16        u:m:: mcht threats made against us, nails in tyre:s,
17        .hhH things put on: my car:, um >such as< die:sel an-
18        an god knows what el:se, [um: my son has had threats=
19   A:                           [Ri:ght.
20   C:   =been made to 'im at school by her children, .hHH or
21        by their children, um: we've 'ad um: things (0.3)
22        y'know things said to us in the s:treet when we've bin
23        walkin' up an' down us path, we've had (.) them
24        threat'nin' us, .HHh their visitors threat'nin' us:,
25        u:m: mcht an' ↑I have just actually: on Tuesday I rang
26        the p'lice because they uh (.) left their rubbish
27        against my car:.=.HHh um: (0.3) mcht the council
28        wouldn't actually do anything for me (.) um at all >an'
29        they just< said wull y'know .HHh there's nothin' that
30        we c'n do so I rang the Citizen's Advice an' they said
31        well it is a harassment if they're
32        do[in' it on a regular basis I am keepin' diaries of=
33   A:     [M m ↑ : : : ↓ m : .
34   C:   =.HHh everythin' that goes on, .HH um so I rang the
35        p'lice an' they came out um::,(0.2) Mrs Goodwin who
36        lives next door: had apparently made a complaint
37        against myself.=.HHh u:m for which (.) I couldn't
38        understand why cos nothin' had actually bin said
39        between any of us on that day.
40   A:   Mm:.
```

The extract starts with A requesting an account of C's trouble (line 1), which is
unproblematically delivered over the next few turns (lines 2-24). Notably, C frames her
concern as a persistent issue (lines 2-3), which in so doing, may strengthen her case for
assistance. Further, C designs some of her talk as *pseudo-legal* – characterising the world in
terms of terminology more fitted to more legally consequential environments (see Chapter 4).
For instance, consider "I just wanted my son to remove himse- self away from the situation"

(lines 10-11), which projects C's trouble in more 'neutral' terms. It is the sense that any *stance* relevant to the trouble has been removed – alternatively, the more common vernacular would be to *leave*. C goes on to report various incidents, including damage to property (lines 14-18), threats made to C's son (lines 18, 20-21), and threats made to C on the street/at home (lines 21-24).

The target stretch of talk (lines 25-32) is distinct, in that three TPAs are reported through different actions – first, the police were called (lines 25-27). Note the use of "actually", which moves the call to the activity of C's contact with the police. Further, observe the reason given for the call to the police, which stands in contrast to C's directly-prior grievances (i.e. verbal abuse). Compared to A's acknowledgment tokens earlier (lines 8, 12, 19), there is no observable receipting by A when verbal abuse is reported. Thus, it might be that the TPA is used to reinforce the credibility of C's trouble, in conjunction with a shift back to reporting property damage. The second TPA element (the council) (lines 27-28) is produced immediately prior an extreme case ("anything"), and also orients to the council's dispositional stance - they *wouldn't* rather than they *couldn't* (Edwards, 2006). The third TPA (Citizen's Advice) was *called* by C, as with the police (line 30). Further, this element *is* receipted by A's "Mm↑:::↓m:." (line 33), albeit, in turn-medial position.

However, observe that the police are invoked again (line 35), and that they attended the scene. Reporting several agencies in this way observably performs various interactional functions. C can be seen as being buffeted from service to service, which allows for certain agencies *not* helping, to be designed into complainable activities. It also displays C as *self-helping* at problem resolution, as displayed through contact with various services. Further, by pre and post-framing this stretch of talk with contact with police, may be a strategy (like *consequential upgrades* in mediation calls), for building the case for aid as a particular type of problem, requiring a certain kind of response.

Extract 5.19 shows how multiple service-mentions can be used for various activities when making the case for aid. The next example is different in that it relates to neighbour harassment and is notable in that the same service has reportedly been contacted by someone else previously, regarding the same problem.

Extract 5.20: AC-08

```
01   A:   Julie Smith g'd afternoon, can I hel[p you¿
02   C:                                      [>Oh is< this Julie
03        Smi:th,
```

```
04   A:   It i:s.
05   C:   Oh yes.=uh (act'lly) a <courtesy call really.=.hh uh
06        I'm- (.) Pau- >I was< speaking to Daphne number
07        ((address is disclosed))
08   A:   ↑Oh ri:ght,
09   C:   (Court with her/Called her) yesterday.=
10   A:   =Yes:,
11   C:   I believe she told you- (>I b'n hav'ng<) some problems
12        over in this block.
13          (.)
14   A:   R:ight.=Yeah, [y-
15   C:                 [Right b't th'thing is y'see Miss Smith,
16        (1.3) um this has been going on f'r ov'r five years,
17        and I'm gettin' no help from the council
18        whatsoe[ver.
19   A:          [.hh Ri:[ght,
20   C:                  [At the mo:ment he's quiet because he's
21        got (his woman) back up there:.=.hh >bu' I< do keep
22        diaries but .hh what I can't understand is (.) ↑why the
23        council never contact me.
24        (.)
25   C:   And tell me wh's=goin' on.
26   A:   Righ:t [oh-
27   C:          [Is it because I ow:n the lease.
28   A:   Right okay.=First of all t'tell me who you are::,
29        and where you live.
```

Extract 5.20 begins with call-taker identifier, greeting, and generalised pre-offer (line 1). In contrast to the majority of call openings in this thesis, there is no return greeting from C. Instead, C designs her response as a form of *recognitional*, in that it is being conveyed that the recipient that (in this case) the call-taker is known to caller (Schegloff, 1996), with the oh-prefaced ">Oh is< this Julie Smi:th," (lines 2-3). Following A's confirmation (line 4), C frames the call - "Oh yes.=uh (act'lly) a <courtesy call really." (line 5). Note that a *courtesy call* is commonly defined in the UK as a *politeness* activity, and "not to discuss important business", and regularly occurs post-transaction in sales calls ("Courstesy Call," n.d.). C concludes her turn with a self-repair from providing her name to someone else's (lines 6-7). Note the volunteering of Daphne's address, as information *knowable* to the call-taker. C goes on to indicate that Daphne has contacted the service previously about "some problems over in

this block. (line 11-12). And so, the repair might be a post-hoc device used to account for it being a courtesy call – essentially, that this *is* a follow up to a prior complaint by Daphne rather than a new grievance, in which the caller's name would be expectable by the service.

Following A's receipts/cut-off (line 14), C produces the target turn in partial overlap (line 15). Note that both speakers produce a change-of-activity turn-initial *right* (Gardner, 2007), and so it might be that C orients to A's potential shift with one of her own - a contrastive ('but'), idiomatic ('the thing is') construction, along with specific person reference ('Miss Smith') marking the upcoming talk out as potentially problematic. After a notable 1.3 second pause, and length of time the harassment has been occurring (line 16), C produces the TPA component (lines 17-18). As with Extract 5.19, the TPA ('council') is designed as part of a complainable activity – C has contacted another service, but assistance was not given. A further feature which is common in these antisocial behaviour calls so far, is the use of ECFs – here, with the turn-final 'whatsoever'. Note also, following A's continuer (line 19), how the complainability of the council is buttressed by C – setting her own efforts at diary keeping (lines 21-22) against the council's failure to contact her (lines 22-23, 24).

Extract 5.20 illustrates how service-mentions can be used as part of complainable activities, contrasted with caller's reported efforts to resolve matters. As with some mediation calls, occasionally there are times when service-mentions come about in response to call-taker inquiries. In the final case, C is reporting verbal abuse and property damage, and shares similar elements of turn-design with previous service mentions in this section.

Extract 5.21: AC-26
```
01   A:   R:ight.=Okay and w-what's the problem.
02          (0.3)
03   C:   Well the last two ni:ghts, (1.7) n:one of u- the
04        residents of got any sleep.
05          (0.8)
06   A:   R:igh:t,=
07   C:   =>Coz of the< sh:outin' s:wearin', (0.8) kick tryin'
08        t'kick in the door:s,
09          (1.7)
10   A:   Wha' a-at the neighbour's property.
11   C:   Y:eah.
12   A:   .hHHH Right okay.=>When you say< people trying t'kick
13        in the door:s wha' did'ja call the p'lice?
14          (0.6)
```

```
15   C:   Uh: O:ne of my neighbours did, [and we got no joy.
16   A:                                  [Right.
17        (0.3)
18   A:   I:n what'j- what'ja mean they got no jo:y.
19        (.)
20   A:   Wh[a-
21   C:     [(We spoke) to the p'lice didn't want to know.
22        (0.4)
23   A:   They didn't want to know¿
24        (.)
25   A:   O[k a  y.
26   C:    [(°No°)
27   A:   Mcht Wh-whats wh-where do you live:.
```

The opening turn in Extract 5.21 deals with C describing the consequences of the neighbour's actions (lines 3-4). Observe the temporal implication of the problem ('last two nights'), which frames C's case for aid as a pressing one, and the extrematised 'none' and 'any', which works to rhetorically enhance the nature of C's concern. Following a significant gap (line 5) and receipt/continuer from A (line 6), C reports the grievance component of the complaint (lines 7-8). Note the repaired 'kick' with 'tryin to kick', which signals downgrading or mitigating of the problem's severity. Also, a three-part list (Jefferson, 1990) which seemingly upgrades the gravity of the trouble – shouting, swearing, trying to kick in doors. After a lengthy 1.7 second gap (line 9), and confirmation of the location of the problems (lines 10-11), A pursues C for further information (lines 12-13). In contrast to shouting and swearing, the action of attempting to kick in doors is marked out by A as 'policeable' trouble, in that there is an orientation to the normative requirements of the institutional setting (M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990). In comparison to the earlier mediation example (Extract 5.15) of a response to a general inquiry ("what have you done so far?"), here, the TPA is explicitly indexed as something requiring confirmation. This may be due to the severity and urgency with the problem at hand, contrasted to neighbours having parties at weekends in the mediation call.

After establishing that a neighbour called the police, C orients to not getting assistance by the police with the colloquial "we got no joy." (line 15). After a pursuit of further details by A (line 18), C produces "(We spoke) to the p'lice didn't want to know." (line 21). Note how 'my neighbour' calling the police (line 15) is reworked as 'we spoke to' the police. Further 'we got no joy' (not *receiving* help) is redesigned here as the police 'didn't

want to know' (not *offering* help). This reformulation may be a way of claiming caller-side rights, in terms of demonstrating previous efforts at problem resolution – an observation which shares similarities with previous antisocial behaviour *service-mentions,* wherein callers regularly report prior attempts at troubles resolution. Observe A's partial repeat of C's prior turn with "They di̲dn't want to kn<u>o</u>w¿", showing she has heard what has been said (see Puchta, Potter, & Wolff, 2004), before unproblematically moving onto to a service-side phase of the call (line 27) – a contrast to the more interactionally defensive character of Extract 5.15. And so, although a service-mention is produced by call-taker in this instance, rather than caller, there are similarities with previous cases. For example, how C orients to the TPA in terms of *self-helping* in the face of no assistance granted by a TPA.

5.3.3.1 Interim summary

In this section I have examined the ways in which *service-mentions* come about, when callers contact antisocial behaviour services to report neighbourhood concerns. There are notable interactional characteristics produced by speakers in these calls. In general, TPAs are designed as part of complainable activities - culpability has been assigned in relation to failure in offering assistance, in the face of caller efforts to seek it. Another common feature is the use of ECFs – both caller-side ('I'm getting no help') and service-side ('they won't do anything for me'). These observations are reflected in the discussion section below, within the broader framework of invoking TPAs in calls for assistance.

5.4 Discussion

In this chapter, I have revealed the ways in which callers' concerns are designed for service provision by comparing how TPAs are invoked and oriented to by members in the course of assistance being sought with neighbourhood problems, across different services. By interrogating core CA topics such as comparative research and recipient design extends our knowledge in the study of social interaction. My approach is underpinned by the sense of *interconnectedness* (or not) between different agencies, and the ways in which callers make the case for aid (e.g., Garland & Besinger, 1997; B. D. Smith & Mogro-Wilson, 2008). While this chapter has focused on caller-side concerns, the analysis has made service provision relevant in terms of its affordances and constraints, which is developed further in the next chapter (where the emphasis is on service-side matters, such as offering assistance, or signposting callers to other services). From the corpus of calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services, I have shown two practices that callers regularly

use while making the case for aid - *service-referrals* and *service-mentions*. The comparative analysis reveals the ways in which these practices were recipient designed, showing how certain features are prevalent in some services, and *across* services.

When contacting services, callers sometimes indicated they had been directed to the present agency from a TPA, characterised as a *service-referral*. The analysis shows that service-referrals are designed in ways which re-categorised (or not) neighbourhood concerns as relevant for service being contacted – in this way, demonstrating troubles as *actionable* (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990). The production of service-referral components in mediation calls, revealed some urgency when pressing for service provision – for instance, the prevalent use of *just*. Callers reported *self-helping* in calls across services– which can be seen as a way of mitigating accountability for calling the service (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). In calls to environmental health services, service-referrals were *accounted* for by callers – indicating the relevance for calling the present service. In antisocial behaviour calls, service-referrals were designed as part of unfolding activities. A prevalent feature across services were the various displays of uncertainty with what services provides (Stokoe, 2013). However, this may be expected consequence of this type of phenomenon - as callers are accountably making the case for aid in the *face* of a rejection by another institution (Sacks, 1972).

Another practice is when TPAs are indexed (or oriented to) by callers without reference to them being referred - defined as *service-mentions*. This practice is distinct in that actions or activities of TPAs are *not* bound to the mentioning of them (by their omission), and so the use of TPAs are observably more ambiguous than service-referrals. In this way, the inference-work around TPA categories, and their activities, is crucial for understanding how members design service-mentions (Sacks, 1992b). For instance, callers to mediation services typically formulated TPAs as part of *consequential upgrades* when making the case for aid - a device for building the case for aid as a particular type of problem by orienting call-takers to what is knowable (e.g., legal ramifications) about TPAs (Stokoe, 2012a, 2012b). In calls to environmental health services, service-mentions were designed in ways that demonstrated callers *self-helping* when making the case for assistance – in so doing, defending against themselves as accountable for calling the present service in the face of not receiving aid elsewhere (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007).

In calls to an antisocial behaviour agency, service-mentions were regularly (although differently) designed as part of complainable activities, – in their own way, illustrating previous efforts at problem resolution, whilst assigning accountability for those not providing

it (Sacks, 1972). For instance, TPAs were sometimes designed in contrastive terms ('I have just actually…'; Extract 5.19), with ECFs ('I'm getting no help from the council whatsoever'; Extract 5.20), and sometimes a combination of contrastive turn design and ECF production ('The council wouldn't actually do anything for me; Extract 5.19). These kinds of service-mentions, as with other invocations of, and orientations to TPAs, reveal the nuanced ways in which callers make the case for assistance through the recipient design of their neighbourhood concerns in service provision.

Whether TPAs are designed as part of the 'reason for calling' or as part of characterising a neighbourhood problem, a factor in almost all of the examples, is that TPAs are *volunteered* by callers, as opposed to being solicited. In comparison with closely related research which focuses on caller responses to call-takers' requests, and displayed uncertainty, and dispreference, with service provision (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Stokoe, 2013), callers *do* tend to display unfamiliarity with what services provide. However, in all the cases presented in this chapter, the sense of unfamiliarity, through callers' interactional displays, underpins the reason for calling – callers are, by their reporting of it, contacting the present service in the face of a non-granting of aid elsewhere. And so, while caller knowledge about a service is not available for analytic inspection, by invoking a TPA as the reason for calling, or as an element when reporting a concern, I have shown how TPAs can perform functions for building the case for assistance in various ways, which are comparable to mediatability, doctorability, or policeability (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990).

However, as mentioned earlier, the examples in this chapter reveal the sense of callers being *caught* (both interactionally and practically) between one service and another. The matter of being *between* environments of service provision, may be reflected in the cases presented above. Callers regularly invoke TPAs as part of self-help efforts, as pressing matters, or through category-relevant descriptions and ascriptions. Yet, building cases for assistance are often couched within displays of ambiguity, unfamiliarity, unfitted-ness, and interactional trouble. In this way, there are observably *contrastive* features which reveal themselves through accounts of neighbourhood troubles. And so, invoking TPAs in the context of calls for help, can be seen as ways of illustrating being *between* services, or more idiomatically, between *pillar and post*.

In the last analytic chapter, I examine the consequences for calls, by exploring how assistance is formulated by call-takers through the actions and activities of *offers* and *signposting,* in the face of rejecting callers' cases for aid. In so doing, I explore the moral and

social concerns people have through their displays of being caught between *pillar and post*, in service provision.

Chapter 6:

Outcomes in calls to dispute resolution services:
Assistance and signposting

6.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I illustrated how TPAs are designed as part of callers' practices when making the case for aid. In the final analytic chapter, my focus turns to the *outcomes* of these calls. When members of the public contact mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services about neighbourhood concerns, they describe problems in ways that demonstrate the relevance of service provision. As I have shown in previous chapters, callers design their case for aid in various ways – through assigning blame (or not) to their neighbours (Chapter 3), or by invoking third-party agencies (TPAs) in ways that handle entitlement and accountability (Chapter 5). I have also demonstrated how callers' experiences of their troubles concomitantly *shift* to troubles for institutional redress, through the co-production of the call (Chapter 4).

While the interactional activities mentioned above show how *institutionality* is produced and oriented to as characteristics of members' practices, an omnipresent element is in the *goal orientedness* of calls to these services (Drew & Heritage, 1992a). Troubles are ostensibly reported in the service of aid being offered by call-takers, and subsequently acquiesced by callers. Likewise, call-takers are tasked with establishing whether assistance can be granted, by enquiring of, and pursuing callers, as to the nature of their trouble. I consider the goal orientations of participants as constitutive of *call outcomes*, through the shared coordination, and mutual relevance of talk (J. D. Robinson, 2014). It is the sense that members are part of a joint project in which activities are organised, invoked, and oriented to, which can be revealed through the initiation, projectability, and potential completion of a particular interactional endeavour (Raymond & Zimmerman, 2016).

In this chapter, I examine the outcomes of people's calls for aid in resolving neighbour disputes and problems. I consider how call outcomes are achieved within the institutional confines of a particular service's remit, as produced through the interactional resources available to participants. I do so by examining the two most common types of outcome that recurrently occur across the corpus of calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services - callers are offered assistance, within the remit of the service, or they are directed towards another service (which is, itself, a form of assistance).

First, I examine how assistance is granted by antisocial behaviour, environmental health, and mediation services via *offers*. This does not mean that an offer will be positively accepted, and may be resisted, as will be shown. Second, I explore the ways in which callers are directed or *signposted* out of the service they are currently talking to, to another service. However, signposting is typically bound up with rejecting the caller's case for aid, which can be met with displays of uncertainty about who is best placed to help.

The organization of the chapter is as follows. In Section 6.1, I provide a critical overview of existing DP/CA literature on offers in service provision, before examining how they are made to, and responded to by, callers. In Section 6.2, I define the action of signposting and unpack its constituent features. I include some longer extracts to illustrate the initiation and trajectory of signposting sequences. In Section 6.3, I discuss offers and signposting when calling for help, focusing on the extent to which participants are designed as benefactors and beneficiaries in the context of service provision.

6.1 Offers in calls for assistance

As an institutional activity, offering assistance incapsulates the very reason that members of the public call services (to be offered aid), and for service provision by the agencies contacted (to offer aid) (e.g., Cromdal, Landqvist, et al., 2012; Emmison & Danby, 2007; Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015; Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005). Yet, as will become apparent, while *offering* is considered a pervasive social action in institutional as well as everyday settings, categorising and identifying what the action is, can be complex (see Enfield & Sidnell, 2017). This definitional challenge is of course, not restricted to offers alone - CA as a methodological process has an "ambiguous relationship" with the classification of actions (Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015, p. 727; also see Methods chapter). An *offer* is commonly defined in dictionaries as to 'present or proffer (something) for (someone) to accept or reject as desired', and maybe more relevantly, to 'express readiness to do something for or on behalf of someone' ("offer," n.d.).

In terms of action categorisation, distinguishing an offer from say, a proposal, or an invitation can be a difficult (and arguably unnecessary) task – interactional activities are for *members* to invoke and orient to, through their turns at talk (Kendrick & Drew, 2014; Schegloff, 2007). Offers can be designed in various grammatical and embodied formats – for instance, the transfer of an object "do you want any pots for coffee?'' (Curl, 2006, p. 1257), proposing a future course of action "maybe we can go out for a drink tonight?" (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014, p. 625), or passing some butter in response to a request "Yes.=hh" (extending

hand to pass butter, Enfield & Sidnell, 2017, p. 518). While these instances demonstrate (cf. Maynard, 1986) that offers can be made as responsive actions (to a request for butter), or designed as initiating ones (going for a drink), they also highlight potential differences in the extent to which the recipient (as beneficiary or 'other') and the offerer (as benefactor or 'self') gain from the transaction (see Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). By proposing going for a drink, an offerer might have more to gain than by passing the butter. Conversely, some offers (e.g., passing the butter) may earn the gratitude of beneficiaries, potentially placing them at an offerer's debt (see Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015).

The matter of who *gains* from an offer makes relevant the potential for an incurred *cost*. However, it is the ways in which offerers and recipients *treat* the transaction through (implicit) invocations and orientations, which is arguably more analytically pertinent – especially the sense in which recipients of an offer might not treat it as such, as (benefactive) *stance* taking (Clayman & Heritage, 2014). Particularly relevant in the context of calls to dispute resolution services, is the *deontic* stance adopted by call-takers in initiating future courses of action through offers (see Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012). While service providers are in positions of authority, offers of assistance are sometimes bound up with making *requests* of callers to fulfil some course of action (see Couper-Kuhlen & Etelämäki, 2014). In this way, future courses of action can be *negotiated* by co-participants; in turn, highlighting the role of interlocutor *agency* in the goal orientation in institutional encounters (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). The ways in which participants go about the co-management of calls for help (through seeking or volunteering aid), can reveal how others are *recruited* to fulfil a course of action, or help resolve some particular difficulty (Kendrick & Drew, 2016). Consequently, *offering* is a flexible activity, "along a spectrum of possible actions" that include offers, requests, and the "grey areas" in-between (Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015, p. 729; see also Chapter 5).

The sense of flexiblilty in doing 'offering' (and 'requesting') can be reflected in how members treat self and other's talk as resources for getting things done, both interactionally and practically. As indicated in Chapter 4, the ways in which participants shift from callers' experiences of troubles to matters for institutional redress, reveals how call progressivity is collaboratively accomplished in various ways. This sense of coordinating activities in the goal orientedness of calls for help, is significant for how offers are made relevant by mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services in the present chapter. The analysis below reveals the interactional flexibility of offers, as drawn upon by interlocuters, in the provision of service.

6.1.1 Offers in mediation services

In this section, I begin to examine how *offering assistance* is located, and designed, in calls to mediation services. These mediation service examples illustrate the ambiguous nature with which offers can be characterised and treated in the unfolding of calls. The first example is approximately two minutes into the call, in which C has begun to outline his trouble, which is access to his property.

Extract 6.1: DC-98

