

## POSTPRINT

# Prefiguring the future

## Projections and preparations within theatrical rehearsals

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Theater rehearsals have a characteristic temporal organization: They rely on fleeting (talk/embodied conduct) and endurable resources (e.g. manipulation of objects) to accomplish a stage play which has a defined shape. In doing this, participants have to bridge time gaps and they are therefore dependent on practices which are able to prefigure the future in a more sustainable way. Based on video recordings from theater rehearsals I will show the basic operation of these practices: While projections-by-arrangements anticipate the play world verbally, preparations produce material parts of the play world (e.g. attaching props). Finally, I consider more general implications of the differences between “verbalizing” (projections) and “materializing” (preparations) for the temporalities of interactional organization.

**Keywords:** theater rehearsals, multimodal resources, temporality, projections, preparations

### 1. Introduction

The aim of the present study is to show how participants in theater rehearsals prefigure<sup>1</sup> upcoming play activities by exploiting inherent temporalities of different modal resources. My special focus is on embodied preparations (e.g. shaping a specific bodily formation), which are an important technique in theater to produce a performance, but have so far been neglected. This will also shed light on the relationship of media and non-media settings, showing that and how the former have to rely on preparatory activities in a greater extend because the central task is to produce a composition. An important way to accomplish compositions or, alternatively performances is the specific use and combination of different modal resources.

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1. ‘Prefigure’ is used in the double sense of foreshadowing and pre-shaping.

Which resources are deployed depends on their usefulness for certain interactional tasks (e.g. hand gestures are more useful than talk to give signals to a third person without interrupting the ongoing verbal flow of activities; cf. Schegloff 1984). This in turn relates to their perceived qualities<sup>2</sup> understandable as *affordances* (cf. Gibson 1986, 127–143): Features of the perceptible world which offer or constrain opportunities relative to their abilities and the (joint) projects people are pursuing. The above-mentioned usefulness of gestures, for example, is because gestures draw on visible rather than audible resources. Multimodal resources therefore converge/diverge with respect to affordances, which makes them appear more useful for the one than for the other task (Deppermann 2013). A crucial dimension of divergence is the temporality of resources, and one crucial aspect of temporal divergence is the fleetingness (which applies to talk as well as to embodied actions like gestures or glances) or, alternatively the more or less enduring quality of deployed resources (for instance body positions or bodily formations).

The degree to which resources (and their results) are enduring has an important impact on the way in which they can prefigure future events. Whereas sustainable resources and results (e.g. objects, props, bodies, light conditions) can be maintained over a certain period of time, fleeting resources (like talk and gesture) vanish after their production, often without leaving tangible traces.

Nevertheless, fleeting resources like talk and gesture – as conversation analytical research on interaction processes has shown – can project possible future events on a number of linguistic and interactional levels. For example, turn completion or turn continuation can be projected by means of turn design (cf. Auer 2002; Mondada 2006), or TRPs are used as signs to project possibilities for possible next speakers to produce a next turn (cf. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974). Similar functions are assigned to pre-sequences (cf. Schegloff 2007, 28), to delays and/or hesitations projecting dispreferred nexts (cf. Pomerantz 1984; Schegloff 2007, 58), and to perturbations as harbingers for repair (cf. Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson 1977).

Through these means future events or courses of interaction are not only projected, but forecasted before their actual occurrence. This enables others to anticipate what is likely to happen next (Mondada 2006; 2007, 195) and allows them to (re-)orient their own directions of behavior, prepare for what is to come, or to preempt possible (unwanted) continuations. Insofar *projection* and *projectability* are central features of human action (cf. Streeck 1995; Streeck and Jordan 2009) and forms a core basis of the temporal nature of interaction (Deppermann and Günthner 2015).

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2. Following Gibson's (1986) ecological approach, "the environment of (...) men is what they perceive" (15).

However, projections are limited to a certain time span (cf. Auer 2002; 2015, 25ff.; Streeck and Jordan 2009), which means that the more time elapses between a projection and a possible projected, the less probable it is to come.<sup>3</sup> So projections which are based on fleeting resources (like talk or gestures) have the problem of losing their projecting potentiality the more time passes. The limited temporal scope of fleeting resources (talk and gestures) is well adapted to their usual way of operating, which is projecting future events rather implicitly and provisionally without naming them explicitly and verbally. They are therefore designed to solve interactional problems *en passant*.<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, in the context of theatrical rehearsals the task of prefiguring future events represents a greater challenge as a composition has to be created interactively within which a concerted interplay of resources (talk, gestures, body positions and postures, props, light etc.) is established. To achieve this, a number of specifications about future events have to be made (e.g. which movements are to be executed, which words are to be spoken etc.). These specifications (or forms) have to be preserved until they become relevant (either during the rehearsal process or later during the performance itself). In this way considerably time gaps are bridged (in comparison to interactional projection spaces as discussed by Schegloff 1984), especially because certain forms have to be repeated multiple times (e.g. lines of the script spoken by certain actors or actresses). This means that attempts to prefigure the future within theater rehearsals have to be much more far reaching, explicit and sustainable than in everyday scenarios.

I want to introduce and discuss two practices which are employed to make prefiguring of future events more reliable. The focus of this article will be on the second one:

First, reliable prefiguring can be achieved by projections which are explicitly describing and/or negotiating verbally certain shapes of future play events. I call such practices *projections-by-arrangements* (ethnocode).<sup>5</sup> It is not surprising that they are used quite frequently in rehearsals as they represent an obvious way to define more explicitly and publicly what should happen within the performance.

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3. Cf. Schegloff (1984) for a discussion of the possible time span underlying the projection of upcoming repair (initiation). Besides other things, he shows the temporal limitedness of projection spaces.

4. The implicit nature of interactional organization, including projections of what possibly comes next, is stressed from the very beginning of EMCA (cf. Heritage 1984).

5. In the interviews I conducted during my research on theater production (see Section 3), the actors mentioned that they use a special term for explicitly making agreements about the future play within rehearsals, which is 'arrangements' (German: "Verabredungen").

