Space, hands and gaze: Pointing as a resource for narrative

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Abstract

The connection between space, language and memory has often been emphasized in studies of social and cultural memory. This paper aims to empirically respecify this relationship. I focus on pointing practices of oral history interview participants giving guided tours of locations that play a significant role in their life stories. I distinguish two forms of it – pointing with the gaze and pointing with a hand. The former refers to the "here" of the narrative, generally incorporating the current space, while the latter is used to delineate a narrative "there", specifying more precisely a concrete element of the environment. I also suggest that the recording's intelligibility depends on making clearly discernible the scenic features being talked about, which is the specific work of the camera operator. In addition to refocusing social memory studies, my contribution also enriches the understanding of pointing gestures and situates narrative practices firmly in their spatial settings.

[1] The research reported in this paper was conducted while I was affiliated with the Malach Center for Visual History, Institute of Formal and Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, Charles University. The analysis of the audiovisual material and the preparation of the text were supported by Charles University Research Centre No. 9 (UNCE VITRI); the interview recordings were accessed at the Malach Center for Visual History, Charles University, which has been supported by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, Project No. LM2023062 LINDAT/CLARIAH-CZ.

1. Introduction

Attempts to operationalize the notion of "collective memory" frequently acknowledge that it is deeply tied to language and narrative (Mlynář, 2014). The link between memory and space is also often emphasized. Respecifying "social memory studies" (Olick & Robbins, 1998), this paper offers an empirical inquiry into the relationship between memory, space and narrative that is informed by ethnomethodology and conversation analysis (Garfinkel, 1967, 2002; Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 2007) and grounded in video-based interactionist analysis (Mondada, 2018) of three interviews from the USC Shoah Foundation's *Visual History Archive*.[2] In particular, I examine the pointing practices narrators use to provide a link between the surrounding space and their ongoing talk within the culturally established structure of oral history.

First, I will briefly review the theoretical insights into the relationship of space, language and memory, explaining how this conceptual triad can be repurposed through an inductive analysis of oral history video materials. Next, after introducing the analyzed data, I will focus on two forms of pointing that narrators routinely employ as part and parcel of their situated talk within oral history interviews conducted at the sites of remembered events: pointing with the gaze and pointing with a hand. I will conclude the paper by discussing the results in the context of interactionist studies of pointing, arguing that a hand is used for pointing when a particular aspect or feature of the surroundings needs to be precisely specified, while gaze is used in reference to the surroundings in a more general manner. I also show that, in the analyzed materials, pointing is routinely followed by movements of the camera (panning, zooming etc.), which seems to take the pointing as an instruction for shifting the frame. Taking the camera movements into account, I analytically relate memory work in oral history interviews to the fundamental feature of the interview's production as an object intended for a future "overhearing audience" (Heritage, 1985).

2. Language, space and memory

For the founding theoretical figures of social memory studies, such as Maurice Halbwachs (1980, 1992) and Jan Assmann (1995, 2011), the relevance of language to collective memory is profound and taken for granted. At the beginning of the 20th century, Halbwachs' pioneering research in sociology of memory pointed to the importance of language as a system of shared

[2] See: http://vha.usc.edu (accessed August 23, 2024).

symbols, stating that "verbal conventions constitute what is at the same time the most elementary and the most stable framework of collective memory" (Halbwachs, 1992, p. 45). In the latter period of his work, he further argued that our interpretation and knowledge of past events emerge from linguistic interactions with others. "[W]e can find in society all the necessary information for reconstructing certain parts of our past represented in an incomplete and indefinite manner, or even considered completely gone from memory," states Halbwachs (1980, p. 76). He observes that "[w]hen we accidentally meet persons who have participated in [the] same events, co-actors or witnesses, or when we are told or otherwise discover something about such past happenings", these materials from other persons are commonly used to "fill in apparent gaps in [our] memory" (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 76–77). Several decades later, Assmann (1995) developed Halbwachs' ideas and incorporated everyday language into his own theory through the concept of "communicative memory" (contrasted with "cultural memory"). According to Assmann, communicative memory consists solely of everyday communication and lacks broader cultural frames, time-persistence or foundations in tradition or conventions. Communicative memory is unspecialized, thematically unstable, disorganized, informal and contingent. In contrast to cultural memory, the roles of narrator and listener are interchangeable and not institutionalized. Finally, communicative memory involves a limited and floating temporal horizon of approximately 80–100 years. Communicative memory is not fixed to a certain moment in history: any temporal fixation requires cultural formation, which already indicates the transition from communicative to cultural memory (Assmann, 2011, p. 34–44).

