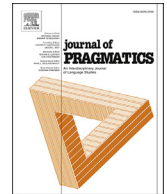


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# Reference construction in interaction: The case of type-indicative “so”

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines an embodied practice in German. The practice investigated is the use of the German particle “so” in conjunction with a noun phrase and accompanied by a pointing gesture (hereafter “so”+NP+PG). Based on the methodological principles of Conversation Analysis, I demonstrate that in the construction “so”+NP+PG the particle features as a type-indicative token. Interlocutors use this practice to point at an object that is a concrete perceivable token that represents a type. Focusing on the interplay between linguistic and multimodal resources in the construction of reference, I show that “so”+NP+PG functions as a resource that interlocutors use in order to point at physically present entities, directing the addressees' attention to an actual object in the participants' perceptual space. However, they are not making reference to that specific object. Instead, the speaker establishes a communicative focus on a recognisable entity in order to make reference to an absent entity that bears the same features as the pointed-at object. Hence, the absent entity is visualised or “seen” through an actual object in the perceptual surroundings.

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## 1. Introduction

Individuals construct shared meanings through their interactions, which they then use as a resource to interpret their cultural and social world (Garfinkel, 1967). This shared social world is jointly constructed through practical reasonings that function as a basis for understanding actions, but also as resources for the production of actions (Heritage, 1995). In order to achieve intersubjectivity and interpret each other's actions correctly, participants in an interaction need to establish that they make reference to the same entity for some interactional purpose. In establishing a referent in interaction, interlocutors have a variety of linguistic and gestural alternatives to select from. These alternative ways of referring to something depend on various factors that pertain to the communicative event, such as the relationship between the speakers involved as well as the purpose of the interaction. A key aspect in formulating a referent is identifiability (Schegloff, 1972) or, as Sacks and Schegloff (1979) term it, recognisability. For a referent to achieve the speaker's communicative purpose, the addressee needs to be in a position to identify the referent from a variety of possibilities. Another aspect to be taken into consideration in the preference for reference construction is minimality (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979); a speaker should select a formulation that consists of a single reference form. By satisfying these two preferences, interlocutors are, for one, accomplishing the communicative requirements of making their addressees

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recognise their referents while, at the same time, minimising the effort involved. However, the communicative practices of referring to something in talk that is visually accessible to the interlocutors might differ from those involved when the referents are only accessible through talk itself. While in the latter interlocutors depend on the identification of referents merely through linguistic means, in the former, speakers can rely on body movements as well to establish recognition. Thus, the use of linguistic elements in referring sequences, such as demonstratives or deictic expressions, is to alert addressees that there is some extralinguistic aspect they need to attend to and that they should look for bodily displays that will help them search for that item (Goodwin, 2003a, 2007).

The focus of the present study is the construction of reference by means of an embodied practice. The practice I will be investigating is “so” accompanied by a noun phrase and a pointing gesture at a physically present entity. The paper is concerned with demonstrating that the speaker establishes a communicative focus on a recognisable entity in order to make reference to an absent entity that bears the same features as the pointed-at object. The paper draws on the methodological principles of conversation analysis (Sacks, 1992) to explicate the ways in which interlocutors use this practice to point at an object that is a concrete perceivable token that represents a type. The particle “so” in these instances features as a type-indicative<sup>1</sup> token. Particular emphasis is placed on the interplay between talk and embodied resources in the production of reference to highlight that interlocutors can point to something without referring to it. Participants in interaction refer to an absent entity using the resources that are available to them in their physical surroundings (Stukenbrock, 2014b), thus satisfying the principle of identifiability (Schegloff, 1972) and minimality (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979) in reference construction.

## 2. Deixis and reference construction

Referring to something in interaction concerns directing the attention of your interlocutor to something which may or may not be present in the immediate surroundings. Whether the referent is your dog, that both you and your interlocutor can visually perceive, or an abstract concept, i.e. the notion of democracy, making reference necessitates both speaker and addressee’s cognitive attention to be aligned (Sidnell and Enfield, 2016). The establishment of a referent is a collaborative accomplishment between interlocutors in a conversation and is something negotiated in interaction (Clark and Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986). In deictic reference, this is achieved “by relating an object of reference to some aspect of the event of speaking via a ground” (Sidnell and Enfield, 2016: 217), the indexical origo as Bühler (1934/1965) describes it. Deixis, that comes from the Greek word *δείξις*, is a communicative act in which speakers draw the addressee’s attention to a particular contextual aspect of the interaction using different resources, i.e. words and gestures, in order to co-produce some common ground and achieve intersubjective understanding. In other words, deixis is an efficient and minimal way of achieving reference (Sidnell and Enfield, 2016). One of the main resources that interlocutors deploy to direct the visual attention of others to something in the surroundings is pointing (Goodwin, 2000b; Kendon, 2004; Kita, 2003; Streeck, 2013). Studies on pointing as a resource for the organisation of human action have focused on its relation with speech (Clark, 2003; Eriksson, 2009; Goodwin, 2003a, 2003b; Mondada, 2014; Stukenbrock, 2015, 2018, 2020) and have investigated the various shapes (Kendon, 2004) that these deictic gestures may take. While pointing is a well-established gesture for indicating something in the surroundings, recipients of a pointing gesture do not simply follow a vector that indicates the location or the object being pointed at (Kita, 2003; Stukenbrock, 2015, 2020). As a matter of fact, the pointing gesture only specifies a “domain of scrutiny” (Goodwin, 2000b, 2003a) where the addressee then has to look for a target, a target that is structured using a range of semiotic resources that in turn form a multimodal package (Goodwin, 2000a, 2000b, 2003a; Mondada, 2014; Stukenbrock, 2015, 2020). Hence, interlocutors rely on additional “meaning-making practices” (Goodwin, 2000a), such as the activity they are involved in and the accompanying talk, in order to infer the connection between what is being demonstrated by the gesture and what is being referred to (Clark et al., 1983).

In the current study, I have identified instances in which the speaker is pointing at an object that is physically present, directing the addressee’s attention to an object he/she can visually perceive. However, I shall show that, while participants are pointing at a perceptually present entity, they are not making reference to that specific object but to an absent object that bears the same features as the one being pointed at. Hence, the absent object is “seen” through an actual object in the perceptual surroundings. The practice I have identified in my data, where this phenomenon occurs, is “so+NP+PG<sup>2</sup>”, as per the following examples:

<sup>1</sup> The term “type-indicative” is introduced here in an attempt to capture the essence of the demonstrative use of “so” in the instances presented in this paper. The practice “so”+NP+PG is used to point at an object that indicates a type and, hence, I propose to describe it as “type-indicative”.

<sup>2</sup> PG stands for Pointing Gesture.

(1) Spielmuseum 02 Rundgang “dice”:

08 A <<lachend> ich will jetzt sone WÜrfel# ha->  
I want (to have) a dice like this now  
fig #fig1

(2) Spielmuseum 02 Rundgang “fishing game”:

01 M ah ich glaub# mir händ Au mol sones ANgelspiel gha;  
ah I believe we also had a fishing game like this  
fig #fig2

(3) Kochen 01 “preserving glass”:

29 C ähm: ja genau #SO was,  
ehm yes exactly like this  
fig #fig3



Figure 1

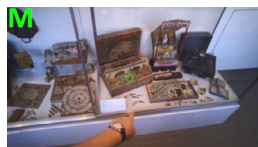


Figure 2



Figure 3

As can be seen in all three exemplary instances, “so”+NP is accompanied by a pointing gesture at a physically present object.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, as we shall see in the course of this paper, the object in the physical surroundings is merely used as a concrete perceivable token that represents a type. Participants point at a physically present object to make reference to an absent entity that has similar properties to the one that is being pointed at. The absent object becomes “present” through the way it is being referred to.