The second way to achieve a more reliable prefiguring of future events is to accomplish materially a targeted state instantaneously (e.g. through a certain body formation). Such accomplishments serve with regard to compositions as parts for a whole (e.g. a specific lighting can be accomplished as a part of a scene before the scene is played as a whole). Unlike fleeting resources, embodied actions involving objects can modify aspects of the material world around them instantaneously. Thereby they create (intended /wanted) results which are tangible and enduring (cf. Streeck 1996; Goodwin 2003; Mondada 2014b; Nevile et al. 2014). In the context of theater rehearsals embodied actions involving “objects” are deployed to prepare certain features of the surroundings (e.g. light, positioning the bodies etc.) to create basic requirements as well as optimal conditions for rehearsing. I call those practices *preparations*.<sup>6</sup>

In both cases – projections-by-arrangements and preparations – participants try to secure future states. This is done either by making verbal projections more explicit, which is the only way to delineate future events more accurately. Or it is done by modifying aspects of the material world immediately in a purposeful way. Both practices are related to the temporal flow of interaction. They are designed to either skip (projections by-arrangements) or preserve (preparations) time<sup>7</sup> depending on their modal realizations (talk/gestures vs. manipulating objects bodily). In both cases forms (preparations) or (future) events (projections) are targeted instead of (single) actions or turns.

Therefore theater rehearsals are a “perspicuous setting” (Garfinkel and Wieder 1992, 184) for the study of practices designed to prefigure future events in a more sustainable way. Environments in which play scenes are initiated are of particular relevance to the question of how different modalities are exploited with respect to their temporal qualities in order to create a play scene. This is because several arrangements and preparations have to be made in these environments in order to enable the start of rehearsing a play scene.

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6. Dausendschön-Gay and Krafft (2009) also draw on the notion of ‘preparation’, though in a different sense: Whereas preparations here are introduced as (more or less) durable modifications of the material world by embodied actions, Dausendschön-Gay and Krafft (2009) use the term to refer to embodied actions as bodily means to project next actions (by visibly preparing (for) something) thereby extending the notion of projection (which is usually refined to verbal activities) to the realm of embodied conduct.

7. “*Skip*” refers to the fact that what has been projected is neither due next nor just cancelled but suspended until it gets relevant. ‘Preserve’ refers to the durable quality of objects. In both cases the ongoing flow of action continues relying either on later re-actualizations (in the case of ‘skipping time’) or on immediate material accomplishments which lasts (in the case of ‘preserving time’).

My contribution aims to

- identify and describe practices of projections-by-arrangements and preparations in the context of theatrical rehearsals drawing on video recordings of a single case in which members of a theater group initiate a play scene;
- work out case-specific and more generic differences of these practices;
- introduce preparations as a (hitherto) neglected practice;
- discuss general implications both for the relation of modalities (fleeting vs. enduring) and temporalities.

This is done by the following steps:

- Section 2 focuses on the specific temporality of theater (rehearsals);
- Section 3 introduces the data and gives some context information;
- Section 4 introduces the case and reconstructs its orderliness by identifying functional steps in the course of initiating the play;
- Sections 5–7 derive more abstract practices from the findings concerning temporal issues of organizing activities, namely preparations, projections-by-arrangements and projection-preparation-sequences;
- Section 8 concludes the analysis of temporal aspects by comparing similarities and differences between projections-by-arrangements and preparations.

## 2. Temporality and theater (rehearsals)

Unlike everyday interactions, rehearsals are institutionalized activities (cf. Drew and Heritage 1992) whose main task is to give future events a certain shape (so called performances). Within the production process there is a clear (at least institutional) distinction between the two activities of rehearsing and performing. Usually rehearsals end when the performance starts; moreover, performances are publicly announced as such and are thus publicly accessible. In short: performances are the targeted, publicly shown and sold end-product of rehearsals.

*Performance* settings include a temporal extended course of activities aiming at creating a final product (cf. Schechner 2006). As such they exhibit special features as a growing body of work on performance has shown (cf. Weeks 1996; Sawyer 2003; Atkinson 2006; Kirsh 2010; Bassetti 2014; Broth and Keevallik 2014; Schmidt 2014; Keevallik 2015). Usually a performance comes into being through a prolonged process of shaping, comprising different activities ranging from developing and/or reworking a script, implementing and thereby creating and modifying ideas, up to instructing and correcting implementations.

Obviously performances are not only socially prearranged events (in contrast to spontaneous occurring events, cf. Goffman 1983), but they are also instructed events (Koschman and Zemel 2014). That is, their emergence rests on an extended process of direction, and their actual appearance is guided by underlying specifications delineating when what has to happen. However, in contrast to craftwork and fine arts (Ekström and Lindwall 2014), they do not leave material residues. Instead their existence depends on a concerted and repeatable interplay of several components (props, spatial structures, bodily movements, talk, music, light, etc.) which have to be mobilized and aligned interactively each time again. As theater studies have emphasized (cf. Fischer-Lichte 2004; Balme 2008; Leach 2013) performances therefore have special features regarding their temporality. On the one hand they are embodied, interactive and fleeting events, making each performance a unique experience, but at the same time a specific play has similar features every time it is performed.

Granting that the main purpose of rehearsals is to create a stage play within a certain time span which is finally shown in several performances, the specific problem with which rehearsals are dealing is thus the tension between the fleetingness of the emerging product (the performance) on the one hand and a requirement or claim of a high degree of stability (Balme 2008, 127) on the other hand. The latter is not only expected by the audience, who perhaps want to be able to see the same play twice, but it moreover represents the foundation of the 'theatrical world' as a societal institution because its organization and economic (re-)production is centered around stable and titled pieces called stage plays.

Rehearsals, on the other hand, can be seen as institutionalized solutions for the accomplishment of fleeting products or as means to make different performances recognizable as belonging to the same play.

