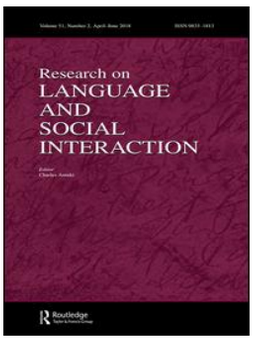

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An Adjunct to Repair: *You Know* in Speech Production and Understanding Difficulties

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ABSTRACT

The English-language particle *you know* is frequently associated with speech production and understanding difficulties. The present study combines sequential and distributional analyses to explicate the particle's relationship to the conversational repair system. It demonstrates that *you know* functions as an *adjunct to repair*, addressing secondary difficulties associated with implementing self-repair in practice, while also promoting the avoidance of transformative repair operations. This repair adjunct viewpoint trades off the particle's general import as an alignment token and is supported by examining its specialized role in: (a) self-repair operations, (b) suboptimal formulations, and (c) understanding pursuits. This article elaborates our understanding of the repair system by identifying an ancillary practice that smooths over recurrent shortcomings of natural speech. Data in American English.

The English-language particle *you know* is used in a diverse range of action environments, among which speech production and understanding difficulties comprise a prominent class (Clark, 1994; Clark & Wasow, 1998; Erman, 1987; Fox Tree & Schrock, 2002; House, 2009; Schourup, 1985) and account for most instances of the particle's use in ordinary conversation (Clayman & Raymond, in press). This association invites consideration of the particle's relationship to the repair system (Schegloff et al., 1977), the primary organization of practices for resolving problems of speaking, hearing, and understanding talk-in-interaction.

We propose that *you know* operates as an *adjunct to repair*. It is syntactically dispensable and hence a recurrent locus of choice in the utterances subject to repair. And it is ancillary to the main components of the repair system as outlined by Schegloff et al. (1977), neither implementing any repair operation (Schegloff, 2013) nor reliably flagging the existence of a trouble to be repaired. Nevertheless, much of what the particle does in problematic speech contexts is best understood in relation to repair, either addressing systematic difficulties in bringing repair to an adequate resolution or enabling forms of repair to be avoided altogether. This functionality trades off the general import of *you know* as an alignment token that invokes the recipient's convergent orientation with the current speaker (Clayman & Raymond, in press). In a variety of ways, this invoked alignment can be exploited to smooth over the rough edges of natural speech.

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Theoretical background: The problematics of self-repair

The repair system as detailed by Schegloff et al. (1977) encompasses practices addressed to two main tasks: (a) flagging the existence of a problem of speaking, hearing, or understanding; and (b) performing a repair operation on that trouble source. These tasks may be differentially distributed to the trouble-source speaker (*self*) or to someone else (*other*), resulting in a repair division of labor that varies from case to case. This framework has been highly generative, with subsequent research focusing on further explicating the basic mechanics of repair (e.g., Drew, 1997; Jefferson, 2018; Lerner & Kitzinger, 2015, 2019; Maynard, 2013; Robinson, 2006; Schegloff, 1979, 1992, 2013), charting its cross-linguistic relevance beyond English (e.g., Dingemanse et al., 2015; Enfield et al., 2013), and context-sensitive functions in use (e.g., Bolden, 2011, 2013; Drew et al., 2013; Lerner, 2013; Lerner & Kitzinger, 2007; Raymond & Heritage, 2013; Robinson, 2013).

The present study falls broadly within the first area of research but takes a somewhat different tack. Focusing primarily on the case of *same-turn self-repair*, we identify systematic difficulties in repair implementation and what appears to be the primary English-language practice for addressing such difficulties. We also demonstrate that the same practice facilitates the avoidance of repair for speaking difficulties that might otherwise be targeted for clarification or revision.

Consider first difficulties in repair implementation. Self-repair does not always run off straightforwardly from initiation to completion, being vulnerable to problems arising at various points in the repair process.

At the initiation of repair: Self-repair is normally launched through some perceptible hitch in the forward development of the talk, such as a phonetic stop or cutoff, sound stretch, filled pause (*uh, uhm*), or silence. This stands as an alert that what follows will not necessarily fit what was projected by the talk to that point (Schegloff, 1992), marking the existence of a trouble of some sort and opening a social space for its repair. By the same token, it also generates a modicum of uncertainty for recipients and a rift in intersubjectivity that may be prolonged insofar as there are difficulties in bringing the repair to completion.

At the resolution of repair: An adequate resolution of the trouble may indeed be elusive (Schegloff, 1979, pp. 277–280). It may be delayed by lexical repetition, filled pause, and/or silence indexing an extended search (arrowed in the following) before the resolution is delivered.

(1) [TG:9]

```
01 BEE:  -> I don'know.=The school- school uh, (1.0) bookstore
02             doesn' carry anything anymo(h)uh,
```

Or the resolution may be revised in the course of its delivery, as when this turn restart (line 4) is itself aborted and restarted yet again (5).

(2) [Sidnell (2010, p. 153)]

```
01 LOT:      …we need a(b) (.) p-p'litical [leader we really do:.
02 EMM:                                    [°°Yah°°
03 EMM:      °We:ll ah duh- (.)
04        -> MuhCarthy's kind of:
05        -> I don't know whether I like him er no:t.°
```

Or once delivered, the resolution may then be treated by the speaker as inadequate and targeted for subsequent revision (lines 1–2).

(3) [Kitzinger (2013, p. 241)]

```
01  ANI:     =Meanwhile for the last five years that
02         -> I've- (0.4) six- seven years that I've
03            been in New Jerse:y .hhh I've seen them
04            break up and get ba:ck together three
05            or four ti:mes
```

Or an adequate resolution may never be delivered, as when this speaker explicitly abandons the repair in progress ("whoever they are," arrowed), although the recipient takes up the search for an elusive surname (lines 4–5; see also Heritage, 2007).

(4) [Schegloff (1979, p. 266)]

```
01 B:    No, I had the queen Clarie.
02       And uh Gene uh that Nobles, or- no their names aren't Noble.
03    -> But Gene and Ruth or Roo-uhm oh whoever they [are
04 A:                                                  [Yeah I- I keep
05 A:    saying Noble- Jones.
06 B:    Yeah, Jones.
```

So long as the resolution remains elusive, this both expands the repair space and prolongs the disruptions of progressivity and projectability that the repair process necessarily entails.

At the next turn transition space and beyond: Any shortcomings in the repair's resolution may have downstream consequences, including a lack of response from recipients. Here an extended search (lines 2–3) and a highly disfluent resolution (lines 4–6) receives no uptake (line 7), prompting the trouble-source speaker to pursue response (line 8) (Pomerantz, 1984).