### 3. The German particle “so” in the literature

The German particle “so” in conjunction with gestures has been widely investigated with the focus being on the use of the particle in modal deixis. [Streeck \(2002\)](#) describes the use of the particle “so” in the presence of “descriptive (iconic) gestures” ([McNeill, 1985](#)) and claims that “so” serves as a “flag” for the interlocutor to look for an additional meaning in the utterance that is being produced. With the use of the particle in combination with the gaze direction that attracts the addressee’s visual attention to the location where this additional meaning can be found, the gesture assumes a grammatical status in the utterance. However, Streeck does not make a distinction between the cases of “so” that do require a gesture from the ones that are accompanied by one but the gesture is not mandatory for the understanding of the utterance ([Ningelgen and Auer, 2017](#); [Stukenbrock, 2010, 2014a](#)).

[Stukenbrock \(2010\)](#) concentrates her research on instances of deictic “so” expressions for which the presence of a gesture is obligatory for the intelligibility of an utterance. In such cases, she claims that “so” is used as an adverb that bears the focus accent and functions as a contextualisation cue for an upcoming gesture by the speaker that must be visually perceived by the addressee. The obligatory presence of gaze in deictic “so” references is also identified in instructional sequences ([Stukenbrock, 2014a](#)). In a collection of 20 instances of “so” in multimodal instructions, the author problematises the sequentiality of next turns and actions and the multimodal temporality of these actions. She argues that instructions are multimodal adjacency pairs and the use of “so” in multimodal practices projects bodily actions that occur simultaneously with talk and those that sequentially follow talk. Take, for instance, the following segment that is part of a cooking show whereby the speaker demonstrates to the addressee how to peel a pineapple:

## (4) “so abschälen”/ “peeling like this” (KK1\_1\_00:03:05)

1 K2: und wenn man die jetzt mit dem MESSer schneidet,  
and when you cut it with a knife  
2 → muss man also SO abschälen,  
you have to peel it like this

([Stukenbrock, 2014a](#): 87)

<sup>3</sup> In excerpt (1) and (2) the “so” is unstressed whereas in (3) the sentence stress is on “so”. German is an intonation language which places stress on lexical items. That is to say, different pitch accents “express pragmatic contrasts and signal syntactic boundaries” (for further details see [Wang and Féry, 2017](#)). I will return to this after having examined a number of cases to establish whether sentence stress makes a difference to the function of this practice.

The modal deictic “SO” at line 02 is accompanied by a bodily demonstration from the expert as an iconic representation of the action of peeling. What the author demonstrates with her analysis is that “so” other than a turn-internal “flag” (Streeck, 2002) that directs the addressee’s gaze orientation to the gesture, the deictic use of “so” + gesture projects a bodily behaviour by the speaker and an aligning action by the addressee, thus making the addressee’s gaze obligatory.

Building on Stukenbrock’s (2010, 2014a) argument that gaze and gesture are obligatory requirements for a multimodal construction with “so”, Ningelgen and Auer (2017) argue that non-deictic “so”, in contrast to the gesturally used deictic “so”, does not fit into the paradigm of a multimodal construction theory as it is not necessarily coupled with an iconic gesture. In the following example, both occurrences of non-stressed, non-deictic “so” appear with a gesture but this is not iconic. The gesture that is performed during the utterance is what the authors call a “vagueness gesture” (for a description of this type of gesture see Ningelgen and Auer, 2017).

(5) (TT7, 23:23)

der\_s so HÜHNchenkoch u:nd schreibt so KOChbücher?  
he’s LIKE a chicken cook and he writes LIKE cooking books?

(Ningelgen and Auer, 2017: 8)

Based on a corpus of 338 cases of “so” from two recordings of dyadic face-to-face interactions of 60 mins each, the authors question Streeck’s (2002) claim that “so” and iconic gestures almost always co-occur as the majority of the unstressed vagueness and/or focus markers in their data occur without a gesture at all. Additionally, the authors disconfirm Streeck’s (2002) argument that gaze direction is combined with “so” as a flag to direct the addressees’ visual attention to the hands and so the work of the hands is incorporated into the grammatical structure of the utterance. In the majority of the cases in their data none of the participants gaze at the gesture. Thus, the aforementioned claim is only applicable to the deictic use of “so”.

While the aforementioned studies focus on the use of “so” as a modal deictic, where the particle is used as an adverb, Knöbl (2014) and Hole and Klumpp (2000) study its use in conjunction with the German indefinite article “ein”, i.e. “so einen” and its variant “son”. The syntactic position of “so” in these instances, as in the examples examined in this paper, is before a noun phrase which either consists of a nominal or an indefinite article followed by a nominal. The German language has both a definite (der, die, das) and an indefinite article (ein, eine, ein), both of which inflect for case and gender. While the definite article also inflects for number (see Table 1), there is no plural form of the indefinite article (see Table 2).

**Table 1**

Definite article.

	Singular			Plural
N.	der	die	das	die
A.	den	die	das	die
G.	des	der	des	der
D.	dem	der	dem	den

(Engel, 1996: 526)

**Table 2**

Indefinite article.

	Singular			Plural
N.	ein	eine	ein	–
A.	einen	eine	ein	–
G.	eines	einer	eines	–
D.	einem	einer	einem	–

(Engel, 1996: 526)

Hole and Klumpp (2000) argue that there is a third grammaticalized article “son” used in colloquial German that is a contraction of “so ein”, “so eine” and “so ein” and has identical inflectional endings to those of the indefinite article with the exception that it also inflects for number (see Table 3).

**Table 3**  
Grammaticalized third article “son”.

	Singular			Plural
N.	son	son	son	so(ne)
A.	son	soner	son	so(ne)
G.	(sones)	(soner)	(sones)	so(ner)
D.	sonem	soner	sonem	sonen

(adapted from [Hole and Klumpp, 2000](#): 235)

According to the authors, “son” “characterises the nominal in which it appears” (243) and depending on the context, it can be used either as a definite or indefinite token of a definite type or as an indefinite token of an indefinite type. “Kaufst du mir sonen Pullover?”/‘Will you buy me a jumper like this?’, for instance, can belong to any of those categories. When accompanied by a deictic gesture, however, the utterance does not refer to the particular jumper anymore but to any jumper belonging to the same class as the pointed-at jumper. By pointing at the jumper, the recipient can identify the token whose type is being referred to (236-7). Hence, the pointed-at jumper functions as a token of the type. Similarly, [Knöbl \(2014: 175\)](#) suggests that this unmarked form “son” primarily functions to introduce “a new indefinite referent without a deictic-phoric component”. He maintains that the indefinite article with “so” conveys properties that are known to the recipients and are tied up to the preceding or following context. These properties help recipients categorise the reference object, hence the variant functions as “an indefinite token of a definite type” per [Hole and Klumpp’s \(2000\)](#) description.

