LECTURES ON CONVERSATION

VOLUMES I & II

Harvey Sacks

Edited
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LECTURES ON CONVERSATION

VOLUME I

LECTURES ON CONVERSATION

VOLUME II

Harvey Sacks, c.1967

Harvey Sacks, c. 1968

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Introduction

The publication of these lectures makes publicly available virtually all of the
lectures by Harvey Sacks on conversation and related topics in social science.
Most of the lectures in this larger corpus were originally delivered to classes at
the University of California – first to sociology classes at the UCLA campus,
and then (beginning in Fall 1968) to classes in the School of Social Science at
the Irvine campus of the University.

Although Sacks produced copious analytic notes, many of which served as
materials for his lectures, what is presented here are the lectures themselves,
transcribed from tape recordings. Almost all of Sacks' lectures were initially
transcribed by Gail Jefferson, although most of the material for Fall
1964–Spring 1965, in that it antedates either her contact with Sacks and this
work, or her undertaking to transcribe the lectures, was intially transcribed by
others. With one exception (Sacks, 1987 [1973]), it is also Jefferson who has
edited those lectures which have previously been published, as well as the
lectures published here.[1] As noted in her introductory notes to the several

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[1] Of the lectures published here, the set for 1964–5 were published in a special
issue of the journal *Human Studies*, 12, 3–4 (1989), and of those, the following had
been previously published elsewhere, edited by Gail Jefferson:

Fall 1964–5, lecture 5 has been published under the title 'You want to find out
if anybody really does care' in Button and Lee (1987: 217–25).

Winter 1964–5, lecture 14 has been published under the title 'The inference
making machine: notes on observability' in van Dijk (1985: 13–22).

Other than the 1964–5 lectures, the following lectures have been previously
published, also edited by Jefferson:

Spring 1966, lecture 18 (and related material in Fall 1965, lecture 7), under the
title 'Hotrodder: a revolutionary category,' in Psathas (1979).

Spring 1966, lecture 13, under the title 'Button-button who's got the button,' in
Zimmerman and West (1980: 318–27).

Spring 1966, lecture 24 (with excerpts from Fall 1967, lecture 14; Winter 1970,
lecture 2; and Spring 1970, lecture 3), under the title 'On members' measurement
systems,' (Sacks, 1988/89).

'lectures' and in Appendix II in her editor's notes to the previous publication
of the 1964–5 lectures in the journal *Human Studies*, those lecture-texts have
been pieced together from several sets of lectures which Sacks gave during the
1964–5 academic year, to make a more coherent and readable document.
These early 'sets' of lectures are full of gaps, and it is not always clear just
when some lecture was given. Accordingly, the reader should bear in mind
that this presentation of Sacks' early lectures cannot be used to track the
development of themes over time, to trace what topics or themes appear to
have been related in Sacks' thinking, etc.

Otherwise, it needs to be said at the outset with respect to the present
edition that the editorial undertaking has been monumental and its execution
heroic. This the reader can only partially see, for what has not been included
is, for that reason, not apparent, nor is the work of sorting and collating what
is made available in these volumes. This work has, as a matter of course,
involved divergences of several kinds from the texts of these lectures which
have circulated in various forms of reproduction over the years. These are
largely stylistic in nature, and are clearly designed to render the text more
accessible, more readable, and more consistent in stance, point of view, diction,
etc.[2] On occasion, however, these textual adjustments could be misread as
taking a stand on an analytic matter which Sacks otherwise addresses, could be
given a 'political' reading, or could appear to have a 'political' upshot, and it
would be well for the reader to be alerted to such possibilities.

By 'taking a stand on an analytic matter which Sacks otherwise addresses'
I mean to call attention to such adjustments in diction as one in which Sacks
follows an excerpt from a group therapy session by referring to one of the
speakers as "this fellow Dan" (in the originally circulated transcript of the
lecture), a reference which is in the present edition rendered as 'the therapist.'
Sacks takes up the issue of the description of persons, and category-ascriptions
such as 'therapist/patient,' on several different occasions in these lectures and
in several papers. Because of the options available for formulating persons,
particular choices of descriptors or identification terms served, in Sacks' view,
to pose problems for analysis, and could not properly be invoked or employed
in an unexamined way. Accordingly, no particular claims should be under-

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Winter 1970, lectures 1 and 2, under the title 'Some considerations of a story told
in ordinary conversations,' (Sacks, 1986).

Spring 1970, lecture 1 (with excerpts from Winter 1970, lecture 2; Spring 1970,
lecture 4; and Spring 1971, lecture 1), under the title 'On doing being ordinary,' in
Atkinson and Heritage (1984).

Fall 1971, lectures 9–12, under the title 'Some technical considerations of a dirty
joke,' in Schenkein (1978).

In addition, extracts from a number of lectures have been assembled by Jefferson
as 'Notes on methodology,' in Atkinson and Heritage (1984: 21–7).

[2] Cf. the editor's notes by Gail Jefferson (Jefferson, 1989), and, in the present
edition, footnotes at Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 2, p. 18; Spring 1966, lecture
04.a, p. 281; Winter 1969, lecture 7, p. 120; as well as Appendix A to lectures for
Fall 1964–Spring 1965, and Appendix B to lectures for Spring 1966.

stood as implied by occasional references to participants by such category terms in the current text (cf. the editor's Appendix A, Spring 1966).

By 'political' I mean, in this context, a relative positioning by Sacks of himself, his undertaking, his colleagues, his students, other contemporary intellectual undertakings, the established contours of the disciplines (sociology, linguistics, anthropology, etc.) and their groupings (e.g., the social sciences), the physically present class to which he was ostensibly addressing himself [3] and the like. Deployment of the pronouns 'we,' 'you,' 'they' and the like can serve to express varying sorts of solidarity and differentiation, and different ways of 'partitioning the population' (as he used to put it).[4] This was a matter to which Sacks was sensitive, having written a paper in graduate school only a few years earlier on Durkheim's use of 'we' in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, an echo of which appears in lecture 33 of the Spring 1966 lectures. Where the text suggests such alignments, readers should exercise caution.

It must also be recalled that the omission of some lecture sets in the present edition, and the transposition of some lectures from one set to another, requires that caution be used in basing an analysis of the appearance and development of themes, ideas and discussions of data fragments on this edition alone. The full texts of prior versions of all the lectures will be available through the Sacks Archive at the Department of Special Collections of the UCLA Library.

These cautions aside, it should be said that one cannot really retrieve Sacks' 'voice' from the text as presented here. In the interest of readability and of the accessibility of the content, what was sometimes a real challenge to discursive parsing – even to his closest friends and colleagues – has been smoothed out. Gone are the often convoluted phrasing, the syntax that might or might not come together at the end, the often apparently pointillistic movement from observation to observation – sometimes dovetailing at the end into a coherent argument or picture, sometimes not. The very long silences, of course, were lost in the transcribing process.

But Sacks himself treated his habits and manners, his attitudes and convictions, as 'private' (as he puts it in response to a question as to whether he is 'convinced' that single events are studyable after the general introductory lecture, Fall 1967, "That's such a private question"), and not really relevant

[3] Cf. the lecture of April 2 in the Spring 1971 lectures, on Sacks' notion that he was really talking to colleagues, friends and 'students' wherever they might be who were interested in his current work and not necessarily to the class actually in the room.

[4] For example, in lecture 6 of the 1964–5 lectures an alignment may seem to be implied in which Sacks identifies himself with the physically present students in criticism of "all the sociology *we* read," whereas the text of the lecture as previously circulated had read "all the sociology *you* read . . ." (emphases supplied).

See Appendix A to the Fall 1964–Spring 1965 lectures for the editor's account of Sacks' use of personal pronouns such as 'you,' 'I' and 'we' in the lectures, and of her editorial practices for changing some of these references in preparing this edition.

to what he felt merited the attention of others in what he had to say. It is that which these volumes present. As quickly becomes apparent from the texts of the lectures, we have yet to take the full measure of the man.

These series of lectures present a most remarkable, inventive and productive account of a strikingly new vision of how to study human sociality. With but a few exceptions, the students who sat in the rooms in which the lectures were delivered can hardly have known what they were hearing. The lectures were addressed to non-present students, to those who might come to know what to make of them. That audience continues to grow.

Under what circumstances were these lectures delivered and recorded? What is their intellectual and scientific context? What is most notable in them? These matters cannot be dealt with comprehensively here, but a brief treatment, in a mixed genre which might be termed an 'introduction/ memoir,' can help provide an overview and some setting for what is increasingly recognized as a startlingly original and important address to the social organization of mind, culture and interaction.

I

Sacks received his AB degree in 1955 after three years at Columbia College. In later years, Sacks would reminisce with partly feigned and partly genuine awe about the faculty at Columbia – Jacques Barzun, Meyer Schapiro, Lionel Trilling, various students and former students of Franz Neumann such as Julian Franklin and Peter Gay (and Neumann himself, who, however, may well have not been teaching undergraduates when Sacks was there), although it was never entirely clear with which of these 'eminences' Sacks had himself studied.[5]

Although he did not officially 'major' in sociology, Sacks' education was influenced in an important way by C. Wright Mills. The influence was not channeled primarily through course work; most important to Sacks was that Mills secured for him a faculty-authorized access to the stacks of Butler Library and turned him loose on his own. But Sacks would later say that from Mills he had learned 'audacity.'

In spite of the predominantly socio-cultural cast of the faculty who figured most centrally in Sacks' later reminiscences, the two closest college friends with whom Sacks kept in touch later on were both biologists.

Upon graduation from Columbia, Sacks was awarded a scholarship at Yale Law School where he earned his LLB in 1959. While at Yale, he participated in the group around Harold Lasswell, and became more interested in understanding how the law as an institution worked, how it *could* work, than

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[5] I recall an account of how students would celebrate if they achieved grades of 'A' from Trilling or Schapiro, but it was unclear, at least to me, whether Sacks himself had been one of those students.

in making it work as an attorney himself.[6] He went looking for intellectual resources with which to pursue this interest and turned first to Cambridge, and to the work of Talcott Parsons in particular (although formally he was enrolled as a graduate student in Political Science at MIT, and was employed as a research assistant in the Department of Economics and Social Sciences there). But what he found in Cambridge that was most consequential for the subsequent development of his thinking was not Parsons (and not Chomsky, some of whose lectures at MIT he attended), but rather Harold Garfinkel.

Garfinkel was spending a sabbatical leave from UCLA at Harvard, where he had himself earned his Ph D a number of years earlier. Sacks and Garfinkel met at Parsons' seminar in Cambridge, and were immediately attracted by each other's seriousness. Their intellectual relationship was sustained until the early 1970s. However, in 1959–60, when it became clear to Sacks that the solutions to the problems he had set himself were not to be found in Cambridge, he followed his law school teacher Lasswell's advice, and decided to pursue graduate work in sociology at Berkeley.

Berkeley appealed on several grounds. Laswell had suggested that Sacks pursue his interests through the continuing study of labor law and industrial relations. An attractive locale was furnished by the Institute of Industrial

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[6] Sacks once recounted a story which provides some insight into the appeal which Garfinkel's work must have had for him when he later encountered it.

He was engaged in a discussion with several other law school students arguing through some problem in case law which they had been set – a problem in torts, if I remember correctly. The issue was whether or not a person on the ground was entitled to recover damages incurred from the overflight of his property by an airplane. At one point, in a kind of mimicry of the 'how many hairs make a bald man' paradox, the students coped with the argument that no damages could be collected if the plane was being piloted in a proper and accepted manner by seeing how far they could press the definition of what was 'proper.' What if it were flying at 2,000 feet? At 1,000 feet? At 250 feet? At 5 feet? Sacks reported that when the last of these proposals was offered, it was dismissed as 'unreasonable,' as frivolous, as violating the canons of 'common sense.' But, he pointed out, that could as well have been said about the penultimate one, but wasn't. What struck him, then, and puzzled him, was that the 'legal reasoning' which was the much heralded instrument in whose use they (students of the law) were being trained rested on, and was constrained by, an infrastructure of so-called 'common sense' which was entirely tacit and beyond the reach of argument, while controlling it. And, in that legal reasoning was something on which the entire legal structure rested (and not just particular areas, such as torts, contracts, crimes, etc.), how the law as an institution actually worked, what made it work the way it did, what restrained its reasoning from pressing the law in other directions, was shrouded in mystery. Undoubtedly, this was only one of the puzzles about how the law could work which engaged Sacks' interest, but it is one for the solution of which Garfinkel's work on methods of commonsense reasoning and practical theorizing, then in progress, would have been an attractive resource.

The issue prompted by this law school incident gets articulated explicitly for its bearing on working with recorded conversational materials at the beginning of lecture 1 for Fall 1971; cf. volume 2 of the present edition.