(5) [MTRAC 60-1/1]

```
01 MAR:     ˙t˙hhhhh dYa:h eh-uh How's the movie I mean is this
02          something that you: uh
03              (2.5)
04 MAR:     yihknow y-ih-ih-ee- eh are- ih you feel yer f:- you've been
05          free:: enough (0.8) in in with movie, (0.2) wor- material,
06          type things?
07       ->    (0.6)
08 MAR:     .hh I guess I'm wondering yihknow what kind of uh:=
09 DAN:     =Oh: yes yeh (th' movie's g'nna be) absolutely free.
```

Further downstream, there may be additional repair efforts initiated by recipients in the next turn (Schegloff et al., 1977) or by trouble-source speakers in subsequent turns (Schegloff, 1992).

You know appears recurrently at all three of these positions—repair initiation, resolution, and next transition space—and addresses context-specific issues arising therein. It is also associated with formulations that have *not* been targeted for self-repair but are nonetheless treated by the speaker as problematic and hence candidates for repair by others. The utility of *you know* in these problematic speech contexts derives from its general import as an alignment token, deployed when the recipient's understanding of or affiliation with the talk is in doubt (Clayman & Raymond, in press). The token invokes the recipient's convergent orientation with the current speaker without asserting it as such, which in turn occasions recipient confirmation that in a substantial proportion of cases is launched in overlap with the *you-know*-marked turn. In the specific context of speech production problems, the alignment invoked by *you know* does specialized work addressed to the aforementioned difficulties in repair implementation while also enabling forms of repair to be circumvented altogether.

This account of *you know* builds upon a substantial literature devoted to pinning down the utility of this widely used speaking practice. Studies have noted its association with speech production difficulties, some offering functional accounts that address pieces of the puzzle we assemble here. The proposal that *you know* buys turn space for speakers who are "fumbling" or engaged in discourse planning (cf. Edmondson, 1981; Erman, 1987; House, 2009) is qualified by subsequent research demonstrating that the particle attracts interjacent responses rather than discouraging them (Clayman & Raymond, in press). Moreover, if the particle merely serves as a "filler" when working out what to say next, why select this particular item over more commonplace fillers (*uh, uhm*)? A similar lack of specificity attends the view that *you know* provides an alert for impending repair (Clark, 1994), since production hitches perform the same function more frequently (Schegloff et al., 1977). And since hitches are a recurrent accompaniment to the particle's use (Clayman & Raymond, in

press), the particle itself would be largely redundant if it did not contribute something distinctive to repair processes.

Closer to the present study are functional accounts of the particle as inviting recipient inferences (Fox Tree & Schrock, 2002; Jucker & Smith, 1998, Schourup, 1985; see also Erman, 1987). But the variety of production problems that speakers treat as requiring inferential work remain unspecified, as are the consequences for subsequent actions, and the particle's broader import for the maintenance of a public "architecture of intersubjectivity" (Heritage, 1984) at moments when it is accountably at risk.

We illuminate these matters by examining the particle's specialized role in various speech production problems that fall into the three overarching categories: (a) same-turn self-repair operations, (b) suboptimal formulations, and (c) understanding pursuits. We then consider how the particle's use both supports the conversational repair system and enables the avoidance of repair in most of its forms.

Database and methodology

Data for this project were drawn from American English conversational corpora, both telephone calls and face-to-face encounters among friends and family.[1] They span a substantial time frame, with most occurring in the late 1960s through the early 1980s and some in the late 1990s. Given our interest in *you know* as a practice in its own right, we excluded constituents of larger grammatical units and focused on grammatically optional cases—those produced as dispensable additions to turn constructional units and as separate units in themselves.

To maximize the range of participants in the database, we chose two to three conversations from the larger telephone corpora, plus numerous smaller data sets and individual recordings, for a total of 22 conversations involving more than 40 different participants. We then sampled up to the first 10 instances of *you know* in each of the shorter encounters[2] (those < 15 minutes; $n = 16$) and up to the first 15 instances in each of the longer encounters (those ≥ 15 minutes; $n = 6$). Since none of these cases occurred during the opening phase (e.g., greetings, *how are you* exchanges, etc.) or initial topical talk, the sample is not biased toward such ritualized activities. This procedure yielded a database of $N = 200$ cases, roughly two-thirds from telephone calls and one-third from face-to-face encounters. The present article is based primarily on an examination of the subset of cases associated with speech production or reception difficulties, which represents more than two-thirds of the database.

The methods combine sequential analysis of individual cases with some coding and statistical analysis. The latter focused initially on structural patterns in the particle's turn-constructional placement and uptake. Later, as our sense of its role in self-repair and related contexts began to emerge, we developed additional coding categories to assess its presence in these contexts. All coding decisions were made by the authors themselves working together and required consensus.

Same-turn self-repair

Same-turn self-repair is a very prominent locus for *you know*. The particle appears recurrently when there is an audible hitch in turn progression (e.g., a phonetic stop, sound stretch, filled pause, or silence), marking the existence of some problem and projecting an effort to address it (Schegloff et al., 1977). Repair-associated cases comprise almost half of the database (94/200 or 47% of the cases; see Table 1). Perhaps not surprisingly, there is a strong association between this use of *you know* and the medial position within turn constructional units (TCUs). Of those cases linked to self-repair, 90% fall in the TCU-medial position.

Although the particle may also appear at clausal and phrasal boundaries within the TCU, it is more often linked to production hitches. For instance, here the particle is disjoined from both prior and

[1]Data were gathered with informed consent, and as necessary, identities have been anonymized.
[2]Some shorter encounters yielded less than 10 cases.

Table 1. Self-repair association by TCU position.

	Not repair		*Self-repair*	
	n	*%*	*n*	*%*
Initial	33	31.1	2	2.1
Medial	19	17.9	85	90.4
Final	29	27.4	6	6.4
Pivotal	3	2.8	0	0
Separate TCU	23	21.7	1	1.1
TOTAL	106	100.0	94	100.0

Note. The *TCU-Initial* category includes all cases prefacing the main body of the unit, including those with other particles or connectors preceding *you know*. The *Pivotal* category includes all cases produced as prosodically continuous constituents of both the prior and subsequent TCUs (i.e., modular pivots; Clayman & Raymond, 2015).

subsequent clausal junctures ("and so" earlier in line 5; "then" in 6) and appears instead between an adverb and the verb it modifies.

(6) [NB II:2:R:162]

```
01 NAN:       …but I tellyuh by the time I got up there after 'im
02            whh(h)y(h) everybody was so completely wru:ng ou:t.
03            yuhknow a[nd .hhhhhh]
04 EMM:                [°Mm hm:,°  ]
05 NAN:    -> so quiet'n so: (0.2) uh: (.) .hhh I just (.) ↑yihknow (0.2)
06            gave my short little,h (.) dissertation then everybody
07            wri:tes.
```

Furthermore, many cases at phrasal/clausal boundaries are also, upon analysis, junctures of self-repair. In the next excerpt, while *you know* lies between a quotative frame and main clause, this is also a repair space opened by a prior sound stretch and phonetic stop and continuing with subsequent silence.