In this study, we will focus on the use of “so”+NP accompanied by a pointing gesture at a specific object (definite token) that makes reference to a specific type (definite type). While the token does not always appear with the indefinite article “ein”,<sup>4</sup> it features very similar functions to the “son” variant described in the literature ([Hole and Klumpp, 2000](#); [Knöbl, 2014](#)) in that, by pointing at an object, speakers direct addressees’ attention to an entity with certain features and based on those features they then can categorise it into a particular type. With regard to gestures that accompany this particle, previous work has mainly researched the occurrence of “so” in conjunction with iconic gestures. The use of this particle coupled with pointing gestures has not been dealt with in depth (see, however, [Stukenbrock, 2010, 2015](#), for use with a presentative gesture). The few studies that, to my knowledge, have examined “so” with pointing gestures attend to the question of the categorisation of this particle as modal or local deictic. [Harweg \(1990\)](#) maintains that though its use is predominantly associated with local deixis, it can nevertheless be used in modal deixis too. In the utterance “So sieht der Kölner Dom von innen aus”/‘this is what Cologne Cathedral looks like from the inside’ accompanied by a pointing gesture at the cathedral, the speaker is pointing at the place (the cathedral) but with the aim of highlighting the qualitative aspect of it, how the cathedral looks like and can be perceived by the speaker and addressee at the moment the utterance was produced. [Fricke \(2007\)](#), on the other hand, claims that modal deictic expressions, like “so”/‘like this’, accompanied by a pointing gesture belong to the category of local deixis. In the example “So ein Auto hätte ich gern”/‘I would like to have a car like this one’ Fricke argues that the utterance is obligatorily accompanied by a pointing gesture on the car, and since pointing gestures only occur with reference to local deictic expressions, such as “here” or “this one”, “so” also belongs to the same category of local deixis. Building on the argument of the categorisation of “so” as local or modal deictic, [Balantani and Lázaro \(2021\)](#) argue with empirical data that participants use a pointing gesture, a local deictic resource, but this is done in the service of modal deixis, to foreground the “manner”. They illustrate that when, in their data, “so” is coupled with a pointing gesture, what is being pointed at is the visible outcome of an action. By pointing at an image of an instruction booklet of IKEA, for instance, participants are pointing at the result of an action, how a cupboard would look like once the action has been performed. While the pointing gesture directs addressees’ attention to an object in the physical surroundings, the deictic expression “so” indicates how the target should be perceived, foregrounding the qualitative aspect of the action. This paper seeks to contribute to the study of “so” in multimodal practices by investigating a construction in which “so” is accompanied by a pointing gesture instead of an iconic one. In this respect, I claim that the particle features as a type-indicative token that presents very similar characteristics to the “son” variant described by [Hole and Klumpp \(2000\)](#) and [Knöbl \(2014\)](#). By considering the use of “so” with a pointing gesture, I hope to contribute to continuing research into the use of embodied communication practices in establishing reference.

<sup>4</sup> In some instances, the noun is in plural form and hence the article “ein” drops off, and in others “so” is followed by “etwas”/‘something’ or its contracted form “was”.

#### 4. Methodology and data

This study has been conducted using the methodological principles of Conversation Analysis (Drew, 2004), which in terms of multimodal analysis describes how talk, gesture, gaze, body posture and the physical surroundings of the participants are jointly used in the performance of social action (Deppermann, 2013; Deppermann and Schmitt, 2007; Goodwin, 2000a; Mondada, 2007; Mondada and Schmitt, 2010; Schmitt, 2007; Stivers and Sidnell, 2005; Streeck et al., 2011). The data analysed is part of a larger corpus on naturally occurring interaction in diverse settings collected for a research project on deixis and joint attention funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). Data recordings were conducted with the use of mobile eye-tracking glasses (Tobii Pro Glasses 2) worn by the participants and an additional third camera to account for embodied conduct not visible through the eye-tracking. The recordings of the eye-tracking glasses and the third camera were synchronized into one split-screen video and imported into ELAN (2019) for transcription. The verbal transcriptions follow the GAT transcription system developed by Selting et al. (2009) and the embodied conduct was transcribed according to Mondada's (2019) conventions for multimodal transcription (see Appendix). The data selected for the current paper is both in German and Swiss German; the first line of transcription is in German and the second line is a translation in English. In the excerpts from the Swiss German data, there is an additional line with its translation in German.

The use of eye-tracking technology in the study of reference construction permits us to identify the precise timing of both speaker and addressees' visual perception of a target or object (see Stukenbrock, 2018).<sup>5</sup> This is particularly helpful when transcribing embodied actions, such as gaze-shifts, as it allows for a more precise temporal and sequential annotation of the verbal and embodied conduct of the participants. Annotating the precise timing of the embodied actions in a verbal transcript, in turn, enables us to be more exact in our analysis as well by comparing, for instance, the timing of the participants' gaze on a target with the timing of it being made interactionally salient by them (Stukenbrock, 2020). The fact that both participants are looking at a common target does not necessarily mean that they are "seeing" the same thing (Goodwin, 1994). We can, however, know through the eye-tracking data if both participants were at least sharing attention on the same target prior to the construction of the referent (Stukenbrock and Dao, 2019).

#### 5. Empirical analysis: "pointing" at imaginary entities

In the data under consideration here, the practice "so"+NP+pointing is used by participants in the service of presenting an object that is physically present as a concrete perceivable token that represents a type. Participants point at an entity that features certain characteristics that are similar to the object they are making reference to and so, based on those features, addressees can categorise it into a particular type. In what follows, I will present five instances from three different data sets where this practice was observed. What traverses all the examples is that the addressees' visual perception is an obligatory requirement for the intelligibility of these utterances. However, how this is managed differs in each case. The first three excerpts are taken from the "museum" data where participants are walking around a game museum and make observations on the different exhibits. In those instances, participants introduce the referent with "so"+NP and a pointing gesture at an object as a new observation. Then, I present two more examples from different settings, where participants are pointing at a token to concretise something that has already been introduced verbally. In the first one, the practice is used in a different sequential environment, namely a repair sequence. The referent has been introduced as part of a word search and one of the participants is pointing at a concrete perceivable token of that referent. Finally, as a last example I present an excerpt where the pointing gesture takes a different form; the pointing is done not with the index finger but with an open palm gesture. The comparative instances, despite displaying somewhat differing compositional features, perform recognizably the same action.

##### 5.1. Introducing a new referent

In the first instance, I present one exemplar of this practice from the "museum" data in order to provide an overview of the main features of the practice: the particle "so" accompanied by a pointing gesture at an object that is a concrete perceivable token that represents a type. Anna and Mike are friends who are visiting a game-museum. They are walking around the museum making remarks about the different games they can observe. At the moment they are standing in front of a display case that contains a variety of, mainly, boardgames.

<sup>5</sup> For more studies on the role of eye gaze in different types of interaction see Brône and Oben, 2018.