```
01   C:   If anybody comes to buy the hou:se,
02   M:   Y:eah.
03   C:   That I'm in dispute with the neighbours because by
04        law they've got t' tell the new (.) house owners.
05            (0.4)
06   M:   R:igh:t.=Okay:.=.hHH Right.=Um >are you< willing to
07        sort this out with y'neighbour.
08            (.)
09   C:   Pardon?
10   M:   .HH Are you willing to sort this out with your
11        neighbour.
12   C:   How d'you mean?
13   M:   .HH Well I'll explain >a little bit< about me:diation
14        an' how we: hel:p.=hh uh: an' then you can dec:ide
15        >y'know if you want to go< ah:ead.=.hHH u:m: tcht we're
16        a- a volunt'ry- (    ) we're an independent service an'
17        we're not tied to the council or the p'lice: .hh or the
18        courts or any- #uh# or an- an:y other agency like that.
19        =.HHh um It's a free service so there won't be any cost
20        to you.=.hH um: H:ow it works is two mediators come out
21        .HH an' t'see you first an' hear your side >of the<
22        story.=.MHh And find out (.) y'know >what you would
23        like to< happen.=.HH uh You can explain about the
24        access like y'ha[ve (.) told me.=.HH u:m What would=
25   C:                   [Yeah.
26   M:   =happen then if you're: (.) if you're agreeable to this
27        .HH m:ediators can visit y'neighbour .HH an:d >y'know<
28        <pass on your concern:s, .hh uh find out what's
29        happening from their point of view.=.hh ((sniffs)) uhm:
30        if it- (.) y'know seems to the mediators that you both
31        want to: .HH (0.3) uh move forward from: th'situation
```

```
32        as it is n:ow .HH and you're both willing to um resolve
33        this .Hh we can arrange a- a joint meeting between
34        y'both.=.hh uh:m Where >y'know y'can< both speak to one
35        another.=.hh Listen to what (.) each other's got to say
36        and to respond an' find a way forward.=.hh ((sniffs))
37        mcht How does that sound.
38   C:   Yeah.
39   M:   Yeah? .h Is that something >that you'd< like to try:.
40           (.)
41   C:   Yeah.
42   M:   Yeah?=.hh All right then what I'l[l do-
43   C:                                    [B'cause the only other
44        way is t'go t- t- th- the s'licitor an' that costs a
45        lot o' money¿
46           (.)
47   M:   R:ight.
48           (0.9)
49   M:   Yeah.=mcht Okay- .HH What I'll do is I'll just get a
50        form out.=Just one moment please:.
51   C:   Y:eah.
```

Following concerns raised by C regarding the ability to sell his house (lines 1, 3-4), M moves to propose a course of action (lines 6-7).[39] Notably, C's "Pardon?" (line 9) could be considered a hearing or misunderstanding problem. However, the prior turn is not only produced 'in the clear' but is followed by an interactional gap (line 8). And so, it may be that "Pardon?" serves as an open class repair initiator, indicating possible resistance to M's proposition (Drew, 1997). M redoes the proposal – which is observably less rushed through, with prosodic emphasis on 'neighbour' (line 10). This reissue is seemingly treated as another repair initiator (line 12), which serves as a launch pad for M to forewarn C of what the

---

[39] Previous research on the lexical item 'willing' in mediation settings found that it generally fails to secure positive uptake of a service if introduced before callers have sufficiently described their trouble, which may be the case in Extract 6.1 (Sikveland & Stokoe, 2016). Further, 'willing' engages strong caller agreement when used in a proposition (e.g., 'would you be willing?'), in contrast to weak agreement in other formulation types (Sikveland & Stokoe, 2016). However, while speculative, this example reveals another potential factor in service uptake. Essentially, even when accounting for a reissue of the initial proposal (line 10-11), there is no uptake from C. It might be that 'willing' has a greater likelihood of uptake when foregrounded by the modal 'would' as opposed to 'are you' here. While 'would' projects a future course of action in a normative, expectable, scripted way, 'are you' is located in the present. And so, it may be that 'would' represents a *lower commitment* (to a *future* course of action) than 'are you' (to a *present* course of action), and thereby being more acceptable to callers.

service offers - essentially, framing the activity of offering through 'pre-announcing' it (line 13) (Schegloff, 1980). Note also, the grantability of assistance "an' how we: hel:p." (line 14), indicating the pre-conditions for aid may already have been met, and further, the degree of agency accorded to C regarding the decision to acquiesce to the offer, with "an' then you can dec:ide >y'know if you want to go< ah:ead." (lines 14-15).

As M gives details of the service's remit (lines 15-20) and the procedure for assisting (lines 20-24, 26-36), note, the turn-final element "How does that sound." (line 37). While this component has the design features that make a response relevant, it also treats the preceding talk *as an offer* requiring either acceptance or rejection. This is observably different from commonly (and explicitly) designed offer formats – for example, as *proposal offers* ('can I do X?'), *announcement offers* ('I will do X'), and *request offers* ('let me do X') (Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015). Here, the offer is implicitly embedded within M's talk, and only hearably ratified as an offer by M's query (line 37). Thus, *offering* in this instance is an example of the kind of definitional ambiguity indicated earlier. And so analytically, this might be considered as an *activity* (comprising several components), rather than a specific *action*. Note that, even though M's offer is accepted (line 38) and confirmed (line 41) by C, it is maybe done so on the basis of being the least costly option, rather than a strong agreement to the offer itself – as illustrated on lines 43-45.

Extract 6.1 demonstrates how callers and call-takers can frame and orient to talk as *doing offering*, even though no explicit offer has been made, revealing the ambiguities through which actions are treated. The extract also shows the ways in which 'shared knowledge' is practically managed between members – essentially, how matters of *intersubjectivity* are oriented to and resolved within talk (Edwards, 2004). Extract 6.2 similarly illustrates how participants orient to the ambiguous formulation of offers of aid. C is calling to report issues with a neighbour regarding trees next to a boundary fence.

Extract 6.2: DC-99

```
01   M:   Uh: and- it's just thee um:: (.) <conifers.
02   C:   Y:eah.=We would we've been round >I mean< don- like
03        wanna g- go across an' approach him >an' then he<
04        starts gettin' y'know 'bit (0.6) (things)
05        b[ut we've round (      )
06   M:    [Mcht .HHh  No you've felt you feel you've asked
07        an:d u[h: a- i- it's a bit awkward to go again.
08   C:        [Yes.
```

```
09   C:   Yeah.
10   M:   Yeah.=mcht .HHh um: (.) C- Shall I just uh explain a
11        little bit about how (.) m:ediation work[s.=.hhh mcht=
12   C:                                           [Yeh,
13   M:   =um: .HH What >we would< do is appoint uh two mediators
14        who initially would a- .Hh contact you: and your
15        husband to make an appointment to come an' see you in
16        your own home, .h[hh mcht .HHh u:m then: obviously=
17   C:                    [Yeh.
18   M:   =y'there t'tell them all about it an:' w- what your
19        concerns are, .HH and what you would like to happen.
20        =.hh [mcht .HH uh If at that point you (.) decide that=
21   C:        [Yeh.
22   M:   =you would still like to proceed .HH we'd then contact
23        your neighbour uh by letter.
24        (0.3)
25   C:   Yeh.
26   M:   Tcht to introduce the service .HH and to offer him: uh
27        the chance to meet with our mediators the same as as
28        you have.=.hh mcht [.HHh It is a voluntary process=
29   C:                      [˚Yes˚
30   M:   =um::: mcht .HHh (.) It's f:ree to: um:: (0.4) Newtown
31        householders, .hh [mcht .HH uh We're an independent=
32   C:                     [˚Yeah˚
33   M:   =service we're not there to: um:: mcht .hh take sides.
34        =Uh We're- (0.2) uh impartial.=.hh mc[ht .HHh u:m:=
35   C:                                        [˚Yeah˚
36   M:   =We're not connected to: (.) the (.) um:: (0.5) y'know
37        to the council or the police or anything like that.
38        =.H[H h h  u:m:: (0.6) mcht (.) and it's f'fr- it's=
39   C:      [(˚Yeh˚)
40   M:   =confidential, n:othing: um that you s- (0.4) tell the
41        mediators will be passed on to anyone else including
42        your neighbour.=.HH Unless you wanted us to.=
43        [mcht .hHH= And we w- they would check that out with=
44   C:   [(˚Oh right.˚)
45   M:   =you.=.hh [mcht .H H h um:: (0.2) So does that sound=
46   C:             [(˚Oh right.˚)
47   M:   =like?
48        (0.2)
49   C:   Yeah.
```

171

```
50   M:  Yeah:?
51   M:  I[t's (.) it sounds just uh th the right kind of=
52   C:   [Yeah.
53   M:  =th[ing really for you t'try:.
54   C:     [Yeah.=Coz w'don't wanna like coz like >w'don't
55        wanna< be: >w'don't wanna< upset them that's all.
```

After C's confirmation of the complainable (line 1) and displayed resistance on the matter of speaking to the neighbour (lines 2-5), M provides a formulation of C's concern. Following a validating "Yeah." from C (line 9), M transitions to the service-side matter of service provision (lines 10-11), which shares similarities in design with the framing of the offer activity in Extract 6.1 (lines 13-15). However, in this case, M stops short of including what is offerable (i.e., deciding if C wants to go ahead), before launching into what is initially hearable as a prepared or 'routinized' script (as with Extract 6.1) – the sense in which it is "pre-fabricated, and not recipient-designed" in its delivery (Wilkinson, 2011, p. 121). While both the procedural and service-remit components of talk are produced here (as with the prior extract), the sequence in which they are delivered has been reversed, indicating differing strategies for *doing* offering.

As with Extract 6.1, M follows up with a query which treats the prior talk as an offer, with "So does that sound like?" (lines 45, 47). However, in this case, the turn's features are 'designedly incomplete', which may indicate delicacy in managing the grantability of assistance (Koshik, 2002; Stokoe, 2010). That said, in this extract, C completes the turn with a positive uptake "Yeah." (line 49), which is arguably more positive than the uptake in the previous extract, overall. Note also, C's use of "oh" (lines 44, 46), which when produced in addition to other indicators of uptake (here, with "right"), can signal more positive uptake than if "oh" is omitted (Albury, Stokoe, Ziebland, Webb, & Aveyard, 2018). Further, *so*-prefaced questions can display a speaker's 'other-attentiveness', in the sense of marking out future matters through the emergence of incipiency (Bolden, 2006), a possible move to institutional matters (Bolden, 2008), and potentially displaying empathy with others' troubles (Ford, 2017). In addition, note C's characterisation of herself as reasonable, and not disposed to 'upset' the neighbours (Edwards, 1997, 2006), which may be a way of showing that although the offer has been accepted, the decision has not been made lightly.

And so, like Extract 6.1, the activity of offering is pre-framed (with a pre-announcement) and post-framed (with a query), in ways that mark out the thing that it is doing, as oriented to by participants through their turns at talk. In the final case from the

mediation dataset, C has contacted a mediation service about a dispute with her neighbour regarding property access, and, in contrast to the first two cases, is an instance where an offer of assistance is *rejected*.

Extract 6.3: HC-5

```
01   C:   I mean it sounds petty in itself but it's (1.5) it's
02        it's getting wearing I don't know:, (.) I [just don't=
03   M:                                             [Yeah.
04   C:   =know >how to< handle it.
05   M:   Yeah yeah.=.hhh um: (0.3) Well I don't know what thee
06        um: cee eye dee explained to you th- th't um mediation
07        offer- offers um (1.2) <We offer you a situation where
08        you c'n: work out .hh a solution to your- (.) to your
09        dispute with your neighbour an' it's a- .hh a voluntary
10        process so .hh um: (0.4) i- if we approach your
11        neighbour and invite him to be involved in mediation
12        and he says no there's nothing .h more we can do.
13   C:   No.
14             (1.6)
15   M:   So I don't (.) know if you want to go ahead with that¿
16   C:   No:.
17             (0.8)
18   C:   No:.=I- I- uh (0.8) I don't know.=↑I I'm frightened of
19        him quite honestly,
20   M:   Yeah.
21   C:   I just don't feel I can face him.
22             (.)
23   M:   No:.
```

Following C's characterisation of the consequences for her regarding the dispute with the neighbour (line 1-2, 4), M inquires as to whether a TPA has provided details of the mediation service (lines 5-6). Notably, the delivery of the query does not wait for a response, but hearably launches into what the present service offers - "th- th't um mediation offer- offers um" (lines 6-7). After a 1.2 second pause, M repairs to the more 'personalised' "<We offer you..." (line 7), designed in a scripted form – the modal "you" displays an object-side stance, with no agent attached (see Edwards, 2006; Edwards & Potter, 2017). The subsequent talk from M contains similar elements as with the offering activities in previous mediation examples, such as the remit of the service (lines 7-10). However, in contrast to the prior

mediation extracts, M provides a basis for C to *reject* the offer of aid, designed with a *negatively valanced* (displaying the intrinsic character of discouragement or pessimism) *if/then* formulation (lines 10-12), to which C aligns with "No." (line 13). In this way, the neighbour is portrayed as the type of person who will not mediate, giving C an arguably greater opportunity to decline the offer of assistance – a common reason for callers rejecting mediation is on the basis of neighbours not being willing to mediate (Stokoe, 2013).

Following a 1.6 second gap, M delivers a decision-seeking turn (as in Extracts 6.1 and 6.2). However, the turn design in this example is, again, negatively valenced, with "So I d<u>on</u>'t (.) know if… (line 15). C's responds by rejecting the proposal by M, with "N<u>o</u>:.." (line 16) and accounts for the rejection by negatively assessing her neighbour (line 18-19, 21), to which M aligns (line 23). This negative characterisation of neighbours is common when callers to mediation services are given the interactional opportunity to do so (Sikveland & Stokoe, 2016). And so, negatively valenced talk by the call-taker arguably builds a preference for agreeing responses from the caller, and vice-versa, and thus, may have consequences for an acceptance of the offer (see Sacks, 1987). In terms of agreeing to, and moving forward with, some form of assistance, it may be that C is *signposted* to another service which may facilitate a more positive outcome – a phenomenon investigated in Section 6.2. However, in the next section, I examine how offers are made in calls to an environmental health service.

6.1.2 Offers in environmental health calls

In Extract 6.4, C is contacting an environmental health agency to report the condition of a neighbour's property. The extract starts approximately a minute into the call, where C has just begun to describe her concern.

Extract 6.4: EH-68
```
01   C:  I walked by this mornin' an:d (.) I th:ink it was a rat
02       I saw scarry- scurrying away.=
03   E:  =Mm::¿
04          (1.0)
05   E:  Righ:t.
06   C:  I mean the s:lates are actually comin' off the roof of
07       the ho[u:se,
08   E:         [O:kay:.
09          (.)
10   E:  .hHH An- an what's your address then [Mrs Adams.
```

```
11   C:                                            [My address is
12        number five Oldtown Road.
13   E:   Number five.
14          (0.6)
15   E:   Okay can I take your ↑phone (.) number for
16        [contact and I'll p[ass it through to an officer an'=
17   C:   [Y:eah,            [It-
18   E:   =somebody'll go'n have a look at the place.


          ((Contact details – omitted for brevity))


19   E:   ↑Okay then.=One of our officers will go round and make
20        a: you know an a[ssessment.
21   C:                   [Y:eah.(  )
```

In contrast to the mediation cases, offers of help in environmental health calls are typically designed in more explicit, direct ways. Extract 6.4 begins with C describing her troubles. Note C's hedged ("I th:ink") report of seeing a rat (lines 1-2), and the response to a potential 'change-of-activity' from E (line 5), which has the design of a more contrastive concern ("the s:lates are actually comin' off…") (line 6) (see Gardner, 2007). This observation can be reflected in terms of subject-side ('I think'; mind, experience) and object-side ('actually coming off'; world, reality) status (Edwards & Potter, 2017). Following E's information receipt in partial overlap (line 8), there is a shift from E to service-side matters (see Chapter 4), comprising a request of C's address details (line 10), which are provided (lines 11-12). Significantly, a further information request for C's phone number (lines 15-16) serves to frame the *offer* component of the turn, designed as a projected course of action by a third party, with "and I'll pass it through to an officer an' somebody'll go'n have a look at the place." (line 16, 18). Particularly notable is the use of the metaphorical expression 'pass it through', which can, as with other spatial metaphors (e.g., 'I'm at the end of my tether' and 'let me go this far') operate as a resource of displaying social phenomena which may be complex or problematic to describe (e.g., emotions, actions, and procedures) in terms of what might be 'understandable' or 'reasonable' to recipients (Krann, 2005; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Note also, the redone description of a future course of action (lines 19-20), which may be a pursuit for C's agreement to an offer, which was not interactionally 'in the clear' (i.e., not in overlap) acquiescence earlier (line 17).

Extract 6.4 illustrates how an offer can be unambiguously formulated; in so doing, getting positive uptake from the caller. In the next example, C is calling an environmental health service to report noisy students next door, and similarly illustrates how offers can be designed as future courses of action.

Extract 6.5: EH-158
```
01   C:   And it's like we're being bypassed and being put down
02        as a load of old- (0.3) old moaners [y'know. (      )
03   E:                                        [Ah ha.=.HHh what
04        I need you to do is just keep a note of- of the
05        incident that you feel is[: .hh uh causing you: a n-=
06   C:                            [Okay.
07   E:   =y'k[now a nuisance.=.hh and disturbing you so[: .hh=
08   C:       [Yeah.                                    [Yeah.
09   E:   =>Can I< take yer name pleas[e an' I'll I'll get a=
10   C:                               [(Y e s   y o u   c a n)
11   E:   case officer allocated to you.
12   C:   Y:eah.
13   E:   And will s:tart (.) y'know m:onitoring from there:.
14   C:   Yeah.
15   E:   Alright.=So you are::,
```


Following C's report that previous complaints (to a local housing warden and the university) were disregarded, and that C was potentially ridiculed for complaining (line 1-2), E issues a declarative request for C to keep a record of problem behaviour from the neighbours (lines 3-5, 7). This request is acknowledged by C as prosodically downturned, information receipts, both mid-turn and turn-end (lines 6, 8), before E produces an offer that is similar in design with Extract 6.4 – "can I take your ↑phone (.) number for contact and I'll pass it through to an officer an' somebody'll go'n have a look at the place." (lines 15-16, 18). For instance, note the similar turn-initial 'can I' request form, the type of information requested (C's details), and subsequent offer design through indexing a third party, and projected future course of action (line 13), accepted by C (line 14). Aside from evident similarities in how the offer is designed, a significant point to make about this example, is the inclusion of a request for *future* action by E, which is seemingly 'bound up' with an offer being made. Such a notion has been considered in terms of a *division-of-labour* between parties – "a Request to Other to carry out some action X, and a Commitment by Self to carry out a complementary action Y",

which may serve to 'balance' asymmetric actions, such as requests and offers (Couper-Kuhlen & Etelämäki, 2014, p. 111). Further, note the "so:" (line 7) which (as with Extracts 6.2 and 6.3) emphasises the link between prior request and subsequent offer, potentially signalling a move to the *goal orientation* of an institutional agenda (Bolden, 2008).

Extracts 6.4 and 6.5 demonstrate how overt requests can get hearably unproblematic uptake from callers. However, in the next example, the offer of aid is met with resistance. In Extract 6.6, C is calling the environmental health service to report loud aircraft noise.

Extract 6.6: EH-33

```
01   C:   Thee airplanes f:ly across Newtown >to go to< North
02        Oldtown:,
03   E:   Ye:ah,
04   C:   And they are: polluting m:y life: because >of the<
05        noise they make during the day and at ni:ght.
06          (0.2)
07   E:   Y:eah.
08   C:   An' I'd like to formally [(              )
09   E:                            [WELL if you want to b-
10        leave me your name and address then I'll log it in.
11   C:   Pardon?
12   E:   <Uh 'f you give me your name and addres[s?
13   C:                                          [An' what will
14        you do?
15          (0.3)
16   E:   I'll pass it to one of the officers.
17   C:   Thank you.
```

Observe how, in describing the nature of the noise problem (lines 1-2, 4-5), C characterises the airplanes as "polluting" her life. This may orient to the institutional term 'noise pollution,' and might be a device for enhancing the rhetorical impact of a trouble as a *serviceable* problem, and thus, worthy of an offer of assistance being made. Note also, the prevalence of the reported noise concern, which occurs both "during the day and at ni:ght." (line 5), which can be seen as marking out the unreasonableness of the noise, in that it happens *at night*, when people are sleeping. Following a receipt from E (line 7), and possibly further complaining from C in overlap (line 8), E produces a turn that seems similar in design to the *offer turns* see in Extracts 6.4 and 6.5, in that there is a request for personal details (lines 9-10). However, in contrast to Extracts 6.4 and 6.5, E does *not* project a future course of action

to a third party (i.e., passing *on* details or *allocating* an officer) - only that C's details will be 'logged in'.

The responding "Pardon?" (line 11) from C could be motivated by a hearing problem, as E's prior turn was delivered in partial overlap. However, following a redoing of the request component of E's previous turn (line 12), C observably displays some kind of understanding problem or resistance, with "An' what will you do?" (lines 13-14). Note how the "and"-prefaced talk completes E's prior turn, but also may serve to "articulate a 'missing' element of the addressee's preceding talk – what the other might have or should have said, but did not." (Bolden, 2010, p. 27). Essentially, what is potentially marked out by C is what is not offered by E. This point is arguably substantiated by the subsequent unfolding talk - E indicates that C's details will be passed on to an officer (line 16), to which C responds with "Th<u>a</u>nk you." (line 17). In this way, the 'missing' element (line 16) is treated as adequate by the way in which it is confirmed as such (line 17). And so, at least in these environmental health calls, it seems to be that trouble can arise when call-takers do not explicitly indicate the procedure for *what happens next* after requesting personal details. Similarly, callers may not treat something as an offer until a future course of action is projected by call-takers. The sense of callers being left with the burden of driving the call forward when next actions are not articulated, has been similarly found with patients in calls to GP surgeries (Stokoe et al., 2016). In the next section I explore how offers are formulated in calls to antisocial behaviour services.

6.1.3 Offers in antisocial behaviour services

Extract 6.7 begins about three minutes into the call, and towards the end of C's account of the problem, in which youths have caused property damage in the neighbourhood.

Extract 6.7: AC-16

```
01   C:   But she is an old lady on 'er own.=I said
02        [they've obviously sent them for all=
03   A:   [Yea:h.
04   C:   =counci[l houses.
05   A:          [M m : : : .
06   C:   In the avenue.
07   A:   Mcht Yeah:.=Mcht .hHHH Well what I will do is I- I'll
08        make some enquiries with the p'lice just t' see wha-
09        what th- what- what they've got in relation t' that
```

```
10        i- incident when which the f:encing was all smashed
11        down they may have the details of the youths involved.
12        =.hHHH If they ↑ar:e um: >y'know the children of<
13        council tenants then th's y'know there's action we can
14        ta:ke.=And we can sort've warn the parents about their
15        conduct.=.H[HH Without it n- y'know without it going=
16   C:            [Yeah,
17   A:   =to cour:t but we can p'rhaps bring a h:olt to the= to
18        their y'know to their activi[ties with a bit of a=
19   C:                              [Yeah.
20   A:   =stern warning.=.H[HH But obviously I need to know the=
21   C:                    [Yeah.
22   A:   =identity of the youths if- if [I'm able to do that.
23   C:                                  [(                    )
```

Following C's displayed concern for her neighbour (line 1), and that literature had been previously sent by the council to properties in the neighbourhood warning of antisocial behaviour (lines 2, 4, 6), A announces that she will contact the police to find out more details regarding the incident (lines 7-11). Note that, although A has indicated a future course of action (as with the offers in Extracts 6.4 and 6.5), the action of 'enquiring' does not make further action expectable (e.g., by a case officer), but rather, is 'information seeking', which may or may not lead to action being taken. However, the next component of A's turn is observably designed as a *conditional offer* through an 'If X (then) Y' formulation - "If they ↑ar:e um: >y'know the children of< council tenants then th's y'know there's action we can ta:ke." (lines 12-14). This device can be considered as a type of *script formulation*, in the sense that participants work to categorise events as regular (or exceptional), and thus, logically the thing to do or to believe (Edwards, 1994, 1995; Jefferson, 2004a). Note also, the inclusion of the modal *can,* which can perform the dual role of referring to the moral necessity of some action being done, and the assessment of the event occurring – in so doing, obscuring the "epistemic and moral implications" of speakers' claims (Sneijder & te Molder, 2005, p. 678). And so, although an offer has been delivered and ostensibly acquiesced to (lines 16, 19, 21), the call-taker's accountability for providing a future offer is diminished, in contrast with the vast majority of offers above (see Sneijder & te Molder, 2005).

The matter of offers being conditionally relevant, as in Extract 6.7, is highlighted in the next extract, wherein C has called an antisocial behaviour service to report various incidents perpetrated by the neighbours.

<u>Extract 6.8: AC-7</u>