Relations at Berkeley, and in particular by Philip Selznick whose interest in organizations and bureaucracy was complemented by a developing interest in legal institutions. (Indeed, several years later Selznick was to establish the Center for the Study of Law and Society at Berkeley, and Sacks was to be among its first graduate fellows.) But Berkeley was attractive on other counts as well. Aside from its having developed one of the strongest sociology departments in the country, Sacks was attracted by the presence of Herbert Blumer, whose SSRC monographic critique (1939) of Thomas and Znaniecki's *Polish Peasant in Europe and America* Sacks had found penetrating. (Sacks lost interest in Blumer soon after arriving in Berkeley, and did not study with him at all.)

It is worth pausing a moment to recall where some of the relevant American social sciences stood during these formative years of the late 1950s and early 1960s, at least as they appeared to graduate students, to *some* graduate students, to *the* graduate students who figure in this account.

There had not yet been the rise to professional visibility of a radical sociology. C. Wright Mills' *Sociological Imagination* was still a daring manifesto, his *Power Elite* still a model inquiry. Theory was predominantly (as it was then called) 'structural-functionalist' and especially Parsonian. 'Empirical' sociology was still predominantly 'Columbia-oriented' rather than 'Chicago-oriented;' data analysis was multivariate, not regression-based. Blau and Duncan's *The American Occupational Structure* was still half a decade to a decade away. And social psychology was in large measure a choice between 'small groups' of the Bales variety or of the Michigan group dynamics variety, a substantial dollop of 'public opinion' or 'attitudes' research, with a minority voice somehow identified – often wrongly – with symbolic interactionism: Blumer at Berkeley being the most visible – or vocal – representative, Goffman (*The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, published in the United States in 1959) just beginning to be recognized, Becker still largely unknown.

In anthropology, the Gumperz/Hymes special issue of the *American Anthropologist* was not to appear until 1964, ethnoscience and componential analysis were just coming into their own, the ethnography of communication was just beginning to recruit its hoped-for army to canvas the world.

In linguistics, Chomsky's *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* was not published until 1964, outsiders were just registering the import and impact of his review of Skinner's *Verbal Behavior* and his *Syntactic Structures* (1957). Linguistics was just beginning to establish a track record for its significance to other disciplines.

Throughout his stay in Berkeley, Sacks remained in touch with Harold Garfinkel (now returned to his home base at UCLA) whose program of ethnomethodological studies was being developed in a series of writings which were privately circulated for the most part in mimeographed form. (It should be recalled that it was not until 1959 that Garfinkel's 'Aspects of the problem of commonsense knowledge of social structure' was published – and not in a broadly accessible outlet at that; not until 1960 for 'The rational properties of scientific and commonsense activities,' also not in a source generally read by

sociologists; not until 1964 that 'Studies of the routine grounds of everyday activities' appeared in *Social Problems*; and not until 1967 that *Studies in Ethnomethodology* was published.) It was largely through Sacks that these manuscripts came to be circulated in Berkeley, largely among graduate students in sociology. Of course, Sacks did not only circulate Garfinkel's manuscripts; in discussions among the students he added the special directions of his own thinking, in some respects converging with Garfinkel's, in other respects quite distinctive.

At the time, Garfinkel was co-principal investigator with Edward Rose of the University of Colorado on a research grant which supported a series of conferences in Los Angeles in which Sacks took part. So Sacks' engagement with Garfinkel's manuscripts in northern California was complemented by more direct, personal engagement in the south. At the same time, other developments were in progress in both north and south; in the north, for example, Selznick had brought into his new Center for the Study of Law and Society a number of graduate students in the social sciences, and especially sociology. During the 1962–3 academic year, this group included Sacks, David Sudnow and the present writer, whose activities separately and together were to contribute to future developments, but are not directly in point here.

In 1963, Garfinkel arranged for Sacks to move to Los Angeles. He was to have an appointment as Acting Assistant Professor of Sociology at UCLA, with the first year off. During that year, 1963–4, Garfinkel and Sacks[7] were to serve as Fellows at the Center for the Scientific Study of Suicide in Los Angeles, under the sponsorship of its director, Edwin Schneidemann. As it happens, my own work prompted a move from Berkeley to Los Angeles during the summer of 1963, and Sacks and I continued both a work and a personal relationship during that year. I can therefore describe, at least in brief compass, his primary intellectual preoccupations during the year. A great many of them had his involvement with the Suicide Prevention Center as a point of departure, thereafter taking the often surprising directions which his distinctive mind imparted to them. In diverse ways, these interests show up in his first ventures in teaching, the 1964–5 lectures which provided the point of departure for the further development of the work, presented in the subsequent lecture series published here.

One line of these concerns focussed on an examination of psychiatric, and especially psychodynamic, theorizing, which furnished one primary theoretical handle on the phenomenon of suicide at the SPC, and which, more particularly, was key to the so-called 'psychological autopsies' which were conducted following suicides and which were of very great interest to both Sacks and Garfinkel. Thinking about psychodynamic theorizing led Sacks (as it had led me; cf. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 1963) to a concern with dialogue, and in particular with Platonic dialogue as a form of discourse designed to control conduct. That, in turn, led him to a more general interest

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[7] And Erving Goffman, visiting on an occasional basis from Berkeley.

in Greek philosophy, and particularly in Greek logic (on which he was reading, among other sources, Kneale and Kneale's *The Development of Logic*, 1962).

From the Freudian theorizing, from a prior interest in 'children's cultures' set off by the work of the Opies (1959), and from a persistent attention to the problems posed by the apparent facts and achievements of socialization, there developed an interest in the behavior of children. This interest Sacks pursued largely through examination of source books on children's games (an interest prompted as well by the work of O. K. Moore on games as 'autotelic folk models;' cf. Anderson and Moore, 1960), of the studies and protocols of Barker and Wright (1951, 1954), in observational studies Sacks acquired from Roger Brown, and other sources.

And Sacks pursued a number of other scholarly interests, in biblical studies and interpretation, in translation, in archaeology, etc. In a very different vein, Sacks came across stenographic transcripts, and then the tapes, of the telephone calls to the Suicide Prevention Center of, or about, suicidal persons. All of these themes may be found in the 1964–5 lectures, but it was the last of them which provided the proximate source for the focussed attention on talk itself – perhaps the most critical step toward the development of conversation analysis.

Throughout the 1963–4 academic year, Sacks and I continued the discussions and explorations entered into in Berkeley during the preceding year and a half. This is not the place for a substantial account of those activities (on-site explorations of the possibilities of field observation at the Los Angeles International Airport, in the reference room of the UCLA library, at neighborhood 'Okie' bars in Venice, and elsewhere; long discussions on the UCLA campus where I was a visiting scholar, at the beach in Venice where he lived, or at the apartment at the fringe of Beverly Hills where my wife and I lived). But it may be of interest to describe what seemed to me at the time something quite new, and seems to me now in retrospect the first appearance of what would eventually become, after a number of major transformations, what is now called 'conversation analysis.'

It was during a long talking walk in the late winter of 1964 that Sacks mentioned to me a 'wild' possibility that had occurred to him. He had previously told me about a recurrent and much discussed practical problem faced by those who answered phone calls to the Suicide Prevention Center by suicidal persons or about them – the problem of getting the callers to give their names. Now he told me about one call he had seen/heard which began something like this:

> *A*: This is Mr Smith, may I help you.
> *B*: I can't hear you.
> *A*: This is Mr <u>Smith</u>.
> *B*: Sm<u>i</u>th.

After which Mr Smith goes on, without getting the caller's name. And later,

when Mr Smith asks for the caller's name, the caller resists giving it. On the one hand, Sacks noted, it appears that if the name is not forthcoming at the start it may prove problematic to get. On the other hand, overt requests for it may be resisted. Then he remarked: Is it possible that the caller's declared problem in hearing is a methodical way of avoiding giving one's name in response to the other's having done so? Could talk be organized at that level of detail? And in so designed a manner?

A month or two later, I arrived home at our apartment in the late afternoon, to find Sacks waiting for me there. A transient difficulty with Garfinkel had led him to realize that, if not on the present occasion then at some future time, he might have to fend for himself in the academic marketplace and had better have some written work to show. So he had drafted the sketches of two papers. I left him talking to my wife in the living room and retreated to my study and read the sketches. One of them was about a methodical way of avoiding giving one's name. As the reader who turns to the 1964–5 lectures will soon discover, this is where Sacks' lectures began (not only in the composite version assembled for this publication, but in the original as well).

Why might this episode, and these observations, be treated as the beginning of what would come to be called 'conversation analysis'?[8] Because

[8] In the 'General Introduction' lecture for Fall 1967, (p. 621), Sacks introduces the work to be presented by describing "When I started to do research in sociology . . ." It is unclear what Sacks means to refer to: when he went to Cambridge? to Berkeley? sometime during graduate school? in Los Angeles? are these the right terms to locate the reference?

In a way, the 1963 paper 'Sociological description' is not incompatible with the account offered in this Fall 1967 lecture, except for the description (p. 622) of starting "to play around with tape recorded conversations," which surely did not happen until the year at the Suicide Prevention Center. Until then, friends of Sacks will remember occasions of sitting 'with him' in some public place and suddenly realizing that Sacks was no longer in the same interaction, but was overhearing a nearby conversation, and often taking out the omnipresent little multi-ring notebook and jotting down a fragment of the talk and some observations about it. The virtues of "replay[ing] them . . . type[ing] them out somewhat, and study[ing] them extendedly" (Fall 1967, ibid.) were realized against a long experience of such overhearing and notetaking. (One shared experience which may have alerted Sacks to the payoffs of taking materials like the SPC tapes seriously was my experience during 1962–3 in Berkeley at the Law and Society Center of tape recording psychiatric competency and criminal insanity examinations for subsequent analysis.)

But it is worth noting that Sacks did not set out to study conversation or language in particular. His concern was with how ordinary activities get done methodically and reproducibly, and the organization of commonsense theorizing and conduct which was relevant to those enterprises. Clearly, he found talk, or what was being done through talk, of interest before coming upon taped materials – else he would not have been jotting overheard bits in notebooks. But the taped material had clear attractions when it became available as a resource, and the talk invited being dealt with as an activity in its own right. But that was something that turned out from experience, not something that had been aimed at, or 'theoretically projected.'

there is the distinctive and utterly critical recognition here that the talk can be examined as an object in its own right, and not merely as a screen on which are projected other processes, whether Balesian system problems or Schutzian interpretive strategies, or Garfinkelian commonsense methods. The talk itself was the action, and previously unsuspected details were critical resources in what was getting done in and by the talk; and all this in naturally occurring events, in no way manipulated to allow the study of them. And it seemed possible to give quite well-defined, quite precise accounts of how what was getting done was getting done – methodical accounts of action.

   This was just the start of a long train of quite new things that Sacks was to provide. It was only a little over a year later that the eventually published version of 'An initial investigation . . .' (1972a) was completed. It is hard now to appreciate how startlingly new and unprecedented that paper was at the time. If one recalls the publication history of Garfinkel's work (and that Goffman's *Behavior in Public Places* was published in 1963, and *Relations in Public* was not to be published until 1971), a sense of its uniqueness when it was published in 1972 might be somewhat more accessible. Its utter originality in 1964–5 when it was being written, and the originality of the materials in the first of these lectures which were delivered around the same time, may be better grasped by reference to this other work. With the current wisdom of hindsight, of course, our sense of this early work of Sacks' is readily assimilated to the direction we now know such studies took. But the originality was not only startling in 1964 and 1965; it had the additional headiness – and vertigo – of indeterminateness: How might one proceed? What sort of discipline was this or might it be? Once a previous sense of plausibility about the depth and detail of organization in conduct and apperception of the world were set aside, what constraints on inquiry were defensible? To what level of detail was it sensible to press?

   During the summer of 1964, I left Los Angeles for the mid-west, wondering what ever Sacks would do about lecturing to UCLA undergraduates, and wondering as well how our contact could be sustained. The latter problem was solved in part by a variety of resources that allowed me recurrent trips to California during the 1964–5 year (though less so in ensuing years), and in part by a practice which also satisfied my curiosity in the first respect. Sacks would tape record his lectures and send them to me, and (if I remember correctly) to David Sudnow who was spending the year in St. Louis, doing the field work for his dissertation, later to appear as the book *Passing On* (1967). At irregular intervals I would receive in the mail a little orange box with a yellow label, containing a three-inch reel of tape, enough for the 50-minute lectures (more or less) which Sacks was delivering. The lectures were for me, then, a rather special form of monologic telephone call interspersed with our dialogic ones (which were not recorded), and then, after Gail Jefferson started transcribing the lectures, they were a sort of long letter series.[9] It turns out that

   [9] At the time they were being delivered, I encountered the lectures term by term, like long analytical letters from Sacks. I had little overall view of them and of their

they became Sacks' most successful and prolific form of scientific communication.