In addition to the relationship of memory and language (incarnated, for instance, in oral history interviews), another relevant aspect is the link between memory and space. "Memory needs places and tends toward spatialization," asserts Assmann (2011, p. 25), once again building on the foundations laid by Halbwachs, who argued that "every collective memory unfolds within a spatial framework" (1980, p. 139), since it is space that provides stability and preserves the past. Halbwachs called for a social scientific study of places and spaces of memory, proclaiming: "It is to space – the space we occupy, traverse, have continual access to, or can at any time reconstruct in thought and imagination – that we must turn our attention" (Halbwachs, 1980, p. 140). This suggestion was later developed by other scholars in a number of research initiatives (e.g., Crinson, 2005), most notably in Pierre Nora's conception of "sites of memory" (Nora, 1989). Nora and his followers focused primarily on places that are created as "reservoirs of memory" by being assigned meanings derived from a shared historical past. More generally, ascribed social meaning is the criterion for distinguishing between places and

spaces, as proposed by theorists of contemporary urban life in capturing the apparent absence of meaning in many urban locations. Public *places* are locations that are socially meaningful, while public *spaces* lack symbolic value and seem to be semantically void (Jacobsen & Chatterjee, 2001). Furthermore, public spaces (such as shopping malls or airport concourses) often have features of non-places, being physically embedded in urban areas, but lacking social meaning (Augé, 1995). Social interaction in such non-places tends to take the form of civil inattention, where strangers in close proximity acknowledge each other's presence without imposing (Goffman, 1971), and non-places also seem to be related to "social forgetting" (Augé, 2004; Connerton, 2009) as they do not preserve particular elements of a common past.

The link between memory and space is also developed in recent work on "embodied memory" (Fuchs, 2016; Ianì, 2019; Macken et al., 2016), which highlights the central role of the body in social interactions (see Meyer, Streeck & Scott Jordan, 2017). In the perspective relevant to the present study, the body is not seen as an "outer" surface on which "inner" memory processes are expressed. Remembering and forgetting, commonly understood as mental processes taking place inside the head or in the mind, at the same time routinely figure in social interactions as unproblematically identifiable categories of activities (e.g., "I can't remember now," "Did you forget that?"). As such, they are also a resource used by interaction participants to carry out an activity or to highlight different social identities, for example when a speaker does not recall a person's name and turns to others present who might have the knowledge because they share certain experiences with him (Goodwin, 1987). Memory is therefore rearticulated as "a technique of the body involving senses and practical skills" (Diasio, 2013, p. 389). It is publicly produced in and as the embodied work of remembering, which may entail sharing narratives about the past, collaborative remembering or bodily practices such as pointing gestures that routinely accompany these social activities, which will be the focus of the analysis below.

Drawing on this theoretical background while also moving beyond it, I am aiming to offer one possible way to "respecify" (Garfinkel, 1991) social memory studies, particularly the link between space, body and memory in narrative. According to Sormani's (2014) apt formulation, the task of Garfinkelian respecification is "to recover the local production of social order in and as its manifest expression prior to any theoretical rendition or 'misplaced abstraction' of its produced orderliness and technical specifics" (p. 1). Respecification is a procedure that takes aspects of social reality and social structure, understood as objective phenomena, as they already first manifest in the ordinary activities of members of society, and

in the production of such activities as routinely comprehensible and recognizable for the practical purposes at hand. Following this direction, I take the notion of social memory as referring to supra- and inter-individual phenomena, although not using it as a "mere metaphor" (criticized, e.g., by Funkenstein, 1989; Gedi & Elam, 1996). My inquiry is oriented by a theoretical preference for "the notion of memory as a describable set of operations by which a previous meaningful experience is reproduced or re-presented to the notion of a memory as a container" (Garfinkel 2008[1952], p. 159). For such a conception of memory, remembering cannot be located inside an individual. Rather, memory is conceived of as a thoroughly intersubjective phenomenon, and it is therefore constituted in and through concerted social action. Respecifying social memory studies rests on placing memory *outside* an individual's skull, as has already been hinted about the "strong notion" of collective memory (Olick, 2007; Wertsch, 2008). I try to take this suggestion seriously with all ensuing epistemological and empirical consequences. Hence, I focus on the *practices of remembering* or on the *structures of memory*, asking, e.g., what makes "remembering" recognizable as a unique social activity? And how is remembering made recognizable as a remembering of "something"? In short, my purpose in this paper is to study the methodical details of producing "the remembered past" (Lukacs, 2009) as a commonly shared social object, *in situ* and in real time, through spatially structured and locally situated embodied conduct. As one of the recurrent details of organized conduct, pointing as a resource for narrative within videotaped oral history interviews is my particular focus, especially with regard to how it is tied not only to the local production of memory while the interview is being conducted as an audio-visual material, but also to the accountability of the embodied narrative as used by various audiences who later access the recorded interview for their own purposes (see Mlynář, 2022).