The major interactional means to achieve this are preliminary staging activities, which are aimed at structuring the play in advance. This includes both conceptual pre-arrangements (script, choreography, situational agreements) and material preconditions (e.g. stage, props, technical facilities etc.) which finally have to be integrated into a play process. This creates an additional problem, namely *what* should be performed *when* (timing), and *how* it should be performed (forming).

As rehearsals are technical redoinings (Goffman 1986) in order to create and maintain the structure of stage plays,<sup>8</sup> they in turn have to simulate parts of the

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8. Goffman (1986, 59–74) grasps 'technical redoinings' as activities which are performed out of their usual context for utilitarian purposes. He identifies five types: practicing/rehearsal, demonstration/exhibition, recording/documentation, role-play and experiment. Especially practicing and rehearsals are characterized by a utilitarian make believe (or 'as if'), which means that they are "decoupled" from their usual embedment in consequentiality" (Goffman 1986, 59). In this sense they are 're-doing' parts of activities.

resulting performance as far as possible depending on production stages.<sup>9</sup> This means that play scenes performed during rehearsals for practice and/or creation purposes have similar temporal requirements as performances themselves (in particular the concerted interplay of specific components). That is, if a play scene is initiated during rehearsal the members have to make sure that all necessary components are available and executed at the right time (depending on how complete a specific scene should be rehearsed). This implies that they have to set a starting point for performing a play scene which requires initial temporal coordination of all necessary resources. This *transition process* of getting a play scene started during rehearsals I want to call *play initiations* (cf. also Broth and Keevallik 2014 for transitions in dance lessons).

In the next Section I introduce my exemplary case, firstly by having a look at data and context.

### 3. Data and context

The basis of my study is a corpus of 30 hours of video recordings from theater rehearsals. The extract I will focus on is drawn from free professional theater in which professionals come together to create and perform a stage play that they have chosen and developed on their own. So the play is not embedded within the usual structures of institutional theater.

The participants know each other well from other occasions where they worked together. However, the selected case represents the first initiation of a play scene within the rehearsal process of this production. They never played a piece of this play before.

The particular stage play which is created is labelled *Angst.Ich* ('Anxiety.I'). It is a play in German language and was played in a city theater in Germany in Spring 2013. It is inspired by the silent movie *Nosferatu – a Symphony of Horror* (1932) directed by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau (a famous German movie director).

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9. The closer the performance date, the more realistic are rehearsals, up to the dress rehearsal, which attempts to simulate the performance in its final state (for different kinds of rehearsals cf. Mehlin 1969).

#### 4. Case: Play initiation

Drawing on a single case I will show how members of a theater group are engaged in preliminary activities in order to initiate a play scene as part of the rehearsal process.

Figure 1 shows the members of the theater group: Two actresses (As1, As2) and two actors (Ac1, Ac2) are standing on the stage; the director (D) is sitting in the auditorium. The white line on the floor marks the divide between stage and auditorium. In the background on the left (view of the spectator) an open door is visible which will play a crucial role. The musicians are located at the side, the technicians at the back (both are out of camera frame).

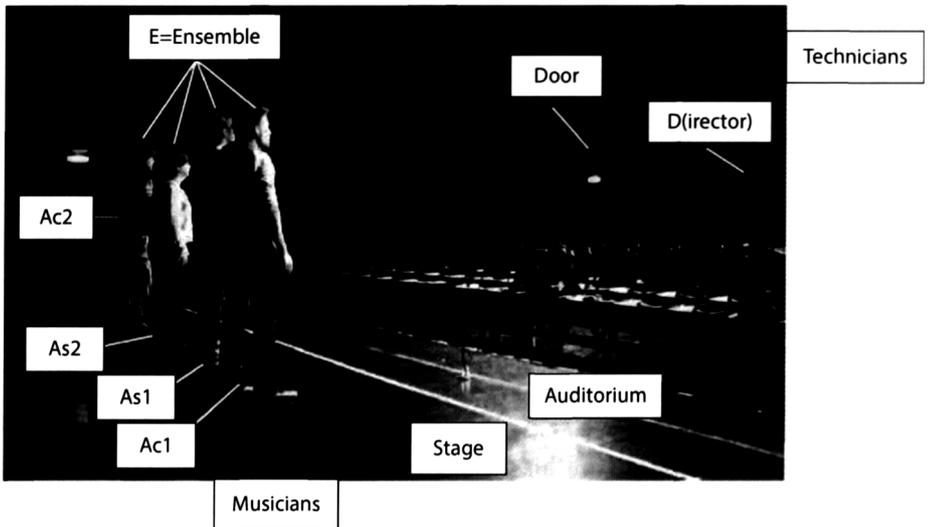


Figure 1. Participants and setting

In the following extract the members of the ensemble are trying to initiate the first play scene of the rehearsal process at issue. This is achieved when the ensemble leans back collectively, as captured in Figure 2.<sup>10</sup>

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10. The script and/or further rehearsals as well as the performance(s) itself are the basis for determining whether a certain event (talk and/or movement) is intended as a part of the play or not.



05 **As1** %(.) weil wir KÖNnen jetzt ja ma\_\*grob;#<sup>3a</sup>  
 %(.) cause we can now indeed \*roughly  
 acl \*waving armgesture  
 d \*sits down in the first row--->  
 06 (0.23)  
 07 **As1** (.) die\_ma- die weiße Linie, dass da:-  
 (.) the ma the white line that there  
 08 **Ac2** JA;#<sup>3b</sup>  
 YES

In this first step a starting position is negotiated. Both suggestions by As1 – how to move ('passage over here' in S01) and where to stand ('white line' in S07) – are ratified by other members thereby agreeing on a starting position depending on walking routes.<sup>13</sup> As they are already roughly aligned on the white line they slightly readjust their current positions by forming a more accurate row as the Figures 3a and 3b show.