When he wrote papers, Sacks imposed standards of formality and precision that were extremely hard for him to meet to his own satisfaction. Most of the papers he published under his own name alone were work-ups of lectures.[10] Most of the papers he drafted on his own as papers he was never sufficiently satisfied with to publish. The exceptions, 'An initial investigation . . . ' or 'On some puns, with some intimations' give some idea of what Sacks thought a finished piece of work might look like.

Aside, then, from his collaborative publications, the lectures are the vehicle by which most of his work was made available. Perhaps it was the explicitly and necessarily informal and limited character of the occasion that could allow him to get 'the stuff' out the best he could, with no pretense to finally getting it 'just right.' Those who have seen some of his successive versions of the 'same pieces' will know how great a change could overtake some piece of work under the guise of getting it just right.[11] But the quality of what was delivered in those lectures, and in those which followed, and the

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overall development, of long term changes in the work reflected in them, etc. This was largely because such changes would have come up in, or (without necessarily being explicitly discussed) informed, our conversations with each other in the interim between shipments, or could not be recognized for the changes they represented until later developments. Largely, then, my reading was marked by my being struck, charmed, and often amazed at what Sacks' sleight of hand could materialize out of a bit of data, the twist he could impart – no, discover – in it, the tacit understandings he could, by a flash of insight, show we ('casual' readers or onlookers) had furnished it. Sometimes the 'twist' assumed the proportions of a whole analytic topical area – e.g., storytelling structure. I came to the reading of each new 'package' with a kind of avid curiosity about what sorts of new things – whether unexpected observations about a moment or whole new analytic issues – were tucked into those pages, and the reading proceeded from flash to flash. It was like watching one's athletic friend show what he could do.

Preparation of this publication and this introduction has afforded me the occasion for a larger overview, or series of overviews – of each set of lectures and of the set of sets. In them I am brought to recall or to discover in retrospect larger scale movements and changes, emerging and waning themes. Of course, this is refracted through my own experience and intellectual colleagueship with Sacks. I have tried to strike a balance between that kind of perspectival account and a less personalized overview and setting-into-context.

[10] Cf. for example, the paper on story-telling (1974). The paper on puns (1973) is an exception here, having never been fully worked up as a lecture before being prepared for the Georgetown Round Table, in whose proceedings it was published. 'Everyone has to lie' (1975) was adapted from a lecture, but the materials for the lecture were initially drafted as a paper, under the title 'The diagnosis of depression,' which was never published in its original 'paper' format.

[11] See the initial two lectures of the Spring 1966 term presented in this edition with Sacks' first effort at revision, at pp. 236–46 below, for a sample. In this case, a virtually identical version of the same material was eventually published as 'On the analyzability of stories by children' (Sacks, 1972b).

special vision that underlies it, did not require getting it 'just right' to be apparent.[12]

Although he continued to tape a variety of research and teaching activities, Sacks stopped recording his lectures in 1972 for a number of reasons. Some of his lectures at the Linguistic Institute of 1973 at the University of Michigan were recorded, as were some of the sessions of the joint seminar we taught, but these were not recorded by Sacks, and were not reviewed for transcription by him.

Harvey Sacks was killed in an automobile accident in November 1975 while on his way to the campus of the University of California, Irvine where we were to meet to formulate a program which we were discussing establishing at the Santa Barbara campus of the University. One can hardly imagine what the next years of Sacks' intellectual life would have produced, especially in an academic environment fully supportive of the enterprise which had already developed.

II

The 'first installment' of these lectures – the ones delivered during the 1964–5 academic year – can be furnished with two sorts of intellectual reference points – ones in Sacks' own intellectual development and ones in the intellectual context around him.

In his own thinking, these lectures come after his paper 'Sociological description' (1963), written in 1962–3 in Berkeley[13] and during the same period as 'An initial investigation . . .' (1972a) which was finished in June 1965.[14]

Several features of these early papers which serve as landmarks in Sacks' intellectual terrain, and of the early lectures, display some of the most potent influences on his thinking at that time. There is first of all a wide-ranging responsiveness to Garfinkel's thematics, broadly acknowledged in a footnote to 'Sociological description' (1963: 1), and in recurrent notes in the early writings and lectures. A thorough treatment of the influences here, I daresay the reciprocal influences at work here, remains to be written. At a different level, there is the transparent allusion to the later Wittgenstein embodied in

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[12] Still, readers should bear in mind the in-progress status which this work had for Sacks. While still alive, he expressed a willingness to have the lectures published, if the publication could be done without much editing, not only because he did not want to spend the time, but also to avoid masking the work-in-progress nature and status of the effort. It should be a way of getting 'a lot of stuff' noticed, without suggesting what should in the end be fashioned from it. The lectures were not meant to look finished.

[13] See the discussion below of the Spring 1966 lectures, and of 'possible description' in particular.

[14] Cf. the initial footnote to the version published in Sudnow (1972b).

the invention (ibid.) of the 'commentator machine' as a grand metaphor for (variously) the relationship of social science discourse to the social world which is its object, of commonsense or lay talk about the world to ordinary enactments of it, etc.

Perhaps less expectable in the contemporary academic setting, in which studies of discourse and conversation are often set in contrast to transformational grammar, is the echo of generativist studies in the form of some of this early work, and especially in the form of its problem development. Take as a case in point 'On the analyzability of stories by children' (1972b, revised from the first two lectures for Spring 1966, but first worked up as lectures 1 and 2 for Fall 1965).

The data for that set of lectures and publication, it will be recalled, were taken not from ordinary conversation, but from the response of a young child to a request by an adult for a story. Most relevantly for the present discussion, this had the consequence that there was no ensuing talk by a co-participant which could be examined to reveal an understanding of the 'story' which was 'indigenous' to the interaction, along the lines exploited in later conversation-analytic work. In its place, Sacks relied on his understanding of the text being examined ("The baby cried. The mommy picked it up"), and the understanding which he attributed to his audience – understandings not overtly provided for by the text itself (for example, that 'the mommy' is the mommy of that baby, although the story as told by the child was expressed as '*the* mommy picked it up').

The problem, as Sacks developed it, was to build 'an apparatus' that would provide for such hearings or understandings, and would serve both as a constraint on them and as a research product to which they could lead. This form of problematics, of course, echoes the commitment to build a syntactic apparatus which would provide for the alternative parsings of a claimedly ambiguous sentence such as 'Flying planes can be dangerous' (Chomsky, 1957). The reader is first asked to recognize that alternative 'structural interpretations' can be assigned to this sentence, and then to be concerned with the construction of a syntax that produces such an ambiguity and provides for its disambiguation. To be sure, this form of problem development and statement is invoked by Sacks on behalf of a quite different intellectual and scientific enterprise, but the formal similarities in the problematics seem clear enough.[15] (And connections appear in other guises as well, for example, in the

[15] See the comments on the Fall 1965 lectures for further discussion of the relationship to generative grammar studies.

In this regard as well, John Heritage has called to my attention an exchange involving Sacks and others at the Purdue Symposium on Ethnomethodology, in which he remarks in response to several inquiries (Hill and Crittendon, 1968: 41–2),

One of the things that is obvious from the kind of analysis I have given you is that there can be a set of rules which can reproduce the problems in the data with which you started ... [Query: How do you become satisfied with a solution?] ... I have a set of rules which give me back my data.

extensive paragraph numbering system which is used to organize 'An initial investigation . . .' as well as the 'Introduction' of 1965 printed in this volume), a format hardly familiar to sociologists at all, but in common practice in linguistics at the time, though Sacks may well have come to it initially through his study of the law).

I think it characteristic of Sacks' relationship to work which he respected that it would enter into the warp and woof of his own thinking and would shape the way he did his work. And this is so not only in this formative stage of his work. Later on (in the work published in Schenkein (1978) but delivered as lectures 9–12 in Fall 1971), for example, his argument that the obscenity in a dirty joke is not its point, but is rather a form of 'circulation control' on knowledge which is packed or tucked in elsewhere, not overtly labelled or featured as the point of the joke, brings to bear a form of analysis developed by scholars of classical Greece such as Milman Parry (1971) and Eric Havelock (1963) in work on the role of the Homeric epics in an oral culture and its transformation in the passage from an oral to a literate culture.

Another case in point is furnished by Cressey's work on embezzlement (1953), which served Sacks (in 'An initial investigation . . . ,' 1972a) not to constitute the problem or suggest the shape of a solution, but as a way-station in the substantive analysis. Cressey had proposed as a key to understanding embezzlement that its perpetrators all had 'a nonsharable problem.' In Sacks' effort to come to terms with the assertion by some avowedly suicidal persons that they had 'no one to turn to,' he proposed as a proximate solution that these persons found that what troubled them would, if recounted to the ones they would properly turn to (e.g., spouse), undermine the very relationship that made them 'turnable-to;' that is, precisely, they had a 'nonsharable problem.' But for Sacks this merely served to pose a problem: how to formulate the terms of the 'search for help' that yielded these persons as the candidates to be turned to, and therefore yielded the result that a problem not sharable with them left the searcher with 'no one to turn to.' And that recasting of the problem led to the central contribution of that analytic undertaking – the formulation of 'membership categorization devices' and their features.[16]

Sometimes Sacks would cite such sources. More often, the shape of the problem formation or solution, or the analytic resource, had simply entered into the currency of his thinking, and its source was lost sight of, especially in the context of lectures to undergraduate courses. The lecture format is, in this regard, 'informal.' Although published work which is, taken as a whole, remote from his concerns is often quoted directly and/or cited by name (e.g., Freud, Gluckman, Von Senden), more intimately related work is often not,

[16] In the paper presenting this work (Sacks, 1972a), the analytic ordering given in the text here is reversed. The paper begins with the most formal and general posing of the issues of categorization, and only eventually arrives at the more proximate, situated problem, as a 'derivation,' i.e., the dilemma presented when what qualifies another as the proper person to turn to will be compromised by the very turning to them.

as for example (to cite an early instance in the text which follows) in the discussion of 'common knowledge' in lecture 3 of the 1964–5 lectures (as printed herein), for which Garfinkel clearly was relevant. In the preparation of these lectures for the present publication, that practice has not been addressed; it is a characteristic feature of the form in which Sacks' work was shaped for presentation.

As unexpected as may be the appearance in Sacks' early lectures of echoes of the analytic style of transformational grammar, even more striking is the apparent lack of specific influences from the work of Erving Goffman. This is especially surprising since, during the years at Berkeley, Sacks took Goffman more seriously than he did virtually any other member of the faculty.

At a very general level, of course, Goffman's analytic enterprise had undertaken to establish the study of face-to-face interaction as a domain of inquiry in its own right, and his work was very likely central in recruiting Sacks' attention to face-to-face interaction as a focus for the concern with practical theorizing and commonsense reasoning which animated the eth-nomethodological enterprise. Surely Sacks' work, and work which it inspired, have been important to whatever success and stability this area of inquiry has achieved. And Sacks could treat Goffman's work as setting a relevant domain for students for pedagogical purposes; in the first of the Fall 1967 lectures, Sacks recommends readings in Goffman's work as the most relevant sort of preparatory reading for the course, and the most indicative of the general stance of the course, while explicitly differentiating his own work from it.

Goffman's influence on Sacks was at its peak during Sacks' years as a graduate student. While at Berkeley, for example, Sacks satisfied a requirement in one of Goffman's courses not with an empirical study of interaction of the sort chracteristic of his later work, but by writing the so-called 'police paper' (later published as 'Notes on police assessment of moral character,' 1972c), concerned with methods of commonsense theorizing about appearances and moral character, and based on handbooks and manuals of police procedure. The subsequently published version of the paper begins with a handsome acknowledgement of debt to Goffman's writing and lectures, and though the style and 'address' of the work differ in various respects from those of Goffman, the topic plays off of several themes recurrent in Goffman's work at the time, and the exploitation of handbooks and manuals echoes Goffman's use of manuals of etiquette and advice. But after this, Sacks' work diverges increasingly from Goffman's.