3. Materials

This paper is grounded in an analysis of three recordings from the USC Shoah Foundation's *Visual History Archive* (VHA; http://vha.usc.edu). VHA provides online access to nearly 55,000 interviews with survivors and witnesses of genocides, particularly of the Holocaust. The interviews have so far been conducted in 62 countries and recorded in 41 languages. On average, each testimony is between two and three hours long and discusses the interviewee's life story chronologically in its entirety with a focus on the genocide. Most of the

interviews completed to date were conducted between 1994 and 2000.[3] In addition to conventional oral histories, in which the camera focuses on the narrator in an interior environment (such as an office or an apartment), several hundred of the VHA interviews also contain "location video footage". This is a separate segment following the interview itself and mostly takes "the form of a walking tour conducted by the interviewee", as defined in the VHA thesaurus. This paper's findings are based on an examination of three interviews in the Czech language that include 75 minutes of on-site footage. They are briefly presented in Table 1.

Interview VHA ID number and interviewee initials	**Date of interview**	**Total length of interview**	**Length of location video footage**
A. H., ID 10325	February 29, 1996	2 hours 11 minutes	19 minutes
J. J., ID 14021	April 29, 1996	3 hours 35 minutes	24 minutes
T. K., ID 4106	July 19, 1995	2 hours 38 minutes	30 minutes

Table 1. An overview of the analyzed material.

4. Analysis

Spatial surroundings are incorporated into the spoken narrative in various ways. I will refer to one such way as *captioning* (see Figure 1), where the speaker produces commentary to illustrate what can be seen in the frame; another way may be referred to as *positioning* (see Figure 2), where the speaker produces an account of the location while on camera, at the site. There may also be other ways, but their detailed analysis remains outside of the scope of this paper.

[3] For more details, see: https://vha.usc.edu/about?tab=overview (accessed August 23, 2024).

Figure 1. "Captioning" as a practice for incorporating the spatial surroundings into the spoken narrative. Example from VHA interview ID 14021.

Figure 2. "Positioning" as a practice for incorporating the spatial surroundings into the spoken narrative. Example from VHA interview ID 4106.

Although the above-mentioned practices merit detailed analysis, here I am only providing them for context. The remainder of this text focuses specifically on *pointing*, another recurrent practice for incorporating the current spatial environment or its features into the ongoing talk. While captioning includes only the narrator's voice commenting on the visible scene, and positioning involves the static bodies of the narrator and other participants as the spatial locus to which the locational utterances refer, pointing consists of culturally established movements of the narrator's body, including "the hand as a sensory actor" (Goodwin, 2018, p. 381) that

contributes to a practical segmentation of the interactional environment. Previous research has shown that pointing with a hand as a way of "performing knowledge" (Knoblauch, 2008) often co-occurs with deictic utterances and induces the attending recipients to shift their attention to the referent of the pointing, defining relevant objects and establishing mutual orientation (De Stefani & Mondada, 2014; Mondada, 2014; Olbertz-Siitonen & Piirainen-Marsh, 2021). Pointing can involve currently present and directly perceivable objects as well as remembered or otherwise imagined entities (Stukenbrock, 2014). Indeed, it is "an action that can only be successfully performed by tying the act of pointing to the construals of entities and events provided by other meaning-making resources" (Goodwin, 2018, p. 335). Pointing gestures are therefore closely coordinated with ongoing talk, perhaps inevitably (Blythe et al., 2016), and do not involve just the pointing hand, but rather "form one part of a whole gamut of bodily activities – gaze, posture and so forth – which both segments and is segmented by the emergent talk" (Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000, p. 1875). The production of pointing also typically requires the participants' bodies to be properly positioned and can be delayed until the required configuration is achieved (Mondada, 2014), especially in mobile configurations with participants on the move (De Stefani & Deppermann, 2021), underscoring the fact that pointing is a public practice that "cannot be explained by studying the body in isolation, but must be seen vis-à-vis shifting backgrounds of settings and situated language practices that are themselves structured by activities and semiotic resources" (Goodwin, 2003, p. 239). Expanding on the state of the art, in the following two subsections, I focus on two specific practices that feature prominently in the examined materials: *pointing with the gaze* and *pointing with a hand* (see Figure 3 for preliminary examples, both to be analyzed in more detail below).