Figures 3a/b. Starting position before and after mentioning the white line

### Extract 2. Self- and object-preparations

See video clip 2 and 2a

9 #<sup>4a\*</sup>(1.0)  
 as1 \*cleans her pullover  
 10 **Ac1** [(aber kein)- ]  
 [(but no ) ]  
 11 **Ac2** [bist SCHMUTzisch; ]  
 [you are dirty ]  
 12 **As1** (ja) SCHMUddi hat sich-  
 (yes) dirty slob has herself  
 \$hat ihr\_m NAMEN wieder alle ehre ge[macht;]  
 \$has lived up to her name again  
 acl \$cleans white line--->  
 13 **Ac2** [nää ]  
 [well ]  
 biste widder#<sup>4b</sup> SCHMUTz[isch,]  
 you are again dir[ty ]  
 14 **As1** [SCHMU]ddi.  
 [dirty]slob

13. As1 is the lead of the chorus which is rehearsed in this first scene.

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15 § (1.46)
   ac1  Sshuffles with right foot--->
16 As1  [SCHMUddi:;]
        [dirty slob]
17 Ac1  <<gedehnt> [ich KANN ] so net arbeite mit dir.>
        <<stretched> [I can ]not work like this with you>
18      %(0.6)
   d    %gets up and moves to the rear rows of the seats >%31
19 Ac2  #6adu kannst überHAUPT net arbeite;
        you can't work at all
20 des_IS ja des [problem. ]
        that's the [problem ]

```

After agreeing on a starting position two of the participants are engaged in cleaning activities: As1 is cleaning her pullover (S09) (see Clip 2a and Figure 4a below), while Ac1 is cleaning the stage floor (S12) (see Figure 4b below). Such activities are understood as either self-preparations (pullover) or object-preparations (stage floor). Both show a pre-orientation toward the upcoming play through anticipation of being observed (here in particular: the view of an audience).<sup>14</sup>



Figures 4a/b. Cleaning pullover and floor

14. The jocular sequences which permeate the entire transcript are disregarded because they are not relevant for my argumentation. Basically they can be understood as both distractions facilitating entry into the play and manifestations of social hierarchies playfully subverting the authority of the director. All in all they are nevertheless – as McAuley (1998) has argued – part of the professional process.

### Extract 3. *Aligning bodies to the deepness of the stage*

See video clip 3

```

21 D <<french> [on y va ]>
22 As1 [*nach$vorne] sehn GLEICHmäßig.
      look [*for $ward ] uniformly
      as1 +looks down--->
      e $align themselves with line
23 $ (0.87)
      ac1 $bends down, clears throat

```

In this part, As1 produces a demand to line up uniformly ('look forward uniformly' in S22), thereby prompting the other participants to adjust their positions, which they comply with immediately (S22). This aligning activity refers to the deepness of the stage and defines the distance to the audience. Afterwards one of the actors is again engaged in self-preparations (Ac1 *bends down/clears throat* in S23).

### Extract 4. *Aligning bodies to one another 1*

See video clip 4

```

24 D und richtig ruhig MIT körperkontakt zu beginn;
      and start with body contact#5a
      d --->continues to walk--->%31
25 $+(2.0)#5b
      e $moves closer
      ac2 +hugs As2
26 D +NICH so [ (xxxx) ]
      +not like this
      ac2 +kisses As2
27 As2 [ääää ]
28 X1 ((snorting laughter))
29 (2.5)
30 Ac1 <<leise zu As1> ich glaub (xxxx[xxxx]xxx%xxxx)>
      <<softly to As1> I guess (xxxx[xxxx]xxx%xxxx)>
31 As2 [hhh ]
      d %%sits down in the
      auditorium
32 #6b (0.6)

```

The next step also deals with spatial relations, this time however with respect to the distance of the performing bodies from one another. The demand of the director to align ('with body contact', S24) is fulfilled by the actors as the Figures below (5a/b) show.



Figures 5a/b. Body positions before and after the director's instruction

At the same time the director reaches the back rows of the auditorium, thereby establishing a new spatial participation framework of the joint focused interaction understandable as performer-audience-constellation (which Figures 6a and 6b show).<sup>15</sup>



Figures 6a/b. Before and after director's position change

#### Extract 5. *Aligning bodies to stage width*

See video clip 5

- 33 Ac1 *sim\_mer MITTisch?*  
*are we centered*
- 34 (2.8)
- 35 D *STÜCK noch nach links; \*(hie\_her)*  
*a little bit to the left\* (hither)*
- d *\*moves right hand to the left*
- 36 \$(2.24)
- e *\$move with little steps to the right*
- 37 D *GUT-*  
*fine*
- 38 \$(5.0)
- e *\$preparing themselves (adjusting, outbreathing, stretching)*

15. The position change of the director starts in segment 18 which can be found in Extract 2.

Having adopted the new position in the auditorium, the director asks the actors to move to the left. Acl's question ('are we centered' in S33) refers to the stage width and addresses the director who subsequently navigates the ensemble into the right position (S35–37). The pause in S38 is again used for self-preparations.

**Extract 6.** *Specification of play entry*

See video clip 6

```
39 D dann fangen_wer mit nosfeRA:tu an odder?
    then we start with nosferatu shall we
40 § (0.84)
    acl $raises his head, looks straight ahead
```

After the acting-ensemble has set themselves up in a sufficient formation, the director announces where to begin ('then we start with...' S39). By citing a word of the script (*nosferatu* in S39) she specifies exactly where in the script the ensemble is supposed to start the play (here in form of a question).

**Extract 7.** *Coordination of play entry*

See video clip 7

```
41 D $FRANK?
    $frank
    acl $moves his head
42 (1.0) § (1.8)
    acl $turns head to the right, looks to the music desk
```

In absence of a reaction the director directly addresses the musician using a vocative (*frank* in S41). By this she treats the non-responsive behavior of the others as tacit consent to where in the script to start (in this case with *nosferatu*). At the same time the director's call of the musician is understandable as *initiating* the entry into the play as it is the musician who is supposed to start first.<sup>16</sup> Consequently the musicians treat the call of the director as a prompt to begin playing, as becomes clear in the next part.

**Extract 8.** *Object-preparation/ interrupted play start*

See video clip 8