To be sure, in later work Sacks addressed himself to more specific interactional topics mentioned in Goffman's work (see, for example, the discussion of 'rules of irrelevance' in Goffman's essay 'Fun in games,' (1961: 19ff.), or the passing mention of turn-taking (Goffman, 1964: 136), but the lines of influence are often not entirely clear. Goffman is reported to have responded to a question years later asking whether Sacks had been his student by saying, "What do you mean; I was *his* student!" Leaving aside the possible elements of generosity, irony and flipness in such a remark (and assuming

that the report is, generally speaking, correct), a serious treatment of the directions of influence and the interplay of ideas between them remains to be written.[17]

That important divergences between Goffman and Sacks began to develop early on can hardly be doubted. These came to a head, both symbolic and practical, over Sacks' PhD dissertation, an episode which cannot be recounted here.[18] For now the upshot must remain this: although in retrospect Sacks seems clearly to have labored in the same vineyard, and although he was not only formally Goffman's student but learned a great deal from him, the degree to which Goffman influenced more specifically the work for which Sacks is known remains an open question. Certainly, such specific influences are not as much in evidence as most readers are likely to expect, either with respect to Goffman's most characteristic substantive concerns – face, demeanor, structures of attention and information, etc., with respect to governing themes – dramaturgic, ethologic, frame-analytic, etc., or with respect to data and method.

III

In mentioning genres of work and particular people who constituted a relevant intellectual ambience for the early corpus of Sacks' work, one name which might be thought missing is that of John Searle. But it turns out that Searle's work constitutes a parallel stream, not a source. Indeed, although his *Speech Acts* was published in 1969, his paper 'What is a speech act?' appeared in 1965, the same year as the first of Sacks' lectures. It is striking to compare the quite different tacks taken in these two approaches to the accomplishment of social action through the use of language, even if only in the brief and superficial way that space limitations compel.

Searle begins not with a particular utterance – either actually spoken or invented. He addresses himself rather to a class of utterances that would satisfy whatever is required for them to effectively – felicitously – accomplish the speech act of 'promising.' It is the type 'promises' that provides Searle his object of inquiry. The solution takes the form of stating the "conditions . . .

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[17] Some considerations on the relationship between Goffman's work and conversation analysis may be found in Schegloff (1988). Goffman's most explicit engagement with conversation–analytic work appeared in *Forms of Talk* (1981), the earliest of whose essays dates to 1974.

[18] The upshot was that Goffman found the argument of 'An initial investigation . . .' circular, and no amount of discussion could move him from this view. Nor would he, for quite a while, step aside from the committee to allow its other members to act favorably on the dissertation, as they wished to do. Eventually, however, he agreed to do so, largely at the urging of Aaron Cicourel who, in the end, signed the dissertation as Chair of its sponsoring committee, making possible the awarding of the PhD in 1966.

necessary and sufficient for the act of promising to have been performed in the utterance of a given sentence" (i.e., a general definition of 'promise'), with a later derivation of the rules for performing acts of this class.

Readers may recall the sort of result yielded by proceeding in this manner – the formulation of preparatory conditions, sincerity conditions, etc., followed by "rules for the function indicating device for promising." The focus, then, is on the class or type of act, and the term describing it – 'promising.' It is not on particular utterances or the contexts in which they occur. Indeed, Searle's paper begins by invoking the most general context possible, "In a typical speech situation involving a speaker, a hearer, and an utterance by the speaker . . ."

Sacks' first lecture starts in a significantly different way (and although the original transcripts show a much more uneven presentation than appears in the edited version, in the manner of their opening they do not differ). Sacks begins by offering particular utterances in a particular context. Our attention is focussed from the outset on particular exchanges, such as *A*: "Hello," *B*: "Hello;" or *A*: "This is Mr Smith, may I help you;" *B*: "Yes this is Mr Brown;" or *A*: "This is Mr Smith, can I help you;" *B*: "I can't hear you," which are

> . . . some first exchanges in telephone conversations collected at an emergency psychiatric hospital. They are occurring between persons who haven't talked to each other before. One of them, *A*, is a staff member of this psychiatric hospital . . .

Sacks goes on to offer a variety of detailed considerations about what these utterances, "This is Mr Smith," "can I help you" or "I can't hear you" might be observed to be doing, and how they might be doing it. Then he remarks (lecture 1, pp. 10–11):

> Clearly enough, things like "This is Mr Smith," "May I help you"? and "I can't hear you" are social objects. And if you begin to look at what they do, you can see that they, and things like them, provide the makings of activities. You assemble activities by using these things. And now when you, or I, or sociologists, watching people do things, engage in trying to find out what they do and how they do it, one fix which can be used is: Of the enormous range of activities that people do, all of them are done with something. Someone says "This is Mr Smith" and the other supplies his own name. Someone says "May I help you" and the other states his business. Someone says "Huh?" or "What did you say?" or "I can't hear you," and then the thing said before gets repeated. What we want then to find out is, can we first of all construct the objects that get used to make up ranges of activities, and then see how it is those objects do get used.
>
> Some of these objects [*recall that 'objects' here refers to the utterances which have been examined*] can be used for whole ranges of activities,

where for different ones a variety of the properties of those objects will get employed. And we begin to see alternative properties of those objects. That's one way we can go about beginning to collect the alternative methods that persons use in going about doing whatever they have to do. And we can see that these methods will be reproducible descriptions in the sense that any scientific description might be, such that the natural occurrences that we're describing can yield abstract or general phenomena which need not rely on statistical observability for their abstractness or generality.[19]

Nor (one might add) do they rely for their abstractness or generality on being stripped of all contextual particulars (in the manner of Searle's "In the typical speech situation . . .") or on the stipulation of general constitutive definitions of verbs for speaking.

The focus in Sacks' work here, and in much of the work of the ensuing years,[20] is not on general constitutive conditions, or even on rules in Searle's sense, but on practices and methods – on how Members, in particular contexts (or classes of context arrived at by examining particular contexts), methodically construct their talk so as to produce a possible instance of an action or activity of some sort, and to provide for the possible occurrence next of various sorts of actions by others.

Although the 1964–5 lectures exhibit some striking early explorations along these lines, a particularly exemplary instance of such an analysis is Sacks' discussion in lecture 4 of Spring 1966, of the utterance by a previously present participant, after a newcomer to a group therapy session of teenaged boys has been greeted, "We were in an automobile discussion," which Sacks undertakes to show to be "a possible invitation." (In later 'takes' of this analysis, the treatment is varied; for example, in Fall 1968, lecture 6, (volume II) he discusses it as 'orientational,' although all the analysis bearing on its 'invitational' aspect is included. This later discussion is rather fuller, more detailed and compelling.)

His undertaking – '. . . to build a method which will provide for some utterance as a recognizable invitation . . .'' – may sound like Searle's, but it turns out to be quite different. There are two component tasks. One of these tasks is

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[19] The reference to "reproducible descriptions in the sense that any scientific description might be" is an appearance in this first lecture of a theme and argument which Sacks had been percolating for some time, and which was written up at the end of the 1964–5 academic year in a putative introduction to a publication which never materialized. (That introduction is included in this volume, and its argument is recounted below, at pp. xxx–xxxii.)

[20] When Sacks does introduce a shift to a rather more general form of undertaking, for example at lecture 3 of the Fall 1968 set, it still has quite a different character than Searle's.

... to construct ... "a partial definition of an invitation." What makes it partial is that while it's a way of doing invitations, it's not ... all the ways ... there are other ways and those would be other partial definitions.

The second task is to have this partial definition provide for the actual case which occasions the inquiry:

We want to do both: Construct a partial definition of 'invitation,' and one that provides for 'this is a case.'

It turns out that there are other things such an analysis should do, which need not preoccupy the present discussion.

The construction of the method that provides for the data under examination as a possible instance of 'invitation' has two parts. First, Sacks characterizes the 'slot' in which this utterance occurs, and characterizes it in various ways — as (1) just after introductions and greetings, (2) in the arrival of a newcomer to a conversation already in progress, (3) in a situation of a psychiatric neophyte coming to group therapy for the first time and joining more experienced patients, etc. Second, he characterizes one particular aspect of the utterance itself — its formulation of the topic preceding the newcomer's arrival as "an automobile discussion." He shows that that formulation makes relevant the common category membership of the newcomer and the others, but a category membership as "teenaged boys" or potential "hotrodders," rather than as "patients." And in formulating the topic as one for which the newcomer might be competent in common with them (rather than as one for which he is not, as is done by a next speaker who extends the utterance by saying ". . . discussing the psychological motives for . . ."), a possible invitation is done.

What this (here highly oversimplified) analysis provides, then, is not necessary and sufficient conditions for the felicitous performance of an invitation, or rules for its performance, but rather a partial method (Sacks refers to it as a "a partial definition") for doing an invitation in a particular interactional/sequential context.

IV

As noted, the earliest lectures, of 1964–5, include a variety of efforts to develop analyses along these lines. Certain themes recur, only some of which can be remarked on here, to highlight something of an abbreviated catalogue of concerns animating Sacks' work at the time.

Consider, for example, the following sort of issue to which Sacks addresses himself recurrently throughout the 1964–5 lectures (this is not an exhaustive listing):

How to get someone's name without asking for it (give yours), lecture 1.

How to avoid giving your name without refusing to give it (initiate repair), lecture 1.

How to avoid giving help without refusing it (treat the circumstance as a joke), lecture 2.

How to get an account without asking for it (offer some member of a class and get a correction), lecture 3.

How to get people to show they care about you, given few opportunities afforded by routine life, e.g., of the divorced (commit/attempt suicide), lecture 5.

How to introduce a piece of information and test its acceptability without saying it, lecture 6.

How to do a 'safe' compliment, i.e., without derogating others, lecture 8.

How to get help for suicidalness without requesting it (ask 'how does this organization work?'), lecture 10.

How to talk in a therapy session without revealing yourself (joke), lecture 12.

Sacks' analytic strategy here is not a search for recipes, or rules, or definitions of types of actions. He begins by taking note of an interactional effect actually achieved in a singular, real episode of interaction (in the listing above, this often includes an achieved absence – something which did not happen). And he asks, was this outcome accomplished methodically. Can we describe it as the product of a method of conduct, a *situated* method of conduct, such that we can find other exercises or enactments of that method or practice, in that situation or context or in others, which will yield the accomplishment, the recognizable accomplishment (recognizable both to co-participants and to professional analysts) of the same outcome – the same recognizable action or activity or effect.

So in the listing I have offered above, the 'solutions' mentioned in parentheses after some of the 'problems' are not 'general;' they are not practices which whenever or wherever enacted will yield those activities as systematic products. They are situated, contexted. How to describe the relevant contexts, the scope within which the proposed practice 'works'? That, of course, is one of the prime sets of problems in this analytic enterprise. How shall we as analysts describe the terms in which participants analyze and understand, from moment to moment, the contexted character of their lives, their current and prospective circumstances, the present moment – how to do this when the very terms of that understanding can be transformed by a next bit of conduct by one of the participants (for example, a next action can recast what has preceded as 'having been leading up to this'). Clearly enough, these questions are of a radically different character than those which are brought to prominence in an undertaking like that of Searle, or Austin (1962) before him.

The recurrent theme documented above will remind some readers of 'indirect speech acts.' In many items on that list the problem appears to be how to achieve some result without doing it 'directly' (as one says in the

vernacular – and it *is* a vernacular term). The proposed 'solutions' might then
be cast, in this vernacular and quasi-technical, idiom, as 'indirect' speech acts,
although this is, of course, an idiom not employed within the conversation-
analytic tradition. (cf. Levinson, 1983: 356–64 for one account).

One line of inquiry (ibid., 274; Brown and Levinson, 1978; Lakoff, 1973)
relates the use of indirect speech acts to considerations of politeness. But
Sacks' discussion focusses instead on what might be termed 'strategic/
sequential' considerations. He notes that the sorts of next turns made relevant
by what might be called direct requests are quite different from the ones made
relevant by the conduct whose methodic practices he is explicating. When
answerers of the telephone at a psychiatric emergency service ask "What is
your name?" they may get in return a request for an account – "Why?" – and
may end up not getting the name. When they give their own names, they do
not get asked "Why?," because they have not done an action which is
accountable in that way. The thrust of the analysis is, then, not considerations
of politeness, but contingent courses of action as progressively and differen-
tially realized in the set of turns that make up structured sequences based on
what would later come to be called 'adjacency pairs.'[21]

The divergence of these two paths of analysis seems quite clearly related to
the materials being addressed. On the one hand, we have single classes of
utterances, and eventually (Searle, 1976) not even particular ones necessarily,
but the categorical type of action which they are supposed to instantiate,
singly and across contexts. On the other hand, we have particular utterances
occurring in particular series of utterances, in particular organizational,
interactional and sequential contexts, with the source of the utterance in prior
talk and conduct accessible and demonstrably relevant to professional/
academic analysis as it was to the participants *in situ* and *in vivo*, and with the
ensuing interactional trajectory which was engendered by the utterance
inviting examination in the light of the set of possibilities from which it might
have been selected. One of these sets of materials is the natural setting for the
work of philosphy and 'academic' inquiry; the other is rather closer to the
natural setting for the workings of talk in the everyday world. Sacks' first
lectures make clear what course is being set.