Figure 3. "Pointing with the gaze" (top) and "pointing with a hand" (bottom) as practices for incorporating the spatial surroundings into the spoken narrative. Examples from VHA interviews ID 10325 (A. H.) and 4106 (T. K.).

4.1 Pointing with the gaze

Pointing with the gaze is a practice that consists of directing one's gaze at a specific object or a segment of the surrounding area. In addition to the movement of the eyes, it may also include movements of the head and a turning of the upper torso or even a reorienting of the whole body. Consider Extract 1, taken from VHA interview ID 10325, which exemplifies one way of pointing with the gaze. The "location footage" is conducted with A. H. at Prague's Charles Square, in a courtyard of the building that was the site of a former Nazi prison. For nearly two minutes before the excerpt begins, he has already been providing a narrative account of the role this building played in his life story.

Extract 1 (VHA ID 10325; tape 5; 02:32–02:52)[4]

[4] Transcription conventions are explained in detail in the Appendix.

1 **eh:: (0.4) °kd-° tady: eeh tady na Karlově námě&%stí#(0.3)&(0.4)#jsme**
uh:: (0.4) wh- here: eeh here on Charles Square (0.7) we
&%turns to his right-->
&looks at ground----------& &shifts gaze
#fig4 #fig5

4

5

6

2 **byli %(.) .hh (0.4) několik měsíců >asi tři měsíce @(.) e::hh:**
were (.) .hh for a couple months about three months (.) u::hh:
-->% *@speaker out of*
*camera frame-->
3 **žalářováni (0.5)# votuď jsme (0.4) byli (.) převezeni (0.4) na: několik**
jailed (0.5) from here we (0.4) were (.) transported (0.4) fo:r a few
#fig6
4 **(.) dní take na P-$ do Pankrácké věznice,**
(.) days also to P- to Pankratz prison,
-->$

While talking about the jail at Charles Square in Prague, in lines 1 and 2, narrator A. H. briefly "looks around", first at the ground between him, the interviewer and the camera operator, and then at one of the buildings surrounding the courtyard. His gaze direction can be treated as a pointing gesture due to its precise temporal coordination with simultaneously produced speech. The horizontal movement of his head and the turning of his upper torso, followed by the reorienting of his whole body to his right (see Figures 4 and 5), are marked by pauses in speech. Only part of the telling, specifically "we were" (in Czech: "jsme byli"), is uttered while the narrator is not facing the camera, and the two words are preceded and followed by brief but noticeable pauses. In line 2, after "were" (in Czech: "byli") and an audible inbreath, A. H. turns back to face the camera, while the camera itself starts panning left and slightly upward, i.e., in the previous direction of his gaze (see Figure 6). The camera operator makes a slow pan to the left and then back to the right, while the speaker is outside of the camera frame for the entire portion of the speech transcribed in line 3, and parts of lines 2 and 4. Subsequently, the narrator becomes the center of the camera's focus again, as it zooms in on his upper torso, and his telling subsequently continues after the end of the first excerpt.

The second excerpt below provides a rendering of a slightly different way of pointing with the gaze. T. K. (VHA interview ID 4106) is conducting a guided tour for the film crew and the viewers through the town of Theresienstadt (Terezín in Czech), which is a former

Jewish ghetto established by the Nazis (for details, see e.g. Hájková, 2020). Before the excerpt begins, the interviewer has asked about the building and whether it is indeed similar to the times – about 50 years earlier – when the narrator lived there as a child with his mother.

Extract 2 (VHA ID 4106; tape 5; 11:42–12:11)

1 je. (.) skutečně jsme ve dvoře (0.5) domu el čtyrysta patnáct, kde jsem
it is. (.) indeed we are in the yard (0.5) of house L415, where I
2 s maminkou asi vod ledna (.) nevim přesně ale mys'im vod ledna čtyrycet
was with mom from about january (.) I dunno but I think from january
3 čtyry bydlel (.)#$.hh °asi v° $#>ta'y v prvnim< patře$ v jednom:#$ (0.5)
forty four lived (.) .hh °ab't in° here on the first floor in one: (0.5)
$turns left- $looks upward, upnods--$looks down-$
#fig7 #fig8 #fig9