```
01   C:   Y'know, w' just w' j[us:t tryin' t' keep ourselves=
02   A:                    [Tcht .hhhh
03   C:   =quie[t (keeping ourselves to our[selves) I mean the=
04   A:        [Y:eah:.                    [.h  H  H  H  H  H
05        [H ↑Wha-
06   C:   [=f:irst thing when anything happens is that she goes
07        round to all of the neighbours an' drums up as much
08        support as she can possibly [get   so  I've  got=
09   A:                                [((Tuts)) <Y:  :  e :
10        [a : h :> H h   m c h t   I-  .H H  W'll the other=
11   C:   [=(absolutely) no chance whatsoever.
12   A:   =in- In the event that sort've something like that was
13        unsuccessful or the problems continue an' an' you feel
14        th't th't .HHh you're not being (.) treated f:airly I
15        mean the thing we can: do to eventually sort've um
16        assist the police t' determine who's at fault is we
17        c'd consider putting some cameras up for yo[u.=.H H h h
18   C:                                               [Yeah I mean
19        we have had actually we've had thee um .hh cameras from
20        the neighbourhood watch committee put up because of all
21        the vandalism [(that we've been) (       )
22   A:                 [((Tuts)) R:igh:t.=O:kay:,
```

In Extract 6.8, note how C initially constructs her family as good "quiet" neighbours (lines 1, 3), contrasted to the problem neighbour who reportedly garners support from other neighbours (lines 3, 6-8), and the negative upshot of C seeking help with her trouble (lines 8, 11). In this way, C observably marks out the contrasting moral positions between herself (as respectful neighbour) and her neighbour (as intent on discrediting C in some way) (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005, see also Chapter 3). The subsequent turn from A, which incorporates the offer of aid, shares similarities in design with Extract 6.7, as another example of an *if-then* formulation (lines 12-17). While there is no explicit lexical use of *if* or *then*, the semantic properties are observably similar – "In the event that…" (if) and "the thing we can: do…" (then) – in so doing, providing for inferences which implicate temporality, causality, and accountability between participants (Edwards, 1997). Note also, the use of the modal *can*, as in the previous case, and further, the modal *could* - hearably in "we c'd consider…", later in the turn. Yet, the offer in this example is markedly different in delivery with the previous case – here, the vagueness/hedging ("sort've", "eventually", "consider"), and perturbation

("an' an'", "th't th't"), compared to more grammatically, semantically, and syntactically unproblematic delivery of the offer in the prior example. This difference may be due to what is *offerable* within the service's domain, on the basis of caller accounts. For instance, observe A's specific orientation to the neighbour's occupancy status in Extract 6.7 (whether they were council tenants) contrasted to the consequences for C's emotional stance in this example (how she feels). In terms of O-side/S-side relations, the occupancy related offer (factual status, O-side) is observably less problematically delivered than the offer bound up with the emotional (experience, S-side) concerns of the caller (Edwards & Potter, 2017).

Extract 6.8 shows how offers can be designed with a degree of ambiguity woven into the offer activity. The final example from this subsection of the dataset illustrates a stronger, although conditional, offer. In Extract 6.9, C has called to report a neighbour's noisy motorbike exhaust.

Extract 6.9: AC-25

```
01   A:   On the other han:d .hh they need to have a look at it
02        an' make sure that it's av- it's not at a level which
03        is exceeding: (.) y'know, what is allowed lawfully.
04   C:   Mm:.=
05   A:   =.hHHH um So that very much is in the police domain.=
06        However what I will do:, mcht .HHH is: if y:ou can get
07        back to me:,
08   C:   Ye[s,
09   A:     [With his exact addres[s, .hHH I will make contact=
10   C:                          [Yeah,
11   A:   =with your local beat officer coz I'm guessing what's
12        happened is y- you've dialled in the police on the
13        seven threes number.=mcht .hHH I- is that the one you
14        use:d the th[ree three:,
15   C:               [I used (.) the one that's in the Newtown
16        Mer[cury
17   A:      [Mcht yea:h.
```

Observe how A seemingly works to downplay the expectancy of a potential offer of assistance – first by describing the procedural elements involved in aiding with the caller's concern (lines 1-3), then by explicitly marking out the police as responsible for the matter (and by implication, that the present service is not) (line 5). However, another kind of offer is subsequently delivered by A - similar in *if/then* conditional design to the previous antisocial

behaviour cases (lines 6-7, 9, 11). Note the *if* component is concerned with what C should do (obtaining the neighbour's address details), before the *then* component can be implemented (contacting the local beat officer). Another point is in regard to the rhetorical force of the offer made – contact *will* be made in this example (an announcement-offer), which can be contrasted to *can* or *could* in previous extracts (a proposal-offer) (Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015). And so, announcement-offers may display a higher degree of commitment in terms of service provision, compared to Extracts 6.7 and 6.8 (see Sneijder & te Molder, 2005). That said, the offer in this case is ostensibly *not* a granting of the assistance sought by C (unlike Extracts 6.7 and 6.8), but as the consequence of the (subsequently revealed) implication that C has not contacted the correct service (lines 11-14). And so, the commitment to offering aid, may highlight differences in the extent to which participants 'gain' or 'lose' from the transaction - the lower the service commitment (contacting the beat officer), the stronger the offer (an announcement-offer); the higher the service commitment (allocating a case officer), the weaker the offer (a proposal-offer) (see Couper-Kuhlen, 2014).

6.1.4 Summary

I have examined how offers of assistance are formulated when people call for help with a neighbourhood concern. The analysis reveals that offering is designed in various ways – framed as implicit or explicit activities, comprising distinct turn-design features. Further, offers were met with different levels of acceptance, enthusiasm, or resistance by callers, as the offer sequence unfolded. Overall, notable patterns of conduct emerged through the analytic process. In calls to mediation services, call-takers designed offers implicitly as *activities*, comprising descriptions of service remits and procedures. Offers were generally framed by pre-announcements, potentially affording *agency* to callers in the matter of acquiescing to an offer. Queries by call-takers treated ostensibly ambiguous prior talk *as* offers through next-turn-proof-procedure; in so doing, marking out utterances as offers for callers to either accept or reject. Further, negatively valenced talk discouraged uptake of an offer. In calls to environmental health services, offers were generally framed by requests for callers' details. Offers themselves were commonly designed to project a future course of action by other professionals within the service and were often accompanied by requests for callers to take action in terms of a *division of labour* formulation. No explicit indication of *what happens next* led to the caller being burdened with moving the call forward. In calls to antisocial behaviour services, offers were designed as conditional *if/then* formulations; in so doing, displaying events as regular and logically the thing to do or 'believe'. The use of

modals highlighted how lower and higher commitment offers were designed – *can/could* (higher commitment) and *will* (lower commitment).

Overall, the design of offers in these institutions illustrates how service provision for similar problems are formulated and negotiated, depending on the agency contacted, resulting in different levels of uptake (or not) by callers. However, sometimes when contacting a service for help, assistance is not offered within the service's remit. In the next section, I examine the ways in which call-takers *signpost* callers to other service providers, who may be better placed to offer help with a neighbourhood concern.

6.2 Signposting in calls for assistance

In some ways, 'signposting' as a practice, shares similar rhetorical machinery (i.e., invoking and orienting to TPAs) as to when callers make the case for *getting aid* (see Chapter 5). Yet, *signposting* is an institutional activity in which TPAs are invoked by call-takers, and by implication, bound up with *not* granting aid. As a verb, 'to signpost' is, at least in a figurative sense, defined as "to point the way, provide direction, guide" ("Signpost," n.d.). Notably, this definition is from an online medical dictionary, rather than an arguably more commonly known and referenced one (e.g., online versions of the Oxford English Dictionary, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, and the Collins Dictionary), wherein the verb 'to signpost' is given a more literal definition – for instance, indicating directions towards a particular landmark. While (figuratively) signposting is familiar in medical settings, there has been very little DP/CA research in this area. And so, there is a unique opportunity to build on previous work, in ways that show how talk can project a *future* course of action (such as, proposing that the caller contact a TPA), rather than a previous one (i.e., a service-referral).

Another significant point to highlight between a *service-referral* and *signposting* (as defined above) is the degree of *agency* afforded to those seeking help – while callers may report being referred (lacking agency to decide), call-takers may guide (giving callers the agency to decide). A comparison can be drawn between the mandating of medical treatment through *pronouncements*, in contrast with *suggestions* regarding medical treatment (i.e., giving patients choice) (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). That said, aside from what the activity is labelled as, the important thing to note is what the activity is doing (see Edwards, 2008; Stokoe, 2012a). And so, my analytic focus in this section is how callers are steered to another agency, in the face of their problem not being resolved in the present one.

Previous DP/CA research specifically on the topic of *signposting* appears to be minimal at best (certainly in the context of institutional encounters, wherein members are

signposted to other services that may offer assistance, in the face of a non-offer). This may be due in large part to the types of institutional domains that predominantly attract DP/CA attention, which arguably inhibit the activity of signposting for those seeking assistance – for instance, calls to emergency services (e.g., Firth et al., 2005; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987), and medical encounters (e.g., Elsey et al., 2015; Robson, Drew, Walker, & Reuber, 2012). Where can you be signposted to, to report a burglary or an accident if not the emergency services? Other than your general practitioner, who else, in the first instance, can assist with a non-emergency medical problem? I am not suggesting that signposting out of these services does not occur. The point is that, in the context of the current chapter and this thesis in general, it is a common practice for mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services to cross-refer and signpost to each other, and to other services, in managing similar social concerns. In this way, by comparatively examining service provision in less commonly used institutions such as these, reinforces the importance of analytic endeavour.

There are studies which discuss steering members to other services by reference to *referring* ('when someone (or something) is referred or directed for consultation, review, or further action'; see Chapter 5), although not as a systematic practice – such as, child protection helpline interactions (Hepburn, 2004; Potter & Hepburn, 2003), medical interactions (e.g., D. Jones et al., 2016; Stivers, 2007b) and meetings between teachers and educational psychologists (Hester, 1998). For instance, child protection officers (CPOs) work to establish grounds (e.g., whether parents are working and in a position to care for their children) for referring concerned neighbours to other services (e.g., social services) – such as, cases where CPO questions are directed towards gathering information about third-parties (leading to a referral) contrasted to CPO questions which "focus on the caller's psychology", and do not lead to a referral (Potter & Hepburn, 2003, p. 221). Further research investigates how teachers categorise their pupils' behaviour as 'deviant' in interactions with educational psychologists, in the service of pupils with 'special educational needs' getting some form of practical, psychological intervention by another service – for example, invoking a pupil's character ('he's not a good talker', 'I realised it was more than just a poor speaker', and 'he's always been a nuisance') (Hester, 1998).

And so, in this section, I address the question of if and how *referring* is treated differently (e.g., the child protection and the 'deviant' pupil examples) to the activity of *signposting* in my dataset. In each case above, those in a position to refer members to TPAs

(social services or to psychological intervention services), act as gatekeepers[40] of access *for* those particular TPAs (from child protection services *to* social services, or from school *to* psychological intervention services). I explore whether signposting, as defined above, is an activity which emerges from *not* receiving help, rather than a consequence of *making the case* for it (and if it can be categorised in this way). Each service in my corpus operates as a distinct agency, with their own particular remit (see Chapter 2). Call-takers in these services act as gatekeepers specifically for that service, and by implication, are not in a position to act as gatekeepers to TPAs (although callers are directed to TPAs). This contrast highlights the inter-relatedness (or not) of services, and further, underscores the minimal amount of research that has been conducted on the topic of *signposting* (or for that matter, cross-service referrals). Focusing on signposting in these services provides a unique research opportunity – not only in terms of examining the ways in which *service-to-service* signposting is formulated by call-takers, but also, how signposting, as an interactional activity, contrasts across institutional domains.

Considered as a broader, community concern, the notion of being signposted to another service, carries with it the sense in which members have *unresolved troubles* when contacting organisations for help. Studies of the UK public sector have examined the social consequences (such as violent, domestic, sexual, and psychological abuse) for those who not have their needs met, as revealed in reports by the National Health Service (NHS) (Lewis, Rosen, Goodwin, & Dixon, 2010), and National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) (Stanley, Miller, Foster, & Thomson, 2010). Further studies have focused on families who have been affected by their experiences with child protection services, as illustrated by the account below.

> *'I contacted social services for help, which did not come about for many months. I wanted advice—not getting any. Passed from pillar to post. They said they'd return calls—didn't return calls. Said they'd send people out—didn't. Social worker eventually turned up—I said "You're too late—I've been to hell and back".' (Vera)*
> (Dale, 2004, p. 144)

---

[40] 'Gatekeeping' is a process by which certain criteria must be met, in order for assistance to be warranted and offered, and is prevalent across many institutional settings – for instance, medical encounters (D. Jones et al., 2016; Speer & Parsons, 2007), emergency service calls (Heritage & Clayman, 2010b; J. Whalen et al., 1988; M. R. Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990), and in law courts (Solan, 2010).

While some families reported positive benefits from contact with child protection services, a significant number (22%) reported that such interventions had caused them distress – for instance, a lack of or missing service provision as specified in protection plans, limited or unavailable preventative services, and untrained/uninterested staff (Dale, 2004). Yet, research on the links between services, such as primary health care and the voluntary sector, demonstrates how the promotion of relevant services by skilled staff, results in both health and community *benefits* (South, Higgins, Woodall, & White, 2008).

In terms of corpus of neighbour dispute calls, the sense of being passed *from pillar to post* may have implications for the trajectory and outcome of the call. Call-takers do, as a matter of necessity, reject cases for aid in circumstances where the callers' problems are considered beyond the remit of the service being contacted (e.g., Lee, 2011; Schegloff, 1988). That said, the responsibility of a particular service is not always clearly defined or adhered to, often involving some form of collaborative accomplishment between caller and call-taker in establishing the 'serviceability' (or not) of caller troubles (Firth et al., 2005). Nonetheless, the matter of *rejecting* a case for assistance is bound up in the task of *signposting* callers to a more ostensibly appropriate service. And so, declining callers the resolution they seek, coupled with guiding them elsewhere may be consequential for the progressivity of the call – in terms of the extent to which assistance is granted *within* the remit of the agency being contacted, in the service of directing callers *out* to another institution. Below, I aim to identify how callers are *signposted* to TPAs, and the consequences for the provision of service to the caller.

6.2.1 Signposting in mediation services

In this section, I consider what happens people with neighbour problems are signposted away from the mediation service they have called. In Extract 6.10 below, C has contacted mediation to complain about the neighbours attaching lights to a jointly-owned fence. The example demonstrates how signposting is accomplished through the action of offering, bound up in the activity of implicitly rejecting the caller's case for assistance.

Extract 6.10: EC-22
```
01   M:   R:ight.=Y:es.[Uh-
02   C:              [<An:d=um >I just wanna know< where we ↑go
03        (from here.)=Is she got the ↑right to <put um:: .hh
04        mcht .hh things onto my wall.=Hh
```

```
05           (.)
06   C:    .hh mcht .hh dr_ill holes in- to my (facia)'n put um:
07         .hhh mcht l_ights up.
08           (1.0)
09   M:    Y:ea:h.=So you're w_anting to know really what your:
10         l:_egal posi[tion is at the moment about (0.2) vrgh uh:=
11   C:                [↑M_m↓:.=Hh
12   M:    =d- drilling w- h_oles in your f_en:ce 'n an putting:
13         l:_ights u[p the top, .hhh y:ea:h.=O:kay.=.hH _um: mcht=
14   C:             [Y:_eah.
15   M:    =.hH #uh# ↑p'haps ↑sh_all I briefly explain what w_e are
16         coz: I may- mbmb <probably need to:: suggest >that you<
17         contact someone e:l[se.=.hh um mcht .hh cau- we're=
18   C:                       [Y:eah,=
19   M:    =we're basically a med_iation service s[o .hh wh_at we=
20   C:                                            [M_m:,
21   M:    =<try to help with is:=um: mcht .hh try t'h_elp with
22         thee: .hh (0.2) th- the situation where neighbours have
23         a disagr_eement in terms of helping them t' (0.3) <talk
24         about th's problem an[d to find a way f_orward.=.hHH=
25   C:                         [M_m:,
26   M:    =But we're n_ot actually: a kind of advice or
27         enf_orcement service.
28   C:    Yeah I see, y[eh.=Hh
29   M:                 [So mcht .Hh did you hear about us from
30         the c_ouncil.=Was th[at um
31   C:                        [Y_eah she put y- #me# _onto=you yeah.
32   M:    ↑O:↓kay, yeah fine fine, .hH um: (0.4) mght so .hh if
33         you w_anted us to- (0.2) sort've contact your neighbour
34         'n talk about the situation 'n try 'n maybe arrange a
35         joint <m_eeting that's the kind of thing w_e
36         c[ould do.=.hhh but if- _if you're wanting l_egal advice=
37   C:     [Mwr_igh' I see yeah.
38   M:    =then what I can do is give you the numbers of a couple
39         of _other .hH places to contact.
40   C:    Mcht _okay then:,
```

Extract 6.10 starts with C is C appealing to the potential 'grantability' of assistance by M
(lines 2-3) (see Drew & Walker, 2010), before shifting to a request regarding the legality of
the neighbour's actions (lines 3-4, 6-7). Following a potentially problematic 1.0 second gap

(line 8), M formulates C's ostensible reason for calling with "So you're w<u>a</u>nting to know really what your: l:<u>e</u>gal position is at the moment about…" (lines 9-10, 12-13). Observe the *category-relevant description* "l:<u>e</u>gal position", which orients to a particular type of assistance by a specific service (Stokoe & Edwards, 2009).

After C's confirming "Y:<u>e</u>ah" (line 14), M proposes to summarise the service's remit with the pre-telling "↑p'haps ↑sh<u>a</u>ll I briefly explain what w<u>e</u> are" (line 15). This initial turn component serves to frame assistance being declined, and for C to be signposted to another service – "coz: I may- mbmb <probably need to:: suggest >that you< contact someone <u>e</u>:lse." (lines 16-17). Note that at this point, even though no specific TPA is indexed, contacting *someone else* rather than somewhere else does invoke a sense of personability. Observe also, the contrastive elements of M's talk – the softening of the stepwise transition into not providing service ('I may', 'probably', 'suggest') contrasted to the declarative ('need to'), which, coupled with observable perturbation, indicates M's non-granting of aid is problematic, at least interactionally (see Curl & Drew, 2008; Silverman & Perakyla, 1990).

M then goes on to explain the service's remit (lines 19-24), including what it does not do: "But we're n<u>o</u>t actually: a kind of advice or enf<u>o</u>rcement service." (lines 26-27). This element builds on M's previous upshot regarding C's legal position (lines 9-10), going further in terms of legality, to what may be legally enforceable – in so doing, neatly marking out the contrast between what is *offerable* by M (lines 19-24), and what is *required* by C (lines 9-10). Significantly, M's implied rejection produces an aligned response from C - "Yeah I see, yeh." (line 28). In this way, there is an unmarked, yet co-supported sense of the call's trajectory – aid has been declined by M and the rejection has been tacitly accepted by C. At this point, M pursues C for how she came to call the service, with "So mcht .Hh did you hear about us from the c<u>ou</u>ncil." (lines 29-30), which is confirmed by C (line 31). Following this move, M reformulates the service's remit (lines 32-36). Significantly, a conditional if/then offer is produced, which serves as (and is treated as) an overt signposting to two TPAs[41] (lines 36, 38-39).

Extract 6.10 shows how the activity of signposting can be designed through offering a service, subsequent to implicit rejection of not providing it. In the next example, C is calling a mediation service to report safety concerns regarding a digger bucket[42] stored on a

---

[41] Contact details for two local advice centres (one council run, one charity run) are disclosed.
[42] Digger buckets are typically attached to building, road or farm machinery, for excavating purposes.

neighbour's wall, similarly illustrating how signposting to another service is indirectly designed.

Extract 6.11: DC-52

```
01   C:   It's on the wall but it's actually h:is wall that it's
02        on.
03   M:   .HH righ:t.
04   C:   It's in (.) our garden kind of thing.
05   M:   .hhhh (0.2) right so #ugh# you- b- a- what you're
06        sayin' is if um: (0.2) even though it's [on: his if=
07   C:                                           [(   )
08   M:   =if anything if it fell it would,
09            (0.2)
10   C:   It'd come over into (ours).
11   M:   Righ:t.=.H[Hh uhm: mcht .hh the thing is uhm:: (0.4)=
12   C:             [(   )
13   M:   =<Gmb (0.4) we're n:ot sort've an emergency service so
14        we can't do anything quickly.=.HH And if you've got
15        real concerns about the safety of that .hh uhm: (.)
16        tcht I th:ink you might need to speak to someone else.


         ((32 lines omitted - includes M conferring with colleagues))


49   M:   Hi.=Sorry to keep you wai[ting.=.HHH um:: (0.2) .HH=
50   C:                            [That's all right,
51   M:   =Yes we were saying that possibly um:: (0.2) if you
52        contacted the local council.=Environmental services.
53            (0.2)
54   C:   Rright I don't suppose you've got the number 'av[e you.
55   M:                                                   [.HHh
56        uh I can give you the: switchboard number.
```


Extract 6.11 starts with C describing where the object she is concerned about, is situated (lines 1-2). Note the possible change-of-activity token with M's ".HH righ:t." (line 3) (Gardner, 2007), before C produces the incremental "It's in (.) our garden kind of thing." (line 4). M's response is initially formatted as an understanding-check "right so #ugh# you-b- a- what you're sayin' is…" (lines 5-6), which may orient to the ambiguity of C's prior talk (i.e. the description of the bucket being both *on* the neighbour's wall, yet *in* C's garden).

However, like the previous extract, M's turn is completed as an upshot of C's account – in this case, projecting the consequences for the neighbour's actions, with "if um: (0.2) even though it's on: his if if anything if it f<u>e</u>ll it would," (line 6, 8). Note the 'designedly incomplete' (Koshik, 2002; Stokoe & Edwards, 2008) talk, presenting C with the interactional slot in which to collaboratively complete the turn "It'd come over into (ours)." (line 10). M's next stretch of talk serves as an opening to a rejection sequence, marking an upcoming lack of fit or contrast with expectations - "R<u>igh</u>:t.=.HHh uhm: mcht .hh the thing is uhm:" (line 11). Observe the turn-initial activity-shifting "R<u>igh</u>:t.", but also "the thing is", which idiomatically conveys the forthcoming talk as in some way contrastive, and potentially disaffiliative (see Raymond & Heritage, 2013).

In contrast to Extract 6.10, M initially describes what is *not* the remit of the mediation service, rather than what *is*, with "we're n:<u>o</u>t sort've an em<u>er</u>gency service so w<u>e</u> can't do anything quickly." (lines 13-14), which builds on the risk element of M's prior upshot. This sense of jeopardy is subsequently reinforced with an if/then formulation comprising the rejection component, initially with "And if y<u>ou</u>'ve got real concerns about the safety of that" (lines 14-15). Note the rhetorically enhanced and pluralised "real concerns", and the explicit indexing of C's trouble as a "safety" issue, which serves to frame the 'then' element – "I th:<u>i</u>nk you might need to speak to someone <u>e</u>lse." (line 16). As with Extract 6.10, a specific TPA is not indexed initially. Similarly, the design of the turn is softened (the stretched 'th:<u>i</u>nk'), and includes the contrastive "you might" and "need" elements. Further, as with before, M produces a "someone <u>e</u>lse." construction, rather than some*where* else. The signposting element is not produced until after M has consulted with colleagues - "Y<u>e</u>s we were saying that p<u>o</u>ssibly um:: (0.2) if you contacted the local c<u>ou</u>ncil.=Environmental s<u>er</u>vices." (lines 51-52). Note, that although M is signposting C, there is a displayed epistemic uncertainness and hesitancy as to whether the council can assist (see Heritage & Raymond, 2005). As with Extract 6.10, we can observe an offer by M (line 56), although in this case, it is produced a response to a request (line 54).

In Extracts 6.10 and 6.11, signposting is framed in ways that prepare the groundwork for an implicit rejection. In the final mediation example, C has called the service regarding a jointly-owned fence, and demonstrates how the caller's case for assistance is more explicitly rejected, prior to the signposting activity.