(7) [HG II:89]

```
01 NAN:      So 'e ga' me these pills to ta:ke¿=
02 HYL:      =What.Tetracyline?
03              (.)
04 NAN:      .PT NO: 'cuz I usetuh take that an' it didn' he:lp so
05           'e ga' me something e:lse.=
06 HYL:      =Hm:.
07              (0.2)
08 NAN:   -> He sai:d- yihknow, (0.2) sometimes Tetracycline jus doesn'
09           he:lp.
```

Since repair is positionally unrestricted in its sequential placement (Schegloff, 1979, 1993), any practices implicated in repair would be similarly unrestricted. *You know* is one such practice, repair-associated and positionally unrestricted, while also appearing in repair-vulnerable contexts documented later in this paper (and other action environments; Clayman & Raymond, in press).

Repair space positioning

Given the association of *you know* with self-repair, consider the particle's placement relative to the repair space (Table 2). It can appear just "before" a phonetic hitch in speech delivery that regularly initiates repair or just "after" the repair's resolution via one or more repair operations (the scare quotes capturing the particle's introduction of some fuzziness to repair-space boundaries). But most appear *inside the repair space*—about 80% occur after a phonetic hitch but before any repair operation has been delivered (e.g., Excerpts 6, 7).

Table 2. Positioning across the repair space.

Position	*n*	*%*
"Before" initiation	9	9.57
Within repair space	76	80.85
"After" resolution	9	9.57
Total	94	100.00

Furthermore, within the repair space, there is a moderate tendency (approximately three-quarters of the cases) for *you know* to appear *just prior to the delivery of the repair solution* (e.g., Excerpts 8–10) or at least an attempted solution (Excerpt 5, line 4). This positioning runs contrary to the view that *you know* functions *primarily* as a "pause filler" enabling discourse planning (cf., Erman, 1987; Holmes, 1986; House, 2009). That view may be plausible when the particle is introduced earlier in the repair space (e.g., Excerpts 7 and 14, where silence precedes the repair solution), but it is more frequently deployed as a type of repair frame (Lerner & Kitzinger, 2015) that prefaces the repair solution or at least the launching of a possible solution and (as demonstrated later in this paper) bears on its substance.

Repair-type specialization

Whether preframing the repair resolution or bracketing the repair space *in toto*, the particle and the alignment it invokes is reserved for a limited range of repair operations (see Schegloff, 2013) (Table 3). In the present data, it is never used for insertion or deletion repairs and only rarely for replacement repairs.[3] Conversely, just two other repair operations comprise the vast majority (≈80%) of repair-associated cases: About half involve *searching repairs*, and over a quarter involve *TCU restarts* (cf. Clark & Wasow, 1998; Erman, 1987).

In searching repairs marked with *you know* (henceforth *YK-marked*), the particle often follows a hitch in the talk's delivery (e.g., the sound stretch and "eh:m .t eh::" in the following line 5) and precedes a syntactically continuous resumption of that talk (line 6). Here the particle-framed continuation delivers a third-party characterization as the object of the suspended sentence (line 6).

(8) [MTRAC 60-1:5]

```
01 MAR:      .hhhh So uh I haven't uh,hh .hh met Ilene but,hh
02              (0.3)
03 ERM:      She's a do:ll. ˙hhh The cute thing is thet she's not only
04           pretty but she seems tuh be such a nice girl.She's: uh
05           youknow she doesn't seem one of the:se eh::m .t eh::
06        -> .hhh yihkno:w watch me all the time kind'v kids? ˙hhh
07           'Cause she's: got a very pretty face. . .
```

In the next case, the production hitch is more extended (line 3), with a succession of filled pauses, aspirations, and silences. But the resumption of talk (line 4) is again framed with *you know* and delivers the suspended sentence's object, here an action characterization.

(9) [SBL: 1-1-10: 369: nursing work]

```
01 JAN:      Well they're lucky to have you:.
02 MAE:      hh We:ll I don't knhhohhhh hhu hheeuhhh I:uh £somedi:mes
03           I:£ e (.) w:onder if I should uh: hh hh (0.4) ˚uh˚ (1.2)
04        -> yihknow be working a little mo:re, hh I ↑really don't want
05           to though. . .
```

[3]For the few replacement repairs in our sample, the alignment token appears tied not to the replacement operation per se but rather its suboptimal outcome. We explore this in the next section (see Excerpt 16).

Table 3. Repair type specialization.

Repair type	*n*	*%*
Searching	48	51.06
Insertion	0	0
Deletion	0	0
Replacement	4	4.26
TCU restart	27	28.72
Repair abandoned	11	11.70
Other	4	4.26
TOTAL	94	100.00

Note. The categories in Table 3 are derived from Schegloff's framework of self-repair operations, with simplifications to enhance reliability. Schegloff's categories "parenthesizing," "reformatting," and "sequence jumping" were largely subsumed under the more generic and structurally identifiable umbrella category "TCU restarts." Correspondingly, the "searching repair" category includes cases where the production-hitch machinery for "searching" may also be "doing delicacy" (Lerner, 2013).

In TCU restarts, the particle generally follows a similar production hitch but yields talk that abandons the in-progress unit and launches a new and often revised unit. Here the speaker abandons a projected time formulation for her upcoming boat trip (line 4), and after a long pause (line 5) she uses *you know* to restart and reformulate the turn (line 6) so as to remove herself as the agent in a more tentative formulation of timing (see Raymond & White, 2017).

(10) [NB I:6:R:92: boat trip]

```
01 EMM:      You go out Sunday night then.=
02 LOT:      =Yeah.
03 EMM:      Ah ha:h,
04 LOT:      We leave after uh
05              (1.0)
06 LOT:   -> 't u.- Yihkno:w, u.-it prob'ly leaves about
07            midni:gh[t,
08 EMM:               [Mm:hm,
```

Similarly, after Marcia expresses concern about being unprepared to direct a play (lines 1–2), Dan's attempt at reassurance (lines 3–4) is twice cut off and restarted, first with a gerund ("directing") and then with an *if*-clause.

(11) [MTRAC 60:1-1:6]

```
01 MAR:      Ayund ah-ah-ee y'know I was in the theater but I don't know
02           a thing about directing, I'm directing it hhehhh hh hh
03 DAN:   -> That's: that's yihkno:w u-directing yihkno:w if: if if yih
04           jus' can relate to people.
05 MAR:      Ye:a:h.=
06 DAN:      =That's all directing is (         )
```

Both restarts are YK-framed, and the framed *if*-clause attracts confirmation (line 5) before the *then*-component is delivered (see Lerner, 1996).