```
42 (1.0) § (0.8)* (0.7) § (0.3)
    acl $turns head to the right, looks to the music desk
    as1 *leaves the formation--->
    acl $watches As1
43 As1 *entschuldigung &ich mach_ma die TÜR dahinten zu;
    *sorry I'm just closing the door in the back
    *moves to the left towards the door --->
    m &begins
```

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16. This becomes clear at the end when the play entry finally succeeds (s. Extract 12).

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44      * (2.8) & (0.9)
      as1 +continues moving towards the door--->
      m      &stops

```

In S43 the musician generates sounds, but although the music starts, play-acting does not begin because As1 leaves the formation to close a door. She thereby interrupts the entry into the play for another object-preparation ('closing the door' starting in S43) framing her action as a deviation by apologizing (S43). Subsequently the music stops (S44) while As1 is moving to the door in the back of the room (the entire activity of closing the door lasts about 48 seconds and was omitted in the transcript). The music action (stopping the music in S44) is not only responsive to activities visible on stage (here: leaving the formation by As1), but at the same time projective for the further course of the joint activity: The process of starting the play is – at least for the moment – suspended and therefore postponed.<sup>17</sup>

**Extract 9.** *Aligning bodies to one another 2/ uninstructed start of music*

See video clip 9

```

45  D      <<laut> ENger,>
      <<loud> closer<
46  As1    (.) JA $doch;
      (.)yes $of course
      e      $move closer together--->
47  As1    UN[germ.      ]
      re[luctantly ]
48  D      [ ( (laughs) ) ]
49  Ac1    &ahhhahahaha
      m      &begins--->
50  Ac2    =wie*$SO: :?
      =why*
      ac2/ac1    +$plug heads together, whispering

```

As As1 returns and joins the formation again, the director gives another instruction: She again calls for more body contact ('closer', S45) thereby resuming a previous state (see Extract 4, S24). While the actors are busy with implementing the instruction by moving closer together (S46), commented on in a jocular way (S46–50), the music starts a second time (S49), this time however, without being instructed (in contrast to the start of the music in Extract 8, S43). This leads to the next part where the coordination of the entry into the play takes more time and effort. It also shows that the participants are sensitive to the mishaps before.

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17. Cf. Haddington, Keisanen, Mondada and Nevile (2014, 25) for the notion of suspending (in contrast to abandoning) an activity which puts the suspended activity (here: initiating the play) on hold but also indicate its resumption (here especially displayed by the excuse of As1 as well as the maintained body configuration of the remaining ensemble).

**Extract 10.** *Coordination of play entry / starting signals**See video clip 10*

```

51      *$ (0.5)
      ac2/ac1  *$ heads together, whispering
52  As1      *[oh ]
      ac1      *positions herself
53  Ac2      $[°°hh]
      ac2      $positions himself
54      &(0.23)
      m        &stops
55  As1      ä::*h,
      ac1      +looks to the music desk
56  Ac2      +DAnke;
      +thanks
      ac2      +leans forward, looks at the music desk
57      *(0.4)
      as1      *looks at Ac2, looks at the music desk and nods
58  As1      Okay;
      okay
59      (0.8)
60  As1      jetzt [SIM]_mer sow[eit. ]
      now [we ] are rea[dy ]
61  Ac2      [SO;]          [+AB ] mussik,
      [so ]          [+go ] music
      +leans forward, gaze at music desk

```

Initially the fact that the music started without instruction (in the part before, S49) causes confusion leading once more to an ending of the music (S54), ironically acknowledged by Ac2 (uttering ‘thanks’ in S56). The next start of the music, however, turns out to be successful and proves to be a collaborative achievement of the entire acting-ensemble: Several actors *give* signals to the musicians using different multimodal resources (body posture, looking, nodding, and speaking) and different verbal devices (‘okay’ in S58, ‘now we are ready’ in S60 and ‘go music’ in S61). This leads to the last step: the joint entry into play.

**Extract 11.** *Play entry**See video clip 11*

```

62      →(1.0)
      → room gets darker
63      &(1.0)$ (3.0)
      m        &begins
      e        $ensemble leans back

```

Following the starting signals before, the room is darkened (S62), the music starts to play (S63) and the acting-ensemble performs the first play movement by jointly leaning back (S63; see Figure 2 above).<sup>18</sup>

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18. The transition from non-play to play – as the analysis has shown – is accomplished successively, even within the last seconds where the acting ensemble instructs the music and uses



At the same time she tries to commit the other members to a certain shape of the future play. So the subsequent ratifications ('yeah' in S03, 'yes' in S04) not only show agreement, but they also imply that 'the passage over here' has to be memorized and re-actualized later in the right spot. This means 'the passage over here' is postponed thereby bridging a temporal gap between the verbal projection and the later implementation of 'the passage over here'. What is more: Ideally, the projected implementation has to be kept as a part of the choreography and has to be executed repeatedly in further rehearsals of the same scene as well as in later performances. Such (in comparison to the underlying script) ad hoc arrangements are important features of rehearsal processes and they contribute to a form of knowledge understood as rehearsal memory.

The following features of projections-by-arrangements are thus crucial:

- They are explicitly formulated describing verbally certain play actions;
- As verbal anticipations of the play they are imaginatively foreshadowing parts of the play;
- Unlike 'conversational projections' they are not produced *en passant* but are part of the main activity and therefore appearing as fully-fledged actions of prefiguring future events;
- Often they are contextualized as seeking mutual agreement ('I guess' in S1) thereby soliciting approval before their (later) implementation;
- Sometimes they are even noted down in a written form (and in some cases ad-hoc-arrangements later become part of the script);
- Temporally they only have to be implemented when the play runs; this does not necessarily concern the near future ('next'), but in most cases a distant future; therefore they are designed to bridge longer time periods;
- The target of projections-by-arrangements are components of the play pre-shaping future play events; as such they are formative and creative;<sup>21</sup>
- They have to be memorized, re-actualized and repeated.