(6) Spielemuseum 02 Rundgang 02:20-02:25 “things to build with”:

(M: Mike, A: Anna)

\* for gaze by A

+ for gaze by M

\$ gesture done by A

& gesture done by M

01 A so ZÜG \$hani au immer glIE\$bt,#  
 so Sachen hab ich auch immer geliebt  
 things like this I have also always loved  
 a \$.....\$PG-->  
 fig #fig4



Figure 4

02 (0.1) \$ (0.7) \* (0.3) \$

a -->\$, / / / / / / / / / / / / \$  
 a \*.....-->

03 A so zÜg \*#zum BAU\*E und so;  
 so Sachen zum bauen und so  
 things like this to build with and such  
 a -->\*gz at M-\*  
 fig #fig5

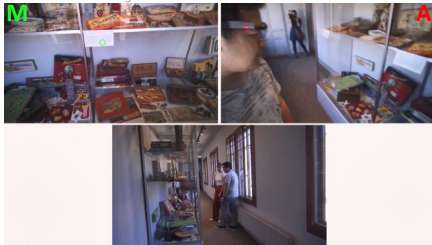


Figure 5

04 (0.2)+# (0.6) \$ (0.3) \$ (0.2) \$ (0.1) #

m +gz at box-->>  
 a \$.....\$PG---\$, / / / / / / / / / / \$  
 fig #fig6 #fig7



Figure 6

Figure 7

05 M hm, \$  
 a -->\$

This is a very short exchange that occurs between different observations that the participants are making regarding the objects they encounter behind the display case in the museum. As they are looking at the objects and are simultaneously walking, Anna makes a new observation in the form of an assessment “so ZÜG hani au immer glIEbt,”/‘things like this I have also always loved’ (l.01). Her turn is formulated with a type-indicative “so” that is unstressed and accompanies the noun “ZÜG”/‘things’. The “so” is not a modal deictic, and therefore does not require an iconic or depictive gesture (Stukenbrock, 2010, 2014a). However, it is accompanied by a pointing gesture. At “hani”/‘I have’, Anna begins forming a pointing gesture at an object behind the display case that is fully materialised by the end of her turn and begins retracting it after 0.1 s (Fig. 4). In the midst of the retraction phase of her gesture, she shifts her gaze to her left towards her addressee (see Fig. 5), monitoring his gaze (Stukenbrock, 2020), and adds an increment to her prior turn “so zÜg zum BAUE und so;”/‘things like this to build with and such’ (l.03). She repeats the type-indicative “so” + noun (“so zÜg”/ ‘things like this’) and specifies the type of things “zum Baue”/‘to build with’. Mike, who has been reading the description of another game, has not been monitoring any of Anna’s actions so far. He turns his gaze to the object (Fig. 6) she is pointing at 0.2 s after Anna’s increment at line 03 and her gaze monitoring. Although Anna does not gaze at him directly at this point, she can perceive his gaze shift from her peripheral vision, as he takes a step forward and moves closer to Anna and the object respectively. Anna then repeats her pointing gesture at it (see Fig. 7) and this gets receipted with a minimal acknowledgment token by Mike “hm,” (l.05).

What we can conclude from this very short sequence is that this type of “so”, that accompanies a noun and comes with a pointing gesture at a physically present object, is used by interlocutors to specify the type of the object. The speaker takes this object, that is being pointed at, to be a concrete perceivable token that belongs to the type “things to build with” that is also identifiable by the addressee as well. That is, these type-indicative “so” utterances indicate a “token” of the type that is being evoked. Hence, when Anna points at the object behind the display case and refers to it as “so ZÜG”/‘things like this’, she points at the property of this specific object being pointed at as one token of a larger category of “things to build with”, as she specifies in her next turn, that the pointed-at object belongs to. By pointing at it she invites Mike to pick out the type that she suggests, a token of which she is pointing out at him behind the display case. So, the speaker directs the addressee’s visual attention at a physically present object by pointing at it but the object that is being picked out represents a concrete token of a more generic type of “things to build with”. Anna makes use of the local resources available to her to make reference to an object from her childhood that “she used to love” and, by pointing at something that resembles that object, she invites Mike to visualise that entity. The use of the past tense “hani gllEbt”/‘I have loved’ further ratifies that the object being pointed at is not her focus; what she used to love is not the object they have in front of them but one with similar properties. The present object is merely used as a token that represents the type of object she refers to from her past. Hence, she points at an object in the material world to make reference to an absent object, rendering the abstract “so ZÜG”/‘things like this’ a collaboratively imagined object.

What follows is another short exchange from the same recording that occurs on the same display case as excerpt (6) but on a different game. The participants are almost at the end of the display case and are reading the description of one of the games when Mike makes an epistemically weakened claim “ah ich glaub mir händ Au mol sones ANgelspiel gha;”/‘ah I believe we also had a fishing game like this’ (l.01).<sup>6</sup> His turn comes after a long gap where both participants were observing the games behind the display case in silence and is introduced with a turn-initial “ah”, marking it as a new observation (Heritage, 1984).

**(7) Spielmuseum 02 Rundgang 04:17-04:27 “fishing game”:**

(M: Mike, A: Anna)

\* for gaze by A

+ for gaze by M

\$ gesture done by A

& gesture done by M

01 M &\*ah ich glaub&\*# mir händ& Au mol& sones ANgelspiel gha;  
 ah ich glaube wir haben auch mal so ein Angelspiel gehabt  
 ah I believe we also had a fishing game like this  
 m &.....&PG-----&,,,,,,&  
 a \*gz at FG-----\*

fig

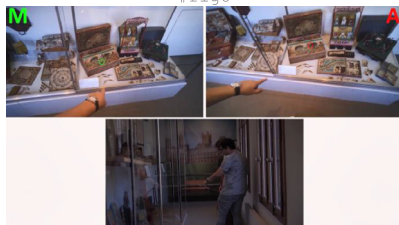


Figure 8

02 (0.9)

03 A jo aber s isch eher so die [NEU] aso die NEUartigi version [für dAs,]

ja aber es ist eher so die neu also die neuartige version für das  
 yes but it is rather the new well the novel version for the

04 M [(Aso),] [(sch-

niefert)]

Also

well

((snif-

fs))

05 A weisch [DIE-]

weisst du die

you know the

06 M [J]Ä;

ja

yes

07 (0.2)

08 A weisch die ÄN[te und so wo so pft] pft mÄche halt;

weisst du die Enten und so wo so pft pft machen halt

you know the ducks and like that where they do like pft pft

09 M [JA ja modÄrn; ]

ja ja modern

yes yes modern

Similar to the previous example, the noun “ANGelspiel”/‘fishing game’ is preceded by an unstressed, type-indicative “sone”/‘one like this’ that is accompanied by a pointing gesture at the game. At the start of his turn, Mike begins forming a pointing gesture that

<sup>6</sup> For reasons of space, “fishing game” is represented as “FG” on the multimodal transcription at line 1.



reaches its peak at “mir hand”/‘we had’ and is brought back to home position before “sone”/‘one like this’ (Fig. 8). Mike’s pointing gesture is perceived by his interlocutor, but it is not the gesture that attracted her attention on the object. Anna has been looking at the object before Mike’s observation and, after 0.9 s, she initially aligns<sup>7</sup> with Mike’s observation with “jo” but then proceeds with specifying that this is but a newer version of the game “jo aber sisch eher so die NEU aso die NEUartigi version für dAs,”/‘yes but it is rather the new well the novel version for the’ (l.03).