```
01   M:   Yeh th- the mediation service: .hhh (.) is here: to:
02        help people (.) resolve disputes.=.hh That they ↑have
03        with their neighbours so it may #ugh:# y'know it maybe
04        that your .HH situation isn't actually a dis:pute.=.hh
05        um: but that you want some information.
06   C:   I do.=.hh [Mainly I want some information on- on um=
07   M:            [Yeah.
08   C:   =how high somebody can build .hh um a shared boundary
09        fence.
10   M:   ↑UMm:. an- and um who who: (0.2) <can I as:k how you:
11        .hH came to be in contact with our service¿
12   C:   Um: because you're in thee: um: (0.2) Newtown book.
13   M:   Mcht [righ:t,
14   C:        [Directory of council service[es.
15   M:                                      [↑Oh↓: okay.=.HHh
16        (0.2) coz we're not a part of the council.=[.hh    uh=
17   C:                                               [Right.
18   M:   we're not actually a- uhm: a council service.=But=
19        we're an as I said we're an independent organisation
20        that's here to help neighbours .HHh when there are
21        disputes.=.HH ↑Um:: .HH have you tried any other:
22        parts of the council.
23           (0.4)
24   C:   Ah no. because I don't know where to look.
25   M:   N:o.=.HH uhm (0.2) I- I thin:k .hhhh #ugh# th't- you
26        m:ay get the information you:: require from (.)
27        environment services,
28   C:   °Environ[ment (services)°
29   M:           [Which is: depar- it's- it's a council
30        department, coun- um: department of New District, .hHHH
31        um:: (1.3) they may have (.) the information that you
32        require.
```

In Extract 6.12, note the remit details (lines 1-3) which, as will become apparent, frame the initial rejection work done by M – specifically, that the service operates to "help people (.) resolve disputes." (line 2). A feature that ties all three mediation examples together sis the sense in which call-takers give callers an upshot of the trouble – here, with a more overt rejection "it may be that your .HH situation isn't actually a dis:pute." (lines 3-4). Observe the

orientation to the prior "dis<u>pu</u>tes", in a way that cements what the service *offers,* contrasted to what C ostensibly *requires*, further reinforced with "but that you want some infor<u>ma</u>tion." (line 5). C confirms the correctness of M's upshot with "I do" (line 6), before detailing her concern (lines 6, 8-9). As with the collaborative completion in the previous extract, there is a sense in which C delivers a 'candidate diagnosis' of the trouble, in that C is "hearable as adopting a stance that he or she is seeking confirmation of the diagnosis…" (Stivers, 2002, p. 299). Stivers argues that candidate diagnoses are ways of patients putting pressure on physicians to prescribe antibiotic treatment. In terms of the grantability of assistance, a similar practice may occur in this institutional setting.

As with Extract 6.10, M pursues how C came to contact the service – note the repaired request form "↑<u>UM</u>m:. an- and um wh<u>o</u> wh<u>o</u>:" (line 10) with the contingently higher, albeit paradoxical "<can I as:k how…" (line 10) (see Schegloff, 1980). After C's report that the "directory of council services" (line 14) was the source for the present call, M goes on to disclose that the mediation service is "n<u>o</u>t a p<u>a</u>rt of the c<u>ou</u>ncil." (line 16) and is "n<u>o</u>t actually a- uhm: a council s<u>e</u>rvice." (line 18) - a similar practice of orienting to what the service does *not* assist with, as with the two previous examples. M reiterates the service's remit, following a similar sequence to the previous extract – what the service is *not*, then what is the service *is*. Observe also, the turn-final 'self-help' component "h<u>a</u>ve you tried any other: parts of the council." (lines 21-22), which is seemingly treated as normatively accountable by co-participants, as displayed through C's "Ah n<u>o</u>.=Because I don't know where to l<u>oo</u>k." (line 24) (see Edwards & Stokoe, 2007). The TPA is finally indexed "I- I th<u>in</u>:k .hhhh #ugh# th't-you m:<u>ay</u> get the information you:: requ<u>i</u>re from (.) env<u>i</u>ronment s<u>er</u>vices," (line 25-27). As with Extract 6.11, observe the displayed lack of knowledge regarding the grantability of aid by the TPA – this time, neatly framed with 'I think', indicating to C, M's own subject-side stance (Edwards & Potter, 2017).

These mediation examples show how rejecting assistance in the service of signposting callers to more appropriate institutions, are designed in ways which are observably softened, implicit, and indirect – however, treated by participants as the activity of moving callers through the service. In the next section, I show how call-takers in environmental health services go about signposting in a more direct and explicit way.

6.2.2 Signposting in environmental health services

The next extracts are from calls to an environmental health service, and illustrate in a more direct way, how callers are signposted away from the current service. In Extract 6.13, C is

reporting syringes that have been left at her allotment. The example begins just after the start of the call and follows the ethics script.

Extract 6.13: EH-106

```
01   C:   H:i y:es.=um:, mcht .hh I was advised to get in touch
02        with you.=We've got a: a sh:ed on an allotment and um:
03        (.) we belie:ve there are needles in it.=Syringes.
04            (0.8)
05   E:   #O#↑:h:.
06            (0.3)
07   E:   Oh: righ:t.=.hHH wu[l:,
08   C:                        [I I d- I mean I couldn't (.) I am
09        <tol:d this, I have not opened the door: and gone in
10        m[yself.(    )
11   E:    [Wu:ll it's not something that I would ↑deal with:.=I
12        mean: .hHH uh you could speak to the clean:sing department¿
13            (0.2)
14   E:   W:e're an enforcement um:: .hh section here.
15            (0.5)
16   E:   In environmental health.=So we enf:-
17        [we    do      enforcement.
18   C:   [Righ:t.=>So the< p'lice said to speak to environmental
19        health.=
20   E:   =Y:ea::h.=Whul↓ I th- think they'd 've got it wrong,
21        .HH uh: could y'↑j'st hold on I'll just check w'a
22        colleague but .HH[h   th's not something we would do=
23   C:                    [Okay,
24   E:   =ah just a moment,

       ((E consults with colleague - 1min 29secs))

25   E:   She ((E's colleague)) suggests you speak to:: .hh the
26        cleansing department, [they do pick them up from: .hhh=
27   C:                         [Mm hm,
28   E:   =(.) uh:: (.) y'know, <public la:n:d but um:: .hh from
29        private land (.) you might have to ↑pay y'see:,
30   C:   Righ:t,
31   E:   U:m::: or else they can put you in touch with: (0.4)
32        someone who: (.) y'know, (0.4) I (don't) they used t'do
33        these needle ↑exchange places¿ .hh run by the health
```

```
34          authority?=They used to g[o'nd pick them up¿=
35  C:                              [Oh,
36  E:  [=.hh so:,
37  C:  [.HHh Really.
38      (.)
39  E:  <Yeah.
40          (0.4)
41      ((C is transferred))
```

C reports she has been referred by an unnamed TPA, and outlines the nature of her reason for
calling (lines 1-3). Note the subsequent 0.8 second gap (line 4), indicating something
interactionally problematic, before E's prosodically 'pumped up' surprise token "#O#↑:h:."
(line 5), not only signalling news, but *unexpected* news (see Local, 1996; Wilkinson &
Kitzinger, 2006). Following a 0.3 second gap, E formulates and extends the news receipt with
"Oh: righ:t.", before initiating a well-prefaced, potentially non-straightforward, response
(Schegloff & Lerner, 2009). C's turn, in partial overlap, observably removes the burden of
accountability for calling, claiming she was informed of the problem (lines 8-9), and that she
has not seen syringes herself (line 9-10).

E issues the rejection component – "Wu:ll it's not something that I would ↑deal
with:." (line 11). Observe the well-preface in E's previously abandoned turn. Also, the modal
'would', indicating a "back-dated predictability" in terms the scripted response regarding
such a social problem (Edwards, 2006, p. 475). In contrast to the mediation calls in which
declining to offer aid is implicit through a projected course of action (maybe you should do
X), the rejection here is explicit (I can't do X). A further contrast is the sequential position of
the TPA signposting – here, occurring in the *same* not later turn, with the modal-designed
('could') referral "you could speak to the clean:sing department¿" (line 12). Similarly with
the mediation calls however, is the inclusion of the service remit as an accountable element
for not offering aid – "W:e're an enforcement um:: .hh section here." (line 14). Note the shift
from the singular institutional category "I" (line 11) to the plural "W:e're"; in so doing,
underlining the institutionality of what the service is, and by implication, not what it is not.
This is further reinforced with the turn-final "here"; *locating* E within an organisational
setting.

Following a hearably problematic reformulation of the service's remit (lines 16-17), C
displays resistance to the implication of being in contact with the wrong service by indicating
she has been referred into the present one (line 18-19) (see Chapter 5). In turn, E responds

with a subject-side assessment of the referral decision (Edwards & Potter, 2017), before indicating a consultation with a colleague; which ends up as a way of ratifying the original rejection (lines 21-22). On returning to the call, E's decision (both to signpost, and the service that would best help) is endorsed via the reporting of a colleague's summation (lines 25-26), a description of how the cleansing department can help (lines 26, 28-29), and possibly other organisations (lines 31-34). The caller is subsequently transferred directly following the end of this extract. A point to note here, is that the signposting itself is framed as something E's colleague may have proposed, rather than E herself - in this way, removing the accountability for *not* personally offering assistance within the remit of this service, whilst offering (or relaying) information relevant to how other organisations can help.

Extract 6.13 shows how the activity of signposting can be ratified as potentially an 'institutional' decision, which may work to shore up a call-taker evaluation of C's reason for calling. In Extract 6.14, C is calling to report a similar concern with syringes being discarded, this time in a woodland area near C's house.

Extract 6.14: EH-51

```
01   C:   Uh >I was wond'rin< is there: (.) d'you know if there's
02        a significant problem up there or no:t.
03            (0.2)
04   E:   Ooh I couldn't ↑tell yer.
05            (.)
06   E:   Um::,
07   C:   Coz I was a- advised by the p'lice to phone up the
08        council.
09   E:   Mcht Y:[e a : h.
10   C:          [(  )council's responsibility to clean it up.
11            (1.1)
12   E:   R:ight.=Okay, I think you need to go to d- #uh# th-
13        the cleans↑ing department then coz we would[n't clean=
14   C:                                              [Yeh,
15   E:   =it up, we're en[vironmental health.
16   C:                   [Yeah well (the ↑young-) th' young lady
17        receptionist didn't know who to speak [to so she >put=
18   E:                                          [Oh: huh
19   C:   =me through< to yours(h)elf.
20   E:   =£Heh .HHH I always seem to come through h(h)er(h)e£=
21        .HHh=
```

```
22  C:  =Yeh.
23  E:  U:m:: tcht (0.4)M::m:. mcht UH: well it would probably
24      be the cleansing if it's if it's council l:and then the
25      cleansing would go round there.=They'd be able to tell
26      you whether they've got a problem round there:¿
27  C:  Yeh.=.hh [Are you able to transfer me then or:,
28  E:           [Um::,
29  E:  I'll try for you, just a [↑moment,
30  C:                           [Y e s   >thankyou.<
        ((Call is transferred))
```

The example starts with C orienting to E's knowledge regarding syringes being discarded (lines 2-3), and E's displayed lack of knowledge on the matter (line 4). C produces a TPA referral which may be a way of legitimising his initial request – "Coz I was a- advised by the p'lice to phone up the council." (lines 7-8). In this way, C's turn marks out E as responsible for the concern – E works for *the council* – which C reinforces, in that it is the "council's responsibility to clean it up." (line 10). The subsequent 1.1 second gap indicates something interactionally problematic, which, in contrast to the previous example, may account for the high-entitlement *declarative* form of signposting – "R:ight.=Okay, I think you need to go to d- #uh# th- the cleans↑ing department then" (lines 12-13). Essentially, the declarative "you need", although mitigated with the hedged "I think", projects C's course of action as lacking agency, compared to "you could speak to" (line 12) in Extract 6.13. Observe also, how the service and its remit is designed by E - "coz we wouldn't clean it up, we're environmental health." (lines 13, 15); constructed as a category that E is informing C about, in terms of an entitlement to tell, but also, something to be treated as knowable by C. Further, note how the institutional category 'we' is foregrounded in this case, in contrast to 'I' in to the previous example – although 'I' is institutional, these variances potentially display the divergence of personable engagement with the caller's concern.

The caller's problem is marked out as a special case that does not fall under the remit of the environmental health service - they would not clean *it* up. This type of turn design by E seemingly orients to C's prior talk with the partial repeat – it is the "council's responsibility to clean it up." (line 10). It is notable the ways in which institutions (or parts of institutions) can be indexed in order to underpin, reject, or account for the case for aid. Observe how 'the council' is treated by both participants as unproblematic, in terms of ways of referring to the same service, before 'cleansing' (signposting) and 'environmental health' (service remit) are

specific to the rejection of aid by E. However, C indexes another element with the person reference "th' young lady receptionist" (lines 16-17), as a way of accounting for being put through to ostensibly the wrong department with "didn't know who to speak to so she >put me through< to yours(h)elf" (line 17, 19). The point is that E and C seemingly orient to different institutional categories and identities, in the course of building or rejecting the case for assistance. Note the complainable by E – potentially implying blame for C being wrongly transferred as resting with the receptionist (line 20). As with Extract 6.13, a TPA's remit is described (lines 23-26), and also, no offer is volunteered. It is only following a request from C (line 27), that E transfers the call.

Extract 6.14 shows how signposting can be designed in ways that do not involve an offer, and further, can remove accountability for not helping, within the service's remit. In the final environmental health case, C is calling with privacy concerns relating to a neighbour who has installed a CCTV camera which overlooks C's property.

Extract 6.15: EH-103

```
01   C:   Um:, (0.4) I've h↑ad a word with the p'lice about it,
02        (0.3) mcht .h and they said th've (.) spoken to him an'
03        he assures them that it's not seeing into my (0.3)
04        house or bedroom, .h b[ut y'know th- nobody's seen it=
05   E:                        [Mm,
06   C:   =of course but I didn't know whether there w- (.)
07        y'know it was allowed to be put in a position where you
08        see it from (0.2) y'[know (0.2) your (.) lounge.
09   E:                       [HHHhhh      Tsk
10        (1.0)
11   E:   .hhh[h AHh:. not sure that's something that we would=
12   C:       [(                                           )
13   E:   =↑deal with but certainly I'll .hH pass it on to one of
14        our officers but I'm not sure th't it comes within our
15        r[em↑i:t so .hHH it's a bit of a do↑dgy one that o n e.
16   C:    [Right (                                ) I know.

((C indexes solicitor, gives personal details – omitted for brevity))

17   E:   Have ye spoken to your solicitor.
18        (.)
19   C:   Well I am s:eeing him,=
```

```
20   E:  =M:m:. I think if you've already got (0.2) y'know, .hh
21       have you got Legal Aid with y'solici[tor.
22   C:                                      [No:. I haven't.=
23   E:  =Oh y' haven't.=N[o:.
24   C:                   [No:.=I'm havin' to pay for it.

((C relays further solicitor details- omitted for brevity))

25   E:  <Wull leave ↑it with me anyway but (.) as I s[ay: uh=
26   C:                                                [Yeh.
27   E:  =Are you still in: .Hh <touch with your solicitor.
28          (.)
29   E:  Did you say you're gonna see he[r this afternoon.
30   C:                                 [I   r e a l l y
31       h:opefully this wee:k.=
32   E:  Ah: right.=Wull ah: a- (0.2) [th:at's something yer=
33   C:                               [(No:.)
34   E:  =need to talk to him ↑about r[eally,
35   C:                               [Right.
```

The example begins with C reporting previous contact with police and the assurances given from the neighbour that the camera's position did not pose a privacy threat (lines 1-4). Note how C subsequently shifts to a position of stance-taking with "but y'know th- nobody's seen it of course" (lines 4, 6), which attends to her neighbour's motivation, but also, implicitly marks out the police's interpretation of what the neighbour has relayed to them. In the following stretch of talk, C orients to matters of law with "but I didn't know whether there w- (.) y'know it was allowed to be put in a position where you see it from (0.2) y'know (0.2) your (.) lounge." (lines 6-8), which explicitly pushes back on the police's (lack of) action – the camera should not be put there.

The initial rejection component occurs in next sequential position, and shares similar grammatical properties (the modal, dispositional design) with Extract 6.13, with "AHh:. not sure that's something that we would ↑deal with" (lines 11, 13). However, unlike Extract 6.13, E does not subsequently signpost C elsewhere, electing to *offer* assistance "but certainly I'll .hH pass it on to one of our officers" (lines 13-14). Yet, this a caveated with a more explicit rejection of aid – "but I'm not sure th't it comes within our rem↑i:t" (lines 14-15) – essentially, orienting to what the *service* does not provide ('our remit') rather than what E generally offers ('we would'). Note also, how E marks out C's concern as a special case –

"it's a bit of a do↑dgy one that one." (line 15). The indexing of a solicitor by C subsequently provides E the opportunity to steer C away from the service, with "I think if you've already got (0.2) y'know, .hh have you got Legal Aid with yer solicitor." (lines 20-21). Significantly, following C's disclosure of not having legal aid, E produces a conditional, non-specific offer – "<Wull leave ↑it with me anyway but (.) as I say:" (line 25). However, the offer seemingly frames the proposal that C makes contact with the solicitor (lines 32, 34). In this way, by producing idiomatic, general help terms (e.g., 'leave it with me') rather than what is explicitly offerable, may be a way of demonstrating that the service could offer assistance if the caller's concern was fitted to the service contacted. Thus, the action of offering can be seen as a flexible device for *rejecting* a case for aid within the signposting activity - marking out the grantability of assistance by the service, contrasted with the needs of the caller.

The environmental heath cases above demonstrate the activity of signposting can, in contrast to mediation calls, be designed in more explicit, direct ways. The examples also show how the *offering* can be a device for showing the grantability of assistance, but also, the rejection of it. Signposting to other services also occurred as an outcome of inquiries to the antisocial behaviour service, which is the focus of the next section.

6.2.3 Signposting in antisocial behaviour services
In this section, I show how signposting is designed in calls for assistance to antisocial behaviour services. In Extract 6.16, C has called to report noise and property damage from a neighbour.

Extract 6.16: AC-26
```
01   A:   Righ:t okay.=An- an how long has it- <do they ow:n
02        their property?
03   C:   Nao::¿ it's rented off you:, they are your tenants.=
04   A:   =It's a local authority property is it okay.[.HHHhh=
05   C:                                               [˚Yeh˚
06   A:   =Okay- >in the< f:↑irst in:stance what I- what I- I
07        need to do is direct your complaint through >to the<
08        h:ousing office, .hh because any complaints relating to
09        council tenants in the first instance need t- to be
10        passed to the h:ousing officer for the area.=.hh mcht
11        .hhh uh are you an ↑owner occupier Mrs Johnson or are
12        you a (.) local au[thorit-
13   C:                     [No I'm a council.
```

```
14   A:   You're a council tenant.=D'you have a ↑contact number.
```

The extract follows a brief outlining of the trouble by C, and starts with A requesting occupancy information about C's neighbours – "An- an h<u>ow</u> long has it- <do they <u>ow</u>:n their property?" (lines 1-2), which is relevant for setting up the conditions for the eligibility of service provision. Observe the repair from a pursuit of a *caller-side* account, seemingly regarding the length of time the problem has been occurring, indicating a move to institutional business regarding C's occupancy details (see Chapter 4). In response, note how C makes A institutionally accountable by using 'you/your' category-relevant descriptions - "it's r<u>e</u>nted off y<u>ou</u>:, they are your t<u>e</u>nants." (line 3). This is repaired by A with the more precise "It's a local auth<u>o</u>rity property is it ok<u>ay</u>." (line 4), which not only corrects C, but tacitly distances A from any implied responsibility. This more explicit service description serves to frame the signposting component "Okay- >in the< f:↑<u>i</u>rst in:stance what I- what I- I n<u>ee</u>d to do is d<u>i</u>rect your complaint through >to the< h:<u>ou</u>sing office," (lines 6-8) – notably, designed as an 'announcement-offer' (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). In contrast to the mediation and environmental health calls, here, the signposting of C to a TPA is more procedural. Note the declarative 'I need to', and how C's trouble is marked out as a *complaint,* which projectably, may be the kind of call dealt with in other services. Observe how A gives an account for the rejection (lines 8-10), before moving onto further *service-side* matters (lines 11-12). As with the environmental health call in Extract 6.14, co-participants orient to different institutional categories for ostensibly the same service, as a way of building the case for aid, or rejecting it. Further, note the listing format ('first'), which may be a way of implicitly designing a rejection – first implies that aid might be offered at a future stage, or rather, that the housing office may be the first stage in an institutional process (see Atkinson, 1984; Heritage & Greatbatch, 1986).

Extract 6.16 shows how signposting can be explicitly framed as an offer. In the next example, C is calling to report verbal and physical abuse towards her son from the child next door.

Extract 6.17: AC-7
```
01   A:   So you're both council tenant[s  okay.=.HHHh in=
02   C:                               [˚Yeah˚
03   A:   =i- in the f:irst instance y- y- your complaint (.)
04        really needs >to be< dealt with by the housing officer.
05        =And that's not a problem I'll relay all o'the
```

```
06         informatio[n to her.
07   C:            [Y:eah, I've already spoken to her t- well
08        I've already made a complaint this mornin' an' she's
09        rang me an' I've got to go in an' see her on Fri- on
10        Thursday at [half past eleven.
11   A:            [Righ:t.
```

The extract starts with the conformation-seeking request regarding C's and the neighbour's
occupancy status (line 1), which is similar to Extract 6.16, in that it marks out the eligibility
of what the service provides. Following C's confirming "˚Yeah˚" (line 2) in overlap, A
moves to signpost C to a TPA, with "in the f:irst instance y- y- your complaint (.) really needs
>to be< dealt with by the housing officer." (line 3-4). Note the similarities in turn
components with A's signposting turn in the previous extract – the turn-initial list format, the
marked *your complaint*, and the declarative *need*. Further, both cases show how the activity
of signposting is framed by establishing the grounds for assistance to be rejected, through an
orientation to C's status as a particular type of occupant, requiring a particular type of
service. However, unlike the previous extract, an *offer* is made to C subsequent to the
signposting – "And that's not a problem I'll relay all o' the information to her." (lines 5-6).
While a case could be made that this kind of post-signposting offer is similar to an earlier
environmental health example ("I'll .hH pass it on to one of our officers"; Extract 6.15), in
this case, the offer is framed as already ratified – "And that's not a problem…" (line 5). Note
how C gives an account of past contact with the housing officer (lines 7-10), which may be a
way of countering the implication that the TPA revealed in the signposting is an unknown
service to C, by revealing her own epistemic stance on the matter (Heritage, 2013).

Extract 6.17 demonstrates how signposting can be designed in ways that feature offers
subsequent to the signposting element. More broadly, so far this chapter has shown the
ambiguity with which offering and signposting activities are constructed, the flexibility by
which actions are used, and how indeed, actions are categorised. In the final example, C has
contacted the service to report noise from next door.

Extract 6.18: AC-17
```
01   A:   R:ight okay.=So y- as yet you haven't he[ard from=
02   C:                                          [No::.
03   A:   =the l[ocal beat officer.= <Have you left any:=
04   C:         [No:.
```