The strong clustering of *you know* in these two forms of repair yields further insight into the particle's specialized utility for production problems. Speakers do not usually invoke alignment for minor adjustments (e.g., lexical insertions, deletions, or replacements) to formulations whose parameters are, for the speaker, already substantially in hand. They do so instead for deeper production problems in which the entire formulation, or the turn as a whole, is treated as elusive and as yet undetermined. Consistent with this pattern of elusiveness, the next most frequent repair outcome after searches and restarts is for the repair to be abandoned altogether (see Table 3). In these cases, having invoked alignment, the parties simply move on without any evident resolution of the trouble.[4]

[4]Abandoned self-repair is one aspect of a more general phenomenon, the association of *you know* with formulations left incomplete, which we examine later in this article.

Suboptimal formulations

You know is associated with a second broad category of speech production difficulty that often co-occurs with self-repair but is both conceptually and empirically distinct. This involves formulations accountable as *suboptimal* in some way—treated by speakers as either (a) falling short of what they were aiming for; or (b) potentially problematic for recipients to grasp as intended; or both of these in combination. The suboptimal element, *whether purposeful or not*, may be expected to pose interpretive challenges for recipients possibly beyond routine processes of conversational inference and implicature (Garfinkel, 1967; Levinson, 2000). Accordingly, speakers treat such talk as less than ideal but nonetheless intelligible in context by invoking alignment for suboptimal formulations that can take a variety of forms. We review these forms to more fully account for the particle's use and shed light on its import as a repair adjunct bearing on speech production difficulties beyond the domain of repair per se.

Typified

YK-marked formulations are frequently offered as inexact, underdeveloped, or otherwise *typified* characterizations. These are not meant to be taken in an excessively literal fashion but rather as rough approximations of the states of affairs to which they refer, and invocations of alignment are recurrently accomplice to such formulations.

Such formulations may include lexical elements devoted to explicitly hedging the talk in progress. For instance, after Diane praises her college dorm room (lines 1–3), she begins to unpack this ("they had-") but cuts off just before providing a specification. Her resumption is both YK-prefaced and overtly hedged with *like* ("y'know like made the beds"), a prepositioned hedge that often co-occurs with *you know* (Jucker & Smith, 1998).

(12) [Clacia: 4:18: reminiscing about college dorm life]

```
01 DIA:      It was nice'n it was clean:,=
02 CLA:      =[Right.]
03 DIA:   -> =[ih was] new: en they [(had-)] (.) y'know like made the be:ds'n,
04 CLA:                              [°Right]
05           (0.5)
06 DIA:      (°furniture 'n stuff.°)
```

Beyond this framing, the ensuing list of features apparently ends with a generalized list completer ("'n stuff") (Jefferson, 1990) alluding to additional unspecified features. So this formulation is both prefaced and completed as a rough approximation of what *nice and clean* might consist of, and framed with an invocation of alignment.

A similarly hedged rendering, but without any production hitch, appears in this complaint regarding a friendship on the wane. To document her diminishing relationship with the recipient, Shelley asserts (lines 3–5) that they only get together for "like you know football things or whatever."

(13) [Debbie and Shelley: 188: not getting together]

```
01 SHEL:     =No I know:, I -ean- a- thats- thats the whole
02           thing though, I mean I've been trying to: e-your
03           right haven't seen you becuz: I mea:n the only time
04        -> we evan- ever: make plans's like you know football
05           things or whatever.
06              (1.2)
07 SHEL:     I mean we haven made alot pla:ns and I-≠I don't know….
```

Here again, a YK-marked formulation is both prefaced ("like") and completed ("or whatever") with elements casting it as a typification of a more general state of affairs (i.e., *the limited sorts of occasions when we get together*).[5]

Such formulations need not contain any dedicated hedging elements to nonetheless come off in context as rough approximations, and the inclusion of an alignment token figures in this. For instance, after Nancy alludes to Robert Kennedy's assassination ("it's been a rough week," line 1), she begins to elaborate its impact at work ("everybody is" at line 2). But instead of specifying how her coworkers have been affected, she invokes alignment and pauses.

(14) [NB II:2:R:pp. 2-3: assassination impact]

```
01 NAN:     .hhhhhh Yeah it's been a rough week ah
02       -> everybody: is you know (0.2)
03 EMM:     Mm [hm
04 NAN:        [ta:lkin about it 'n everybody: course
05          I: don't know whether it's that er just that
06          we're jus:t (.) completely bo:gging down at
07          work, h .hhhmh
```

The formulation she initially settles on, after Emma's continuer, is "talking about it" (line 4). This is not by itself a sufficient unpacking of "rough week," and indeed Nancy begins to elaborate further ("and everybody:") before abruptly shifting to an alternative explanation for the difficult week. The abandonment casts the formulation in progress as an underdeveloped rendering of what the speaker was aiming for.

Lexically nonspecific

YK-marked formulations may also be *lexically nonspecific*, couched in terms that are nebulous or vague on their face. Lexical nonspecificity can be entirely purposeful (Jucker et al., 2003; Kitzinger & Mandelbaum, 2013) and unproblematic when understood in context, and the invocation of alignment furthers this.

In this straightforward illustration, a birthday gift proposal (lines 4–5) is couched in somewhat vague terms ("microphone and thing") and capped off with "you know" with final rising intonation that yields acknowledgment (line 6).

(15) [Kamunsky: 116: birthday gift]

```
01 ALA:     ˙t˙hhh I d'know what 'e wants. Uhm if you wa:nt you
02          can talk tuh Rob about go[een' in on a gi:ft,=
03 SH?:                               [(°    )
04 ALA:     =˙hhh Cuz Rob thought that they were gonna go in on a
05       -> gift an' get'm a microphone an' thing y'know?
06 SHA:     Yea:h,h
```

The next case prefaces a formulation that is not only intrinsically vague ("a little thing") but appears designedly so given the version preceding it ("an ad"), as well as the production hitch indexing a search before "thing" is delivered. Evidently the speaker attempted a more precise formulation before settling on this one.

[5]This formulation is also lexically nonspecific ("things"), incorporating the next form of suboptimality to be examined.

(16) [HG II:3-4: birthday play]

```
01 HYL:     The week before my birthda:[y,
02 NAN:                                [Yea[:h
03 HYL:                                    [I was looking
04          in the Calendar section an' there was
05       -> u:n- (.) un a:d yihknow a liddle:: u- thi:ng,
06          .hh[hh
07 NAN:        [Uh hu:h,=
08 HYL:      At- th- th'theater's called the Met Theater
09           it's on Poinsettia. . .
```

This case yields one of the few plausible replacement repairs in our data set, and the use of *you know* here may be driven not by the replacement operation per se but rather the elusive and eventually suboptimal character of its outcome. Thus prefaced, the formulation is subsequently acknowledged (line 7).