Again, we can see the use of a type-indicative “so” accompanied by a pointing gesture at an object. By pointing at the object in the display case, Mike is pointing at a concrete perceivable token of the type of fishing game that he is referring to. Anna’s response at line 03 that this is but “a novel version” proves that she acknowledges Mike’s reference to this physically present game as merely a reference to another version of the game. She contrasts the fishing game being pointed at, the newer version, with the old version that is referred to by Mike. Her response thus indicates that she too perceives Mike’s reference to the specific fishing game as merely a token of the type of fishing game that she is asked to identify.

The following example comes from the same recording. The two participants have just completed a puzzle game next to the entrance on the wall and moved to the exhibits that are in the same room. In this sequence, Mike makes the first observation on the first exhibit they are looking at in the room.

**(8) Spielmuseum 02 Rundgang 12:20-12:29 “multiple puzzles”:**

(M: Mike, A: Anna)

\* for gaze by A

+ for gaze by M

\$ gesture done by A

& gesture done by M

01 M &+o:h mir händ AU &so eis# \*de&HEI gha mol&;  
 oh wir haben auch so eins mal zu Hause gehabt  
 oh we also had one like this at home once  
 m &.....&PG-----&,,,,,,&  
 m +gz at puzzle-->  
 a \*gz at puzzle-->  
 fig #fig9



Figure 9

02 (0.2)

03 A \$jo\$ #SO\$ eins han\*i\$ DIE ha+ni au immer gliEbt,  
 ja so eines habe die habe ich auch immer geliebt  
 yes one like this I have these I have also always liked  
 a -->  
 a \$..\$PG--\$,,,,,,,,\$  
 m -->+  
 fig #fig10

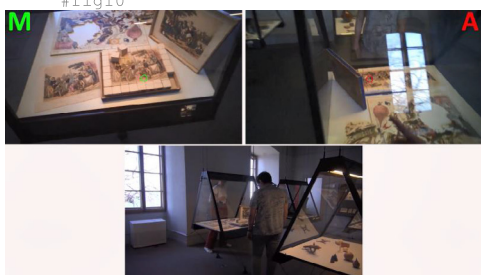


Figure 10

04 ich weiss AU nit wieSO;=  
 ich weiss auch nicht wieso  
 I do not know why  
 05 =Eigentlich ischs jo e toTale-  
 eigentlich ist es ja ein totaler  
 actually it is a total

<sup>7</sup> For the distinction between alignment and affiliation see Stivers, 2008.

06 (0.4)  
 07 A jo [SOne-]  
     ja so eine  
     yes like a  
 08 M [sind eifach] mEhreri PUZZle [in EIM-]  
     sind einfach mehrere Puzzles in einem  
     they are simply multiple puzzles in one  
 09 A [sone Art] wiene PUZZLE halt;  
     so eine Art wie ein Puzzle halt  
     some kind of like a puzzle

Mike claims to have had once at home a similar game to the one in the exhibit “o:h mir händ AU so eis deHEI gha mol;”/‘oh we also had one like this at home once’ (l.01). His turn is formulated with a turn-initial “oh” (Heritage, 1984), which marks it as a noticing of something new and comes after a gap where the participants are not in a focused interaction. Hence, the “oh” invites a new joint focus of attention on an exhibit. At “so” he points at the puzzle behind the display. The semantic vagueness of the reference term is compensated by the pointing gesture that reaches its peak at “so”; as Levinson (2003: 70) notes, gestures, when accompanied by deictics, can give a finer degree of specification than the linguistic expressions. At “deHEI”/‘at home’ Anna gazes at the puzzle that is exhibited in front of Mike (see Fig. 9) and affiliates with him verbally at line 03 “jo SO eins hani DIE hani au immer gIEbt;”/‘yes one like this I have these I have also always liked’ and in an embodied way by walking around the display case to position herself next to Mike to observe the item from his perspective. Her utterance at line 03 follows a similar syntactic structure that includes a type-indicative “SO eins”/‘one like this’ accompanied by a pointing gesture. However, unlike Mike’s utterance and pointing gesture at line 01 that does attract Anna’s gaze to the puzzle, this one is not perceived by Mike who is still looking at the puzzle in front of him (Fig. 10).

In this extract, we have two type-indicative “so eins” + pointing gesture from two different speakers. At line 01 Mike points at the puzzle that is the concrete perceivable token of the type of puzzle that is being referred to and invites his addressee to identify, in the object that is being shown to her, the puzzle that they used to have at home. And, indeed, Anna’s uptake at line 03 with the repetition “SO eins” + pointing gesture indicates that she recognises this as a specific token of a type of puzzle, one that is “multiple puzzles in one” as Mike subsequently describes it. Additionally, she reformulates the singular form “SO eins” to the plural demonstrative “DIE”, which further reinforces the idea of class reference; the puzzle indicated with the pointing gesture is understood by Anna to be a token or member of a type of puzzles. Having established that they both understand this to be a token of a type, they then attempt to find the name for that type of puzzles (l.07–09).

## 5.2. Concretising a referent that has been verbally introduced

By now we have established that the practice “so”+NP+PG functions as a resource for interlocutors to direct their addressees’ attention to an object in the physical surroundings in order to “point” at or refer to an absent object. The present entity has certain features or characteristics that exemplify some of the qualities of the pointed-at object. These shared features then help the addressee categorise the absent object into a certain type, a concrete, perceivable token of which is presented in front of him/her. I will provide two more excerpts from different settings in order to highlight the transversality of the practice in different sequential environments. In excerpt (9), the “so”+NP appears in a repair sequence; the interlocutors are in search of a word and the particle is used with a pointing gesture in order to show the object in question in the surroundings.

### (9) Kochen 01 45:23-46:07 “the preserving glass”

(C: Caroline, S: Sabrina)

\* for gaze by S

+ for gaze by C

\$ gesture done by C

& gesture done by S

01 C Uh:: da fällt mir EIN?  
     Uh it occurs to me  
 02 (0.2)  
 03 S [hm hm, ]  
 04 C [Also das hat] überhaupt nichts damit zu tun;=  
     Well that has nothing to do with it  
 05 C =ich seh nur grad die GLÄser,  
     I just see the glasses  
 06 (0.4)  
 07 C hast DU zufälligerweise mein;  
     did you by any chance (see) my  
 08 C ähm::  
 09 (0.9)  
 10 C ähm DINGSglas was man,  
     ehm such a glass that one

11 C hh° (.) WArte kurz;  
wait briefly  
(0.4)

12 C es GIBT ein wort dafür? (.) °hh=  
there is a word for that

13 S =Bügelglas,  
clip-on glass  
(0.2)

14 S WECKglas.  
preserving glass  
(0.1)

15 C WECKglas.  
preserving glass  
(0.3)

16 C Bügelglas?  
clip-on glass  
\*(0.6)\*

17 S \*.....\*

18 S \*ja SO\_was,  
yes like this  
s \*preserving glasses-->

19 + (0.1)\*

20 S -->\*

21 c +gaze following -->

22 C <<ff> achSO:;>  
I see  
(0.2)+

23 c -->+

24 s &stands up and removes photo-->

25 C <<ff> JA. ÄH mit dem;>  
yes eh with the  
(0.3) &(0.1)

26 S -->&PG-->

27 C ähm: ja genau #SO&\_was,\$  
ehm yes exactly like this  
s -- >&  
c \$PG-----\$  
fig #fig11



Figure 11

29 (0.1)