```
05   A:   =.HHh #umg# or have you made any complaints to
06        environmental health in respect of the
07        nui[sance noi:se.=.hhh Okay, th- th- th:ey would=
08   C:      [N:o:.
09   A:   =be your f:irst points of ca:ll really.=Tha- that
10        complaint of nuisance noise n:eeds to be directed to
11        the environmental health.=.HHh um office which I will
12        do on your beh:alf:, [.hh but they probably want to Hh=
13   C:                        [Yeh,
14   A:   =contact you an' take some further infor[mation f:rom=
15   C:                                            [Yeah,
16   A:   =you.
```

In Extract 6.18, A pursues details of previous service-referral efforts (see Chapter 5) C may
have made to report her concerns with "have you made any complaints to environmental
health in respect of the nuisance noi:se." (lines 5-7). Notably, in contrast to previous research
on 'self-helping' in a mediation context, where call-takers typically respond with a 'have you
called X?' designed pursuit to callers volunteering other people or services (Edwards &
Stokoe, 2007), here, a TPA is specifically nominated by the call-taker as a service C might
have previously contacted. Further, it is the first mention of 'environmental health' in the
call. As with the previous antisocial behaviour examples, the signposting element - "th:ey
would be your f:irst points of ca:ll really.=Tha- that complaint of nuisance noise n:eeds to be
directed to the environmental health." (lines 7, 9-11) - comprises several similar components,
such as the list format, the marked *complaint* action, and the declarative *needs* (which may be
a device for managing potential resistance). Observe also, the *offer* by A (lines 1-12), as with
the previous example. As a general point, it might be that, in contrast to the two prior
extracts, the TPA rather than property occupancy, is indexed as a way of framing a rejection
of assistance, through marking out C as accountable for *not* contacting the service she is
subsequently signposted to.

6.2.4 Summary

In this section, I have examined how call-takers from mediation, environmental health, and
antisocial behaviour services go about signposting callers to TPAs. In mediation calls, call-
takers may produce upshots of caller troubles, which frame the rejection of assistance.
Rejections were typically softened or hedged, with TPAs not indexed initially. Significantly,
offers were sometimes designed subsequent to signposting elements. In this way, what is

offerable (service-side) and what is required (caller-side) are commonly produced as ways of accounting for a rejection. By contrast, in environmental health calls, institutionality was recipient designed as ways of removing accountability for rejecting to case for aid. Rejections of aid were sometimes 'well'-prefaced and designed in terms of what call-takers normatively do, through modal verbs such as 'would' – in this way, categorising C's trouble as an instance of a type of problem that projects a course of action in scripted, expectable way. Rejections were typically formatted as what the service could *not* do, and TPA signposting typically occurred in close proximity, in the same turn. Offering was produced in ways that displayed grantability of aid, and sometimes as a way of rejecting it. In antisocial behaviour calls, the institutionality of *caller status* (home occupancy) typically served to frame the grounds for the rejection of assistance. Signposting was sometimes overtly designed as an offer. Occasionally, offers were produced subsequent to signposting elements. The rejection sequence was commonly initiated with a listing type format, and *declaratives* (such as 'need') were utilised – in this way, displaying *more* certainty in the grantability of assistance by a TPA, in contrast with environmental health, and especially mediation service calls. Call-takers regularly marked out caller troubles as TPA-relevant *complaints* yet offers were sometimes made after the rejection of aid had been established.

6.3 Discussion

In the final analytic chapter, I have shown that and how different outcomes occur when members of the public contact mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services to report neighbourhood problems. Offers and signposting (and rejections) were recipient designed such that we learn about institutions and their remits for service provision through the negotiation of entitlements and obligations. This chapter has illustrated how institutions establish grounds for service provision through the recruitment of callers' accounts of their troubles, and the various ways in which callers accept and resist service outcomes. More broadly, this chapter, as with the preceding analytic chapters, has revealed how the various features of service provision are typically (but not always) designed by participants through the co-management of calls in which neighbourhood concerns are reported.

The analysis reveals that, when making an *offer* of assistance, mediation service call-takers designed offers as constitutive of implicit procedural activities – made relevant *as* offers through both pre-announcements and queries. Ostensibly ambiguous talk was treated by participants *as* offering through next-turn-proof-procedure; making callers accountable for

either accepting or rejecting an offer. Negatively-valanced talk discouraged uptake of an offer. In calls to environmental health services, offers were typically framed by requests for callers' details, and designed as a division of labour - projecting a future course of action by other professionals in conjunction with requests for callers to take action. Failing to indicate what happens next, led to the caller burden with moving the call forward (which was a pervasive feature in this data set). Offers in calls to antisocial behaviour services, were designed as conditional if/then formulations and in this way, displaying events as regular and logically the thing to do. Modal use illustrated how lower and higher commitment offers were designed – can/could (higher commitment) and will (lower commitment). As a general point, offers in these institutions were designed in ways which demonstrated a flexibility with which service provision was delivered, depending on the service contacted.

A common feature across all three services was that the practice of *signposting* was bound up with *rejecting* the case for aid, which as has been revealed, is quite different to the signposting literature mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. In mediation calls, callers' troubles were commonly reformulated, which served to frame subsequent (and observably hedged) rejections of assistance. Typically, when signposting, TPAs were *not* initially named. When accounting for a rejection, *institutionality* (service remits or caller requirements), were invoked by call-takers. In environmental health calls, rejections were regularly well-prefaced, and designed in normative terms. Call-takers commonly indexed what the service did *not* assist with, as a strategy of rejecting the case for aid. Signposting to TPAs was typically produced in the same turn. In antisocial behaviour calls, occupancy status of callers framed grounds for rejecting the case for aid. Rejection design regularly included a listing type format, and the use of declaratives. The *complainability* of troubles was sometimes oriented to by call-takers as a device for signposting callers to TPAs.

As a general observation, the *offers* identified above expose the difficulty in categorising what an offer is (Enfield & Sidnell, 2017). This question is significant for developing understanding how actions can be categorised, and indeed, how action-relevant activities are negotiated (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014) - in turn, revealing the ambiguity and flexibility of offering (and other actions), as produced and oriented to by participants, through the co-management of the call. For instance, I have shown how offers can be performed over single turns, or as part of extended ordered activities; as collaborative courses of action or produced as conditionally bound to callers' future actions. A broader question may be to consider what conduct is described as, and whether *offering* is doing offering, or some other interactional activity as described by participants – '*passing* it through' (Extract 6.4), 'get a

204

case officer *allocated*' (Extract 6.5), or '*consider putting* cameras up' (Extract 6.8) (see Sidnell, 2017). Conversely, other activities constitute *doing* offering. A common feature in mediation calls is an absence of what might be characterised as an offer altogether and is treated by participants as an offer by the surrounding talk – significantly, in a way which may be appropriate for the service being contacted. This type of implicit offering activity might be considered as conduct that can serve as projecting an *intersubjective* stance between members, in the sense that "actors co-ordinate their actions in terms of putatively shared knowledge of their circumstances and, in many cases, shared knowledge of the range of considerations which may influence choices among courses of action" (Heritage, 1984b, p. 23).

Further, the analysis reveals a 'fuzzy' distinction between *an offer* and other activities, in terms of callers being *beneficiaries* and call-takers being *benefactors* (Couper-Kuhlen, 2014; Hofstetter & Stokoe, 2015). For example, in environmental health calls, *division of labour* formulations mark out what is requestable of the caller, and offerable by the call-taker (Couper-Kuhlen & Etelämäki, 2014). In antisocial behaviour calls, offers are conditional on whether future event will occur, demonstrating no ostensible benefit to the caller in that service, but a reliance on other factors outside their control (Edwards, 1994, 1995; Jefferson, 2004a). A feature of mediation calls is the *agency* afforded to callers, which, in turn, marks out the accountability of callers acquiescing to the offer, rather than the business of offering itself. This observation highlights an important point about the management of psychological matters – particularly the degree to which caller agency is allocated across these different services (see Chapter 3); how it can be built up by call-takers, and undermined by callers (Edwards & Potter, 1992a). Matters of agency, action description and ascription, beneficiaries and benefactors, and intersubjectivity, can be ambiguously designed, occurring along a *continuum* of other possible activities and actions (Sacks, 1992b). And so, a way of accounting for this 'fuzziness' might be to consider offers (or other actions) as attending to troubles in delicate ways by those (i.e., call-takers) who are incumbent in different categories, with different obligations and restrictions in the provision of service.

In contrast to extensive DP/CA research on *offering*, previous studies which have examined the practice of *signposting* (which does offering) are largely absent. And so, situating my analysis within the broader framework of scholarly inquiry is a different task to the case with *offers*. While analysis unpacked the different strategies call-takers used to signpost callers to TPAs, a pervasive feature across services was that callers' ostensible reasons for calling were *rejected*, which were designed in distinctive ways. Previous research

on the non-granting of requests, in airline booking service encounters, showed the ways in which customers' expectations were covertly shaped ahead of a rejection, leading customers to request something grantable by the service (Lee, 2011). In my data, callers contacted mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services report a neighbourhood problem (or problems), that systematically result in either a granting or non-granting, rather than interlocutors "(re)specifying a particular component in agreement with what agents can grant." (Lee, 2011, p. 121). However, a common feature of signposting across services was the inclusion of offer components, after callers were signposted elsewhere. And so it might be that offering is produced in ways that call-takers re-specify what *is* grantable, through the unfolding of the signposting sequence in calls to these services. In turn, this highlights the need to have a more flexible approach to action categorisations.

Another common element revealed in signposting in these services, is *rejecting* the case for aid, and the extent to which call-takers attend to the *interactional delicacy* of the unfolding business at hand. For instance, in mediation services, troubles are reformulated, serving to soften or mitigate subsequent non-grantings. In environmental calls, rejections are typically well-prefaced, indicating the potential non-straightforwardness of following talk. Antisocial behaviour call-takers often frame rejections by projecting the non-grantability of assistance in the present service. In this way, rejections are somewhat *shaped* in respect of troubles tellers, even if no subsequent offer is produced. And so, rejections of assistance may be designed in various ways that attend to *avoiding dispreference* in the face of requests for help and the subsequent delivery of unwelcome news (Curl & Drew, 2008; Schegloff, 1988).

It is notable that call-takers in these different services reveal their *stance* towards the prospect of *signposting* callers to TPAs, as shown (or not) through the development of gist of earlier talk – essentially, summaries that display a candidate understanding of some prior talk (Heritage & Watson, 1979). This is most clearly oriented to in mediation calls – for instance, 'so you're wanting to know…' (Extract 6.10), 'so what you're saying is…' (Extract 6.11). This type of turn design is comparable to related research that examines *recipient formulations* of caller troubles in pursuing solutions in mediation settings (Stokoe & Sikveland, 2016). The ways in which clients' expectations are framed are evidently relevant for the service being contacted, as this chapter shows. It may be that the design of *rejections* and *signposting* are oriented to the *grantability* of assistance by a particular institution. Yet, compared to other services in the corpus, there is rather *less* signposting out of mediation agencies to TPAs. And so, within the course of callers being referred in and out of different institutions, mediation services may typically be the last service contacted by callers (see

Stokoe, 2013; Stokoe & Edwards, 2009). In this way, call-takers in mediation services may treat the practice of signposting as a more *accountable* matter. And so, while callers may design their talk as practices for "discovering if anybody cares" (Sacks, 1992b, p. 32), call-takers may orient to callers having *unresolved troubles*, in the sense that help is *not* offered when it is sought.

Chapter 7:
Discussion and Conclusions

7.0 Introduction

The aim of this thesis was to make a significant contribution to our knowledge of service provision, and how people went about resolving issues in their neighbourhoods. To do that, I examined recordings of telephone calls between members of the public and mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services. I have provided the first comparative analysis of requests for help with a similar kind of problem are designed and managed across different services. Not only is the research presented in this thesis original, but also enhances how we, as conversation analysts and discursive psychologists, understand the core concepts of recipient design and institutionality as objects for analytic scrutiny.

In this chapter, I reflect on context of the thesis, locating it within the broader literature on service provision. Next, I summarise the findings from my analytic chapters. I discuss limitations of this study, such as the quality of usable data. I offer directions for future research and emphasise the relevance of extending the study of neighbourhood problems to other institutional environments – and to study the route of other social problems through different service provision. Further, I reflect on the ways in which describing and managing neighbourhood troubles in service provision sits within broader theoretical structures of social problems. Finally, I consider the potential for utilising findings as part of trainable materials, by highlighting the points in calls where observable interactional difficulties occur between participants. I offer ways of potentially improving how call-takers might mitigate caller resistance and misalignment in service provision.

7.1 Summary of thesis content

This thesis is, in the broadest terms, an examination of social problems. In Chapter 1, I unpacked the concept of 'social problem(s)', as the phenomenon under study. I provided a brief historical and etymological overview of how the terms 'social' and 'problem' were conceived, defined, and operationalised across the social sciences. I explored how the two terms were combined through a somewhat evolutionary process, before considering 'social problems' as relevant to laypeople, identity, and human characteristics (Schwartz, 1997). I then discussed the ways in which sociologists attempt to explain root causes of social

problems (Merton, 1957), or in ways that socially construct social problems as distinct from social conditions (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). In contrast to discursive psychology's focus on psychological objects *in* and *for* interaction, I showed how traditional psychologists approach social problems in terms of *causal* effect – for instance, how individuals within groups behave and interrelate through social identity (Lewin, 1947; Tajfel, 1974), or the ways in which the dysfunction of members is considered in terms of broader organisational community structures (Sarason, 1974).

Because the main driver of my research was to examine social problems as they unfold, in real talk, in settings that matter, I also located this thesis in the context of other studies that have examined how social problems are formulated in everyday and institutional settings. For example, I presented research on how teenagers and adults used membership categories to design identity, social status, and accountability of the self and others in confrontational situations (Sacks, 1979). Further, I showed how the use of modal verbs in police interviews inferred the moral claims of suspects as not disposed to commit some offence (Edwards, 2006). I argued that traditional theorists and analysts overlook the ordinary workings of day-to-day activities, choosing to focus on macro/group structures or underlying conditions of human behaviour – in this way, limiting our knowledge about *how* people go about getting things done, through inspecting its conversational machinery. And so, social problems can be revealed through members' practices by using CA methods (enhanced by DP), and that by examining the recurrent ways in which these activities are produced gives us insight about what is relevant *for* people, as they go about their everyday lives (Schegloff, 2005).

The research presented in the thesis extends earlier research on 'neighbourhood disputes', which itself enhances the wide-ranging DP/CA work on social problems as brought about through *complaints and conflict*. This highly relevant research area was examined in the subsequent section and organised into four broad themes – day-to-day troubles-telling, complaining about others, complaints in institutional contexts, and neighbourhood problems as complainable matters. I demonstrated how troubles-talk was invoked and oriented to as a *topic of inquiry* through mundane telephone calls – troubles emerged and were occasioned by speakers and recipients (Jefferson, 1988). I then showed how morality, accountability, and dispositions were designed when complaining about others (Drew, 1998; Edwards, 2005b), before reviewing literature relative to the goal-orientedness of complaining in institutional environments – for instance, call to the emergency services, in which speed and type of assistance was conditional on the call-taker's assessment of the complaint (M. R. Whalen &

Zimmerman, 1990). Last, I examined studies that explored how neighbourhood problems were revealed as complainable matters, such as how noise complaints were formulated in different ways to different institutions (Stokoe & Hepburn, 2005), or the design of racial insults in police and mediation encounters (Stokoe & Edwards, 2007). Thus, central for understanding how neighbourhood problems are reported and managed by members in the provision of service, is through the core DP/CA topic of recipient design.

A central aim of this thesis was to conduct a comparative analysis - in so doing, affording unique insights into how similar types of neighbourhood problems are designed and managed across different service encounters. I briefly critiqued the nature of doing comparative research and provided a step-by-step guide to the process I employed in forming a robust underpinning to my analytic chapters – such as establishing an action, practice, sequential environment for analytic inquiry. I considered theoretical and methodological concerns, such as making claims about a particular phenomenon's relevance for the ongoing interactions, and thus, for analytic inspection (Sidnell, 2009). I then indicated that adequate justifications for comparative analysis should be in mind when embarking on such a study, before illustrating this point by pointing to previous comparative research (e.g., Dingemanse et al., 2016; Lindström, 2009). Overall, the present study (and the analytic chapters therein) is not only uniquely merited due to the similar nature of members neighbourhood concerns, but paradoxically, warranted on the basis of the *interrelatedness* of the institutions being compared. Conversation analytic and discursive psychological literature has failed to systematically compare the relatedness (or not) of members' practices for service provision in institutional environments, and so provided the motivation for this thesis.

7.2 Thesis findings

In the first analytic chapter, I focused on what and how neighbourhood concerns are formulated at the first interactional opportunity – what is relevant for callers when initially designing their complaints? I examined how complaints about noise disturbance were recipient designed for call-takers in mediation and environmental health services. I found that initial iterations of noise complaints were formulated by callers in two recurrent ways – *agentive* (assigning accountability to neighbours) and *agent-free* (the culpability of the neighbour was omitted). A general but significant observation was that, in mediation calls, initial iterations of complaints were exclusively designed as agentive (e.g., 'it's about the neighbour'), whilst in the majority of environmental health calls, the agent-free formulation was produced (e.g., 'there's noise in the area'). These two interactional features, which

effectively launch a complaint sequence, showed the transitional arrangement between actors, agents, and objects (Halliday, 2004; Hopper & Thompson, 1980). In their own way, the formulation of these initial iterations are *recipient designed* practices for service provision – in so doing, displaying 'mediatability' (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007) or 'environmental health-ability' through the different strategies people use to formulate similar kinds of problems to different agencies. That said, the design of initial iterations, particularly in some agent-free formulations, illustrate a lack of caller knowledge regarding what the service provides (Stokoe, 2013). Further, agentive and agent-free iterations revealed the moral implications for calls – dispositional states were the focus of agentive formulations (e.g., assigning accountability and blame), whilst factual accounting (e.g., pseudo legal talk) provided for moral distinctions between right and wrong in agent-free iterations (Stokoe, 2009; Stokoe & Edwards, 2015).

In the second analytic chapter, I moved the focus from the caller's domain (initially designing the complaint), to matters for institutional redress (managing the problem). I compared the points in calls across services where institutional business emerged through *concomitant shifts* of relevant activities and categories – away from callers' experiential accounts of their concerns, to call-takers problems 'to be solved' (Jefferson & Lee, 1981). Findings showed the varied degree to which shifts oriented to callers' prior turns across services. For example, in antisocial and environmental health examples, call-taker shifts were sometimes responsive to callers' previous turns (e.g., treating talk as shift relevant), but occasionally were unmotivated (e.g., seeking callers' personal details). In mediation calls, shifts were regularly produced subsequent to 'pre-shift' summaries of callers' concerns; in so doing, facilitating the production of shifts. Overall, I argued that concomitant shifts were occasioned in ways which showed the kind of service sought by callers, and the type of assistance offered by call-takers. Shift activities were collaboratively accomplished as ways that displayed the *joint* goal orientation of service provision (Drew & Heritage, 1992a; Lee, 2009). These findings are significant for our understanding of how members formulate and respond to *the trouble* "in ways which display an orientation and sensitivity to the particular other(s) who are the coparticipants" through recipient design (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 727).

In the third analytic chapter, I moved away from the sequential environment of concomitant shifts, and towards the institutions themselves. I focused on the *interconnectedness* of services, by examining the points in calls where third-party agencies (TPAs) were invoked or oriented to by callers, as they reported their neighbourhood concerns – in particular, *service-referrals* (callers indicted they had been directed to the present service

by a TPA) and *service-mentions* (callers invoked TPAs, but not that they had been directed to the present service). In service-referrals, mediation callers typically invoked TPAs as part of previous *self-helping* actions (Edwards & Stokoe, 2007), compared to TPAs in accounts for calling (environmental health) or as part of more procedural activities (antisocial behaviour). In service-mentions, TPAs were used as part of building the case for aid in mediation calls. In calls to environmental health and antisocial behaviour services, TPAs were commonly produced as part of displaying previous efforts at problem resolution (i.e., self-helping). Overall, a common feature across services was the displays of uncertainty with what the present service provides, which is significant for understanding the production of TPAs as part of case building activities in the face of rejections in prior services encounters (Stokoe, 2013). Further, the chapter reveals and crystalizes the comparative approach to this thesis – these services do, by their nature, interconnect, and overlap in various ways, as has been shown.

In the final analytic chapter, I focused on the outcomes of calls by examining *offers* and *signposting*, as formulated activities for providing assistance with callers' neighbourhood concerns. In mediation calls, offers were designed as constitutive of implicit procedural activities (i.e., pre-offers and queries). Offers in environmental health calls were commonly framed by 'division of labour' designed requests for callers' details (Couper-Kuhlen & Etelämäki, 2014). Offers in antisocial behaviour calls were typically designed as scripted, and logically 'the thing to do' through if/then formulations. In signposting callers to TPAs, a common feature across agencies was the *rejection* of the callers' reasons for contacting the current service. In mediation calls, callers' problems were typically reformulated, serving to frame subsequent rejections of aid. In environmental health calls, the turn design in strategies for rejection usually well-prefaced, and overtly indexed what the present service could *not* assist with. In antisocial behaviour service calls, rejections were framed through procedural activities of the callers' occupancy status and listing type formats. In general, the chapter illustrated how callers' expectations were shaped ahead of the rejection (sometimes in the vehicle of an offer) and subsequent signposting and were relevant for the service contacted; in so doing, revealing the delicate ways in which *grantability* (or not) of help was recipient designed for callers. Importantly, the chapter reveals how *offering*, as an action, can be designed into the activity of rejecting the caller's case for assistance.

7.3 Research contribution