7

8

9

4 pokoji (.) .hhh a: (.) °mmm° ten dvůr vy$padal# (.) hh d- dost podobně
room (.) .hhh a:nd (.) °mmm° the yard looked (.) hh q- quite similar to
$looks right, nods-->
#fig10
5 jak te:d$(.) vim akorát že$tady taky#běhaly krysy,$byla tu$latrína která
now (.) I only know that rats were running here, there was a latrine
-->$looks ahead------$looks left, turns left-$.....$looks ahead
#fig11


10

11

12

6 #tu dnes není ale ta tu byla (.) .hh p't'že zá$chody (.) @tady byl jeden
that is not here anymore but was here (.) .hh b'c'se toilets (.) there
#fig12 $looks left and up, nods
@speaker out of
cam. frame-->>
7 záchod pro celej barák a přeci jenom tam bydlelo jánevim sedumdesát lidí
was one for the whole house and there was I dunno seventy people so
8 tak prostě to by nestačilo tak tady byla latrína dole .hh
simply that wouldn't be enough so there was a latrine here downstairs .h

Answering the interviewer's question, T. K. expands on the topic by positioning himself and the other interview participants ("indeed we are in the yard (0.5) of house L415") in relation to the narrated past. In line 3, he performs the first pointing with the gaze, turning his head and upper torso to his left, directing his gaze upward and making a slight nod with his chin (see Figure 8). As in the previous excerpt, the turning is accompanied by a pause, an inbreath and a quiet particle of an unfinished utterance. While pointing with the gaze, he then restarts it with "here on the first floor" ("tady v prvnim patře" in Czech), after which he already starts looking back down. This strip of interaction is particularly interesting for the use of an "upnod" – or what Williams (2017, p. 568) calls "head pointing" –, which was not employed in the previous excerpt. While he proffers the pointing in line 3, his speech becomes slightly faster and is precisely timed with his head and eye movements. Other instances of pointing with the gaze can also be found in subsequent lines (4, 5 and 6) – e.g., looking right and left –, although these times they are rather akin to "looking around", which is also illustrated by Extract 1. The way talk is produced in line 5 illustrates Goodwin's point that speech "both elaborates and is elaborated by the act of pointing" (2003, p. 2019). Noticeably, then, in line 6, the camera starts panning (see the change of composition in Figure 12, documenting that the camera is already moving to the right and upward) in a direction suggested by the first upnod pointing (in line 3), rather than by the subsequent gaze pointings produced in later lines. The movement of the camera thus seems slightly delayed when compared to the similar event in Extract 1; however, in both cases, the speaker eventually gets out of the frame, while the camera operator makes a slow panning shot of the surrounding buildings.

In summary, pointing with the gaze appears to be produced in deictic reference to the currently inhabited place, which consists of the space occupied by the bodies of the participants and their surroundings. The word "here" ("tady" in Czech) occurs in both excerpts. In Extract 1, it is uttered shortly before the actual pointing with the gaze commences, but it is accompanied by an initial shift of gaze to the ground. In Extract 2, it is uttered precisely when the upnod and a brief look up is produced. Furthermore, in the second extract, the word "here" is once again used and accompanied by a simultaneous pointing with the gaze in line 5 (Figure 11). It therefore seems that pointing with the gaze indexically establishes *this place* as the "here" of the ongoing narrative.

4.2 Pointing with a hand

Pointing with a hand is a practice that consists of directing one's gaze at a specific object or a segment of the surrounding area, and simultaneously producing a culturally established pointing gesture. In addition to the movement of the eyes, head and upper part of the torso, or even reorienting the whole body, it includes a lifting or stretching of an arm and an extending of the index finger from a closed fist. Consider Extract 3, which is also taken from the VHA interview ID 4106. In response to the interviewer's question (see Figure 3), T. K. produces the following conduct:

Extract 3 (VHA ID 4106; tape 5; 08:51–09:06)

1 **#já %jsem bydlel támle v tom% rohu# (.) .hh v tom prvnim patře**
I was living over there in that corner (.) .hh on the first floor
%.....%points with index finger-->
#fig13 #fig14


13

14

15

2 **%#sou vidět takový%#bílý %#dveře.%>tak ta%m #byla $taková místnost**
you can see that white door. >so there was a room over there
->%open palm-%....%fist--%thrust-%,,,,,,,% $speaker out of camera frame
#fig15 #fig16 #fig17 #fig18