The consequentiality of working with *particular* data, for example, with
particular utterances, is underscored elsewhere in these and subsequent
lectures, when Sacks directs the problematic of describing a 'method for the
production of . . .' to whatever action label one would assign to an utterance
such as "I'm nothing." Sacks asks (lecture 9, p. 67): how does someone
"properly and reproducibly" come to say such a thing, *this* thing? What is
someone doing by saying this thing, and how do they come to be doing it?

At the time that Sacks was launching inquiry along these lines, a common
reaction was that an utterance of this sort was 'just a manner of speaking.'

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[21] Sacks deals with these themes from a different stance subsequently in Winter,
1967, cf. the lecture for March 9 in particular, and the discussion of the varying tacks
he takes below at pp. l–li of this introduction.

That the *particular* way of speaking, the phrasing, was almost accidental (a stance suitable to the view that an utterance is an enactment of a sentence which expresses a proposition, where it is the underlying proposition – perhaps accompanied by its 'function indicating device' – which finally matters, not the particulars which happen to give it expression on any given occasion). But Sacks saw it as the outcome of a procedure, as announcing 'a finding' by its speaker. He asked what that procedure was, and how it could arrive at such a finding, in a fashion that other participants would find understandable, and even 'correct.' He took seriously the particular form in which conduct appeared – the participants had said *this thing, in this way,* and not in some other way. He insisted on the possibility that that mattered – that every particular might matter. None could be dismissed *a priori* as *merely* (a word he particularly treated with suspicion) a way of talking.

Of course, the fullest version of this sort of analytic undertaking was Sacks' paper 'An initial investigation . . .' (1972a), where the utterance/action in question was 'I have no one to turn to." This utterance was also seen as reporting the result of a search, the description of which required developing the terms in which such a search might be understood to have been conducted, namely, 'membership categorization devices.' Early versions of parts of that paper (as well as other papers) can be found in the 1964–5 lectures, for example in lecture 6.

This way of working, then, mixed a kind of naturalism (in its insistence on noticing and crediting the potential seriousness of particulars of the natural occurrences of conduct) with the ethnomethodological concern for the Members' methods for the production of a mundane world and commonsense understandings of it. Sacks asked how the recognizably detailed ordinary world of activities gets produced, and produced recognizably. It was just this way of proceeding – describing procedurally the production of courses of action – that Sacks understood at the time to be the foundation of the sciences as 'science,' and therefore the grounds for optimism about the principled possibility of a natural observational discipline in sociology. A brief account of this view (argued in the 'Introduction' by Sacks, Appendix I in this volume) is in order.

V

Sacks had developed an argument[22] addressed to the question of whether

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[22] The argument was written up, probably in the summer or autumn of 1965, after Sacks' first academic year of lectures, as a possible introduction to a contemplated volume entitled *The Search for Help*. This publication, which was never pursued, would have included two papers – 'The search for help: no one to turn to' (later published in Sudnow, 1972b), and 'The search for help: the diagnosis of depression,' never published. That the argument informed his thinking earlier, and entered into the first lectures, can be seen in the excerpt from lecture 1 cited at pp. xxv–xxvi above, and remarked on in n. 19.

sociology could be shown to be a possibly 'stable' natural observational discipline. By this question Sacks meant to address the possibility that social science provided merely stopgap accounts of human action, conduct, behavior, organization, etc., until such disciplines as biology and neurophysiology matured to the point at which they could deal with such problems. (This was a position that Sacks was trying out when I first met him in 1961–2, and could be seen as a kind of riposte to Chomsky's critique of Skinner. I always suspected that Sacks entertained the position as a provocation, in a law school pedagogical way, rather than as seriously tenable, but used it to force a consideration of the arguments necessary to set it aside. The position certainly shook me up when Sacks first confronted me with it in the winter and spring of 1962, for, in common with most sociology graduate students, I had treated such claims as long since undermined by Durkheim and other ancestors.) If sociology, or social science, were such a stopgap and thus 'unstable,' it hardly seemed worth investing much time and commitment in it. So before setting off on a serious research undertaking, it seemed in point to establish that a stable discipline was possible. Sacks believed that the argument he developed had a further pay-off; it showed something of the features the research enterprise and its results should have if it were to be, or contribute to, a stable science. The argument, briefly stated, was this.

Contributions to science, including to sciences such as biology and neurophysiology, are composed of two essential parts. One is the account of the findings. The other is the account of the scientists' actions by which the findings were obtained. What discriminates science from other epistemic undertakings is the claim that its findings are reproducible, and that reproducibility is itself grounded in the claim that the results were arrived at by courses of action reproducible by anyone in principle. Other investigators can, by engaging in the same actions, arrive at the same findings.

Sacks argued that both of these parts of contributions to science are 'science', and not just the findings. For it is the reproduction of the actions reproducing the results which make the findings 'scientific', and the descriptions of those courses of action which make their reproducibility possible. If the results are scientific, the descriptions of the actions for producing them must also be science.

But, he noted, the descriptions of courses of action in scientific papers are not couched in neurophysiological terms, but take the form of accounts of methods or procedures. This form of account of action is reproducible, both in action and in description.

So, Sacks concluded, from the fact of the existence of natural science there is evidence that it is possible to have (1) accounts of human courses of action, (2) which are not neurophysiological, biological, etc., (3) which are reproducible and hence scientifically adequate, (4) the latter two features amounting to the finding that they may be stable, and (5) a way (perhaps *the* way) to have such stable accounts of human behavior is by producing accounts of the methods and procedures for producing it. The grounding for the possibility of a stable social-scientific account of human behavior of a

non-reductionist sort was at least as deep as the grounding of the natural sciences. Perhaps that is deep enough.

This conclusion converges, of course, with the thrust of ethnomethodology as Garfinkel had been developing it, and was undoubtedly motivated, at least in part, by Sacks' engagement with Garfinkel (and informed, perhaps, by Felix Kaufmann (1944) as well). Still, the argument is novel and provides a grounding from a different direction than Garfinkel had provided. For the tenor at least of Garfinkel's arguments was anti-positivist and 'anti-scientific' in impulse, whereas Sacks sought to ground the undertaking in which he was engaging in the very fact of the existence of science. (And, indeed, in the earlier 'Sociological description' (Sacks, 1963) he had written, "I take it that at least some sociologists seek to make a science of the discipline; this is a concern I share, and it is only from the perspective of such a concern that the ensuing discussion seems appropriate.")

VI

I have remarked on two types of problems taken up in the 1964–5 lectures – the reproducible methods by which 'findings' such as "I'm nothing" or "I have no one to turn to" may be arrived at (note in this regard the special claim on Sacks' attention exerted by commonsense uses of 'quantifiers,' starting with the ones mentioned above, but extending to utterances such as 'Everyone has to lie', (Sacks, 1975)), and how to achieve some outcome without aiming for it 'directly'. Several other recurrent themes in these earliest lectures might be mentioned here.

One is an attention to certain 'generic forms' of statement or question, into which particular values can be plugged in particular circumstances. Sacks isolates, for example, the question form 'Why do you want to do X?' (lecture 5, p. 33), or the generic form of statement 'Because A did X, B did Y' (lecture 5, p. 36). Later he focusses on the form, 'X told me to call/do Y' (lecture 10, pp. 76–7). It was very likely the exposure almost exclusively to calls to the Suicide Prevention Center, and the sort of recurrencies which they provided, which led to a focus on regularities so literally formulated. But it was in this sort of problem that the concern with the formats of utterances, often rather more abstractly and formally described, initially appeared.

There is throughout these lectures the repeated use of 'the socialization problem' as a resource for focussing analysis. The question gets posed, 'How does a child learn that X?,' for example, that activities are observable; what properties of competence does socialization have to produce, and how are they produced; how does this learning take place (e.g., lecture 14, pp. 120–1). This form of problem or observation finds expression in Sacks' writing of this period as well as in the lectures (for example, in the remarks in 'An initial investigation. . . .' concerning what is involved in learning how adequate reference is to be done), although it recedes in prominence in the later years of the lectures.

These early lectures of 1964–5 touch on, or give a first formulation of, a variety of themes more fully developed in later work, either of Sacks' or by others.

For example, although many believe that the early lectures were taken up with membership categorization, and that sequential organization is only addressed in later years, we have already seen that the early lectures – including the very first – engage that issue from the very beginning. To cite but one other instance of this early engagement, lecture 9 includes observations on sequence organization (the asker of a question gets the right to do more talk), on what were later (Sacks et al., 1974) called contrasting speech exchange systems (remarks on press conferences and cross-examination), on how the turn-taking systems of different speech exchange systems can affect the forms of utterances (e.g., long questions when there is no right of follow up), and the like.

Or note how the earlier-mentioned recurrent theme concerned with 'how to do X without doing Y' finds later resonance not only in Sacks' work but in work such as that by Pomerantz (1980) on 'telling my side as a fishing device' (how to elicit information without asking for it), by Jefferson (1983) on 'embedded correction' (how to induce adoption of a correct form without correcting the wrong one), and others.

Or consider the material in lecture 11 concerned with glancing, looking, and seeing. The parts of this discussion which concerned the categories in terms of which one sees, anticipate the later discussion of 'viewer's maxims' in the lectures on "The baby cried" (lectures 1 and 2 for Spring, 1966, eventually published as 'On the analyzability of stories by children,' 1972b). They display as well Sacks' reflections on what such glance exchanges reveal about 'norms' in the more conventional sociological and anthropological sense, about 'social integration,' 'alienation,' and the like. And perhaps there is here as well a point of departure for Sudnow's later (1972a) work on glances, for example in Sacks' observation (p. 86) that "We start out with the fact that glances are actions."

It is worth noting that in some cases, discussions in these early lectures include points that are not found in later elaborations. Some of these seem to me to have been simply wrong – for example, the claim (lecture 5, p. 33) that 'opinion' is something you don't need a defense for. Others encountered problematic evidence within the conversation – analytic tradition of work. For example, Sacks had proposed that a method for doing greetings consisted in the use of one of the class of greeting terms in 'first position.' Schegloff (1967) disputes the generality of the claim by examining telephone conversation in which "Hello" in first turn is ordinarily *not* a greeting, and shows that claims in this domain of work can be addressed with data, investigated empirically and found to be the case or not.

Still other portions of these early lectures, however, appear to be strong points which simply dropped out of later reworkings of the topic. For example, lecture 6 is a version of (or draws on) 'An initial investigation . . . ,' 'On the analyzability . . .' 'Everyone has to lie,' and a paper which Sacks

never published, entitled 'A device basic to social interaction,' concerned with the character of the categories which compose membership categorization devices as organizing devices for commonsense knowledge about members. But Sacks makes a point in this lecture which I do not believe ever appears in any of the other accounts of these domains, concerning the relativity of category collections such as age and class to the categorizer; he notes that the recipient of some utterance which includes some such categories (such as 'young man') has to categorize the categorizer to know how they would categorize the one who had been categorized in the utterance.

These lectures, then, have more than merely historical interest as embryonic versions of later developed work. Some of the themes here, however insightful and innovative, happen not to have been further developed. And others, which were further developed, left behind some points which are still valuable and can be found here.

VII

As with the 1964–5 lectures, those for the Fall 1965 term include first tries at topics (both accounts of specific data episodes and analytical topics raised from them) taken up and elaborated in subsequent terms, as well as discussions which do not get such subsequent development. Among the latter are, for example, 'hotrodding as a test' (lecture 10) or 'non-translatable categories' (lecture 12). Among the former are "The baby cried . . ." and membership categorization devices (lectures 1 and 2) more fully elaborated as lectures 1 and 2 in the following term, Spring 1966; collaborative utterances addressed via "We were in an automobile discussion" in Spring 1966 (lectures 4 and 5); or 'tying rules' taken up in a number of subsequent lecture sets.

Still, there is good reason to read carefully the discussions of Fall 1965, even for topics which are given fuller, and apparently more satisfactory, treatment later. To cite but a single example, in the outline for the initial lecture on "The baby cried . . ." (here appearing as Appendix A for Fall 1965), at 1.a.2 and a.3, Sacks offers observations which do not appear in subsequent treatments of this material (either in Spring 1966, or in the subsequent publication as Sacks, 1972b) but which differentiate Sacks' point here from other, parallel claims – often characterized as being concerned with the order of narrativity. Others (often more or less contemporaneously, e.g., Labov and Waletsky, 1966) have remarked that in narratives the 'default' organization is that order of sentences is isomorphic with the order of the occurrences which they report. And in later versions of this analysis Sacks seems to be making the same argument. As it is put in the published version (1972b: 330), "I take it we hear that as S[entence] 2 follows S[entence] 1, so O[ccurrence] 2 follows O[ccurrence] 1." But here, in the Fall 1965 outline, he notes that "this cannot be accounted for simply by the fact that S1 precedes S2," for "we can find elsewhere two sentences linked as these are, with

nothing between, where we would not hear such an action sequence." And he offers an instance from the same collection of children's stories, ". . . . The piggie got hit by the choo-choo. He got a little hurt. He broke his neck. He broke his chin."