Overall, my thesis has provided the first comparative analysis across several different institutions, wherein members of the public recipient design neighbourhood concerns for services that, in one way or another, have the remit of providing assistance. The chapters above represent *a journey* through the regularly occurring interactional features involved in service provision across the corpus of neighbourhood dispute calls. Findings from the analysis have revealed the various ways in which co-participants report and negotiate neighbourhood issues – from initiation of the trouble, to service-side matters, to service interconnectedness, to call outcome. I have enhanced our understanding of the kinds of service provision that occurs in these services by examining what is significant for members as they go about complaining, accounting, negotiating, and assisting in these institutional environments.

Significantly, this thesis has provided a novel way of examining two core DP/CA topics – the ways in which utterances are formulated for others through *recipient design*, and how action, turn design, and sequence can be examined for their similarities and differences across interactional domains through *comparative analysis*. Further, I have contributed to our knowledge of the institutional identities of participants, as revealed in the interactional environments presented above. In many ways, the institutions and neighbourhood problems explored above serve as vehicles for investigating these key topics, which in turn, add to our knowledge regarding social interaction, institutional identity, and shared understanding.

7.4 Someone to turn to?

I introduced this thesis by posing the question of how people with neighbourhood problems go about getting help – who or where do they go to, to resolve their troubles? Subsequently, I explored social problems as a broad phenomenon in order to illustrate what and how such matters permeate society, social cohesion, and the study thereof. For such a culturally prevalent and enduring issue, people who have concerns about their neighbourhood and neighbours' conduct, sometimes display themselves as unsure, or having a lack of knowledge about what the current service provides, and if what the service provides, is fitted to the problem being reported. For example, when making an initial case for aid, some callers display uncertainty in how their initial turns are formulated for services (Chapter 3). Likewise, TPAs are invoked in ways that show the present call is not the first service contacted in order to resolve the problem (Chapter 5). This sense of ambiguity regarding service provision, is not only restricted to callers. Occasionally, call-takers would shift to

institutionally relevant matters on a conditional basis, or only after reformulating callers' concerns in ways which were observably unclear (Chapter 4). Further, call-takers sometimes rejected callers' cases for aid by framing rejections in the vehicle of offers (Chapter 6). And so, there is arguably a *tension* between the pervasiveness of neighbourhood problems, and society's means of resolving them.

The sense of friction in service provision can be reflected more broadly in societal structures and theories, as I discussed in Chapter 1 – particularly through the early work (c.1870) of the British philosopher John Stuart Mill, and his consideration of the moral nature of 'the social problem' within society. Mill argued that people are attentive to matters of both personal liberty (e.g., to be self-serving) and morality (e.g., to do the 'right' thing, or not) through issues of social cohesion. The practical tensions regarding which service is best placed to help with a neighbourhood concern reflects William F Poole's previously discussed concerns (c.1880). Poole considered how social justice could be applied to particular kinds of 'social problems' (e.g., hunger, homelessness) within the moral, political and economic boundaries of societal conflict and cohesion. Further themes considered in Chapter 1 are relevant for how people go about describing neighbour conduct in ways which mobilise institutional support for their claims, such as through social constructionist and rhetorical approaches to matters of discourse - ostensibly formulated in ways which seek to persuade call-takers into undertaking particular courses of (assisting) action.

The notion of social tension is significant for understanding neighbourhood problems (and the reporting thereof), as they are the kinds of issues that are, by their nature, moral constructions of everyday life – for instance, noise formulations as constituting the character of the neighbour (Chapter 3), or the ways in which call-takers are incumbent on offering a service in the face of rejecting the case for assistance (Chapter 6). The ambiguity with which service is offered (or not) is evident through callers' formulations of other services, that are commonly invoked when designing the problem – in so doing, implicitly demonstrating a failure to get help elsewhere (Chapter 5).

However, the *flexibility* of service provision, through its design and management, is perhaps not a surprising revelation, given how social problems, and particularly the findings from this thesis, reveal *how* neighbourhood troubles have been characterised for recipients. In contrast to other types of organisation (e.g., emergency services), mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services typically *can* and *do* refer and signpost to each other, as regular ways of managing the fuzziness and ambiguity of neighbourhood issues - precisely as these are the kind of troubles that can be both unclear and disputable matters,

regarding the social conduct of the self and others. In this way, displays of uncertainty or lack of knowledge by callers, might be common (or at least, not atypical) ways of callers and call-takers working through the nature of problems in these institutional encounters.

And so, the question of who to contact regarding a neighbourhood problem has been significantly addressed as a result of my comparative approach to analysis, in ways that would otherwise have been constrained. By highlighting similar and different conversational features across services, I have shown how the problem is designed for the service being contacted, who in turn, may direct a concern to an ostensibly more appropriate service. It should be underlined that the data examined in this thesis constitutes a particular interactional environment, in which institutionality is revealed and accomplished through participants' turns-at-talk, in ways that might be non-straightforward and complex to parse. Further, this study presents a unique way of comparatively examining the description and management of neighbourhood conduct, and its conversational machinery. Considering the ambiguity and flexibility with which members go about reporting and managing neighbourhood concerns, the relevance of the question might, to some degree, be explained by the posing of it. Yet, there is evidence to indicate that different institutions, as explored in this thesis, have their own remits, limitations, and ways of providing assistance. In turn, callers to these institutions routinely design their troubles for a certain kind of service, as has been illustrated in the chapters above.

7.5 Limitations and directions for future research

All research has its limitations. DP/CA research, particularly as applied in institutional environments, tends to be limited by what it can offer in addressing practical problems – for instance, communicative practices in medical interactions, which are "likely to have a comparatively modest effect on medical outcomes *per se.*" (Antaki, 2011, p. 13; italics in original). However, there have been successful ways in delivering training workshops using findings from DP/CA studies, which can be applied to findings from my thesis (see Section 7.6).

One limitation of my thesis was the rather mundane issue of lack of usable data from the antisocial behaviour dataset, in terms of both number and recording quality. This is not to say that there is an optimum number of required recordings. As with most CA research, some calls could not be used. Considered on that basis, the opportunity to investigate a dataset for a particular interactional feature such as openings is limited to the number of openings one has in the collection. In Chapter 3, in which I examined initial iterations of noise complaints in

two of the three services in the corpus, antisocial behaviour calls were omitted for this reason. However, the dataset still provided an opportunity to investigate how one of the most pervasive neighbourhood concerns (see Table 2.1) was handled by different agencies. Whether it is noise that is the focus, or a broader set of criteria, the data themselves provide for the examination of members methods for producing orderly and accountable social activities, through the conversational structure of talk, which after all, is what I consider to be the overarching endeavour of the enterprise (see Edwards & Potter, 2005; Sacks, 1992; Sacks et al., 1974).

Using CA and DP as ways of comparatively examining the corpus of telephone calls to mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services have revealed ways in which members go about designing their talk for recipients, as situated within the *goal-orientedness* of these encounters (Drew & Heritage, 1992a). Moreover, a significant finding from this thesis has been the *interconnectedness* of services, through their invocation and orientation, and how callers and call-takers manage the case for aid (Chapter 5) or go about ways of rejecting it (Chapter 6) – which in turn, establishes new ways for doing comparative research. It is also the case that services, other than those investigated in this thesis, were regularly indexed by callers and call-takers alike – such as, the police service and the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB). By examining recordings of interactions in police and CAB encounters with members of the public, future research could extend our knowledge of institutional interconnectedness in the service provision regarding similar kinds of neighbourhood problems, as designed and managed through the conversational structures of talk. In this way, members practices can be examined for their *action-ability* in terms of making the case for, and being offered, assistance across these services (see Edwards & Stokoe, 2007; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; Meehan, 1989; Whalen & Zimmerman, 1990).

As a finding of the services explored in this thesis, the interconnectedness of institutions also highlights the *unresolved* nature of past and present call outcomes – as revealed in the indexing of TPAs by callers and call-takers (Chapters 5 and 6). The 'failure' in resolving a neighbourhood problem offers unique and significant analytic insights in how callers design their concerns, and the ways in which callers are signposted to more appropriate services by call-takers. While it would not be practically possible (although not inconceivable) to track a particular unresolved neighbourhood problem as it makes its way through various services, future studies might focus on how the kinds of concerns reported above can be systematically examined for their interactional features, as callers are moved from service to service. As underlined in Chapter 6, there is very little analytic DP/CA

research in how peoples' concerns and troubles are *not* resolved in service provision – exemplified in how the case for aid is rejected through the vehicle of an offer. This is an area of research which can further enrich our knowledge of the conversational, moral, and discursive psychological features of social interaction and social cohesion, through examining how people describe and manage the very real dilemma of being caught between *pillar and post* when seeking help.

7.6 Communication training

Finally, the findings from this thesis can supplement or be designed to create communication training for practitioners in mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services. Results from previous research using CA and DP, have successfully been applied to staff training materials in a variety of institutional settings – such as UK Government departments (Drew, Toerien, Irvine, & Sainsbury, 2010), medical interactions (Heritage, Robinson, Elliott, Beckett, & Wilkes, 2007), and telephone helplines (Hepburn & Potter, 2007). However, the most relevant communication training programme for this thesis's findings, has been used in mediator training (e.g., Stokoe, 2013), and particularly the way in which it is delivered. Conversation Analytic Roleplay Method (CARM) is a way of training staff from organisations by drawing on CA insights, and presenting them directly to practitioners, in which sequences of recorded interactions are revealed in 'real-time' (Stokoe, 2011, 2014).

Below, I indicate a brief selection of conversational features that emerged from my analytic chapters and might be useful in terms of training – both in enhancing existing ways of training mediators, and in creating new training programme in other services using the CARM method.

a) Callers appear unfamiliar with what services provide. Call-takers could explain the remit of the service at or near the start of intake calls, which in turn would help triage whether concerns are fitted to the service.

b) Shifts to institutional matters are occasionally met with resistance. In response to some exemplar cases in mediation calls, call-takers from other services might provide 'pre-shift' summaries of callers' concerns before moving on to service-side matters. This would demonstrate understanding of/alignment with callers' problems and provide a smoother transition to institutional business.

c) Some uses of 'willing' demonstrate possible resistance. The production of 'would you be willing…' might get less resistance than the turn-initial 'are you willing…'. While 'would' projects a future course of action in a normative, expectable, scripted way, 'are you' is located in the present. And so, 'would' might represent a lower commitment (to a future course of action) than 'are you' (to a present course of action) - thereby being more acceptable to callers.

d) An offer may not be treated as such until a future course of action is projected and may be resisted. Call-takers should clearly explain what happens after the call has completed. Failure to do this might leave callers with the burden of driving the call forward.

It should be noted that, while the proposals for training materials have typically emerged from findings in a particular service, the suggestions above might well be applied to communication training workshops and resources across mediation, environmental health, and antisocial behaviour services. That said, in some cases this may not be possible, due to the affordances or constraints of calls in some services. For instance, meditation calls in the corpus are regularly longer than in other services, as callers are given extended interactional space to describe their neighbourhood concerns. In these cases, describing service remits at the beginning of calls (a) might restrict the telling of troubles, which in turn may limit the granting of assistance. The use of 'willing' (c) may not apply in call-taker scripts or proposals in some services, as the burden of problem resolution is potentially less with callers (e.g., taking to neighbours) and more with call-takers (e.g., sending out diary sheets). Nonetheless, similar kinds of communication training materials should be considered as providing of ways of delivering service provision *across* agencies. Particularly, as the services explored above rely on the interconnectedness to other institutions, as has been shown.

Overall, this thesis has uniquely demonstrated how neighbourhood problems are designed and managed across mediation, environmental health and antisocial behaviour services in the UK. This comparative approach to the study of social interaction has revealed new and significant features of talk that members design and orient to in the provision of service. This study extends previous research in neighbourhood disputes, but also, lays the foundations for future studies in *new* institutional settings – environmental health and antisocial behaviour services, as indicated above. This thesis has enriched our understanding of the relationships between callers to services, and call-takers from those services, as

produced through talk-in-interaction. Moreover, this thesis has enhanced our knowledge of *how* people go about doing everyday tasks, such as reporting and managing neighbourhood problems.

References

Adorno, T. W., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D. J., & Sanford, R. N. (1950). *The authoritarian personality*. New York: Harper & Row.

Albury, C., Stokoe, E., Ziebland, S., Webb, H., & Aveyard, P. (2018). GP-delivered brief weight loss interventions: A cohort study of patient responses and subsequent actions, using conversation analysis in UK primary care. *British Journal of General Practice*, (March), 1–8.

Alexander, M., Blackburn, D., & Reuber, M. (2019). Patients' accounts of memory lapses in interactions between neurologists and patients with functional memory disorders. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, *41*(2), 249–265.

Allik, M., & Kearns, A. (2017). "There goes the fear": Feelings of safety at home and in the neighborhood: The role of personal, social, and service factors. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*(4), 543–563.

Almeida, H. N. de, Albuquerque, C. P., & Santos, C. C. (2014). *Social and community meditation in Europe: Experiences and models*. Coimbra: University of Coimbra.

Antaki, C. (2011). Six kinds of applied conversation analysis. In C. Antaki (Ed.), *Applied conversation analysis: Intervention and change in institutional talk* (pp. 1–14). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Antaki, C., Barnes, R., & Leudar, I. (2007). Members' and analysts' interests: "Formulations" in psychotherapy. In A. Hepburn & S. Wiggins (Eds.), *Discursive research in practice: New approaches to psychology in interaction* (pp. 166–181). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Atkinson, J. M. (1984). *Our masters' voices: The language and body language of politics*. London: Methuen.

Atkinson, J. M., & Drew, P. (1979). *Order in court: The organisation of verbal interaction in judicial settings*.

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Beeble, M. L., Sullivan, C. M., & Bybee, D. (2011). The impact of neighborhood factors on the well-being of survivors of intimate partner violence over time. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *47*(3–4), 287–306.

Benwell, B., & Stokoe, E. (2006). *Discourse and identity*. (B. Benwell & E. Stokoe, Eds.). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality*. New York:

Doubleday.

Bernard, L. L., & Bernard, J. (1965). *Origins of American sociology*. New York: Russell & Russell.

Best, J. (2002). Constructing the sociology of social problems : Spector and Kitsuse Twenty-Five Years Later. *Sociological Forum*, *17*(4), 699–706.

Best, J., & Luckenbill, D. F. (1982). *Organizing deviance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Billig, M. (1976). *Social psychology and intergroup relations*. London: Academic Press.

Billig, M. (1987). *Arguing and thinking: A rhetorical approach to social psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Billig, M. (1988a). Common-places of the British Royal Family: A rhetorical analysis of plain and argumentative sense. *Text*, *8*(3), 191–218.

Billig, M. (1988b). Rhetorical and historical aspects of attitudes: The case of the British Monarchy. *Philosophical Psychology*, *1*(1), 83–103.

Billig, M. (1989). The argumentative nature of holding strong views: A case study. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *19*(3), 203–223.

Billig, M. (1991). *Ideology and opinions: Studies in rhetrical psychology*. London: Sage.

Billig, M. (2008). The language of critical discourse analysis: The case of nominalization. *Discourse & Society*, *19*(6), 783–800.

Billig, M. (2012). Undisciplined beginnings, academic success, and discursive psychology. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *51*(3), 413–424.

Bolden, G. B. (2006). Little words that matter: Discourse markers "So" and "Oh" and the doing of other-attentiveness in social interaction. *Journal of Communication*, *56*(4), 661–688.

Bolden, G. B. (2008). So what's up?: Using the discourse marker so to launch conversational business. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *41*(3), 302–337.

Bolden, G. B. (2009). Implementing delayed actions. In J. Sidnell (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 326–354). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bolden, G. B. (2010). "Articulating the unsaid" via and-prefaced formulations of others' talk. *Discourse Studies*, *12*(1), 5–32.

Bourdieu, P. (1992). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Boyd, N. M., & Angelique, H. (2002). Rekindling the discourse: Organization studies in community psychology. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *30*(4), 325–348.

Brenner, A. B., Zimmerman, M. A., Bauermeister, J. A., & Caldwell, C. H. (2013). Neighborhood context and perceptions of stress over time: An ecological model of neighborhood stressors and intrapersonal and interpersonal resources. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *51*(3–4), 544–556.

Brevard, J., Maxwell, M., Hood, K., & Belgrave, F. (2013). Feeling safe: Intergenerational connections and neighborhood disorganization among urban and rural African American youth. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *41*(8), 992–1004.

Brewer, M. B. (1979). In-group bias in the minimal intergroup situation: A cognitive-motivational analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *86*(2), 307–324.

Brewer, M. B. (1999). The psychology of prejudice: Ingroup love or outgroup hate? *Journal of Social Issues*, *55*(3), 429–444.

British Government. (1990). *Environmental Protection Act 1990*. London.

British Psychological Society. (2018). *Code of ethics and conduct*. Leicester, UK.

Bryan, K. S., Klein, D. A., & Elias, M. J. (2007). Applying organisational theories to action research in community settings: A case study in urban schools. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *38*(3), 383–398.

Burney, E. (2009). *Making people behave: Anti-social behaviour, politics and policy* (2nd ed.). Cullompton, Devon: Willan Publishing.

Buzinski, S. G., & Kitchens, M. B. (2016). Self-regulation and social pressure reduce prejudiced responding and increase the motivation to be non-prejudiced. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *00*(00), 1–16.

Cave, B., Fothergill, J., Gibson, G., & Pyper, R. (2017). *Health and environmental impact assessment: A briefing for public health teams in england*. London.

Cheshire, L., & Fitzgerald, R. (2015). From private nuisance to criminal behaviour: Neighbour problems and neighbourhood context in an Australian city. *Housing Studies*, *30*(1), 100–122.

Citizens Advice. (2017). Anti-social behaviour in housing. Retrieved August 11, 2017, from https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/problems-where-you-live/anti-social-behaviour-in-housing/

City of Westminster. (2017). Investigating your complaint. Retrieved August 12, 2017, from https://www.westminster.gov.uk/investigating-your-complaint

Clayman, S. E. (2010). Address terms in the service of other actions: The case of news interview talk. *Discourse & Communication*, *4*(2), 161–183.

Clayman, S. E., & Heritage, J. (2014). Benefactors and beneficiaries: Benefactive status and

stance in the management of offers and requests. In P. Drew & E. Couper-Kuhlen (Eds.), *Requesting in social interaction* (pp. 55–86). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Clift, R. (2001). Meaning in interaction: The case of actually. *Language*, *77*(2), 245–291.

Clift, R., & Holt, E. (2006). Introduction. In E. Holt & R. Clift (Eds.), *Reporting talk: Reported speech in interaction* (pp. 1–15). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Collins, H. M. (1981). What is a TRASP? The radical programme as a methodical imperative. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, *11*, 215–224.

Couper-Kuhlen, E. (2014). What does grammer tell us about action? *Pragmatics*, *24*(3), 623–647.

Couper-Kuhlen, E., & Etelämäki, M. (2014). On divisions of labor in request and offer environments. In P. Drew & E. Couper-Kuhlen (Eds.), *Requesting in social interaction* (pp. 111–140). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Courstesy Call. (n.d.). Retrieved March 5, 2018, from https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com

Cromdal, J., Landqvist, H., Persson-Thunqvist, D., & Osvaldsson, K. (2012). Finding out what's happened: Two procedures for opening emergency calls. *Discourse Studies*, *14*, 371–397.

Cromdal, J., & Osvaldsson, K. (2012). Working towards trouble: Some categorial resources for accomplishing disputes in a correctional youth facility. *Sociological Studies of Children and Youth*, *15*, 141–163.

Cromdal, J., Osvaldsson, K., & Persson-Thunqvist, D. (2008). Context that matters: Producing "thick-enough descriptions" in initial emergency reports. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *40*(5), 927–959.

Cromdal, J., Persson-Thunqvist, D., & Osvaldsson, K. (2012). "SOS 112 what has occurred?" Managing openings in children's emergency calls. *Discourse, Context and Media*, *1*(4), 183–202.

Curl, T. S. (2006). Offers of assistance: Constraints on syntactic design. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *38*(8), 1257–1280.

Curl, T. S., & Drew, P. (2008). Contingency and action: A Comparison of two forms of requesting. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *41*(2), 129–153.

D'Zurilla, T. J., & Sheedy, C. F. (1991). Relation between social problem-solving ability and subsequent level of psychological stress in college students. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *61*(5), 841–846.

Dale, P. (2004). "Like a fish in a bowl": Parents' perceptions of child protection services.

Child Abuse Review, *13*, 137–157.

Dersley, I., & Wootton, A. J. (2000). Complaint sequences within antagonistic argument. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *33*(4), 375–406.

Didier, M. (1987). Attributions in the evaluation of alternative solutions to social problems. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *127*(4), 357–365.

Dingemanse, M., Kendrick, K., & Enfield, N. J. (2016). A coding scheme for other-initiated repair across languages. *Open Linguistics*, *2*(1), 35–46.

Dollard, J., Doob, L. W., Miller, N. E., Mowrer, O. H., & Sears, R. R. (1939). *Frustration aggression*. New Haven, CT: University Press.

Donoghue, J. (2010). *Anti-social behaviour orders: A culture of control?* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., Validzic, A., Matoka, K., Johnson, B., & Frazier, S. (1997). Extending the benefits of recategorization: Evaluations, self-disclosure, and helping. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *33*(4), 401–420.

Drew, P. (1987). Po-faced receipts of teases. *Linguistics*, *25*, 219–253.

Drew, P. (1997). *'Open' class repair initiators in response to sequential sources of troubles in conversation. Journal of Pragmatics* (Vol. 28).

Drew, P. (1998). Complaints about transgressions and misconduct. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *31*(3&4), 295–325.

Drew, P. (2005a). Conversastion analysis. In K. L. Fitch & R. E. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social interaction* (pp. 71–102). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Drew, P. (2005b). Is confusion a state of mind? In H. te Molder & J. Potter (Eds.), *Conversation and cognition* (pp. 161–183). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drew, P. (2006). When documents "speak": Documents, language and interaction. In P. Drew, G. Raymond, & D. Weinberg (Eds.), *Talk and interaction in social research methods* (pp. 63–80). London: Sage.

Drew, P., & Heritage, J. (1992a). Analyzing talk at work: An introduction. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings* (pp. 3–65). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drew, P., & Heritage, J. (Eds.). (1992b). *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Drew, P., Heritage, J., Lerner, G. H., & Pomerantz, A. (2015). Introduction. In P. Drew, J. Heritage, G. H. Lerner, & A. Pomerantz (Eds.), *Talking about troubles in conversation*

(pp. 1–26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Drew, P., Toerien, M., Irvine, A., & Sainsbury, R. (2010). *A Study of Language and Communication Between Advisers and Claimants in Work Focused Interviews*. Retrieved from http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/73526/

Drew, P., & Walker, T. (2010). Citizens' emergency calls: Requesting assistance in calls to the police. In M. Coulthard & A. Johnson (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of forensic linguistics* (pp. 95–110). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Dworkin, E. R., Javdani, S., & Allen, N. E. (2016). If you build it, will they come? Explaining participation in family violence councils. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *44*(4), 442–4631.