30 C mit de:r Tafel vorne drauf;  
with the plate in front of it  
(1.2)

31 C weil die SUCH ich nämlich überall und ich finde sie nicht WIEder;  
because I search for them everywhere and I can't find them again

Caroline and Sabrina are friends who are having lunch together in Sabrina's kitchen. Caroline is asking Sabrina whether she has seen her glass "hast DU zufälligerweise mein; ähm DINGSglas was man,"/'did you by any chance (see) my ehm such a glass that one' (1.07–10). Her utterance is left incomplete and, after an outbreath and a minimal pause, she initiates repair "h(.) WArte kurz;"/'wait briefly' (1.11) and subsequently a word search "es GIBT ein wort dafür? (.) °hh="/'there is a word for that' (1.13). She names the object she is searching for "DINGSglas", the word "DINGS" substituting the referent she is in search of, and Sabrina offers a candidate referent "Bügelglas"/'clip-on glass' (1.14) and subsequently an alternative candidate "WECKglas."/'preserving glass' (1.16). Caroline accepts the second candidate as the repair solution with a full repeat of the word "WECKglas."/'preserving glass' (1.18) (Schegloff, 1996). Having registered the repair solution, Caroline then initiates another repair in her subsequent turn "Bügelglas"/'clip-on glass' (1.20), thus locating the trouble source in the first candidate term offered by Sabrina at line 14 and making a repair solution relevant (Schegloff et al., 1977). However, instead of proceeding to a repair solution, Sabrina formulates her next turn with "ja SO\_was"/'yes like this' (1.22), acknowledging the repair initiation and proposing, by means of the deictic "SO\_was", to provide the repair solution in an embodied way. At the end of "Bügelglas"/'clip-on glass' (1.20), Sabrina shifts her gaze towards the shelf that is on the wall next to the table and at "ja"/'yes' (1.22) she scans the preserving glasses on the shelf. Caroline follows her gaze up to the shelf on the wall and produces a free-standing "<<ff> achSO:;>"/'I see' (1.24) with a stretch in the last syllable, marking her understanding and acceptance of Sabrina's upcoming repair solution (Golato, 2010). Despite Caroline's display of

acceptance of the repair solution, with “SO\_was” at line 22, Sabrina has already projected that a repair solution is underway which she now has to fulfil. At the end of “<<ff> achSO;;>”/‘I see’ (L.24) she stands up, removes a photo that is in front of the clip-on glass and points at it. Caroline accepts the repair solution with an upgraded agreement in second position “ja genau”/‘yes exactly’ and a repetition of the deictic reference “SO\_was”/‘like this’ (L.28). At “SO” she points at the preserving glass that is pointed at by Sabrina, who at that point retracts her pointing gesture (Fig. 11).

The pointed-at object in this case functions as a token that exemplifies what is being verbally referred to as “Bügelglas”/‘clip-on glass’. Since the object they are looking for is not physically present, the speaker uses an object to point at that portrays certain features that are representative of the type. The addressee then is asked to identify that object as a token of the type of glass that is being made reference to by “SO\_was”. Caroline scans all the glasses on the shelf until she finally points at the most representative example of a “Bügelglas”, so that the addressee would recognise it as not just a glass but a “Bügelglas”. And, indeed, she agrees with that being a representative example with “ja genau SO\_was”/‘yes exactly like this’ (L.28).<sup>8</sup> In other words, that particular glass exemplifies enough of the properties of the object it refers to for it to be identifiable as a “Bügelglas”. Furthermore, similar to the previous example, there is a reformulation in the form of the referent by the addressee from singular to plural. In her subsequent turn, Caroline reformulates the referent from “SO\_was” to the plural form “DIE” (L.32), reinforcing the idea that she perceives the item as a token that belongs to a more general type.

The last excerpt differs slightly from the ones analysed so far in that, instead of a pointing gesture with an index finger (Goodwin, 2000b; Kendon, 2004; Kendon and Versante, 2003; Kita, 2003; Streeck, 2013), the participants are presenting the referent with an open palm hand gesture (Cienki and Müller, 2008; Kendon, 2004; Müller, 2004; Stukenbrock, 2015).<sup>9</sup> The two participants, Carola and Torsten, are teachers and are looking for a place to organise a game night for a society they are involved in. The room they are currently looking at is presented to them by the museum administrator and is located on the ground floor of the game museum with a view to the lake, a detail that gets topicalised in this extract.

This is a further example from the games museum in which “so”+NP is used to demonstrate a concrete perceivable token of the type of referent the speakers are invoking in their talk. In fact, we have two “so”+NP constructions from two different speakers, one referring to the view and the other to the weather and both are accompanied by an open hand palm gesture. At line 09, after the interlocutors have made their positive assessments of the room at lines 01–05 “also ICH find\_s hier unten WUNderschön (aber schon)-]”/‘so I find it very beautiful down here but already’ (L.01), “ich find das ABSolut-”/‘I find it absolutely’ (L.02)<sup>10</sup> and “is HERRlich oder,”/‘it is lovely isn’t it’ (L.05), the museum administrator invites the speakers to look at the view “<<creaky> äh::> SCHAUen sie mal die !AUS!sicht;”/‘eh look at the view’ (L.09). At “SCHAUen”/‘look’, she walks from the middle of the room towards the window and, before she stops in front of the window, she presents the view to the participants “SO SO etwas hat man NICHT überall ja?”/‘you don’t have something like like this everywhere yeah’ (L.12), reformulating the referent, “die !AUS!sicht”, from a

(10) Spielmuseum 01 Saal 03:14-03:35 “the weather”:

(C: Carola, T: Torsten, S: Spielmuseum administrator)

\* for gaze by S

+ for gaze by C

% for gaze by T

\$ gesture done by S

& gesture done by C

f gesture done by T

```
01 C  also ICH find_s hier unten WUNdersch[ön (a]ber schon)-]
      so I find it very beautiful down here but already
02 T                                     [ich] find das ABSolut-
      I find it absolutely
03 S                                     [JA?]
      yes
04 (0.2)
05 C  is HERRlich ode[r,]
      it is lovely isn't it
06 S                                     [u[n]d ich MEIne-]
      and I mean
07 T                                     [J[A;          ]
      yes
08 C                                     [ ((lacht)) ] [ ((lacht)) ]
      ((laughter))
09 S                                     =[[<<creaky>äh]::]> SCHAUen sie
      mal die !AUS!sicht;=
                                     eh look at the view
10 S  =ich MEIne:==
      I mean
```

<sup>8</sup> The reference to the “Tafel” / ‘plate’ (L.30) in the subsequent turn relates to the fact that the preserving glass that the speakers are referring to has a label in front, on which Caroline can write. As she subsequently mentions in the recording (not included in the transcript): “ich find das eigentlich ziemlich GEIL dass man da was drauf schreiben kann;”/ ‘I find it actually pretty cool that you can write something on it’.