In contrast to such play relevant conceptualizations, which are designed to become an inherent part of the play, and which are therefore important aspects of the creative process, there is another, more organizational kind of projection concerning the future course of the current interaction as exemplified in S39:

**Extract 13.** *Nosferatu*

39 D dann fangen\_wer mit nosfeRA:tu an odder?  
 then we start with nosferatu shall we

---

21. That means that projections of this kind are designed to create specific forms as parts of the composition (as in this case 'the passage over here' as a candidate for a stable part of the play).

By quoting a word which indexes a scene from the *play script*, the director determines the point of entry into the play with respect to the script.<sup>22</sup> Such *situational agreements* which serve as “practice projectors” (Broth and Keevallik 2014, 112) only apply to *next actions* (e.g. where to enter the play now) but not to actions/events which have to be memorized, practiced and repeated several times (like e.g. ‘the passage over here’ mentioned by As1 in S1). In short: They are just instructions for the moment which serve to coordinate presupposed next actions without describing them further. Therefore they are not in an artistic sense *formative*.

## 6. Preparations

In contrast to projections-by-arrangements, *preparations* are immediate interventions into the material world, as it is done by As1:

### Extract 14. Closing a door

```

42      (1.0) § #7a(0.8) *(0.7) § (0.3)
    ac1      §turns head to the right, looks to the music desk
    as1      *leaves the formation
    ac1      §swatches As1
43  As1  *entschuldigung &ich mach_ma die#7b TÜR dahinten zu;
    *sorry I'm just closing the door in the back
    *moves to the left towards the door --->
    m        &begins
44      *(2.8) &(0.9)
    as1  *continues moving towards the door--->
    m        &stops

```

Here, As1 closes a door in order to improve the light conditions. In contrast to the above verbal projections of the play, preparations are embodied instrumental activities. They do not describe and thereby imagine what the play should look like, but accomplish materially parts of the play (in this case a closed door and the lighting resulting from this action).<sup>23</sup> Since the play has not started yet but the conditions produced at the moment (closed door/specific lighting) are meant to be relevant for the play, parts of the play are pre-accomplished. In order to be able to use them as elements in the (upcoming) play they have to be maintained over a certain period of time. In this case, the door has to be kept closed both until the entry into the play is reached as well as during the play to preserve the light conditions. In other words: Preparations are designed to arrange material conditions until they become

22. Weeks (1985) speaks of “temporal places” (230).

23. As1 refers to her ‘door closing activity’ in a later stage of the rehearsal explaining that she was primarily concerned with the light conditions.

a component of future events, in this case the play process. This is possible because preparations deal with material aspects of the surroundings thereby producing potentially persistent results.

Persistent results of embodied actions have been described and analyzed with regard to their contributions to the ongoing interactional activities in several respects. Usually persistent results of embodied actions are tangible by qualities of the material world of objects, “those elements of the physical world that we can experience sensorically, i.e. that we typically see, hear and touch” (Nevile et al. 2014, 5). As Nevile et al. (2014) point out from an interactionist point of view objects basically can be considered both as *situated resources* which can be used within interaction and as *practical accomplishments* in and through interaction. Both perspectives are intertwined as using objects as resources simultaneously constitute them as interactional objects. Streeck (1996), for instance, shows how objects (several boxes, in his case) are used to produce a certain shape (the boxes are piled on top of each other). This is achieved while talking symbolizing basic features of the talk (topic and pragmatic outcomes). Mondada (2014b), in contrast, shows how participants involved in a cooking class deal with objects verbally. In her cases instructions and subsequent instructed actions (e.g. an instruction how to cut an onion, possible clarifications, and the action of cutting itself) refer to central aspects of involved objects thereby rendering certain qualities relevant (in Mondada’s example, the vulnerability of involved objects whose modifications, for instance cutting, are irreversible). In both cases objects of the surroundings are used either to support ongoing (topic) talk (in the ‘box-pile-case’) or to carry out the verbally instructed core activity (in the ‘cooking-case’). At the same time the objects only get constituted as specific ones in and through their use within interaction (either as symbolic means reflecting talk, or as material entities which have to be cut in a certain manner).

In contrast to the above cases, preparations in theater (rehearsals) have to fulfil a further task: their temporal alignment aims to create a composition. The distinctive feature in the present case therefore is that persistent results are generated in order to accomplish a concerted interplay of several components, fleeting and fixed ones, which, taken together and integrated into a process, constitute the play.

Because preparations are designed to change material conditions in the surroundings more or less permanently, they are relevant for the ongoing flow of activities in two different ways. First, they are actions in themselves whose temporal course has to be aligned with ongoing activities. Second, they are producing persistent results which are henceforth available for further interactional purposes. Although it is often not the actions themselves but the results that are central (as in the door-closing-example where the action itself is framed as a disturbance), preparations nevertheless have to be fitted into the ongoing activities. Depending

on the resources they employ and how much effort is required to carry out these activities, they can be conducted either in a simultaneous or interrupting way.

So the object preparation 'door closing' interrupts and briefly suspends<sup>24</sup> the ongoing activity of starting the play, at this point already *partly* accomplished by a certain body formation and by producing music (S43). There are three reasons why this type of preparation has the potential to suspend the ongoing activities. First, the activity itself (closing a door) requires a position change (As1 has to move to the back of the room) which interferes with the collective project (starting the play). Second, the creation of proper conditions takes place prior to the play so that the play entry is postponed until the preparatory action has been completed. And third, this illustrates the nature of the targeted event, the play, as an 'aesthetic totality' which requires all of its components to be set up completely in order to be considered as fully achieved. Consequently, the lack of one relevant component (initial body formation of all performers, optimal light conditions, etc.) leads to an interruption reflected via the reactions of the other members: It is not only that the music stops after the musicians have realised what happened (S44), but also other members of the ensemble are re-orienting themselves in response to As1's chosen action of suddenly leaving the formation: After looking at the music expecting it to begin, Ac1 turns his head in the opposite direction and watches As1 moving out of the formation (see Figures below). Ac1 does this, however, without leaving the formation himself, thereby making his behavior understandable as waiting.