For a more elaborate example of lexical vagueness, consider this flurry of nonspecific terms in a self-reflective comment by the victim of a house fire: "the hardest thing is things that meant things" (line 5).

(17) [House Burning: 104]

```
01 PAT:     [(With)    ]ev- betwee:n everything.='m sure we can get
02          the house back up [(             ).
03 PEN:                       [Yih c'n get it back up together again,
04          y[eah.
05 PAT:       [I gue]ss the hardest thing is things that meant things.
06       -> Yihknow,
07 PEN:     Yea:h,
08 PAT:     Fi:lms'n pictures'n stuff en: but we've kinda reckoned
09          with that. That was the hardest part this morning,
```

Here the alignment token (line 6) follows a brief phonetic juncture with no uptake and prompts acknowledgment (line 7).

Elliptical

Certain highly abbreviated or *elliptical* formulations also attract *you know*. Many of these elliptical cases are not accountable as "successful" instances of recipient design but rather as elusive and potentially problematic design choices to which the alignment token is addressed.

In this exchange from the late 1960s, a search for the name of a radio broadcast (lines 1–2) is initially resolved with "blast off," an abbreviated reference to an Apollo rocket launch. This formulation is treated by the speaker herself as suboptimal, as she immediately adds "you know" with final intonation and then despite receiving an acknowledgment (line 3) offers a revised version ("astronauts" in line 5).

(18) [SBL 1:1:11:R:74]

```
01 MIL:     Well I had my television on but I was listening
02       -> to: uh the blast off yih ↓kno:w.
03 MAE:     Mm hm,
04             (0.4)
05 MIL:  -> The uh: ah- a[:stro]nauts,
06 MAE:                  [Yeah.]
07 MAE:     Yeah.
08 MIL:     hh A:nd I:, I didn't ever get any ↑lo:cal new::s.
```

The revision, although launched as an improvement on the prior, is itself elusive and abbreviated, but the recipient's multiple acknowledgments (lines 6, 7) treat it as adequate and license continuation (line 8).

In the next example, an elliptical reference to the Dory Fleet Fish Market of Newport Beach is coupled with an alignment token. Lottie first refers to it as "the Dory" and then offers a slightly expanded version ("Dory Fisherman") that remains abbreviated relative to its official name.

(19) [NB II:1:R:135]

```
01 LOT:     The smallest ba:ss we kep' was one pou:n' we-we uh we:ll
02          (.) Monday we we:nt uh went with this: (.) gi:rl Mary en
03          we wen'over on Elmer's do:ck 'n Faye went with us 'n=
04 EMM:     =[°°Mm hm°°
05 LOT:     =[we got a  lot'v fish over there .hh en we take'em down
06       -> to the Dory yihknow Dory fisherm'n down there an'
07          they clean'em for yuh.
08 EMM:     Well goo u:::[:d.
```

Lottie herself seems to register the inadequacy of the expanded version, not only by framing it with "you know" but also by appending a spatial reference ("down there") that aids recognition.

A final case, exemplifying the utility of elliptical expressions, involves an account of illicit behavior —an underage girl's night at an adult dance club. When Virginia's brother asks how she got in (lines 1, 5), thus problematizing her presence at the club, Virginia's refers to the initial entry point as "the eighteen" followed by a detour to "the twenty one" (lines 6–7).

(20) [Virginia: 182: dance club]

```
01 WES:     (Dih')('n) they letchya in Friday's the other night?
02             (1.0)
03 WES:     They did.
04             (0.3)
05 WES:     W:hich side 'ya go in.
06 VIR:  -> (mt) Well we wen' in the eighteen °you know° but we walked
07          (under) the twenty one.
08 WES:     Uh huh, ((nodding during this))
```

These are abbreviated ways of referring to entrances for underage and drinking-age customers respectively. Virginia supplements each formulation with an iconic hand gesture (a lateral movement of the left hand concurrent with the formulation's clausal unit) and with "you know" inserted between the clauses. Thus augmented, her comment is acknowledged (line 8). Here the ellipsis enables a somewhat veiled admission to having eluded the gatekeepers and snuck into the club's adult section.

Off-base

A more acute form of suboptimality involves language that is, from the speaker's vantage point, off the mark. Ostensibly inapposite or incorrect formulations have the potential to mislead and not merely confuse, but alignment tokens here tacitly claim otherwise and often mobilize confirmation that the recipient is nonetheless on track.

For instance, here the speaker is having great difficulty specifying the challenges of a nursing job opening. After restarting her turn (line 1), she suspends the revised turn for a lengthy YK-framed search (lines 2–3).

(21) [SBL 1:1:10:2: nursing position]

```
01 MAE:     Well it's a ca:se thet, uh:m (0.4) ↑It ta:kes↑
02       -> a special ki:nd the:re yuh kno:w to uh::
03          kh hhhh (0.2) ˚uhm˚ (0.9)
04          They like gentleness. hh (.) if I u-tih be
05       -> plai:n. Yih kno[:w.
06 JAN:                    [Mm[: hm.
```

Another restart delivers the resolution ("They like gentleness" in line 4), but the speaker quickly qualifies that formulation ("if I u- to be plain"), retroactively treating it as more blunt than she intended. This retreat is followed by another tacit alignment claim (line 5) that mobilizes confirmation (line 6).

A more strongly inapposite formulation can be seen in the next excerpt. The victim of a devastating house fire is favorably assessing the insurance situation but having difficulty with the assessment term, which is framed with *you know* and then requires three distinct attempts (lines 2–3).

(22) [House Burning: 38]

```
01 PAT:     An::d, (0.3) (b-) I d'know. The insurance com'ny's comin
02       -> up no::w, 'n:: yihknow looks: hhhhhh looks like they'll-
03       -> (0.2) I duhknow ih' ↑looks good, I don'know.what's gunnuh
04          happen.
```

The assessment she finally delivers ("looks good" in line 3) is perhaps more positive than might be expected in this context. Correspondingly, it is both framed as uncertain ("I don't know"; Weatherall, 2011) and subsequently modulated (lines 3–4) by noting the insurance outcome as still in doubt.

In a more complex case, the speaker mobilizes *you know* together with iconic gestures before delivering her off-base lexical choice ("lambasting" in line 11). Reminiscing about college pranks, Diane recounts toilet papering a student's dormroom entrance (lines 4–6). As she approaches the prank's denouement ("when she opened the door she'd havetuh come"), she pauses, adds a downwardly intoned "you know" (line 6), and falls silent (line 7).