16

17

18

3 **.hhhh (.) která hhh byla veliká já bych řek tak asi osm metrů**
.hhhh (.) which hhh was large I would say about eight meters
4 **široká (0.4) takovejch možná (1.2) osmnáct dvacet metrů**
wide (0.4) and maybe some (1.2) eighteen twenty meters
5 **dlouhá .hh**
long .hh

In line 1, synchronously with his spoken response to the interviewer's question, T. K. turns to his left and starts producing a pointing hand gesture, which is completed as he utters "corner" ("rohu" in Czech; see Figure 14); as Hindmarsh and Heath have put it, the "whole body conspires to indicate the relevant object" (2000, p. 1863). The first part of the utterance in line 1 is highly indexical, incorporating "there" and "that" in close temporal proximity. After an inbreath, the narrator maintains the outstretched position of his left arm, producing what Enfield et al. (2007) call "B-points", i.e., pointing that is related to information that is situationally foregrounded (p. 1722). At the same time, the related "domain of scrutiny" (Goodwin, 2000) – i.e., a specific spot where the addressee should look to find the pointed-at target – is established and specified in real time through simultaneous talk, while the pointing gesture is held. There is a shift in grammar from the present tense to past tense; first the place is specified ("that white door"), and next, a narrative account is provided that relates to the place ("there was a room . . ."). Moreover, in line 2, the narrator transforms the hand gesture from pointing with an index finger to pointing with his whole hand, his palm open, as he utters "on the first floor". Subsequently, he bends his left arm slightly, closing his palm into a fist (Figure 16), and then outstretches his arm quickly while simultaneously opening his palm again (Figure 17) in a movement glossable as a "thrust" (somewhat similar to the throwing of a small invisible object). Note that at this precise moment, the camera operator starts panning the camera to the right and upward, in the direction of the pointing. Toward the end of line 2, while T. K. continues to provide more talk, he disappears from the camera frame; however, we can still see him in Figure 18 as he completes the pointing by bringing his left arm down and possibly putting his hand back into his pocket. For the rest of the excerpt, as T. K. continues his narration, the camera locates and focuses on the white door on the first floor that has been specified in lines 1 and 2.

In the final example, Extract 4, we join the narrator J. J. (VHA ID 14021) as he stands at the gate of the upper castle in Panenské Břežany, which was occupied by prominent Nazi officer K. H. Frank during World War II. The excerpt begins after approximately 30 seconds of the narrator's positioning talk in the filmed scene, which is also the beginning of the location footage tape; no question from the interviewer precedes J. J.'s turn in line 1:

Extract 4 (VHA ID 14021; tape 8; 01:14–01:45)

1 **zde#(0.5)+(0.6)#+je horní +zámek v#tomto+ horním zámku sídlila**
here (1.1) is upper castle in this upper castle was settled the
>>turn L-+.....+LH points+turn R-------+
#fig19 #fig20 #fig21


19

20

21

2 **rodina Karla Hermanna Franka (1.2) kdo byl Karl Hermann Frank**
family of Karl Hermann Frank (1.2) who was Karl Hermann Frank
3 **(0.3) ehh (dv-) byl to člověk který byl jedným z čelních**
(0.3) ehh (dv-) he was a man who was one of the head
4 **představitelů henleinovského hnutí (.) .hh a který potom**
representatives of the Henlein movement (.) .hh and who later
5 **za odměnu v případě protektorátu se stal státním sekretářem**
as an honor in the case of protectorate became chief secretary
6 **(0.6) +v dolním# z+á$mku:+ .hh ehhh#$**
(0.6) in the lower castle: .hh ehhh
+.....+RH points+
$cam pans left--$cam stops panning
#fig22 #fig23


22

23

24

7 **byl usídlen hh# takzvaný zastupující Reichsprotektor in Böhmen**
was settled hh so-called Deputy Reichsprotektor in Böhmen …
#fig24
8 **und Mähren (.).hh Reinhard Heydrich**

Compared to Extract 3, both pointings with a hand (in lines 1 and 6) are relatively short. In line 1, J. J. employs a practice that could be glossed as "turn-and-point": prefaced by "here" (in Czech "zde", which is a more formal synonym of "tady" used in Extracts 1 and 2), he turns his upper torso to the left and points briefly with his left hand to the building visible behind him (see Figure 20). The visibility of the building behind the speaker and in the camera frame might have to do with the choice of "here" (rather than "there"), incorporating the visually available

elements of the space into the narrative location. The camera pans slightly right and zooms out to produce a shot that shows the entire castle gate (compare Figures 19 and 21). While facing away from the camera, J. J. continues his turn by labelling the building the "upper castle". Subsequently, he proffers an account of the castle's significance in the context of World War II by linking it to a particular person (K. H. Frank), who is also briefly characterized. In terms of its content, Extract 4 contains rather impersonal historical commentary related to the visible scenery; Extract 3, in contrast, layers the narrator's own life story on the surrounding environment.