Figures 7a/b. Ac1 looks at musicians, then at As1

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24. Recognizable by her formulation 'I just close the door (...)', which indicates the temporal limited character of her exit.

Whereas some preparations inevitably cause interruptions (like the door-closing), others can be conducted simultaneously,<sup>25</sup> as it is done by As1 and Ac1 in this extract:

**Extract 15. Cleaning**

```

9      * (1.0)
      as1  +cleans her pullover
10 Ac1  [ (aber kein)-      ]
      [ (but no  )      ]
11 Ac2  [bist SCHMUTzisch; ]
      [you are dirty  ]
12 As1  (ja) SCHMUddi hat sich
      (yes) dirty slob has herself
      $hat ihr_m NAMen wieder alle ehre ge[macht;]
      $has lived up to her name again
      ac1  $cleans white line--->

```

Here, As1 and Ac1 are engaged in cleaning activities thereby preparing relevant play resources (body/appearance; spatial conditions/stage). These activities are designed to be executed in parallel fashion without necessarily becoming part of the talk. The same holds for self-preparations concerning bodily states of actors/actresses as it is done in these examples:

**Extract 16a and b. Stretching/bending/throat clearing/breathing**

```

23      § (0.87)
      ac1  $bends down, clears throat
      § (5.0)
      e    $preparing themselves (adjusting, outbreathing, stretching)

```

Here the members of the acting ensemble are engaged in bodily preparations like stretching, throat clearing or jerky exhaling, which are executed in order to be physically well prepared for the upcoming task of play-acting. At the same time they are displaying the process of preparing.

Whereas some preparations, like the cleaning-activities discussed above, but also the more interruptive door-closing-activity, leave perceivable traces (clean clothes and floor; closed door, darker light) which enter the upcoming play as material parts or tangible conditions, other preparations are far less perceivable, such as the results of the warm-up-activities. This means that in general, the results of preparations can be more or less visible up to being totally invisible. Nevertheless, this may have interactional consequences as also invisible results of preparations are producing more or less long lasting bodily effects (e.g. a clear voice, a relaxed

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25. Cf. Haddington, Keisanen, Mondada and Nevile (2014, 24–26) for different possible forms of coordinating multiple activities.

body, a more focused state etc.), which become a silent' part of future events. This is particularly important in performance contexts where physical states and appearance play a crucial role.

This leads to one final consideration: preparations can be more or less persistent depending on the affordances of their results. As preparations generally aim to produce more or less sustainable effects, the results achieved in the above cases clearly differ with respect to their persistent qualities (effects of cleaning vs. effects of warming up vs. light conditions vs. bodily formations, etc.). In the case of preparations this means that what plays a crucial role is not only the temporal relations with respect to their actual and later implementation but also how long results last. Whereas some preparations, like the ones discussed above, cause more or less long lasting effects which are integrated in the play process, others are just accomplished for intermediate or transitional purposes and dissolved afterwards. This is especially true for the preparatory accomplishment of bodily formations, which are a central resource to achieve a concerted interplay of different modalities because the body can be both dynamic and static. Thus, the bodies of the performers are the primary means to get into the play. For this reason, bodily movements aiming to complete the preparatory accomplishment of initial bodily formation are often instructed by talk, as we will see in the next part.

## 7. Projection-Preparation-Sequences

So far I have discussed single occurrences of both practices, but they also occur combined as *projection-preparation-sequences (PPS)*. In these cases, parts of the play are verbally projected and immediately implemented bodily as the following collection of extracts shows:

### Extract 17. Collection of PPS

#### Video clip 12

```

22  As1      [*nach$vorne] sehn gleichmäßig.
      look [*for $ward ] uniformly
      as1      +looks down--->
      e        $align themselves according to the line
24  D        und richtig ruhig MIT körperkontakt zu beginn;
      and start with body contact
      d        --->continues to walk--->%31
25  $+(2.0)
      e        $moves closer
      ac2      +hugs As2

33  Ac1      sim_mer MITtisch?
      are we centered
34  (2.8)

```

- 35 D     **STÜCK** noch nach links;   \*(hie\_her)  
           *a little bit to the left* \*(hither)  
   \*moves right hand to the left
- 36     **\$(2.24)**  
       e     \$move with little steps to the right
- 37 D     **GUT-**  
           *fine*
- 45 D     <<laut> **ENger,**>  
           <<loud> *closer* >
- 46 **As1**   (.) **JA** \$doch;  
           (.) *yes* \$of course  
       e     \$move closer together--->

The combination of projections-by-arrangements and subsequent embodied preparations leads to verbal-bodily-sequences, as in S22 where As1's demand ('look forward uniformly') is immediately taken up by the others (and herself), who are aligning themselves along the white line on the floor. Here, PPS take the form of instruction sequences which are particularly effective in conveying, accomplishing and checking a certain state of affairs (here: a certain formation of bodies). This is because the pairing of an instruction and an instructed action immediately shows how the instruction was taken up and understood by the instructed persons (cf. Amerine and Bilmes 1988; Garfinkel 2002; Mondada 2014b). Therefore they are well-suited not only for announcing that a certain state has to be implemented but also for navigating movements in an extended process, as is done in the case of directing the ensemble spatially (S35–37). Moreover, corrections within instructional settings (like 'closer' in S45) go beyond conversational repair as they are always linked to a specific task (cf. Macbeth 2011; Ekström and Lindwall 2014), in this case the accomplishment of a starting position as a pre-condition for rehearsing a play scene.

In contrast to the first two practices (projections-by-arrangements discussed in Section 4 and single preparations discussed in Section 5), in the case of PPS projections get immediately implemented whereas preparations are instructed by talk.

On the one hand PPS occur because they are an effective means regarding affordances and temporal qualities of involved modal resources: the instructed body movements are not part of the play (otherwise they would have to be memorized until the play starts and would have to be executed then and not now). Rather, they are a means for accomplishing a starting line-up which can be preserved until the play starts. In other words: The special material and temporal qualities of human bodies as both durable objects and carriers of movements and actions are exploited to shape the beginning of a process by producing successively a constellation of bodies as a 'point of departure'.