(23) [Clacia: 1:34: college dorm prank]

```
01 DIA:     Tch!  We couldn't sta:nd her.so bad:dly we usetuh take
02          her doorknob'n grease it wi(h)th va(h)seli(h)ne(h)
03          e(h)v(h)ry n(h)i(h)ight, ˙HHSSSS! O(h)r, ˙hhh y'know
04          (if) she'd be in th'room'n we'd- ˙hh kinda put toilet
05          paper across so thet when she open'up the door she'd
06       -> haftuh co:me (0.2) yih kno:w.
07          [(0.4)
08 CLA:     [((nodding during the silence))
09 DIA:     [((Forward hand thrust, depicting walking through doorway))
10 DI?:     ss-ss=
11 DIA:  -> =la[:mbastin[g through it.=
12 CLA:        [˚Oh::   [˚Ghho::d    ˚=
13 DIA:     =Oh:: God it was r'lly funny.
```

During the post-*you know* silence, the recipient is nodding in confirmation (line 8) (Stivers, 2008), while the teller uses her right hand to visually portray the climactic event (line 9) before verbalizing it (line 11). This hand, which had previously depicted the opening door (left-to-right sweep at line 5), now depicts the next event within this gesturally defined space, a forward hand thrust representing the act of walking through the paper-strewn doorway.

Together with *you know*, this gestural enactment frames and contextualizes the event's verbal rendering ("lambasting through it"), whose main lexeme—*lambasting*, a term for verbal criticism rather than physical demolition—is used in an incorrect or at best metaphorical way. This choice might have seemed peculiar or confusing, but with the ground prepared by a tacit claim of alignment that elicits confirmation, plus an embodied portrayal, the formulation comes off as transparent and gets an appreciative response (line 12).

Incomplete

YK-marked suboptimality reaches another level with formulations that are left incomplete and hence accountably "abandoned" in favor of other talk. This phenomenon parallels the abandonment of

repair before its resolution (noted earlier; see Table 3) but is more general, extending to formulations outside of any evident repair context.

Such an outcome may be collaboratively achieved through a convergence of *you know*-associated patterns documented previously. Recall that the particle attracts interjacent responses at a high rate of frequency (Clayman & Raymond, in press). This tendency may be increased when the talk's delivery is delayed and hence accountably "elusive," thus enabling and perhaps encouraging recipients to intervene and progress the talk (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Jefferson, 1984; Lerner, 2013). Furthermore, insofar as the particle invokes an extant state of alignment, this may in itself license forward movement without resolving the in-progress formulation.

To illustrate, here "you know" (line 1) frames a pause and a clausal restart, but that revision is itself cut off before the predicate (which seems to be referencing *when* requested baseball tickets will become available) is fully delivered (line 2). The recipient then intervenes without addressing the incomplete formulation (line 3).

(24) [Ravioli Dinner: 402]

```
01 MAR:   -> I can prob'ly get tickets I just ya know (.) I don't
02            know exactly w- (.)
03 KIM:       I jus' kinda wanta get thuh good seats ya know_
04 KIM:       for her.
```

The next case occurs as part of an *I mean*-prefaced "defensive" move (Maynard, 2013) within an overtly argumentative exchange. Here only the first word of a YK-framed formulation is produced ("I" in line 5) before the talk becomes accountably "difficult," at which point the recipient takes the floor (line 6) by claiming understanding ("I know"; Mikesell et al., 2018) and then overtly licensing the prior abandonment ("you don't have to explain yourself").

(25) [Debbie & Shelley: 173]

```
01 DEBB:      …but don't a:lienate me jus becuz I'm friends
02            with Jay:.[I mean it just really seems like i:t.]
03 SHEL:                [I'm not try:ing to:, I mean origina]lly
04            I know it seemed liked that but thats not th- thats
05         -> not i:t, I mean you know I e- hh a- [I  (           )
06 DEBB:                                          [>I KNOW YOu
07            don' have to explain< yourself I mean >its-its<
08         -> [you   know   whate:v]er.
09 SHEL:      [No I know but I mean]
10 SHEL:      Y:a hhave to understand I mean I need time to be
11            able swallow all this. . .
```

That the alignment token is not merely incidental to this process is evident in the recipient's reuse of the same practice in the very next sentence (lines 7–8). After a production hitch, yet another "you know" paves the way for something elusive/suboptimal, but here the speaker explicitly gives up on the formulation and the turn with a downwardly intoned "whatever."

Sequentially disjunctive

Beyond formulations that are *intrinsically* suboptimal are those that are *sequentially* so, out of place in some way relative to the course of action previously in progress. Utterances with a detached or obscure relationship to prior talk have been shown to be a recurrent source of puzzlement for recipients (see Drew, 1997). These are also a locus for *you know*, often as a way of launching the out-of-place utterance.

Consider parenthetical insertions (Mazeland, 2007; Schegloff, 2007, pp. 237–244), which suspend the progression of a main course of action to address recognitional or other secondary matters. Mazeland (2007, p. 1837) demonstrates that parentheticals in Dutch are recurrently marked as sequential departures through both phonetic and lexical resources. Here we document

a similar pattern in English, while noting that the parenthetical context shares a family resemblance with other YK-marked suboptimal contexts posing interpretive challenges for recipients.

To illustrate, after Prudence begins a news announcement (line 1), she suspends its progression to insert an item of background information regarding the protagonist's connection to the workplace where she heard the news (line 2). This parenthetical digression is *you know* prefaced.

(26) [Virginia: 579]

```
01 PRU:     ptI heard today, >at First National Bank,<
02       -> >yuhknow Phillips works at First National.< (0.2)
03          >So=I went down ta'thuh bank< an' Pam did >an' they
04          were tellin' me about thuh wedding.< (0.2) t!
05          They said that Phillips got uhm (0.5)
06 ???:     .hh[h
07 PRU:        [knee walking drunk.>at thuh reception.<
```

In a parallel example from Schegloff's account of parentheticals (Schegloff, 2007, p. 241), Kathy is explaining a hand-weaving project when she inserts the definition of a technical term ("warp" at line 9) that was previously used without explanation (at line 6). This move disrupts the progression of the telling and reaches back to an earlier element for clarification.