The point is that what is at work here is more than a matter of narrative technique or of discourse organization, although these may well be involved. Rather 'commonsense knowledge' of the world, of the culture, and of normative courses of action enter centrally into discriminating those actions or events whose description in successive sentences is to be understood as temporal succession from those which are not. It is not, then, a merely formal or discursive skill, but can turn on the particulars of what is being reported. This theme drops out of later discussions of these materials.[23]

If this point seems to resonate basic themes of so-called contextualist, or social constructionist or ethnomethodological stances, there are other elements in these early lectures which operate on a different wavelength. For example, early in the development of what he called 'tying rules' (in which he is addressing matters later often discussed under the rubric of 'cohesion,' cf., for example, Halliday and Hasan, 1976) he proposes (Fall 1965, lecture 5, p. 159) to be

> taking small parts of a thing and building out from them, because small parts can be identified and worked on without regard to the larger thing they're part of. And they can work in a variety of larger parts than the one they happen to be working in. I don't do that just as a matter of simplicity . . . the image I have is of this machinery, where you would have some standardized gadget that you can stick in here and there and that can work in a variety of different machines . . . So these smaller components are first to be identified because they are components perhaps for lots of other tasks than the ones they're used in.

Thus, there is room within a larger, contextually sensitive, address to his materials (cf. the earlier-discussed contrast of Sacks' starting point with that of Searle) for the recognition and more formal description of particular practices and sets of practices – here metaphorized as 'gadgets' or 'machinery' – which members can use in constituting coherent talk and specific lines of action and interaction, and for an appreciation that some of these may operate in a way substantially unqualified by the particulars of local context.

Recall again (cf. the discussion above at pp. xx-xxii) the echoes in Sacks' work in this period of some of the themes of work in generative grammar (more accurately, an analytic model whose most lively embodiment at the time was generative grammar, but which is surely not limited to that domain of work).[24] The lectures for Fall 1965 were for a course whose catalogue title

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[23] It does not drop out as a theme of the lectures, however; cf. the discussion at pp. xxxvii–xxxviii below, and n. 26.

[24] It is worth making explicit here that Sacks kept himself informed of

was 'Culture and personality.' Whether or not he would otherwise have been inclined to do so, it was perhaps this title which prompted some discussion by Sacks of the notion 'culture.' In setting out the orientation of his examination of the story told by a child, "The baby cried, the mommy picked it up," Sacks subsumed it, and the 'machinery' by which it was produced and heard, under the notion 'culture,' of which he remarked, "A culture is an apparatus for generating *recognizable* actions; if the same procedures are used for generating as for detecting, that is perhaps as simple a solution to the problem of recognizability as is formulatable' (Fall 1965, Appendix A, p. 226, emphasis in original.)[25] His description of what 'the apparatus' should do is strikingly reminiscent of lines from early Chomsky, and seems directly targetted at transformational grammar, but here, surprisingly, not at its principles – but at its product: 'We are going to aim at building an apparatus which involves building constraints on what an adequate grammar will do, such that what an adequate grammar will do, some of the things it will do, we are going to rule out, and provide for the non-occurrence of' (Fall 1965, Appendix A, p. 229). Sacks' undertaking here seems in important ways to be shaped by the transformational grammar enterprise, albeit in a corrective stance toward it. The stance seems to be something like the following. Given an undertaking like the one generative grammar studies had seemed to set in motion, and operating with similar sorts of goals (e.g., to generate all and only the grammatical/acceptable sentences of a language), getting right results requires looking at something other than just the linguistic or, even more narrowly, the grammatical aspects of sentences or utterances. Not language, but culture, is the key object and resource. And while such an enterprise was understood by some 'as ethnomethodology,' by others it was seen as an anthropological/cultural version of cognitive science (albeit along different

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contemporary developments in a wide range of potentially relevant disciplines, and was aware of what seemed to be 'hot' topics and ways of working. His work recurrently speaks to such developments, sometimes explicitly, sometimes tacitly. He is aware of, and responsive to, his intellectual ambience. The present account often underscores such points of convergence and contrast – both with respect to the ambience at the time Sacks' work was being done and with respect to developments at the time the present publication is being prepared. What may be of enduring interest is the larger picture of the intellectual stances and developments at issue, rather than the more transient excitements that pass over areas in ferment, even if these substantially engage a generation of workers in a field.

[25] On some readings, it is telling to compare this stance with Garfinkel's account of ethnomethodology (1967: 1), about whose studies he writes,

Their central recommendation is that the activities whereby members produce and manage settings of organized everyday affairs are identical with members' procedures for making those settings 'account-able' . . . When I speak of accountable my interests are directed to such matters as the following. I mean observable-and-reportable, i.e., available to members as situated practices of looking-and-telling.

lines than those previously suggested by studies in ethnoscience and compo-
nential analysis).

There are various problem-types addressed and observations developed in
these lectures which seem to have a (sociological?) bearing on what came to
be called 'cognitive science.' Here I can mention only one of each.

First, observations. Both in Fall 1965 (lecture 7) and in Spring 1966
(lecture 18) Sacks comments on the differential 'owning' or control of certain
categories by different social groups, and the not uncommon asymmetry
between those to whom a category is applied and those who apply it. One
particular focus for this line of analysis is the pair of terms 'adolescent' and
'hotrodder' as applied to teenaged boys. 'Adolescent' is 'owned' by the
conventional adult society, and is deployed by its members (together with all
the commonsense knowledge or 'conventional wisdom' for which it is the
organizational locus in the culture) more or less without regard to the views
of those whom it is used to characterize. 'Hotrodder' (or, more recently,
'punker,' etc.), on the other hand, are categories deployed by their incum-
bents, and in ways often inaccessible to those who are not themselves
members. It is this relative independence from the 'official' or conventional
culture that led Sacks to term such categories 'revolutionary' (Spring 1966
lecture 18, and Sacks, 1979). There seems to be here a whole area of inquiry
which might be termed a sociology of cognition or a cognitive sociology quite
distinct from other usages of this term (cf. especially Cicourel, 1974). Insofar
as it involves the differential relevance of different category sets for the
cognitive operations of persons dealing with categories of persons, its
relevance to cognitive science seems transparent.

Second, problem-types. There is a form of problem which Sacks takes up
a number of times in the early lectures, each time on a distinct target, which
can be best characterized as an 'analysis of the ordering of cognitive
operations' (or the ordering of interpretive procedures). Two especially
brilliant instances of solutions to this problem-type occur in the Spring 1966
lectures. In lecture 11 (pp. 350–1) and again in lecture 21 (pp. 417–20), in
dealing with an instance of 'intentional misaddress,' Sacks wonders how the
co-participants in an interactional episode could have found who was being
addressed, since the address term employed by the speaker ("mommy") did
not 'actually' apply to anyone present. He argues that, if they were finding
'who is being addressed' by finding to whom the address term referred, then
they would find no solution. Rather, he argues, they first use sequencing rules
to find whom the current speaker would properly be addressing, and they use
the product of that analysis in deciding how the address term is properly to
be interpreted. He is thus able to sort out the order in which these analyses are
conducted – first addressee, then address term – and it turns out to be just the
opposite from what one might have thought.

Another instance of the same problem is addressed in lecture 16 for Spring
1966. Here the object of interest is what is conventionally known as 'the
possessive pronoun.' Rather than taking a word like 'my' as indicating a
relationship of 'possessing' toward whatever it is affiliated to (which yields

results in usages such as 'my brother' or 'my teacher' which are either obviously faulty or in need of subsequent, and questionable, interpretation), Sacks argues that a hearer/receiver must first determine that what 'my' is attached to is a 'possessable' – the sort of thing which in that culture can be possessed (rather than a category from a membership categorization device, for example), in order to decide that 'my' is being used to claim possession. Once again, an ordering of analyses – of cognitive operations – seems clearly involved.

In both of these cases, the upshot of Sacks' analysis is to reject as inadequate the view that linguistic items determine the meaning or the force of an action, and to insist instead that the cultural, sequential or interactional status of the objects employed in the utterance shape the interpretation of the linguistic item.[26]

But for Sacks there was no in-principle ordering of what sorts of things one consults first (e.g., the syntactic, semantic, sequential, interactional, etc.) and no necessary priority, therefore, among the disciplines which study them. Perhaps the first appearance of this problem-type is in lecture 4 for Fall 1965. Here Sacks is discussing various forms of 'tying rules,' forms of talk (such as indexical or anaphoric reference) which require a hearer to make reference to another utterance to understand a current utterance, and which thus 'tie' the utterances to one another. Encountering such usages of 'that' as "I decided that years ago" or "That's the challenge," Sacks remarks that they present a complication relative to other instances of tying procedures which he had previously discussed, for such usages must be distinguished from the use of 'that' in, for example, "I still say though that if you take . . . " Before analyzing a 'that' for the sequential tying connection it makes to some other (ordinarily prior) utterance, a hearer has to do a syntactic analysis to determine that the 'that' is the sort which can tie back to some earlier component of the talk. Here, once again, the sheer occurrence of an item (whether address term, 'my,' or 'that') does not determine what is to be made of it. But whereas in the analyses previously discussed a linguistic analysis is contingent on prior sequential, interactional or cultural analyses. here the sequential 'tying' analysis is contingent on a prior syntactic one.[27]

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[26] Related discussions can be found throughout the lectures. For example, in the Spring 1966 lectures: lecture 11, pp. 350–1 (re how sequential and interactional organization controls the semantic and truth-conditional interpretation of an utterance, rather than the opposite, which is the ordinary understanding); lecture 16, p. 383; lecture 21, pp. 417–20; lecture 27, p. 451 (where sequential context is shown to control the very hearing of a word); and lecture 29, pp. 461–3. See also the earlier discussion at n. 23. Fuller discussion of the theme and the particular analyses on which it rests must await another occasion.

[27] Still, there is little doubt that the main thrust of analyses along these lines is that the understanding of talk is, in the first instance, controlled by the hearer's grasp of the sequence in progress (or the sequential context more generally), rather than being derived from the linguistic tokens. Cf., for example, the discussion in Spring 1966, lecture 27, p. 451, where Sacks discusses the difficulty experienced by one participant

Whatever the particulars, both these observations about control of categorization structures and deployments and the problem-type addressed to the ordering of cognitive or psycholinguistic or interpretive operations are theoretically central to the responsibilities of a sociological, or more generally interactional, sector of what are now called the cognitive sciences. And to the degree that the results of these inquiries inform and constrain our understanding of how linguistic and category terms work, indeed *can* work, their import goes well beyond the interactional domain which is their initial locus.

The quasi-generativist themes in the Fall 1965 lectures, and in the 1964–5 lectures as well, co-exist with analyses of particular action types ('how to do action X') based on empirical materials of talk, and co-exist as well with analyses of sequencing and tying practices – also developed on empirical materials, and addressed to the doing of conversation as an undertaking in its own right. This variety of topics and approaches (and I have not mentioned all the separate strands here) are, then, not a matter of stages in Sacks' intellectual development over time. There are in these early lectures different sorts of undertaking underway, differentially developed by Sacks, differentially appealing to various segments of his professional readership, and perhaps differentially susceptable to development by others, and, therefore, differentially institutionalizable as a discipline. Surely, however, the drift of his own subsequent work favored some of these initiatives over others.

VIII

If the lectures of Fall 1965 tilt in the direction of culture (whether incidentally because of the course title or because it was central to Sacks' preoccupations at the time), the Spring 1966 lectures feature culture quite centrally. This was the most extensively taped and transcribed of the lecture sets, and it is as rich as anything in the materials assembled in these volumes. In its range – from the empirical detail of the interactional materials to discussions of some of the classic texts of social science and western culture – it gives the reader some sense of the power of the mind at work here, of the nuanced sensitivity to detail and of the scope of learning being brought to bear, and the distinctive stance being developed through the conjunction of these resources. Here I can touch only briefly on a few of the central themes of these lectures.