Ecker, J., & Aubry, T. (2017). A mixed methods analysis of housing and neighbourhood impacts on community integration among vulnerably housed and homeless individuals. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*(4), 528–542.

Edwards, D. (1991). Categories are for talking: On the cognitive and discursive bases of categorization. *Theory & Psychology*, *1*(4), 515–542.

Edwards, D. (1994). Script formulations: An analysis of event descriptions in conversation. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *13*(3), 211–247.

Edwards, D. (1995). Two to tango:Script formulations, dispositions and rhetorical symmetry in relationship troubles talk. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *28*(4), 319–350.

Edwards, D. (1997). *Discourse and cognition*. London: Sage.

Edwards, D. (1998). The relevant thing about her: Social identity categories in use. In C. Antaki & S. Widdicombe (Eds.), *Identities in talk* (pp. 15–33). London: Sage.

Edwards, D. (1999). Emotion Discourse. *Culture & Psychology*, *5*(3), 271–291.

Edwards, D. (2000). Extreme case formulations: Softeners, investment, and doing nonliteral. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *33*(4), 347–373.

Edwards, D. (2004). Shared knowledge as a performative category in conversation. *Rivista Di Psicololinguistica Applicata*, *4*(2–3), 41–53.

Edwards, D. (2005a). Discursive psychology. In K. L. Fitch & R. E. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social interaction* (pp. 257–273). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Edwards, D. (2005b). Moaning, whinging and laughing: The subjective side of complaints. *Discourse Studies*, *7*(1), 5–29.

Edwards, D. (2006). Facts, norms and dispositions: practical uses of the modal verb would in

police interrogations. *Discourse Studies*, *8*(4), 475–501.

Edwards, D. (2007). Managing subjectivity in talk. In A. Hepburn & S. Wiggins (Eds.), *Discursive research in practice: New appraoches to psychology and interaction* (pp. 31–49). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, D. (2008). Intentionality and mens rea in police interrogations: The production of actions as crimes. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, *5*(2), 177–199.

Edwards, D., & Mercer, N. (1987). *Common knowledge: The development of understanding in the classroom*. London: Methuen/Routledge.

Edwards, D., & Middleton, D. (1988). Conversational remembering and family relationships: How children learn to remember. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *5*(1), 3–25.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992a). *Discursive psychology*. London: Sage.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992b). The chancellor's memory: Rhetoric and truth in discursive remembering. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, *6*(January 1989), 187–215.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1993). Language and causation: A discursive action model of description and attribution. *Psychological Review*, *100*(1), 23–41.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (2001). Discursive psychology: Introduction. In A. W. McHoul & M. Rapley (Eds.), *How to analyse talk in institutional settings: A casebook of methods* (pp. 12–24). London: Continuum International.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (2005). Discursive psychology, mental states and descriptions. In H. te Molder & J. Potter (Eds.), *Conversation and Cognition* (pp. 241–259). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (2012). Descriptions and assessments. In *Discourse, Communication and Conversation Conference, Loughborough University, 20-22 March*.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (2017). Some uses of subject-side assessments. *Discourse Studies*, *19*(5), 497–514.

Edwards, D., Potter, J., & Middleton, D. (1992). Toward a discursive psychology of remembering. *The Psychologist*, *5*, 441–446.

Edwards, D., & Stokoe, E. (2007). Self-help in calls for help with problem neighbors. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *40*(1), 9–32.

Elsey, C., Drew, P., Jones, D., Blackburn, D., Wakefield, S., Harkness, K., … Reuber, M. (2015). Towards diagnostic conversational profiles of patients presenting with dementia or functional memory disorders to memory clinics. *Patient Education and Counseling*, *98*(9), 1071–1077.

Emery, C. R., Yang, H., Kim, O., Arenas, C., & Astray, A. (2017). What would your neighbor do? An experimental approach to the study of informal social control of intimate partner violence in South Korea. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *45*(5), 617–629.

Emmison, M., & Danby, S. (2007). Troubles announcements and reasons for calling: Initial actions in opening sequences in calls to a national children's helpline. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *40*(1), 63–87.

Enfield, N. J., & Sidnell, J. (2017). On the concept of action in the study of interaction. *Discourse Studies*, *19*(5), 515–535.

Enfield, N. J., Stivers, T., Levinson, S. C., Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A., Hanks, W. F., … Senft, G. (2007). *Person reference in interaction: Linguistic, cultural, and social perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

environment. (n.d.). Retrieved September 10, 2018, from http://www.oed.com/

Firth, A., Emmison, M., & Baker, C. (2005). Calling for help: An introduction. In C. Baker, M. Emmison, & A. Firth (Eds.), *Calling for help: Language and social interaction in telephone helplines* (pp. 1–38). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Floyd, S., Rossi, G., Baranova, J., Blythe, J., Dingemanse, M., Kendrick, K., … Enfield, N. J. (2018). Universals and cultural diversity in the expression of gratitude. *Royal Society Open Science*, *5*, 1–9.

Ford, J. (2017). *Empathy in doctor patient palliative care consultations : A conversation-analytic approach*. Loughborough University.

Fox, B. A. (1987). *Discourse structure and anaphora*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., & Bachman, B. A. (1996). Revisting the contact hypothesis: The induction of a common group identity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *20*(3), 271–290.

Gardner, R. (2001). *When listeners talk: Responce tokens and listeners stance*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Gardner, R. (2007). The Right connections: Acknowledging epistemic progression in talk. *Language in Society*, *36*(3), 319–341.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Garfinkel, H. (1974). On the origins of the term "ethnomethodology." In R. Turner (Ed.), *Ethnomethodology* (pp. 115–118). Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Garland, A. F., & Besinger, B. A. (1997). Racial/ethnic differences in court referred

pathways to mental health services for children in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *19*(8), 651–666.

George, H. (1883). *Social problems*. New York: Henry George.

Gibson, S. (2019). *Arguing, obeying and defying: A rhetorical perspective on Stanley Milgram's obediance experiments. Arguing, Obeying and Defying*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gilbert, G. N., & Mulkay, M. (1984). *Opening Pandora's box: A sociological analysis of scientists' discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Behavior in public places: Notes on the social organization of gatherings*. New York: The Free Press.

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

Goffman, E. (1983). The interaction order. *American Sociological Review*, *48*(1), 1–17.

Goldthorpe, J. H. (2000). *On sociology: Numbers, narratives, and the intergration of research and theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hacohen, G., & Schegloff, E. A. (2006). On the preference for minimization in referring to persons: Evidence from Hebrew conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *38*(8), 1305–1312. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2006.04.004

Halevy, N., Chou, E. Y., Cohen, T. R., & Bornstein, G. (2010). Relative deprivation and intergroup competition. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *13*(6), 685–700.

Halkowski, T. (2006). Realizing the illness: Patients' narratives of symptom discovery. In J. Heritage & D. W. Maynard (Eds.), *Communication in medical care: Interaction between primary care physicians and patients* (pp. 86–114). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Halliday, M. A. K. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). London: Hodder Arnold.

Hannah, M. G. (2000). *Governmentality and the mastery of territory in nineteenth-century America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hepburn, A. (2004). Crying: Notes on description, transcription, and interaction. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *37*(3), 251–290.

Hepburn, A. (2005). "You're not takin'' me seriously": Ethics and asymmetry in calls to a child protection helpline." *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, *18*(3), 253–274.

Hepburn, A., & Bolden, G. B. (2014). The conversation analytic approach to transcription. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The Handbook of conversation analysis* (pp. 56–76).

Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Hepburn, A., & Potter, J. (2007). Crying Receipts: Time, Empathy, and Institutional Practice. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *40*, 89–116.

Hepburn, A., & Potter, J. (2011). Designing the recipient: Managing advice resistance in institutional settings. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *74*(2), 216–241.

Hepburn, A., & Wiggins, S. (2007). Discursive research: Themes and debates. In A. Hepburn & S. Wiggins (Eds.), *Discursive research in practice: New appraoches to psychology and interaction* (pp. 1–38). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heritage, J. (1984a). A change-of-state token and aspects of its sequestial placement. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis* (pp. 299–345). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heritage, J. (1984b). *Garfinkel and ethnomethodology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Heritage, J. (2005). Conversation analysis and institutional talk. In K. L. Fitch & R. E. Sanders (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social interaction* (pp. 149–171). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Heritage, J. (2011). Conversation analysis: Practices and methods. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: Theory, method and practice* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Heritage, J. (2013). Action formation and its epistemic (and other) backgrounds. *Discourse Studies*, *15*(5), 551–578.

Heritage, J. (2014). Epistemics in conversation. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis* (pp. 370–394). Oxford: Blackwell.

Heritage, J., & Atkinson, J. M. (1984). Introduction. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis* (pp. 1–16). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heritage, J., & Clayman, S. E. (2010a). Dimensions of institutional talk. In *Talk in action: Interactions, identities, and institutions* (pp. 34–50). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Heritage, J., & Clayman, S. E. (2010b). Gatekeeping and entitlement to emergency service. In J. Heritage & S. E. Clayman (Eds.), *Talk in action: Interactions, identities, and institutions* (pp. 69–86). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Heritage, J., & Greatbatch, D. (1986). Generating applause: A study of rhetoric and response at party political conferences. *American Journal of Sociology*, *92*(1), 110–157.

Heritage, J., & Raymond, G. (2005). The terms of agreement: Indexing epistemic authority and subordination in talk-in-interaction. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *68*(1), 15–38.

Heritage, J., & Robinson, J. D. (2006). Accounting for the visit: Giving reasons for seeking

medical care. In J. Heritage & D. W. Maynard (Eds.), *Communication in medical care: Interaction between primary care physicians and patients* (pp. 48–85). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heritage, J., Robinson, J. D., Elliott, M. N., Beckett, M., & Wilkes, M. (2007). Reducing patients' unmet concerns in primary care: The difference one word can make. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, *22*(10), 1429–1433.

Heritage, J., & Sefi, S. (1992). Dilemmas of advice: Aspects of the delivery and reception of advice in interactions between healh visitors and first-time mothers. *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*, 359–417.

Heritage, J., & Sorjonen, M.-L. (1994). Constituting and maintaining activities across sequences: And-prefacing as a feature of question design. *Language in Society*, *23*, 1–29.

Heritage, J., & Stivers, T. (1999). Online commentary in acute medical visits: A method of shaping patient expectations. *Social Science and Medicine*, *49*, 1501–1517.

Heritage, J., & Watson, D. R. (1979). Formulations as conversational objects. In G. Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology* (pp. 123–162). New York: Irvington Publishers.

Hester, S. (1998). Describing "deviance" in school: Recognizably educational psychological problems. In C. Antaki & S. Widdicombe (Eds.), *Identities in talk* (pp. 133–150). London: Sage.

Hewstone, M., Rubin, M., & Willis, H. (2002). Intergroup bias. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *53*(1), 575–604.

Hill, T. D., Ross, C. E., & Angel, R. J. (2005). Neighborhood disorder, psychophysiological distress, and health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *46*(2), 170–186.

Hoey, E. M. (2014). Sighing in interaction: Somatic, semiotic, and social. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *47*(2), 175–200.

Hofstetter, E. C. (2016). *Citizens getting help : Interactions at the constituency office*. Loughborough University.

Hofstetter, E. C., & Stokoe, E. (2015). Offers of assistance in politician–constituent interaction. *Discourse Studies*, *17*(6), 724–751.

Hofstetter, E. C., & Stokoe, E. (2018). Getting service at the constituency office : Analyzing citizens' encounters with their Member of Parliament. *Text & Talk*, *38*(5), 551–573.

Holt, E., & Clift, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Reporting talk: Reported speech in interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Home Office. (2003). *Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003*. London.

Home Office. (2011). *Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011*. London.

Home Office. (2017). Anti-social behaviour. Retrieved August 11, 2017, from
https://www.police.uk/crime-prevention-advice/anti-social-behaviour/

Hopper, P. J., & Thompson, S. A. (1980). Transitivity in grammar and discourse. *Language*,
56(2), 251–299.

Hough, M., & Jacobson, J. (2004). Getting to grips with antisocial behaviour. In J. Grieve &
R. Howard (Eds.), *Communities, social exclusion and crime* (pp. 35–42). London: The
Smith Institute.

Humă, B. (2018). *The interactional organisation of initial business-to-business sales calls
with prospective clients*. Loughborough University.

Ibarra, P., & Kitsuse, J. I. (1993). Vernacular constituents of moral discourse: An
interactionist proposal for the study of social problems. In J. Holstein & G. Miller
(Eds.), *Reconsidering social construction-ism: Debates in social problems theory* (pp.
25–58). New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Jackson, J. W. (2002). Intergroup attitudes as a function of different dimensions of group
identification and perceived intergroup conflict. *Self and Identity*, *1*, 11–33.

Jacobs, K., Kemeny, J., & Manzi, T. (2003). Power, discursive space and institutional
practices in the construction of housing problems. *Housing Studies*, *18*(4), 429–446.

Jarrett, C. (2018). *Neighbourhood complaints*. London. Retrieved from
https://www.directlinegroup.com/media/news/brand/2018/12062018.aspx

Jayyusi, L. (1984). *Categorization and the moral order*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul
Limited.

Jefferson, G. (1979). A technique for inviting laughter and its subsequent acceptance
decliation. In G. Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday language: Studies in ethnomethodology* (pp.
79–96). London: Wiley.

Jefferson, G. (1988). On the sequential organisation of troubles-talk in ordinary conversation.
Social Problems, *35*(4).

Jefferson, G. (1990). List construction as a task and interactional resource. In G. Psathas
(Ed.), *Interaction competence* (pp. 63–92). London: University Press.

Jefferson, G. (2004a). "At first I thought": A normalizing device for extraordinary events. In
G. H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 131–
167). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Jefferson, G. (2004b). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. H. Lerner

(Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Studies from the first generation* (pp. 13–31). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Jefferson, G. (2015). *Talking about troubles in conversation*. (P. Drew, J. Heritage, G. H. Lerner, & A. Pomerantz, Eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jefferson, G., & Lee, J. R. E. (1981). The rejection of advice: Managing the problematic convergence of a "troubles-telling" and a "service encounter." *Journal of Pragmatics*, *5*(5), 399–422.

Jones, B. J., Gallagher, B. J., & McFalls, J. A. (1988). *Social problems: Issues, opinions and solutions*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Jones, D., Drew, P., Elsey, C., Blackburn, D., Wakefield, S., Harkness, K., & Reuber, M. (2016). Conversational assessment in memory clinic encounters: interactional profiling for differentiating dementia from functional memory disorders. *Aging & Mental Health*, *20*(5), 500–509.

Kahn, K. B., Lee, J. K., Renauer, B., Henning, K., & Stewart, G. (2017). The effects of perceived phenotypic racial stereotypicality and social identity threat on racial minorities' attitudes about police. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *157*(4), 416–428.

Kendrick, K., & Drew, P. (2014). The putative preference for offers over requests. In P. Drew & E. Couper-Kuhlen (Eds.), *Requesting in social interaction* (pp. 87–113). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Kendrick, K., & Drew, P. (2016). Recruitment: offers, requests, and the organization of assistance in interaction. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *49*(1), 1–19.

Kilewer, W. (2013). The role of neighborhood collective efficacy and fear of crime in socialization of coping with violence in low-income communities. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *41*(8), 920–930.

Kitsuse, J. I., & Spector, M. (1973). Toward a sociology of social problems: Social conditions, value-judgements, and social problems, *20*(4), 407–419.

Kitzinger, C., & Mandelbaum, J. (2013). Word selection and social identities in talk-in-interaction. *Communication Monographs*, *80*(2), 176–198.

Kohn, M. L. (1976). Looking Back: A 25-year review and appraisal of social problems research. *Social Problems*, *24*(1), 94–112.

Koshik, I. (2002). Designedly incomplete utterances: A pedagogical practice for eliciting knowledge displays in error correction sequences. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *35*(3), 277–309.

Krann, W. (2005). The metaphoric use of space in expert-lay interaction about computing

systems. In C. Baker, M. Emmison, & A. Firth (Eds.), *Calling for help: Language and social interaction in telephone helplines* (pp. 91–108). Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1961). Notes on history of quantification in sociology: Trends, sources, and problems. In H. Woolf (Ed.), *A history of the meaning of measurement in the natural and social sciences* (pp. 147–203). Indianapois: Bobbs-Merrill.

Lee, S.-H. (2009). Extended requesting: Interaction and collaboration in the production and specification of requests. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *41*(6), 1248–1271.

Lee, S.-H. (2011). Managing nongranting of customers' requests in commercial service encounters. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *44*(2), 109–134.

Lerner, G. H. (1992). Assisted storytelling: Deploying shared knowledge as a practical matter. *Qualitative Sociology*, *15*(3).

Lerner, G. H., & Kitzinger, C. (2007). Extraction and aggregation in the repair of individual and collective self-reference. *Discourse Studies*, *9*(4), 526–557.

Levine, R. A., & Campbell, D. T. (1972). *Ethnocentrism: Theories of conflict*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Lewin, K. (1947). Group decision and social change. *Readings in Social Psychology*, *3*, 197–211.

Lewis, R., Rosen, R., Goodwin, N., & Dixon, J. (2010). *Where next for integrated care organisations in the English NHS? The Nuffield Trust*. London.

Lindblad, M. R., Manturuk, K. R., & Quercia, R. G. (2013). Sense of community and informal social control among lower income households: The role of homeownership and collective efficacy in reducing subjective neighborhood crime and disorder. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *51*(1–2), 123–139.

Lindström, A. (2009). Projecting nonalignment in conversation. In J. Sidnell (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 135–158). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Local, J. (1996). Conversational phonetics: Some aspects of news receipts in everyday talk. *Studies in Interactional Linguistics*, *12*, 177–230.

Locke, A., & Edwards, D. (2003). Bill and Monica: memory, emotion and normativity in Clinton's Grand Jury testimony. *The British Journal of Social Psychology / the British Psychological Society*, *42*(Pt 2), 239–256.

Mankowski, E. S., Galvez, G., & Glass, N. (2011). Interdisciplinary linkage of community

psychology and cross-cultural psychology: History, values, and an illustrative research and action project on intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *47*(1), 127–143.

Maynard, D. W. (1986). Offering and soliciting collaboration in multi-party disputes among children (and other humans). *Human Studies*, *9*(2–3), 261–285.

Maynard, D. W. (1988). Language, interaction, and social problems. *Social Problems*, *35*(4), 311–334.

Maynard, D. W. (2005). Language, interaction, and social problems. *Social Problems*, *52*(4), 443–444.

Maynard, D. W. (2013). Defensive mechanisms: I-mean-prefaced utterances in complaint and other conversational sequences. In M. Hayashi, G. Raymond, & J. Sidnell (Eds.), *Conversational repair and human understanding* (pp. 198–233). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maynard, D. W. (2014). Everyone and no one to turn to: Intellectual roots and contexts for conversation analysis. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis* (pp. 11–31). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

McKinlay, A., & McVittie, C. (2008). *Social psychology and discourse*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

McMillan, D. W., & Chavis, D. M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *14*(1), 6–23.

mediation. (n.d.). Retrieved September 10, 2018, from http://www.oed.com/

Meehan, A. J. (1989). Assessing the "police-worthiness" of citizen's complaints to the police: Accountability and the negotiation of "facts." In D. T. Helm, W. T. Anderson, A. J. Meehan, & A. W. Rawls (Eds.), *The interactional order: New directions in the study of social order* (pp. 116–140). New York: Irvington Publishers.

Mention. (n.d.). Retrieved April 16, 2018, from https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/

Merton, R. K. (1957). *Social theory and social structure*. Glencoe, Ill: Free Press.

Michaux, E., Groenen, A., & Uzieblo, K. (2017). Unwanted behaviors and nuisance gehaviors among neighbors in a Belgian community sample. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *32*(13), 1967–1994.

Middleton, D., & Brown, S. D. (2005). *The social psychology of experience: Studies in remembering and forgetting*.

Middleton, D., & Edwards, D. (1990). Conversational remembering: A social psychological approach. In D. Middleton & D. Edwards (Eds.), *Collective remembering* (pp. 23–45).

London: Sage.

Millie, A. (2009). *Anti-social behaviour*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Mondada, L. (2009). The methodical organization of talking and eating: Assessments in dinner conversations. *Food Quality and Preference*, *20*(8), 558–571.

Montgomery, M. R. (2010). John Stuart Mill and the Utopian tradition. In J. G. Backhaus (Ed.), *The state as Utopia: Continental approaches* (pp. 19–34). London: Springer.

Mulkay, M., & Gilbert, G. N. (1983). Scientists ' theory talk. *The Canadian Journal of Sociology*, *8*(2), 179–197.

National Audit Office. (2006). *The Home Office: Tackling anti-social behaviour*. London.

Neighbours From Hell. (2004). UK: Carlton UK Productions. Retrieved from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1366316/

offer. (n.d.). Retrieved June 6, 2018, from https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/offer

Ogden, R. (2013). Clicks and percussives in English conversation. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, *43*(03), 299–320.

Orford, J. (2008). *Community psychology: Challenges, controversies and emerging consensus*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Osvaldsson, K. (2004). 'I don't have no damn cultures': doing 'normality' in a 'deviant' setting. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *1*(3), 239–264.

Parkes, A., & Kearns, A. (2006). The multi-dimensional neighbourhood and health: A cross-sectional analysis of the Scottish Household Survey, 2001. *Health and Place*, *12*(1), 1–18.

Parrillo, V. N. (2005). *Contemporary social problems* (6th ed.). New York: Pearson.

Pearson, A. L., Breetzke, G., & Ivory, V. (2015). The effect of neighborhood recorded crime on fear: Does neighborhood social context matter? *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *56*(1–2), 170–179.

Pika, S., Wilkinson, R., Kendrick, K., & Vernes, S. C. (2018). Taking turns: Bridging the gap between human and animal communication. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, *285*, 1–9.

Pomerantz, A. (1984). Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: Some features of preferred/dispreferred turn shapes. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis* (pp. 57–101). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pomerantz, A. (1986). Extreme case formulations: A way of legitimizing claims. *Human Studies*, *9*, 219–229.

Potter, J. (1996). *Representing reality: Discourse, rhetoric and social construction*. London: Sage.

Potter, J. (2002). Two kinds of natural. *Discourse Studies*, *4*(4), 539–542.

Potter, J. (2006). Cognition and conversation. *Discourse Studies*, *8*(1), 131–140.

Potter, J., & Edwards, D. (2001). Discursive social psychology. In W. P. Robinson & H. Giles (Eds.), *The new handbook of language and social psychology* (pp. 103–118). Chichester: Wiley.

Potter, J., & Hepburn, A. (2003). "I'm a bit concerned" - Early actions and psychological constructions in a child protection pelpline. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *36*(3), 197–240.

Potter, J., & Hepburn, A. (2005). Qualitative interviews in psychology: problems and possibilities. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *2*(4), 281–307.

Potter, J., & Hepburn, A. (2010). Putting aspiration into words: 'Laugh particles', managing descriptive trouble and modulating action. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *42*(6), 1543–1555.

Potter, J., & te Molder, H. (2005). Talking cognition: Mapping and making the terrain. In H. te Molder & J. Potter (Eds.), *Conversation and cognition* (pp. 1–54). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: Beyond attitudes and behaviour*. London: Sage.

Prentice, M., & Sheldon, K. M. (2015). Priming effects on cooperative behavior in social dilemmas: Considering the prime and the person. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *155*(2), 163–181.

problem. (n.d.). Retrieved September 7, 2018, from http://www.oed.com/

Puchta, C., & Potter, J. (2002). Manufacturing individual opinions: market research focus groups and the discursive psychology of evaluation. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, *41*, 345–363.

Puchta, C., Potter, J., & Wolff, S. (2004). Repeat receipts: A device for generating visible data in market research focus groups. *Qualitative Research*, *4*(3), 285–309.

Raymond, G. (2004). Prompting action: The stand-alone "so" in ordinary conversation. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *37*(2), 185–218.