(27) [Schegloff (2007, p. 241)]

```
01 KAT:   =Well I mean it's ve:ry simple, (.hhh)
02        (0.8)
03 KAT:   It's exac[tly the same in the we]:ft as it is in the warp
04 DAV:           [She also means th't-  ]
05           (0.2)
06 KAT:   That is if the warp has sixteen greens an' two blacks
07        an two light blues an two blacks and sixteen greens
08        an:sixteen blacks an sixteen blues an' so on,
09     -> .hh Y'know the warp are the long pieces.
10           (0.5)
11 FRI:   Mhhm
12 KAT:   The weft has exactly tha:t.
13 FRI:   Yah.
14           (0.5)
15 FRI:   Oh. So it's square, °in other words°
```

The disjunctiveness of this insertion was noted by Schegloff but not the manner in which it is launched and framed—namely, with an alignment token.[6]

Suboptimality and YK: Associations and reflexivities

These various forms of suboptimality, taken together, share a family resemblance as varieties of expressive difficulty that recurrently attract alignment tokens. Overall, about a third of the *you know* cases (35.5%, n = 71) are associated with formulations that are suboptimal in these ways and identifiable as such independently of the particle itself. Most of these formulations appear within environments of self-repair as less-than-ideal repair solutions, but more than a third (n = 25) occur outside of repair (e.g., Excerpts 13, 15, 17, 20). Among the self-repair cases, some occur "early" in what emerges as a search for some difficult-to-formulate target, but many occur as prefaces to the delivery of the suboptimal solution itself (e.g., Excerpts 12, 16, 19, 23). Since suboptimal formulations portend interpretive challenges for recipients, they are vulnerable to (further) repair efforts by both parties.

[6]A related set of cases, also sequentially disjunctive but beyond the scope of this article, involve new topic initiations. These are known to be subject to both self- and other-initiated repair (Schegloff, 1979, pp. 270–272) while also attracting *you know* (see also Schourup, 1985, pp. 107–110). Such cases reveal another convergence between sequential disjunctiveness, repair vulnerability, and alignment tokens.

Here *you know* provides a claim of intersubjective alignment that compensates for and licenses such talk, treating it as intelligible and hence adequate in context, while also at times mobilizing responses that validate and reinforce this emerging semblance of alignment.

This section has emphasized the particle's frequent *association* with suboptimal formulations as evidence for the its repair-adjunct import. But the particle can also have *reflexive* ramifications for the talk in which it is embedded. Invoking alignment can be heard to treat the associated talk as having the kind of shortcomings that would require such compensatory work. It is this process of implicature that, in some contexts, gives *you know* its recognized hedging import (cf., Brown & Levinson, 1987; Fox Tree & Schrock, 2002; Holmes, 1986; Östman, 1981)—that is, its capacity to portray talk as less than ideal when it might not otherwise come off as such (e.g., Excerpt 14). The particle's hedging import is evident in its recurrent use for the management of reported speech (Lamerichs & Te Molder, 2009; Mazeland, 2006). When inserted between a quotative frame and a main clause (Excerpt 7, "He said- yih know … "), it frames the "quotation" as a nonliteral approximation of what was said.

Potential understanding problems: Pursuits of response

The analysis thus far has focused on *you know* as a practice for invoking alignment for manifest speech production difficulties (self-repair, suboptimal formulations) largely within the same turn constructional unit as the difficulty itself. Consider next the particle's use in a subsequent unit when the prior has received no response. At this interactional juncture, speech production problems become accountable as possible sources of difficulty for recipients (Pomerantz, 1984). Correspondingly, alignment tokens figure in pursuits of response that would implicate some understanding of the prior talk.

Such tokens may stand alone as pursuits in themselves (e.g., Excerpt 21, line 5), or they may precede further clarifying talk, as in the next excerpt. Nancy, recounting her speech in a college class, briefly characterizes the class activity afterward ("then everybody writes" in lines 2–3) with final falling intonation. After a brief pause with no uptake (line 4), she adds "you know" (line 5) plus an increment clarifying the referent of "everybody writes" (Ford et al., 2002).

(28) [NB II:2:R:162: college course presentations]

```
01 NAN:      …so: (0.2) uh: (.) .hhh I jus' (.) ↑yihknow (0.2)
02           gave my short little h (.) dissertation then everybody
03           wri:tes.
04           (.)
05        -> yihknow. a[bout what the]y: (.) fee:l towards you an'...
06 EMM:                [° M m   h m, °]
```

Even before the clarification is delivered, the particle itself is sufficient to elicit an acknowledgment (line 6).

You know-prefaced pursuits may also seek correct appreciation of a story telling, implicating both understanding of the story and affiliation with the teller (Sacks, 1974). Shirley has been recounting a funny story about her rambunctious dog's encounter with Geri's mother, but Geri's boyfriend-focused question (line 6) suggests an incipient misunderstanding of the story's main focus, engendering Shirley's brusque response (line 8) treating the question as beside the point (Stivers, 2011).

(29) [TC I:1:36: rambunctious dog story]

```
01 SHI:      [.hh So 'e tried tih jump in the'car.
02 ( ):      .hh
03              (.)
04 GER:      Oh: boy,h=
05 SHI:      ='cuz I was jus' getting ou:t.=
06 GER:      =S[o didju]interdu:ce 'er?
07 SHI:        [(     )]
08 SHI:      Of COU:rse.
09 GER:      e-Ye::h,
10 SHI:      .hh- So: yihknow she said hi: as- as he tried to yank'er
11           up'n down the blo:ck. .hhhh
12        -> Y'know ih'was kind'v a funny way t'say hello.
13 GER:      Ye::h,=
14 SHI:      =.hhh So how're you?
```

Shirley's resumption of the dog story (lines 10–11), which juxtaposes the mom's greeting against the dog's wild behavior, appears built as the story's climax. When this receives no uptake, Shirley pursues response (line 12) with an explicit formulation of the story's point ("a funny way to say hello"). This pursuit is, again, *you know* prefaced and yields a token display of understanding (line 13).

Opportunity spaces and interactional functions

The intersubjectively problematic environments that attract *you know* may now be summarized as follows:

(1) *Self-repair operations*, involving mostly searches and restarts and hence relatively elusive repair solutions;
(2) *Suboptimal formulations*, treated by the speaker as entailing a potentially problematic gap between what was said and what was meant to be conveyed;
(3) *Pursuits of response*, following its absence at a prior transition space.

These environments are conceptually distinct but overlap in practice and share a family resemblance in revolving around *some focal item of problematic talk*. Correspondingly, they index interpretive challenges and portend understanding problems that have not yet risen to the level of overt expression (e.g., through recipient's display of misunderstanding or repair initiation) but may be anticipated on the basis of shortcomings of speech production, or the absence of response, or both of these in combination.

This usage framework supports the view that *you know* in such contexts invokes intersubjective alignment (as opposed to other forms of alignment; cf. Clayman & Raymond, in press) as an adjunct to speech production difficulties, while further suggesting that the tacit alignment claim and its validation are compensatory or remedial in import.

The three environments sketched here may or may not co-occur in practice, but they are sequentially organized relative to one another, as schematically represented in Figure 1. Taken together, these environments comprise a structured opportunity space for *you know* as an intersubjective alignment token, which can be placed at various points (numbered) within this space. Moreover, beyond its core suggestion of recipient convergence with speaker, the particle's further import is positionally sensitive (Schegloff, 1996) and hence contingent on its precise placement within this framework.