<sup>9</sup> These appear in the transcript with the initials “OHPU” for Open Hand Palm Up and “OHPV” for Open Hand Palm Vertical respectively (Kendon, 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Although Torsten’s turn is left unfinished, it projects a positive and affiliative agreeing assessment with his interlocutor which is confirmed at line 07 “JA;”/‘Yes’ after Carola’s tag question “is HERRlich oder,”/‘it is lovely isn’t it’ (L.05).

```

11 C   =ja [JA KLAR;]
       yes yes clearly
12 S   =[$SO SO e]twas hat man NICHT überall ja?#
       you don't have something like like this everywhere yeah
       s   SOHPU -->
    fig  #fig12
  
```

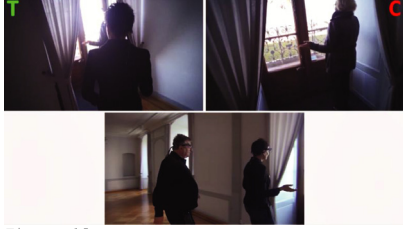


Figure 12

```

13 C   +%!NO:N!-!$
       no
       c   +gz outside window-->
       t   %gz outside window-->
       s   -->$
14     (0.2)
15 C   c'est BON;
       it's nice
16     (0.3)
17 S   [AH?]
18 C   [HE h]e;
19 C   ha HA;
20     (0.3)
21 T   ((lacht)) [ ((lacht)) ]
       ((laughter))
22 S   [das s doch TOLL,]
       that is great
       t   -->$
23     (0.3)
24 C   [HERRlich;]
       lovely
25 T   [((lacht))] <<lachend> ja DA[S is->]
       ((laughter)) yes this is
26 C   [aber] s2 wir müß+#sen &so_n& $WETter
       be&ste$llen==
       but we have to order a weather like
       this
       c   &OHPV &,,,,,,,
       ,, &
       c   -->+gz to admin-->
       s   $gz to C
       -----$
    fig  #fig13
  
```

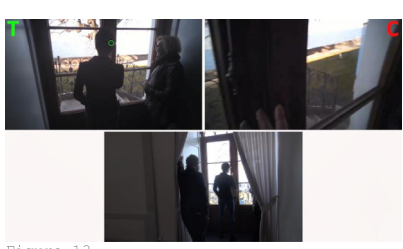


Figure 13

```

27 C   =[GEHT das?]
       is that okay
28 S   [JA gut,]=+
       yes fine
       c   -->+
29 C   =[oKA]Y.
       okay
30 S   [ (ep) ]
31 S   [oKAY]=
       okay
32 C   [((lacht))] [((lacht))]
       ((laughter))
33 S   =[das das (.) das] [NEHM ich auf die Liste JA?]
       I will put it on the list yeah
34 C   [ <<lachend> oKAY.>((lacht))]
       ((lacht))
       okay ((laughter))
  
```

feminine form to a neutral one, “SO etwas”. Her turn is formulated with a turn-initial “SO”+ “etwas” and is accompanied by an OHPU gesture (Kendon, 2004) at “SO” that is held until one of the addressees affiliates in the next turn “NON-”/’no’ (l.13) (Fig. 12). “SO”+“etwas”+OHPU gesture is used here to give a concrete perceivable token of the type of “view” that the speaker mentions in her prior turn. She is presenting a concrete instance that the addressees can perceive in real time. That is, the speaker is using this practice to concretise a referent that was verbalised previously in the talk by ‘showing’ it. The addressees, who started

following her to the window when the administrator walked over to show them the view, accept the invitation and both gaze out of the window. In this way, they perceive and concretise the administrator's indication of "SO"+ "etwas"+ OHPU gesture.

The second instance of a "so"+NP comes a few lines later as a remark on the weather. Carola and Torsten have followed the museum administrator to the window and have stated their agreement with regard to 'the beauty of the view' in their previous turns when Carola makes a humorous remark "aber s? wir mÜssen so\_n WETter bestellen-"/'but we have to order a weather like this' (L26). Her turn is formulated with "so ein"+ nominal referent and is accompanied by an OHPV gesture (Kendon, 2004) outside the window at "so ein"/'like this' (Fig. 13). Although her gesture is performed very quickly and is not held as long as that of the museum administrator's, it is performed synchronously with "so ein". The speaker is showing a perceivable and concrete token of the type of weather that is meant by "so\_n WETter"/'weather like this' that has the same quality as the weather they are visually perceiving at that specific instance. According to Kendon (2004: 208), OHPV gestures are used by participants to direct the addressees' attention to something in the surroundings that relates to the topic under discussion. The pointed-at object is not the focus of the discourse but is somehow linked to it and therefore should be regarded in a certain way. The interlocutors here are already gazing outside the window in response to the administrator's presentation of the view at line 12. Hence, they are already gazing at the view that is the focus of the discourse. The weather then is presented as an example that relates to that topic and should be inspected with that in mind. As the turn is addressed to the administrator who introduced the view as a topic, just before "so\_n WETter", Carola shifts her gaze to her. At "WETter", the administrator also shifts her gaze to Carola, therefore her gesture is perceivable to the administrator as the retraction phase of Carola's OHPV gesture extends to the word "bestellen".

To sum up, what we can conclude from our observations on these two instances is that "so"+NP+pointing is a resource that interlocutors use in order to index a real instance that concretises a reference that was previously made in talk. By indicating the view outside the window with her open palms, the administrator disambiguates and concretises the "SO etwas" in line 12. Without indicating the quality of "SO etwas", her turn would be unintelligible. And since she cannot perform or represent iconically what "SO etwas" stands for, she points at a token of it that exemplifies similar features to the referent being evoked. Similarly, Carola concretises the referent "so\_n WETter" by presenting with her OHPV a concrete perceivable instance, a definite token of the type of weather that she makes reference to in her turn. Hence, instead of an iconic gesture, or performance, that depicts the quality, or manner, of what "so" refers to (Stukenbrock, 2010, 2014a), reference to the quality of "so" is achieved by pointing at a concrete perceivable token that exemplifies the type that is being referred to.

## 6. Discussion

The paper has outlined a systematic use of pointing as a method for representing physically absent entities by pointing at objects in the visually accessible space. The practice investigated is the use of the German particle "so" in conjunction with a noun phrase and accompanied by a pointing gesture. The analysis has revealed that, in this particular practice, the particle features as a type-indicative token. Speakers direct their addressees' attention to an object in the physical surroundings that is used as a token that represents a type. While the addressees' visual attention is directed to an object in the field of perception, speakers are not making reference to the pointed-at object but to an object that is being remembered or imagined that bears similar features to the one being pointed at. Hence, the absent entity is visualised or "seen" through an actual object that both speaker and addressee have visual access to.

What is more, the practice seems to underwrite the preference for identifiability and minimality for reference constructions as suggested by Sacks and Schegloff (1979). The practice of pointing at an object in the surroundings that is a concrete perceivable token of the type the speakers are in search of is a resource that interlocutors have at hand for achieving intersubjective understanding in a succinct manner. Instead of explaining and describing with words what is meant by the referent, "Bügelglas"/'clip-on glass' for instance in excerpt (9), the speaker merely points at one. The achievement of intersubjectivity through embodied means then adds to the progressivity of the talk as it minimizes the resources required to explain the referent (Heritage, 2007; Schegloff, 1992, 2007; Sidnell and Enfield, 2016).