On the other hand, this reflects the status of PPS as a core activity of first play initiations. Apart from the projection-by-arrangement at the beginning (S01–08) and the attempts to coordinate the start of the music in the end (S55–61), the whole activity of initiating the play consists of PPS trying to form a 'temporary object'

(here: a certain configuration of bodies) which lasts until the play starts, and is dissolved with the start of the play.

Sequentially PPS occur indeed in different forms and environments:

- Independent, that is, neither directly responsive to prior activities nor taken up verbally by subsequent turns (like S22);
- Directly responsive to a prior action (like S35);
- With (S45/45) or without (all other cases) verbally acknowledging the instruction;
- Negotiated (like S35–37);
- Expanded (like S24 or S45);

However, in all instances they are part of the main activity of initiating the play by building a starting line-up.

In the next section, I conclude my analysis by considering the different temporalities of the two practices from a more generic point of view.

## 8. Conclusion: The temporalities of projections-by-arrangements and preparations

The analysis above has shown that theater rehearsals are contexts within which practices of prefiguring the future play a crucial role. But unlike comparable practices in everyday interactions, these practices have to project and prepare a concerted interplay of several modal resources, the play (process), which further have to be aligned temporally at a certain point (when the play starts).

Therefore, these practices are designed to ‘manipulate’ time: Projections-by-arrangements are verbal pre-arrangements of play-relevant processes which have to be memorized and implemented later. Single preparations are embodied pre-accomplishments of play-relevant components carried out in the moment, but only later becoming part of the play. Finally, *PPS* combine both practices. In contrast to single projections-by-arrangements they concern more durable aspects of the play which can be implemented immediately (e.g. the formation of bodies). In contrast to single preparations they are instructed by talk. Consequently, they are part of the talk-driven core activity of constructing a starting line-up, which is indispensable for aligning the temporal course of interaction with that of the play (process). During the whole activity (initiating the play) the ensemble maintains a specific formation (side-by-side row facing the auditorium; see Figure 6b above) thereby displaying their continuous orientation at the task of initiating the play.<sup>26</sup>

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26. Cf. Streeck (in this volume) on postures and body configurations expressing and indexing an interacting ensemble’s working consensus.

As preliminary activities, projections-by-arrangements and preparations obviously serve a common purpose: they 'prearrange' parts of the upcoming play. How and to what extent they do this, however, relates to material and temporal qualities of these practices:

- They rely on different multimodal resources: Whereas projections-by-arrangements need verbalizations to describe and negotiate later parts of the play, preparations mainly rely on embodied actions that can manipulate objects;
- Therefore, they differ in their relations to their material environment: Whereas projections-by-arrangements merely refer to material aspects to denote, imagine, suggest etc. features of the play, preparations are designed to intervene physically and accomplish parts of the play in a direct and material fashion;
- This implies different temporalities: Whereas projections-by-arrangements transcend the current situation (here and now) in formulating a future state or process, preparations are immediate implementations of certain material conditions within the situation at hand.
- In both cases a form of 'time-manipulation' is at play: While projections pre-arrange and postpone play components that can only be implemented later, preparations pre-accomplish play components that can be produced now, but become play-relevant only later.

In contrast to verbal projections, which are a well-known and extensively investigated phenomenon within CA, preparations have not yet become a topic of research. This is largely due to the following methodological issues.

First, only the turn from audio to video data (cf. Mondada 2008; Deppermann 2013) as well as the related shift from verbal to "embodied interaction" (programmatically unfolded in Streeck et al. 2011; cf. also Heath 1986; Goodwin 2000; Mondada 2014c) allows considering preparations as an integral part of the ongoing activities. This is especially true for preparations that do not enter the official course of interaction and which would remain invisible drawing only on the verbal-vocal track.

This is related to a second point: Preparations are not necessarily sequentially structured; often, they are rather instrumental, non-communicative and self-initiated activities (like the cleaning-activities discussed above) which are not attended to by others. This is possible because preparations often rely on bodily resources, which allows them to be executed at the same time as a talk-driven core activity (cf. Keevallik in this volume).

This leads to my third point: Because preparations entail durable results, they do not disappear after the participants have dealt with them. That is, they are not just perceivable, but they become permanent parts of the ongoing flow of activities that create (altered) constraining and enabling affordances which participants may build on in the further course of interaction.

In the case of media productions, and especially theater rehearsals, practices to prefigure the future are employed systematically. Preparations in particular play a crucial role because they offer an alternative solution to the problem of creating a defined shape of future events which mainly rests on their temporal affordances: Instead of having to produce them 'on time', they can be implemented in advance, and can later become an integral part of the product. With these considerations in mind, we can conclude that the practices of prefiguring the future in the context of media productions presented in this study, namely projections-by-arrangements and preparations, are indeed important components of staging processes.

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## Appendix. Transcription conventions

### *Talk and Pauses are*

- in black font
- indicated by a segment number
- noted according to GAT 2 (Selting et al. 2011)

### *Multimodal Details* (according to Mondada 2014a)

- appear in grey
- are described in the following line (without a separate number)
- are synchronized with talk/pauses using the following actor-specific symbols indicating the beginning (one symbol, e.g. \*) of body movements (ends are noted only when relevant for interpretation and are indicated by two symbols (e.g. \*\*)):
- \*\*/\*\*            as1
- \$/\$\$            ar1
- +/++            ar2
- ~/~~            as2
- \$/\$\$            e
- %/%%            d
- &/&&&            m
- →/→→            other events

### *Continued actions and events*

- >            Movement continues across subsequent lines
- >\$            Movement continues across subsequent lines until
- \$\$              reaching the same symbol in double notation
- >\$<sup>16</sup>        specifies line number where movement ends

### *Figures*

are anchored with # within transcripts, additionally highlighted with grey shadings