Adjacent to an initial production hitch (positions 1 and 2), *you know* operates most directly on the ensuing break in progressivity. It disambiguates any subsequent pause as a "search" for "the right" formulation, which is thereby projected to be elusive and possibly suboptimal but not a fundamental departure from the trajectory of talk to that point. Furthermore, the conjunction of *you know* with

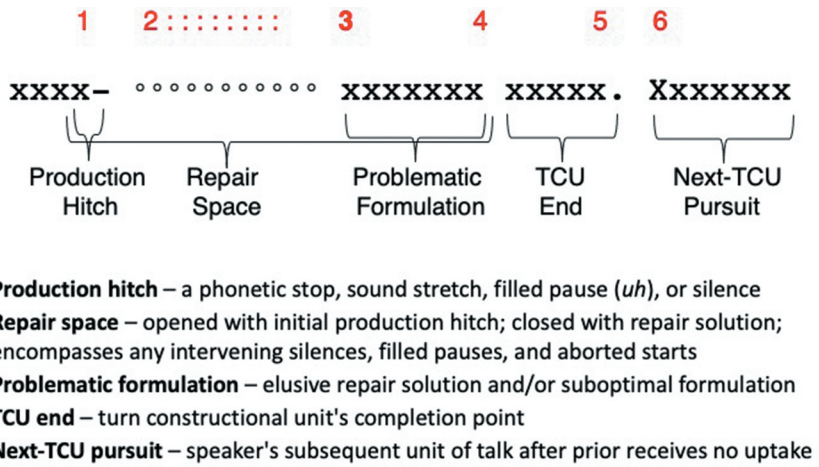

Figure 1. YK opportunity spaces.

a production hitch enhances the permeability of the TCU in progress (Jefferson, 1984; Lerner, 1996), increasing the likelihood of an "early" confirmatory response. Here both the tacit alignment claim and its validation yield a semblance of intersubjective convergence at a moment when this has been cast into doubt by uncertainty over how the suspended TCU will be brought to completion (Schegloff, 1992).

Adjacent to a repair solution or some item of problematic talk more generally (positions 3 and 4), *you know* operates primarily on the problematic talk itself. It either preframes (position 3; see Lerner & Kitzinger, 2015) or retroactively casts (position 4) such talk as deficient but intelligible given the ostensible convergence between recipient and speaker. Here the invoked alignment both compensates for and licenses the production of talk that may be less than ideal but nonetheless adequate in context.

Adjacent to the next transition space (positions 5 and 6), *you know* builds pressure for a response that would confirm the invoked alignment, implicate understanding of prior talk, and restore forward conversational movement. At the end of the current TCU (position 5), it may be given a final intonation contour that helps to open a transition space and may (via rising intonation) invite such response (Stivers & Rossano, 2010). At the onset of the next TCU, the particle pursues response following its absence (Pomerantz, 1984), sometimes in conjunction with further clarifying talk.

Discussion

The role of *you know* as an English-language repair adjunct trades off the particle's more general import as a token of interpersonal alignment (Clayman & Raymond, in press). Through what it invokes in context and elicits from recipients, the particle contributes to a public semblance of intersubjectivity that smooths over various shortcomings of natural speech found in both self-repair and repair-implicative contexts.

At the initiation of self-repair, the particle's invoked alignment and interjacent sequelae mitigate the breach of intersubjectivity arising from the production hitch. At an elusive repair solution, the invoked alignment compensates for and licenses the production of talk that may be less than ideal but nonetheless adequate in context. And at the next transition space, the invoked alignment builds pressure for a confirmatory response that both displays understanding and restores forward conversational movement. None of this work, by itself, actually resolves speech production or reception problems, but it amounts to wide-ranging support for both intersubjectivity and progressivity in the face of those momentary rifts intrinsic to such problems and their repair.

Beyond this, the particle has ramifications for the circumvention of more elaborate forms of repair that would require speakers to self-correct or recipients to intervene (cf. Raymond, 2019). The invoked alignment and frequent confirmatory responses—an accountable semblance of intersubjectivity to which *both* parties contribute—appear to minimize the likelihood that suboptimal formulations will need to be modified or replaced by speakers or will require transformative work initiated by recipients. It thereby contributes not only to the dispreference for other-initiated repair (Schegloff et al., 1977) but also to the avoidance of transformative repair operations more generally, facilitating forward conversational movement in the face of speech production and anticipated understanding difficulties.

The conceptual framework developed in this article can inform further studies of repair-related phenomena in language contexts beyond American English. This framework identifies a succession of recurrent and sequentially ordered difficulties in self-repair implementation and a practice addressed to those difficulties. The same practice also addresses repair-implicative shortcomings in talk, constituting a form of remedial work that is separate and distinct from repair and appears to facilitate its circumvention. For the case of American English, the practice that both supports repair and enables its circumvention is (a) syntactically unconstrained in its placement, (b) response-mobilizing in its impact on subsequent talk, and (c) involves a basic semantics of recipient-speaker alignment. These attributes do not appear to be merely incidental to the practice's functional role as a repair adjunct.

Whether there are allied practices in English-language contexts beyond the United States, and in other languages, and what these might look like in semantic, syntactic, and sequential terms, remains a work in progress. Studies of references to shared knowledge in Danish and Swedish (Asmuß, 2011; Heinemann et al., 2011) have focused on contexts where affiliation rather than understanding is salient. The affiliation-relevant context is quite unlike those examined in the present article, but it converges with a different use of *you know* documented in English (Clayman & Raymond, in press). Closer to the repair-related focus of the present study is Kushida and Hayashi's (2019) analysis of a Japanese-language practice (the demonstrative adverb *koo*) used in searching repairs as a preface to descriptive formulations, particularly those that are out of the ordinary or entail a high degree of precision. In both Japanese and English then, there are dedicated practices that, while different in their surface semantics, are implicated in managing the production of elusive formulations in talk.

Finally, for a fuller appreciation of the particle's ancillary and supportive relationship to the conversational repair system, we note a certain resonance between this phenomenon and the biological analogue of repair found in all living systems. It has long been understood that organic wound repair at varying levels of complexity (from the cellular to the organismic) has common features that include (a) an ultimate process of rebuilding what was damaged, and (b) a more immediate and *pro tempore* stopgap process that stems further damage while enabling continued organic activity (Sonnemann & Bement, 2011). Against this backdrop, studies of conversational repair have thus far addressed the actual rebuilding of "damaged" formulations and understandings (e.g., Hayashi et al., 2013; Schegloff et al., 1977). By contrast, *you know* and its sequelae amount to a protective stopgap of sorts, a patchwork of gestures toward mutual understanding that enable forward interactional movement across various disruptions and shortcomings of natural speech. This interactive patchwork is sufficiently efficacious that, in some instances, it renders any actual rebuilding superfluous and dispensable.

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