One theme, clearly part of the 'culturalist' motif of these lectures, and surely not unrelated to the abiding preoccupation with 'reflexivity' and the 'incarnate character of accounts' central to the continuing development of ethnomethodology in Garfinkel's oeuvre, concerns the relationship between

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in hearing something addressed to him which is acoustically accessible to everyone else. He remarks that the party in question hears that turn by reference to the sequence in which it occurs 'so as to hear, indeed, a puzzle, when he could hear something perfectly clear.'

'commonsense knowledge' and real world conduct or praxis on the one hand, and between commonsense knowledge and 'professional' inquiry on the other hand. This theme provides an opportunity as well to touch on the elements of continuity and discontinuity in the orientation of Sacks' work going back to 'Sociological description' (1963).

   Although there is no direct connection between the positions explored in 'Sociological description' and these lectures, there are echoes here, formal similarities to aspects of the earlier paper. By 'no direct connection,' I intend two observations. First, there is a substantial difference between what Sacks is doing in the lectures and the hypothesized program of studies which Sacks entertained in 'Sociological description' as a contrast with his depiction of how contemporary sociological inquiries are conceived and carried through. Second, there was no direct step-by-step theoretical development that led from the position taken up in the 1963 paper to the directions pursued in the lectures of 1964–6. On the other hand, I can only roughly suggest one sort of observation I have in mind in suggesting 'echoes' and 'formal similarities.'

   The central metaphor of 'Sociological description' was the so-called 'commentator machine,' a 'device' describable (from one point of view) as composed of two parts – one which engages in some physical activity and another which produces a form of language, understandable as a description of what the first part is doing. Sacks entertains a variety of possible formulations of this device, and the 'proper' understanding of the relationship of its parts. The 'doing part' can be understood as a resource for coming to understand what the 'speaking part' is saying. The 'speaking part' can be understood as a description of what the 'doing part' is doing. The contraption may be understood as two independent devices. And so on. For those views in which the two parts do relate to one another, 'discrepancies' between the parts can be variously understood: for example, as the 'speaking part' offering *inadequate descriptions* of the 'doing part;' alternatively, as the 'doing part' malfunctioning and *badly enacting* the program set forth by the 'speaking part.'

   With such a theme in the background consider just a few elements of the first two lectures of Spring 1966 and some elements from the lectures of the intervening year, 1964–5.

   One of the central tasks which Sacks sets himself in the lectures on "The baby cried" is providing an account of how recognizable activities are done, and done recognizably. And in particular how the activity of 'describing' is done, and done recognizably. The key starting point here is that descriptions *are* recognizable, *are* recognizable descriptions, and are recognizable descriptions without juxtaposition to their putative objects. Much of Sacks' effort in the early years of this analytic enterprise was given over to building an apparatus that provided recognizable descriptions without reference (by real life co-participants or by professional investigators) to what was putatively being described. The 'membership categorization devices' introduced in lectures 1 and 2 of Spring 1966, and the MIR device introduced in lecture

6 of the 1964–5 lectures (p. 41)[28] are key elements in such an apparatus. And the commonsense knowledge of the social world which is organized in terms of these categories, 'protected' as it is 'against induction' (as Sacks used to remark), provides for just such autonomously recognizable possible descriptions. When some potential discrepancy is suggested between what is provided for by the 'knowledge' organized around some category in a categorization device and what is observably the case about some putative incumbent of such a category, what may well be found (Sacks pointed out, and this is part of what he meant by 'protected against induction') is not the inadequacy of that 'knowledge' but rather the inadequacy of that person as a member of the category involved, an inadequacy which that person may feel and may seek to remedy.

Although vastly transformed (from a 'doing part' and 'speaking part' to 'observable conduct' and 'recognizable description'), the problematics concerning (1) the proper juxtaposition of the practical activities of social conduct, (2) the commonsense knowledge of the mundane world and descriptive practices resident in that world, and (3) the proper formulation of investigators' stances and goals with respect to that world, persist from 'Sociological description' through these lectures.

One component of these problematics is specially important throughout these lectures, surfacing at the end in Spring 1966, lecture 33 but also central at the beginning, and that is the relationship between commonsense knowledge which investigators may share with those whose conduct is the object of inquiry and the proper formulation of research questions, observations and findings. Sacks begins the discussion of "The baby cried" with a number of observations which he makes about the components of this little story, and offers the claim that his audience would have made (perhaps did in fact make) the same observations. But these are not sociological findings, he insists. They are simply the explication of commonsense or vernacular knowledge. Rather than constituting analysis, they serve to pose a research problem, namely, the construction of an apparatus that would generate (or that has generated) such observations, that would (in that sense) have produced them. And such an apparatus would constitute findings.

Both parts of this analytic operation are important: making explicit the understandings which common sense provides of the world which members of the society encounter, including the conduct of others; and the provision of something that can account for those understandings. And it is important to keep them distinct and to insist on both.

Consider, for example, the notion of category-bound activities. It is in order to address the observation that a report of 'crying' makes the category 'baby' (in the sense of a 'stage-of-life' category) relevant that Sacks introduces this notion, and the proposal that the activity 'crying' is 'bound' to the

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[28] Sacks (ibid.) explains the term 'MIR device' by saying, "that is an acronym. 'M' stands for membership, 'I' stands for inference-rich, and 'R' stands for representative."

membership category 'baby' as one of the 'stage-of-life' categories in particular. But the observation that "crying is bound to 'baby'" is (like the initial observations in the lecture) not a finding; it is merely the claimed explication of a bit of commonsense knowledge. As such it is just a claim, and cannot be simply asserted on the analyst's authority. It has to be warranted somehow, either by a test of it or by requiring it to yield some further pay-off to analysis.

And this is what Sacks does with "crying being category-bound to baby." He immediately (lecture 1, p. 241) constructs a test of this category-boundedness, even though (as he says) "it's obvious enough to you, you wouldn't argue with the issue." The pay-off, it will be recalled (lecture 1, ibid), is not only the explication of 'praising/denigrating' as a test for the category-boundedness of the action 'crying,' but an account for how to do such recognizable actions as 'praising' or 'deprecating', research goals already familiar from the 1964–5 lectures and from elsewhere in the Spring 1966 opening lectures.

This stance is a basic and persistent one in these lectures. Elsewhere, for example, Sacks insists on testing the claim that the categorization device 'therapist/patient' is 'omni-relevant' in the group therapy sessions which supply the data for most of these lectures (Spring 1966, lecture 6, p. 315; lecture 29, pp. 462–3; then again in Winter 1967, February 16, and Spring 1967, lecture 14), although this claim can be treated as no less 'obvious.' To be sure, when he has recently made the point, Sacks sometimes asserts a claimed category-bound activity without carrying through a test or deriving a further finding (e.g., lecture 4, p. 302), but there can be little doubt that the principle is basic – commonsense knowledge cannot properly be invoked as itself providing an account, rather than providing the elements of something to be accounted for.[29] In my view, Sacks abandoned the use of 'category-bound activities' because of an incipient 'promiscuous' use of them, i.e., an unelaborated invocation of some vernacularly based assertion (i.e., that some activity was bound to some category) as an element of an account on the investigator's authority, without deriving from it any analytic pay-off other than the claimed account for the data which motivated its introduction in the first place.

The editorial effort to combine and blend largely overlapping treatments of the same material, which has prompted the inclusion of lectures delivered during the following term in Fall 1966, here in the Spring 1966 set (e.g., lecture 04.a), brings into relief certain shifts in analytic focus which accompanied a return by Sacks to the same empirical materials. Only two of

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[29] See, for example, lecture 04.b, p. 295, here included with the Spring 1966 lectures, though actually delivered later, in Fall 1966: '. . . it is our business to *analyze* how it is that something gets done, or how something is 'a something,' and not to *employ* it.'

This theme – as represented, for example, in the phrase introduced by Garfinkel, 'commonsense knowledge as topic and resource' – is, of course, central to ethnomethodology.

these shifts can be taken up here, and only for a brief mention.

As remarked earlier, the analytic task set front and center in the initial lectures for Spring 1966 was "how recognizable actions get done and get done recognizably." The first two lectures address those questions to the actions 'doing describing' and 'doing storytelling.' (The third lecture, omitted here because of its availability in a published version as 'Everyone has to lie' took up the issue of 'doing a recognizably true statement.') Lectures 04.a and 04.b, interpolated here from Fall 1966, have a different analytic focus – observing and establishing orderliness – but lectures 4, 5 and 6 (delivered in the Spring term) continue the 'recognizable actions' theme (doing recognizable invitation and rejection) and reproducible methods for accomplishing recognizable actions.

At the same time there is an apparent shift toward the invocation of a kind of evidence that was to assume an increasingly central place in Sacks' conception of how to ground an argument or an observation. In lecture 4 (from the Spring) he proposes that, in order to establish that "we were in an automobile discussion" is doing a recognizable invitation, it is necessary not only to agree that it "looks like an invitation" but to show "how that's so" (p. 301) with the description of a method for doing invitations that works for the instance at hand. This echoes the stance of lectures 1 and 2.

In lecture 04.a (pp. 286–7, 288–9) from the Fall 1966 term, Sacks offers as evidence that some earlier talk was attended by others than its overt interlocutors, and as evidence that it constituted a recognizable introduction, the *prima facie* evidence afforded by a subsequent speaker's talk. Specifically, he notes, that when Ken responds to the utterance of his name by the therapist Dan not with "What" (as in an answer to a summons), indeed not with an utterance to the therapist at all, but with a greeting to the newly arrived Jim, he shows himself (to the others there assembled as well as to us, analytic overhearers) to have attended and analyzed the earlier talk, to have understood that an introduction sequence was being launched, and to be prepared to participate by initiating a greeting exchange in the slot in which it is he who is being introduced.

There is a shift here in analytic stance and procedure, from the analyst's understanding as initial point of departure on the one hand to the co-participant's understanding as initial point of departure on the other.

In the former mode, the analysis begins with an asserted convergence of interpretations and recognitions by the analyst and the analyst's audience (for example, that something is a story, that 'the mommy' is 'the mommy of the baby,' that an utterance is doing an invitation, and so on). It proceeds by the provision of a methodical basis for both that convergence of understandings and the convergence between the 'understanders' and the producers of the to-be-understood 'in the data.' In the latter mode, analysis begins with an asserted observation (that not-overtly-engaged participants are attending, and, indeed, are obligated to attend to the talk), and then immediately grounds that observation in subsequent conduct by the co-participants in the episode being examined. That conduct is taken as displaying the product of

their orientation to, and understanding of, the setting and what has been transpiring in it. The site of analysis is located in the setting of the data at the outset. And further: the analysts' so treating the conduct of the participants is itself grounded in the claim that the co-participants so treat it.

This contrast in stance and procedure is visible in this publication of the lectures only briefly, by virtue of the juxtaposition of the material from Spring and Fall 1966. What is seen only in lecture 0.4a–b here is seen increasingly thereafter, starting with the Winter 1967 lectures in the present volumes. Of course, this shift does not entail any abandonment of the commitment to provide an account for how the recognizable outcome – whatever sort of object it may be – is produced, although the form such an account might take does change over time. The subsequently developed description of the turn-taking organization, for example, is offered as a procedural account for how a substantial collection of observable achievements of ordinary talk are methodically produced by the co-participants.

What I have referred to as the 'culturalist' tenor of the Spring 1966 lectures is set in the first of its lectures, when Sacks sums up his initial gloss of the understanding of "The baby cried . . ." as indicative of "the operation of the *culture*" as "something real and something finely powerful" (Lecture 1(R), pp. 245–6, emphasis supplied). The analysis of the membership categorization device and of the commonsense knowledge organized by reference to its categories is, in its fashion, an analysis of culture – "an analysis of *some* culture," as Sacks puts it (lecture 30, p. 469, emphasis supplied). Throughout these 34 lectures (cf. especially lectures 13, 16–21, 24–25 and 31 and the appended manuscript 'On some formal properties of children's games') may be found treatments of various forms and artifacts of 'culture' in at least that anthropological sense in which it refers to the categories through which 'reality' is grasped. Among these forms and artifacts are the categories of persons making up a society and its world and who is entitled authoritatively to 'administer' those categories (lecture 13), notions of possession and possessables, the constitution of observations and descriptions, measurements systems (lecture 24), games (lectures 13 and 31 and 'On some formal properties . . .'), conceptions of danger and their bearing on differentially accomplishing such actions as warning and challenge (lecture 10, 12) etc. A kind of socio-cultural semantics is involved, and a largely anthropological literature is invoked, reflecting Sacks' engagement with then-contemporary work in so-called 'ethnoscience.'[30]

[30] Cf. Sacks' contrast of his own way of working on such matters with the then-mainstream approaches to ethnoscience, for example, with regard to 'measurement systems,' the discussion at lecture 24, p. 436, where the contrast is almost certainly with the work of Berlin and Kay (1969, but circulated in mimeo earlier) on color terms.