In line 6 of Extract 4 (see Figure 22), after a pause, we witness another manual "small point" (Enfield et al., 2007). This time, it is produced by the narrator's right arm, which he briefly lifts. Simultaneously, as in line 1, J. J. provides a label that is complementary to the first one – "lower castle". The two words are intonationally emphasized, and moreover, separated by the following inbreath and hesitation marker. Interestingly, the categorial contrast between the "upper" and "lower" castle is also embodied by the contrasting use of the left (line 1) and right (line 6) hands, while the latter gesture also retrospectively gives sense to the former. As we can see in Figures 22–24, the second pointing engenders a slight panning movement of the camera in the direction of the pointing, which is however then suspended as the camera pans back to the speaker, albeit not achieving the exact previous visual arrangement (compare the narrator's position in Figures 24 and 21). It might be seen as an ongoing repair on the part of the camera operator, initially responding to the pointing gesture by moving the camera, but then halting the movement as the referent of the pointing gesture is not visible from this particular place (the lower castle is actually two kilometers away from the upper castle), and the camera could therefore not directly show the relevant pointed-to object to the audience in a way similar to, e.g., Extract 1.

In summary, pointing with a hand (compared to the use of gaze) seems to be produced for incorporating *another place* specified as a location of past events. It literally "points out" something in the currently inhabited environment – a "highly structured cultural entity" (Goodwin, 2003, p. 218) – and indexically establishes that object as a "there" for the narrative. In Extract 1, we could see the narrator using the Czech word "támhle" ("over there"); in Extract 2, the narrator indeed uses the word "zde", which corresponds to English "here", but the subsequent turn-and-point specifies that in fact the place is not precisely the current location, but the location visible behind the speaker. With these insights in mind, I will now discuss the

broader implications of my analysis of pointing with the gaze and pointing with a hand in oral history location footage materials.

5. Concluding discussion

Location footage in audiovisual oral history interviews is a perspicuous site (Garfinkel, 2002) for an investigation of the relationship between memory, narrative and space, looking at "*histories put to work* in cultural activity" (Rose, 1964, p. 9; original emphasis). Featured prominently in the audiovisual materials from the VHA, this paper took pointing as its phenomenon of interest. In particular, I have demonstrated how narrators use pointing with the gaze and pointing with a hand as two distinct practices for incorporating the surrounding spatial environment into the ongoing spoken narrative about the past.

Pointing is a fundamental human communicative practice (Kita, 2003) and humans are similarly well-suited to interpret gaze direction (see Hadjikhani et al., 2008). As Bühler suggested in his classic treatment of deixis, in addition to pointing to presently perceivable phenomena, people can also point to "imagined objects" belonging to "remembered or imagined situations" (2011, p. 149–150). Indeed, there is a primacy of the here-and-now, and narrators are "grounded in the immediate space of perception", using "the surrounding space as a resource to evoke, anchor and imaginatively integrate absent phenomena within the actual space of perception" (Stukenbrock, 2014, p. 89). The distinction between directly perceivable and imagined referents brings up the question posed by Haviland: "When he points . . . how do we know whether he is pointing or referring in the 'here and now' or the then-and-there?" (1996, p. 302)

We may answer this question by attending not only to the speech produced in synchrony and precisely timed with the pointing, but also in oral history interview footage by focusing on the work of the camera. The interactional work achieved by pointing with a hand and pointing with the gaze during situated narration has been specified by examining what happens next. In the analyzed recordings, both gaze pointing and hand pointing practices are routinely followed by panning and zooming of the camera, which seems to take the pointing as an *instruction*. The narrator's pointing seems to be seen by the coparticipants as a request to perform a pan to the pointed-to object, and the gesture thus serves to virtually direct the camera work. This can indicate that in co-presence, pointing invites the listeners to look at something relevant to the telling (see Mondada, 2014, p. 114ff). One of the camera operator's tasks thus seems to be to

allow the viewers visual access to relevant features of the environment in real time, as progressively specified in the narrator's ongoing talk and bodily conduct. As proposed by Goodwin, "the participants' visible orientation provides a guide for what should be included within the frame of the video image" (2018, p. 194). We saw in Extract 4 that this can also lead to brief mistakes and reorientations of camera movements. With regard to narrative practices, it seems that pointing with a hand is used to establish a (present) locus of attention that is then used as a narrative resource; while eyes are used to point to the surroundings as the "background" of the current narrative. Finally, a procedural rule operative in these interactional sequences could thus be formulated: a hand is used for pointing when a particular aspect or feature of the surroundings "over there" has to be specified more precisely (alongside the ongoing talk), overcoming the possible indexical uncertainty of deictic utterances, while eyes are used for pointing in reference to the surroundings in general, inviting the listener to join the speaker in having a look around and thus perhaps "seeing the past in the present" (Post, 2015).