Raymond, G., & Heritage, J. (2013). One question after another: same-turn repair in the formation of yes/no type initiating actions. In M. Hayashi, G. Raymond, & J. Sidnell (Eds.), *Conversational repair and human understanding* (pp. 135–171). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Raymond, G., & Zimmerman, D. H. (2007). Rights and responsibilities in calls for help: The case of the Mountain Glade fire. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *40*(1), 33–61.

Raymond, G., & Zimmerman, D. H. (2016). Closing matters: Alignment and mis-alignment in sequence and call closings in institutional interaction. *Discourse Studies*, *18*(6), 1–34.

Referral. (n.d.). Retrieved April 16, 2018, from https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/

Reyes Cruz, M., & Sonn, C. C. (2011). (De)colonizing culture in community psychology: Reflections from critical social science. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *47*(1), 203–214.

Rigby, K., Cox, I., & Black, G. (1997). Cooperativeness and bully/victim problems among Australian schoolchildren. *Journal of Social Psychology*, *137*(3), 357–368.

Robinson, J. D. (2014). Overall structural organization. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis* (pp. 257–280). Oxford: Blackwell.

Robson, C., Drew, P., Walker, T., & Reuber, M. (2012). Catastrophising and normalising in patient's accounts of their seizure experiences. *Seizure*, *21*(10), 795–801.

Sack, R. D. (1986). *Human territoriality: Its theory and history.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks, H. (1967). The search for help: No one to turn to. In E. S. Shneidman (Ed.), *Essays in self-destruction* (pp. 203–223). New York: Science House.

Sacks, H. (1972). An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology. In D. Sudnow (Ed.), *Studies in social interaction* (pp. 31–74). New York: Free Press.

Sacks, H. (1979). Hotrodder: A revolutionary category. In G. Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday language: Studies in ethnomethodology* (pp. 7–14). New York: Irvington Publishers.

Sacks, H. (1984a). Notes on methodology. In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis* (pp. 21–27). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks, H. (1984b). On doing "being ordinary." In J. M. Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis* (pp. 413–429). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sacks, H. (1987). On the preferences for agreement and contiguity in sequences in conversation. In G. Button & J. R. E. Lee (Eds.), *Talk and social organisation* (pp. 54–69). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Sacks, H. (1992a). *Lectures on conversation: Vol 1*. (G. Jefferson, Ed.).

Sacks, H. (1992b). *Lectures on conversation*. (G. Jefferson, Ed.) (Vol. 1 & 2). Oxford: Blackwell.

Sacks, H. (1992c). The MIR membership categorisation device. In G. Jefferson (Ed.), *Lectures on Conversation Vol.1* (pp. 40–48). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Sacks, H., & Schegloff, E. A. (1979). Two preferences in the organization of reference to persons in conversation and their interaction. In G. Psathas (Ed.), *Everyday language: Studies in ethnomethodology* (pp. 15–21). New York: Irvington Publishers.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language*, *50*(4), 696–735.

Sammons, J. (1975). *Six essays on the young German novel* (2nd ed.). Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Sarason, S. B. (1974). *The psychological sense of community: Prospects for a community psychology*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sarason, S. B. (1981). An asocial psychology and a misdirected clinical psychology. *The American Psychologist*, *36*(8), 827–836.

Schegloff, E. A. (1968). Sequencing in conversational openings. *American Anthropologist*, *70*(6), 1075–1095.

Schegloff, E. A. (1979). Identification and recognition in telephone openings. *Everyday Language*, *23*(2), 23–78.

Schegloff, E. A. (1980). Preliminaries to preliminaries: "Can I ask you a question?" *Sociological Inquiry*, *50*(3–4), 104–152.

Schegloff, E. A. (1986). The routine as achievement. *Human Studies*, *9*, 111–151.

Schegloff, E. A. (1987). Analyzing single episodes of interaction: An exercise in conversation analysis. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *50*(2), 101–114.

Schegloff, E. A. (1988). On an actual virtual servo-mechanism for guessing bad news: A single case conjecture. *Social Problems*, *35*(4), 442–457.

Schegloff, E. A. (1991). Reflections on talk and social structure. In D. Boden & D. H. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Talk and social structure: Studies in ethnomethodology and conversation analysis* (pp. 44–70). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Schegloff, E. A. (1992a). On talk and its institutional occasions. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings* (pp. 101–134). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schegloff, E. A. (1992b). Repair after next turn: The last structurally provided defense of intersubjectivity. *American Journal of Sociology*, *97*(5), 1295–1345.

Schegloff, E. A. (1996). Some practices for referring to persons in talk-in-interaction: A partial sketch of a systematics. In B. A. Fox (Ed.), *Studies in anaphora* (pp. 437–485). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Schegloff, E. A. (1997). Practices and actions: Boundary cases of other-initiated repair. *Discourse Processes*, *23*(3), 499–545.

Schegloff, E. A. (1999). Discourse, pragmatics, conversation, analysis. *Discourse Studies*, *1*(4), 405–435.

Schegloff, E. A. (2000). Overlapping talk and the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language in Society*, *29*(01), 1–63.

Schegloff, E. A. (2005). On complainability. *Social Problems*, *52*(4), 449–476.

Schegloff, E. A. (2007). *Sequence organization in interaction: A primer in conversation analysis* (Vol. 1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schegloff, E. A. (2009). One perspective on conversation analysis: Comparative perspectives. In J. Sidnell (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 357–406). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schegloff, E. A., Jefferson, G., & Sacks, H. (1977). The preference for self-correction in the organisation of repair in conversation. *Language*, *53*(2), 361–382.

Schegloff, E. A., & Lerner, G. H. (2009). Beginning to respond: Well-prefaced responses to wh-questions. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *42*(2), 91–115.

Schegloff, E. A., & Sacks, H. (1973). Opening up closings. *Semiotica*, *8*(4), 289–327.

Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schwartz, H. (1997). On the origin of the phrase "social problems." *Social Issues*, *44*(2), 276–296.

Seymour-Smith, S., Wetherell, M., & Phoenix, A. (2002). My wife ordered me to come!': A discursive analysis of doctors' and nurses' accounts of men's use of general practitioners. *Journal of Health Psychology*, *7*(3), 253–267.

Sherif, M. (1958). Superordinate goals in the reduction of intergroup conflict. *American Journal of Sociology*, 349–356.

Sherif, M. (1961). *The robbers cave experiment: Intergroup conflict and cooperation*. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.

Shmool, J. L. C., Yonas, M. A., Newman, O. D., Kubzansky, L. D., Joseph, E., Parks, A., … Clougherty, J. E. (2015). Identifying perceived neighborhood stressors across diverse communities in New York City. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *56*(1–2), 145–155.

Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sidnell, J. (2009). Comparative perspectives in conversation analysis. In J. Sidnell (Ed.), *Conversation analysis: Comparative perspectives* (pp. 3–28). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sidnell, J. (2014). Basic conversation analytic methods. In J. Sidnell & T. Stivers (Eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis* (pp. 77–100). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Sidnell, J. (2017). Action in interaction is conduct under a description. *Language in Society*, *46*(03), 313–337.

Signpost. (n.d.). Retrieved June 1, 2018, from https://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/signposting

Sikveland, R., & Stokoe, E. (2016). Dealing with resistance in initial intake and inquiry calls to mediation: The power of "willing." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly*, *33*(3), 235–254.

Sikveland, R., Stokoe, E., & Symonds, J. (2016). Patient burden during appointment-making telephone calls to GP practices. *Patient Education and Counseling*, *99*(8), 1310–1318.

Silverman, D., & Perakyla, A. (1990). AIDS counselling : the interactional organisation of talk about ' delicate ' issues. *Sociology of Health & Illness*, *12*(3), 293–318.

Simmel, G. (1950). *The sociology of Georg Simmel*. New York: The Free Press.

Skitka, L. J., Mullen, E., Griffin, T., Hutchinson, S., & Chamberlin, B. (2002). Dispositions, scripts, or motivated correction?: Understanding ideological differences in explanations for social problems. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *83*(2), 470–487.

Smith, B. D., & Mogro-Wilson, C. (2008). Inter-agency collaboration. *Administration in Social Work*, *32*(2), 5–24.

Smith, D. E. (1978). `K is mentally ill': The anatomy of a factual account. *Sociology*, *12*(1), 23–53.

Sneijder, P., & te Molder, H. (2005). Moral logic and logical morality: Attributions of responsibility and blame in online discourse on veganism. *Discourse & Society*, *16*(5), 675–696.

social. (n.d.). Retrieved September 7, 2018, from http://www.oed.com/

social problem. (n.d.). Retrieved September 7, 2018, from http://www.oed.com/

Solan, L. M. (2010). The forensic linguist: The expert linguist meets the adversarial system. In M. Coulthard & A. Johnson (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Forensic Linguistics* (pp. 395–410). London: Routledge.

South, J., Higgins, T. J., Woodall, J., & White, S. M. (2008). Can social prescribing provide

the missing link? *Primary Health Care Research & Development*, *9*(4), 310–318.

Spector, M., & Kitsuse, J. I. (1977). *Constructing social problems*. Menlo Park, CA: Cummings.

Speer, S. A., & Parsons, C. (2007). 'Suppose it wasn't possible for you to go any further with treatment, what would you do?' Hypothetical questions in interactions between psychiatrists and transsexual patients. In A. Hepburn & S. Wiggins (Eds.), *Discursive research in practice: New approaches to psychology in interaction* (pp. 182–200). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Speer, S. A., & Stokoe, E. (2014). Ethics in action: Consent-gaining interactions and implications for research practice. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *53*(1), 54–73.

Stanley, N., Miller, P., Foster, H. R., & Thomson, G. (2010). *Children and families experiencing domestic violence: Police and children's social services' responses*. *NSPCC*.

Steptoe, A., & Feldman, P. J. (2001). Neighborhood problems as sources of chronic stress: Development of a measure of neighborhood problems, and associations with socioeconomic status and health. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, *23*(3), 177–185.

Stevanovic, M., & Peräkylä, A. (2012). Deontic authority in interaction: The right to announce, propose, and decide. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *45*(3), 297–321.

Stivers, T. (2002). Presenting the problem in pediatric encounters: "Symptoms only" versus "candidate diagnosis" presentations. *Health Communication*, *14*(3), 299–338.

Stivers, T. (2007a). Alternative recognitionals in person reference. In N. J. Enfield & T. Stivers (Eds.), *Person reference in interaction: Linguistic, cultural and social perspectives* (pp. 73–96). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stivers, T. (2007b). *Prescribing Under Pressure: Parent-Physician Conversations and Antibiotics*. (T. Stivers, Ed.), *Oxford Studies in Sociolinguistics*.

Stivers, T. (2008). Stance, alignment, and affiliation during storytelling: When nodding is a token of affiliation. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *41*(1), 31–57.

Stivers, T., Enfield, N. J., & Levinson, S. C. (2007). Person reference in interaction. In *Person reference in interaction: Linguistic, cultural and social perspectives* (pp. 1–20). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stokoe, E. (2006). Public intimacy in neighbour relationships and complaints. *Sociological Research Online*, *11*(3), 1–24.

Stokoe, E. (2009). Doing actions with identity categories: Complaints and denials in neighbor

disputes. *Text & Talk*, *29*(1), 75–97.

Stokoe, E. (2010). "Have you been married, or …?": Eliciting and accounting for relationship histories in speed-dating interaction. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *43*(3), 260–282.

Stokoe, E. (2011). Simulated interaction and communication skills training: The "conversation-analytic role-play method." In C. Antaki (Ed.), *Applied Conversation Analysis: Intervention and Change in Institutional Talk* (pp. 119–139). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Stokoe, E. (2012a). Moving forward with membership categorization analysis: Methods for systematic analysis. *Discourse Studies*, *14*(3), 277–303.

Stokoe, E. (2012b). "You know how men are": Description, categorization and common knowledge in the anatomy of a categorial practice. *Gender and Language*, *6*(1), 233–256.

Stokoe, E. (2013). Overcoming barriers to mediation in intake calls to services: Research-based strategies for mediators. *Negotiation Journal*, *29*(3), 289–314.

Stokoe, E. (2014). The Conversation Analytic Role-play Method (CARM): A method for training communication skills as an alternative to simulated role-play. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *47*(3), 255–265.

Stokoe, E., & Edwards, D. (2007). `Black this, black that': Racial insults and reported speech in neighbour complaints and police interrogations. *Discourse & Society*, *18*(3), 337–372.

Stokoe, E., & Edwards, D. (2008). `Did you have permission to smash your neighbour's door?' Silly questions and their answers in police-suspect interrogations. *Discourse Studies*, *10*(1), 89–111.

Stokoe, E., & Edwards, D. (2009). Accomplishing social action with identity categories: Mediating and policing neighbour disputes. In M. Wetherell (Ed.), *Theorizing identities and social action* (pp. 95–115). London: Sage.

Stokoe, E., & Edwards, D. (2015). Mundane morality: Gender, categories and complaints in familial neighbour disputes. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Professional Practice*, *9*(2), 165–192.

Stokoe, E., & Hepburn, A. (2005). "You can hear a lot through the walls": Noise formulations in neighbour complaints. *Discourse & Society*, *16*(5), 647–673.

Stokoe, E., & Sikveland, R. (2016). Formulating solutions in mediation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *105*, 101–113.

Stokoe, E., Sikveland, R., & Symonds, J. (2016). Calling the GP surgery: Patient burden,

patient satisfaction, and implications for training. *British Journal of General Practice*, *66*(652), 779–785.

Stokoe, E., & Wallwork, J. (2003). Space invaders: The moral-spatial order in neighbour dispute discourse. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, *42*, 551–569.

Tajfel, H. (1970). Experiments in intergroup discrimination. *Scientific American*, *223*(5), 96–102.

Tajfel, H. (1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, *13*(2), 65–93.

Tajfel, H. (1977). *Social comparison and social change: Studies in intergroup behaviour*. London: Academic Press.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (2014). UK: Flame Television Production Ltd. Retrieved from https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3811218/

Thomas, A., Caldwell, C. H., & Jagers, R. J. (2016). It's in my hood: Understanding African American boys' perception of safety in their neighbourhoods. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *44*(3), 311–326.

Tileagă, C., & Stokoe, E. (Eds.). (2015). *Discursive psychology. Classic and contemporary issues*. New York: Routledge.

Tracy, K. (1997). Interactional trouble in emergency service requests : A problem of frames. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, *30*(4), 315–343.

Tracy, K., & Robles, J. (2013). *Everyday talk: Building and reflecting identities* (2nd ed.). The Guilford Press.

Turner, S. P., & Turner, J. H. (1990). *The impossible science: An instituional analysis of American sociology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Ufkes, E. G., Giebels, E., Otten, S., & Zee, K. I. Van Der. (2012). The effectiveness of a mediation program in symmetrical versus asymmetrical neighbor-to-neighbor conflicts. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, *23*(4), 440–457.

UK Government. (2017a). Report an environmental incident. Retrieved August 12, 2017, from https://www.gov.uk/report-an-environmental-incident

UK Government. (2017b). Resolving neighbour disputes. Retrieved August 14, 2017, from https://www.gov.uk/how-to-resolve-neighbour-disputes/use-a-mediation-service

UK Government. (2017c). Statutory nuisances: How councils deal with complaints.

Retrieved August 12, 2017, from https://www.gov.uk/guidance/statutory-nuisances-how-councils-deal-with-complaints

Van de Vliert, E. (1997). *Complex interpersonal conflict behaviour: Theoretical frontiers*. Hove, East Sussex: Psychology Press.

Wakin, M. A., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1999). Reduction and specialization in emergency and directory assistance calls. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, *32*(4), 409–437.

Walker, G. (2007). On the design and use of pivots in everyday English conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *39*(12), 2217–2243.

Walton, G. M., & Dweck, C. S. (2009). Solving problems like a social psychologist. *Social Issues*, *4*(1), 101–102.

Weatherall, A., & Stubbe, M. (2015). Emotions in action: Telephone-mediated dispute resolution. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *54*, 273–290.

Weinberg, M. S., Rubington, E., & Kiefer Hammersmith, S. (1981). Social problems and their solutions. In M. S. Weinberg, E. Rubington, & S. Kiefer Hammersmith (Eds.), *The solution of social problems: Five perspectives* (2nd ed., pp. 3–12). New York: Oxford University Press.

Weinstein, R. S. (2006). Reaching higher in community psychology: Social problems, social settings, and social change. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *37*(1), 9–20.

West, C., & Garcia, A. (1988). Conversational shift work: A study of topical transitions between women and men. *Social Problems*, *35*(5), 551–575.

Whalen, J., Zimmerman, D. H., & Whalen, M. R. (1988). When words fail: A single case analysis. *Social Problems*, *35*(4), 335–362.

Whalen, M. R., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Sequential and institutional contexts in calls for help. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *50*(2), 172–185.

Whalen, M. R., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1990). Describing trouble: Practical epistemology in citizen calls to the police. *Language in Society*, *19*, 465–492.

Wiggins, S. (2017). *Discursive psychology*. London: Sage.

Wiggins, S., & Potter, J. (2003). Attitudes and evaluative practices: Category vs. item and subjective vs. objective constructions in everyday food assessments. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *42*, 513–531.

Wilkinson, S. (2011). Gender, routinization and recipient design. In S. A. Speer & E. Stokoe (Eds.), *Conversation and gender* (pp. 112–134). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wilkinson, S., & Kitzinger, C. (2006). Surprise as an interactional achievement: Reaction tokens in conversation. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *69*(2), 150–182.

Williams, R. (1983). *Keywords*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Winstok, Z. (2010). The effect of social and situational factors on the intended response to aggression among adolescents. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, *150*(1), 57–76.

Woolgar, S., & Pawluch, D. (1985). Ontological gerrymandering : The anatomy of social problems explanations. *Social Problems*, *32*(3), 214–227.

Zimmerman, D. H. (1984). Talk and its occasion: The case of calling the police. In D. Schiffrin (Ed.), *Meaning, form, and use in context: Linguistic applications* (pp. 210–228). Washington, D. C: Georgetown University Press.

Zimmerman, D. H. (1992). The interactional organization of calls for emergancy assistance. In P. Drew & J. Heritage (Eds.), *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings* (pp. 418–469). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zimmerman, D. H. (2005). Conversation analysis and social problems, *52*(4), 445–448.

Zimmerman, D. H., & Boden, D. (1991). Structure-in-action: An introduction. In D. Boden & D. H. Zimmerman (Eds.), *Talk & social structure: Studies in ethnomethodology and conversation analysis* (pp. 3–21). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Appendix A:

Information Sheet

Neighbour Mediation Centre Telephone Interaction

Dr. Liz Stokoe and Professor Derek Edwards, Department of Social Sciences, Loughborough University

This project is part of a larger study of neighbour relationships. In addition to recordings of initial interview and round table mediation sessions, this phase will focus on analysing telephone calls to mediation centres. We are interested in topics such as:

- How is the business of the call identified?
- How are neighbour complaints formulated in this initial contact with mediation services?
- How is information elicited and delivered?

Our aims are to:

- Give an account of the variety of conversational skills that neighbours use when formulating their complaints / defences to mediators.
- Contribute to more general academic and practical literatures on telephone helplines.
- Contribute to new developments in psychology and interaction.
- Generate some resources (e.g. examples of trouble and its management digitised onto CD) to assist in training.

What would we like you to do?

Our hope is that everyone involved in the project will routinely record all calls where appropriate permission is received, for a specified period of time.

Ethics and confidentiality

We will only use calls where the caller has agreed to take part. So don't worry if you forget to ask a caller. If you find that callers are in distress at the start of the call, some call takers have found that raising the issue of ethics permission works better towards the end. You or I can wipe calls where no ethics permission is given.

Everyone has their own preferred way of broaching ethics issues. The crucial thing for us is that the caller has agreed that the **recording** of the call can be used for **research** and **training** purposes.

The typical sort of script that call takers on the NSPCC helpline have been using so far looks like the following:

(Phone rings, CPO turns on recorder)
CPO: Hello NSPCC Helpline?
Caller: Hello I'm concerned about my neighbour's kids
CPO: OK can I just stop you for a moment?
              We are currently recording calls to be used in research and training.
              Are you happy for your call to be used in this way?
              (Further reassurance about anonymity if needed)
              All calls are completely confidential *(irrespective of how NSPCC uses them).* There is absolutely no obligation.
(CPO continues recording, or switches off)

Feel free to vary this to what feels best for you. As long as it covers the crucial points about recording, research and training it will be usable.

So far very few of the callers we have listened to have asked questions. If they do you could tell them that the research is concerned with interaction on telephone helplines, and that it is research done by some academics that work at Loughborough University.

The recorders you have been provided with record sound digitally – this means that the quality of people's voices can be manipulated to sound significantly different. It also means that any identifying details (names, places, street names etc) can be easily removed or disguised. We routinely engage in these practices as part of our call management procedures.

What should I do with the disks?

We will either pick them up in person or they will be delivered by registered post. If you would rather keep hold of them we will pick them up when we visit.

What about confidentiality and anonymity?

The mediators will be treated like the callers in this respect. Your identity will be disguised in the recording and in the transcript.

We are happy to provide copies of calls and transcripts, and provide training workshops based on our findings.

Contacting us

If you have any questions about the research, about the technology, about disks or anything to do with our study please get in contact with us.

The most direct way is by email or phone:

e.h.stokoe@lboro.ac.uk
d.edwards@lboro.ac.uk

01509 223360 or 222544 (direct lines)

Appendix B:

Consent Form

Loughborough University
Leicestershire, UK, LE11 3TU
Tel: +44 (0) 1509 263171

Loughborough University

Economic and Social Research Council grant RES-148-25-0010:
Identities in neighbour discourse: Community, conflict and exclusion

<u>Researchers</u>: Dr Elizabeth Stokoe (01509 223360, e.h.stokoe@lboro.ac.uk)
Professor Derek Edwards (01509 222544, d.edwards@lboro.ac.uk)

<u>Project outline</u>: The aim of this three-year, government-funded project is to develop an understanding of neighbour disputes. We are collecting and analysing "naturalistic" conversations involving neighbours in a variety of settings: neighbourhood mediation, telephone calls to mediation services and environmental health, police-suspect interviews, and anti-social behaviour and environmental health meetings/interviews. We hope to be able to find out about how disputing neighbours interact and deal with problems across a variety of community contexts, and will present our findings at academic and professional conferences, in academic journals, to our funding body and government agencies, and to the participating organizations.

PERMISSION FORM
We would be very grateful if you would give us permission to audio record this meeting/interview and include the recording in our research database.

ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THE RECORDINGS and IN THE TRANSCRIPTS WILL <u>ALWAYS BE MADE ANONYMOUS</u>

Statement of participant: **Please tick as appropriate**

I hereby give my permission for the meeting/interview that I am a participant in to be audio recorded. ☐

I understand that **if any information is used from the recording, it will be fully anonymized** so that **everyone's confidentiality is protected**. ☐

I give my permission for the transcripts to be used for grant reports, research publications and presentations. ☐

I give my permission for the transcripts **and anonymized recordings** to be used for grant reports, publications and presentations. ☐

Name	Signature	Date

Appendix C:

Jefferson Transcription Symbols

`t[alk` `  [Yeah,`	Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of overlap.
`↑↓`	Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech. They are used for notable changes in pitch beyond those represented by stops, commas and question marks.
`Under`<u>`lin`</u>`ing`	Indicates emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis and also indicates how heavy it is.
`CAPITALS`	Mark speech that is hearably louder than surrounding speech. This is beyond the increase in volume indicated by underlines.
`°I know it,°`	'Degree' signs enclose hearably quieter speech.
`(0.5)`	Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 5 tenths of a second).
`(.)`	A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.

`((staccato))`
 	
`((lines omitted))`
	Additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. about features of context or delivery. Also, to indicate material omitted for brevity.

`(I know)`	Text in single round brackets to indicate best guess at hard-to-hear utterance. Can also be blank to indicate something spoken but unhearable.

`she wa::nted`	Colons show degrees of elongation of the prior sound; the more colons, the more elongation.
`hhh`	Aspiration (out-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
`.hhh`	Inspiration (in-breaths); proportionally as for colons.
`Yeh,`	Comma: 'Continuation' marker, speaker has not finished; marked by weak rising intonation, as when delivering a verbal list.

`y'know?`
 	
`okay¿`
	Question mark: strong rise in intonation, irrespective of grammar. Inverse question mark indicates tone between a comma and a question mark in rise.

`Yeh.`	Full stop: marks falling, stopping intonation ('final contour'), irrespective of grammar, not necessarily followed by a pause.
`bu- u-`	Hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound.

`>he said<`
 	
`<he said>`
	'Greater than' and 'lesser than' signs enclose utterances that are faster than surrounding talk.
	Reverse indicates utterances that are slower than surrounding talk.

`solid.=` `=We had`	'Equals' signs mark the immediate 'latching' of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval.
`sto(h)p i(h)t`	Laughter within speech is signalled by h's in round brackets.