With respect to the literature on "so", the practice "so"+NP+PG seems to support Streeck's (2002) claim that "so" functions as a flag that alerts the addressee to direct his/her attention to some extralinguistic meaning in the utterance and that through their gaze orientation interlocutors display where this additional meaning is to be found. Addressees' visual perception is an obligatory requirement for the intelligibility of these utterances in all of the excerpts we have seen. The practice "so"+NP is combined with a pointing gesture to direct the addressee's attention to an object as a concrete perceivable token of the "type" the speaker makes reference to. While the pointing gesture directs the addressee's visual attention to a domain of scrutiny, the "so" foregrounds the qualitative aspect of the token being pointed at. This observation seems to support Harweg's (1990) and Balantani and Lázaro's (2021) description of "so" with a pointing gesture in the service of modal deixis rather than local deixis as supported by Fricke (2007).

As was also discussed in Section 3, a modal deictic "so" carries the focus accent, is accompanied by a gesture and is unintelligible without the addressee's gaze (Stukenbrock, 2010, 2014a). Non-deictic "so", on the other hand, is not stressed and does not require the addressee's visual attention (Ningelgen and Auer, 2017). In the examples in my collection not all of the "so" instances are stressed. One possible explanation for this could be that the lexical items take the focus accent, i.e. "ZÜG" (ex.6), "Angelspiel" (ex.7) and "WETter" (ex.10), because they are structurally new information in the discourse (Halliday, 1967). According to Halliday's (1967) information structure, if a nominal is introduced without prior anaphoric reference, this item takes the focus accent. So, while the "so" in these instances do not fit into the paradigm of modal deictic expressions as defined by Stukenbrock (2010, 2014a), as they lack the focus accent component, they are, nevertheless, coupled with a deictic gesture, a

pointing gesture, which requires the addressee's gaze. What is more, the token is used to highlight the qualitative aspect of the entity pointed at by the gesture. It seems therefore that modal deixicity lies nevertheless at the core of this practice.

Additionally, the type-indicativity of the object being pointed at can only be understood correctly in relation to the utterance in which it is embedded in. That is, the construction “so”+NP+PG is “anchored in some social context” (Fillmore, 1997: 59). The understanding of “so<sub>n</sub> WETter”, for instance, is dependent on the place and time in which the communicative act is performed, it depends on the “here and now” of the speaker and the addressee. In other words, one needs to know how the weather was like in the particular moment the utterance was produced in order to make sense of it. Similarly, in order to understand the type of “ANGelspiel” the speaker is making reference to, one has to be present and visually perceive that specific “ANGelspiel” that is being pointed at. The analysis has also revealed that the class, that this token is presented as a member or type of, is something the participants negotiate in interaction. We have seen for instance, in excerpt (8) and (9) the form being reformulated from singular “SO eins” and “SO<sub>was</sub>” to plural “DIE”, reinforcing the idea of class reference.

The last point I want to make is with respect to Knöbl's (2014) observation that the indefinite article with “so” conveys properties that help recipients categorise the reference object. These properties, he maintains, are known to the recipients and are tied up to the preceding or following context. While in the examples he provides, the properties are tied to the context of the talk, in the ones analysed here, the properties that help interlocutors categorise a referent are tied to the entity that is being pointed at. The addressee identifies certain features in the object that assist him/her in categorising the referent into a particular “type”. Accordingly, the pointed-at object is a definite token, a particular object that the speaker directs the addressee's attention to, in order for the addressee to identify a definite type associated with that token. Hence, unlike Hole and Klumpp (2000: 243) that consider “son” a distinct article that characterizes the nominal it accompanies by “making indefinite reference to a token of a definite type”, in my analysis I have shown that, when accompanied by a pointing gesture at an object, it functions as a definite token of a definite type. The speaker points at a specific entity in the surroundings (a definite token) in order to make reference to a definite type (one that features similar characteristics to the token being pointed at).

On the whole, the practice described in this paper illustrates that interlocutors make use of the resources they have at hand for achieving intersubjectivity. “so”+NP+PG is used to demonstrate a concrete perceivable instance as a token that represents the type of referent the speakers are invoking in their talk. By using the resources of their visible surroundings as semiotic references, interlocutors are in a position to refer to something in the imagination.

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## Declaration of competing interest

The author declares no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

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## Appendix

### Appendix A

GAT 2 transcription conventions (GAT2, Selting et al., 2009; for the English translation see Couper-Kuhlen and Barth-Weingarten, 2011).

**Sequential structure**

[ ]	Overlap and simultaneous talk
=	Fast, immediate continuation with a new turn or segment (latching)

**In- and outbreaths**

° h / h°	In-/outbreaths of appr. 0.2--0.5 s duration
° hh / hh°	In-/outbreaths of appr. 0.5--0.8 s duration
° hhh / hhh°	In-/outbreaths of appr. 0.8--1.0 s duration

**Pauses**

(.)	Micro pause, estimated, up to 0.2 s duration appr.
(0.5)/(2.0)	Measured pause of appr. 0.5 / 2.0 sec. duration (to tenth of a second)

**Other segmental conventions**

and_uh	Cliticizations within units
uh, uhm, etc.	Hesitation markers, so-called “filled pauses”
:	Lengthening, by about 0.2-0.5 sec.
::	Lengthening, by about 0.5-0.8 sec.
:::	Lengthening, by about 0.8-1.0 sec.
?	Cut-off by glottal closure

**Laughter and crying**

haha hehe hihi	Syllabic laughter
((laughs)) ((cries))	Description of laughter and crying
<<laughing> >	Laughter particles accompanying speech with indication of scope
<<:-> so>	Smile voice

**Continuers**

hm, yes, no, yeah	Monosyllabic tokens
hm_hm, ye_es, no_o	Bi-syllabic tokens
?hm?hm	With glottal closure, often negating

**Accentuation**

SYLlable	Focus accent
sYlLlable	Secondary accent
!SYL!lable	Extra strong accent

**Final pitch movements of intonation phrases**

?	Rising to high
,	Rising to mid
--	Level
;	Falling to mid
.	Falling to low
<<surprised> >	Interpretive comment with indication of scope
<<f> >	Forte, loud
<<ff> >	Fortissimo, very loud
<<p> >	Piano, soft
<<pp> >	Pianissimo, very soft
<<all> >	Allegro, fast
<<len> >	Lento, slow
<<cresc> >	Crescendo, increasingly louder
<<dim> >	Diminuendo, increasingly softer
<<acc> >	Accelerando, increasingly faster

**Other conventions**

(xxx), (xxx xxx)	One or two unintelligible syllables
(may i)	Assumed wording
((. . .))	Omission in transcript



## Appendix B

Embodied actions are transcribed according to the following conventions developed by Lorenza Mondada (see Mondada, 2018 for a conceptual discussion).

<https://www.lorenzamondada.net/multimodal-transcription>

**	Descriptions of embodied actions are delimited between
++	two identical symbols (one symbol per participant and per type of action)
Δ Δ	that are synchronized with correspondent stretches of talk or time indications.
*-->	The action described continues across subsequent lines
---->*	until the same symbol is reached.
>>	The action described begins before the excerpt's beginning.
--->>	The action described continues after the excerpt's end.
.....	Action's preparation.
----	Action's apex is reached and maintained.
.....	Action's retraction.
ric	Participant doing the embodied action is identified in small caps in the margin.
fig	The exact moment at which a screen shot has been taken
#	is indicated with a sign (#) showing its position within the turn/a time measure.

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