One aim of this paper was to respecify social memory studies by zooming in on the "locally witnessable, technical, work-site details" (Garfinkel, 2022, p. 22) of one of the social settings where remembering's work is done, i.e., the oral history interview and its accompanying location footage, in which the narrator gives a guided tour of a place connected to her or his life story. Bringing about "a more dynamic, performative and intersubjective understanding of memory" (Diasio, 2013, p. 400), I show how the narrator incorporates the surrounding space into the ongoing narrative about the past being talked about. Meanwhile, I also demonstrate that it would be a mistake to consider solely the work done by the narrator: an oral history interview is an interactional achievement (see Mlynář, 2020) and the local participants in the "location footage" together collaborate to record it as an intelligible object for future viewers. Part of the recording's intelligibility consists of making clearly discernible the scenic spatial features being talked about, which is the specific work of the camera operator – absent from the frame but producing in its entirety "the historian's view" that "makes the activity accountable as a testimony's narrative, focusing on the speaker alone" (Mondada, 2006, p. 63). My analysis therefore underscores how Holocaust memory is produced in the "re-membering dynamic" of the interview (Bartesaghi & Bowen, 2009), and indicates how people establish, maintain and contest "the past" in interaction (see Lynch & Bogen, 1996). Social memory studies thus become the study of the practical production and maintenance of memory and remembering as interactional resources. In similar contexts, this has been discussed with regard to the analytical focus on "the practical and interactional production, reading, and

establishment of documentary details" (Lynch, 2009, p. 98), with sustained attention to the work of members tasked with "making history" and "explicating the practical actions … through which versions of past events are worked up, worked on and eventually 'settled'" (Whittle & Wilson, 2015, p. 58).

To conclude, by focusing on bodily incorporation of surroundings into an ongoing narrative, my contribution enriches our understanding of pointing and situates narrative practices firmly in their material and temporal settings. I put forward a typology for incorporating space into spoken narration, using the example of oral histories and their particular form of location video footage. I have shown that narrators comment on space, locate themselves in it and point out various aspects of it. Examining pointing in particular, I have distinguished its two forms – pointing with the gaze and pointing with a hand. Both practices appear to perform similar interactional work (manifested in the camera's movements). Nevertheless, pointing with the gaze rather refers to the "here" of the narrative, generally incorporating the currently inhabited space, while pointing with a hand is used to define a narrative "there", specifying more precisely a concrete element of the spatial surroundings. Rather than being a cognitive or mental construct, I argue that structure of memory should be approached as a thoroughly social phenomenon, achieved through observable, embodied, and spatio-temporally organized activities. Thus, elaborating on pointing as a situated practice that is inherently "interstitial" – involving speech, bodily conduct, gaze and aspects of the surrounding space (Goodwin, 2003, p. 238) –, this paper pointed to a way to transcend the memory and narrative studies' scarcely reflected logocentrism and respecify some of its core topics as embodied details of witnessable work of people remembering and narrating in real time and space.

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Appendix

Notation of speech (based on Jefferson, 2004)

[ ]	Overlapping talk
(.)	Micro-pause
(2.1)	Pause in seconds
.	Final intonation
>yes<	Notably faster talk
<no>	Notably slower talk
(kuk)	Estimated hearing
( )	Inaudible segment
a::	Vocal prolongation
ge-	Cut-off
↑	Higher pitch
=	Rapid continuation
.hh/hh	Inhalation and exhalation
.nh	Nasal inhalation
n(h)o	Laughter particle within word
NO	Louder volume
<u>not</u>	Emphasis

Notation of embodied action (based on Mondada, 2018)

* *	Two symbols delimit descriptions (one symbol per
% %	participant) synchronized with talk.
$-->	Described action continues across subsequent lines

-->$	until the same symbol is reached.
fig	Indication of video screenshot displayed as figure.
#	Exact position of screenshot within the turn.