Although ethnoscience is in point for this particular reference, Sacks' reading in, and use of, the anthropological literature was very broad indeed – both in 'areal' terms and in 'approaches.' What he most appreciated was some combination of dense and acutely observed ethnography, tempered by a sharp theoretical intelli-

All of these lectures provide rich materials for analysis and discussion, but in the present context, a brief consideration of Sacks' treatment of games may serve to recall some of the relevant intellectual context for this sort of cultural analysis, as well as to permit a brief consideration of a direction for the study of culture and acculturation, including language acquisition, which deserves fuller exploration than it has been accorded.

The most immediately relevant context for writing about games within American social science in the mid-1960's traces back to the invention of 'game theory' in 1944 by von Neumann and Morgenstern as a branch of mathematics with overtly 'social' applications (the title of their book was *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*), with its subsequent elaboration by economists and others concerned with strategic thinking, most visibly in the late 1950's and early 1960's, in authors such as Kenneth Boulding (1963), and Thomas Schelling (1961). The analytic force of the metaphor propelled it into the arena of discourse and interaction as well, the language of constitutive rules playing a central role in Searle's development of speech act theory, for example, and strategic considerations entering psychology and sociology through varieties of 'exchange theory' (e.g., Thibaut and Kelley, 1959, or Blau, 1964). More proximately to Sacks' thinking, both Goffman and Garfinkel had explored the game model or metaphor in their own work – Goffman in his essay 'Fun in games' (in Goffman, 1961) and later in *Strategic Interaction* (1969, but written in 1966–7), and Garfinkel in the so-called 'trust' paper (Garfinkel, 1963), a paper from which he subsequently distanced himself, refusing to include it in the collection of his papers in 1967, *Studies in Ethnomethodology*.

One problem with the assimilation of game theory into social science was in establishing the limits of its usefulness as a model of social reality, a concern surely central to both Goffman's and Garfinkel's treatment of it. One central objection is that 'games' fail as a basic model of social order much as 'contract' failed as a basic model in Durkheim's discussion of 'utilitarian' social theory, an element of Durkheim (and Parsons' (1937) treatment of Durkheim) especially emphasized by Garfinkel. In both cases, the 'model' – whether 'contract' or 'game' – is itself 'an institution,' a normatively constrained organization of understandings and conduct, with its own constitutive infrastructure. 'Contract' could not undergird social order because, as a legal institution, it was itself undergirded by the social order it was invoked to explain. So also would 'games' fail as models of social interaction, for the

gence, and informed by broad learning. I recall especially his appreciation of Hocart and Elizabeth Colson, of Fortune and Edmund Leach, of Evans-Pritchard and Max Gluckman. But less reknowned ethnographers were no less appreciated. His fondness for ethnography crossed disciplinary boundaries, and he collected original issues of the volumes produced by the founding 'Chicago school' of sociological field workers – Nels Anderson, Paul Cressey, Franklin Frazier, Clifford Shaw, Frederic Thrasher, Harvey Zorbaugh – and later sociological ethnographies such as Dollard (1937), Drake and Cayton (1945), and, in a different vein, studies like Cressey (1953), discussed earlier.

conduct of games and their constitution presumed an infrastructure of interactional conduct, and an epistemic/ontological definition as a discrete order of 'reality,' within which games constituted a separate domain of activities. Such misgivings would surely have informed Sacks' approach to games from the outset.

It is noteworthy, in this regard, that Sacks focussed on *childrens'* games,[31] and that one of his central preoccupations was to get at that very infrastructure by reference to which games, as a special class of events, also are undergirded. Thus, both in lecture 13 (on the game 'Button-button who's got the button') and in the draft manuscript on children's games appended to the Spring 1966 lectures, games are treated not as models *of* or *about* social life *for* the social scientist, but as training grounds for formal aspects of social life *in* social life, i.e., as arenas within social life for kids' learning of central features of (the) culture, features such as the operation of membership categorization devices, the management of appearance and emotional display, etc. His treatment of children's games aims to provide analytic particulars for his claim ('On some formal properties . . . , Spring 1966, Appendix A, p. 502) that "Play then becomes an environment for learning and demonstrating criterial matters in real world action." Games provide models *of* social life *in* social life for its initiates, and in that capacity can be looked to for methodically central components of culture. In that regard, for example, such a game-relevant contrast as 'counting' versus 'not counting' can provide materials on which can be built such 'real-world' contrasts as 'legal versus illegal.'

Considerations of enculturation and 'language acquisition' provide an especially provocative focus for a matter which Sacks raises, in the first instance, rather more as a methodological point. Taking up the methodological relevance of sampling, Sacks points out that it depends on the sort of order one takes it that the social world exhibits. An alternative to the possibility that order manifests itself at an aggregate level and is statistical in character is what he terms the 'order at all points' view (lecture 33, p. 484). This view, rather like the 'holographic' model of information distribution, understands order not to be present only at aggregate levels and therefore subject to an overall differential distribution, but to be present in detail on a case by case, environment by environment basis. A culture is not then to be found only by aggregating all of its venues; it is substantially present in each of its venues.

Leaving aside the consequences for the methodology of professional inquiry, consider the implication that ' . . . any Member encountering from his infancy a very small portion of it, and a random portion in a way (the parents he happens to have, the experiences he happens to have, the vocabulary that happens to be thrown at him in whatever sentences he

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[31] Recall that this antedates by several years organized attention to play and games in the social science community, as represented, for example, in the wide ranging collection edited by Bruner, Jolly and Sylva (1976).

happens to get) comes out in many ways pretty much like everybody else, and able to deal with pretty much anyone else' (ibid., p. 485).

In such a view, one might conjecture, we have one, and perhaps the major, theoretically available alternative to Chomsky's argument that, given the highly limited and 'degenerate' sample of a language to which first language learners are exposed, most of language – the crucial part – must certainly be innate; they surely could not be induced from the available 'inputs.'

The alternative is to consider a culture – and language as one component of culture – to be organized on the basis of 'order at all points.' If culture were built that way, then socialization and language acquisition might well be designed accordingly, and require induction from just the 'limited' environments to which the 'inductee' is exposed. As Sacks writes (ibid., p. 485), ". . . given that for a Member encountering a very limited environment, he has to be able to do that [i.e., grasp the order] . . . things are so arranged as to permit him to." 'Things' here presumably includes the organization of culture, the organization of language, the organization of learning, and the organization of interaction through which the learning is largely done. What such a view projects is the need for an account of culture and interaction – and the acquisition of culture and language *in* interaction – which would complement a 'cognitive' language acquisition device and innate grammar much reduced from contemporary understanding. Studies relevant to such a view have been pursued for the last two decades or so, but not necessarily under the auspices of the theoretical stance toward culture which Sacks projects here. The evidence for an 'order at all points' view has accrued throughout Sacks' subsequent work and the work of others working in this area.

IX

The sessions from Winter 1967 appear in various respects transitional. There are returns to, and revisions of, themes initially discussed in earlier sets, including 1964–5 lectures, and initial explorations of topics taken up in much greater detail in subsequent terms. The discussion here can only touch on a few of these themes.

It is in the session of March 2, 1967 that we find the first substantial consideration of turn-taking in multi-party settings. Here, as elsewhere in the lectures, a set of materials is treated lightly near the end of one term, and then is taken up in much greater detail in the next. The single session devoted to turn-taking in Winter 1967 is followed by seven lectures in Spring 1967 (the lectures on turn-taking from that term are not printed here), and an extensive run in Fall 1967.[32]

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[32] Another 'take,' embodying a different stance toward the work, is presented in the Fall 1968 lectures.

A good deal of this treatment seems to have been prompted by reflections on the difference between the two-party talk discussed in the 1964–5 and Fall 1965 lectures on the one hand (for which the materials were drawn from telephone calls to the Suicide Prevention Center), and, on the other, the group therapy sessions (GTS) on which many subsequent lecture sets are based.

But the relevance of working with multi-person talk was not limited to the issue of turn-taking alone. To cite but one other product of the juxtaposition, the discussion at pp. 529–33 of the March 2 session is concerned with 'derivative actions,' i.e., what a speaker may be doing to a third party by virtue of addressing a recipient in a certain way. This seemed to Sacks but one indication of the need to take up multi-person materials apart from two-party ones (p. 533).[33]

There is a theme taken up in the February 16 session, and touched on again on March 9 (pp. 543–6), whose relevance to contemporary concerns (both then and now) may be worth brief development here. One way of characterizing those concerns is the generic relevance of context to talk in interaction.

The general question taken up is whether there is some way of formulating or invoking the sheer fact of the 'settinged'-ness of some activity, without formulating or specifying the setting. The 'solution' which Sacks points to is the use of indicator terms (e.g., 'here and now' or stable uses of 'this') to do this, a usage which affords us evidence that it can, in fact, be done. Indicator terms can be seen as a machinery for invoking an unformulated setting, for referring to (categorially-) unidentifed persons, or taking note of unformulated activities.

But where does this 'question' come from? Why is its solution of any interest? The beginning of the discussion, of course, is given not by a question, but by some observations which end up as the 'solution.' This was a common, and recommended, analytic procedure for Sacks: begin with some *observations*, then find the problem for which those observations could serve as (elements of) the solution.

The observations in point here concerned the use of such 'indicator terms,' terms whose special relevance for ethnomethodology had (under the name 'indexical expressions') already been developed and underscored by Garfinkel (1967, passim). And the central observations here had come up in a train of considerations with a quite different focus, along the following lines.

The discussion begins with the problems of the 'professional' analyst (i.e., the 'conversation analyst,' not the 'therapist' in the data) establishing the categorization device 'patient/therapist' as omni-relevant for the participants (which would cast it as always-invocable – 'on tap,' so to speak – both by participants and by analyst). One way of doing that analytic task is to establish a formulation of the setting as 'group therapy session' as omni-relevant. Sacks then observes that this is but one form of 'formulating as a

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[33] Subsequently it turned out that derivative actions can be found in two-party conversation as well (Schegloff, 1984 [1976]).

Introduction xlixsuch-and-such,' and that this is something that *Members* do. When they do it, it is consequential, that is, they are doing some possible *action* in doing the formulation. (Recall the discussion in Spring, 1966 of "we were in an automobile discussion" as a formulation of the topic as a such-and-such which is consequential – which does a possible invitation.)

The question then is: is there some way of referring to the context, or components of the context, without *formulating* the context (or persons or actions in it) as such-and-such – without, therefore, potentially doing the actions which such a formulation might do. (Note that this can be a consideration both for members/participants-in-the-interaction and for professional analysts: for members so as to avoid doing the potential actions and the responses they would engender in the interactional setting; for analysts because it is precisely the escape from control by that interactional consequentiality, from what otherwise constrains or 'disciplines' formulations, that makes professional use of the lay device problematic).

It is in this context that the observation about the indicator terms finds its resonance: terms like 'here and now' can invoke any present context and any conception of scope-of-context ('in this room,' 'in 20th-century America,' etc.) without formulating it. And by requiring a recipient to provide its sense, they recruit the recipient into the speaker's project; they make the recipient complicit in forming up its sense.

Several further brief comments will have to suffice here:

1   The observation that formulating does more than simply naming what is formulated is focussed especially on 'formulating what someone is doing' in the March 9 lecture (pp. 544–6), and it sounds a theme central to the paper 'Formal properties of practical action' (Garfinkel and Sacks, 1972), though that paper was (according to Sacks) Garfinkel's work. In this discussion in Winter 1967 we see something of Sacks' 'take' on similar issues, possibly one source of discussions of this theme between them.

2   The considerations raised here (and when this theme is addressed elsewhere) impose a constraint on discussions of 'context' and its bearing on talk and action which has not been fully absorbed in the literature. The same problems raised about the categorization of persons/members pertain:

the set of available characterizations is indefinitely extendable;
the selection of some one or more is potentially a way of doing something, (i.e., is open to such understanding by others);
in actual interaction, such possible interpretation by interlocutors and the responses they may offer in turn, can serve as a constraint on actually selecting such a formulation;
the absence of such a constraint in the activities of professional analysts leaves the grounds of such choices undisciplined, and therefore problematic.

The positivist solution to this problem (i.e., constraining the choice of formulation by explanatory adequacy as attested by 'evidence,' leaves the

actual orientations of participants out of the picture. Where 'context' is made
a central notion, these concerns will have continuing relevance.

   3   The effort to cast 'therapist/patient' as an omni-relevant categorization
device has as one continuing relevance the concern with the bearing of gender
(and perhaps other of what Hughes (1971) used to call 'master statuses') on
talk-in-interaction. Were those who bring considerations of gender to bear on
all phenomena of interaction to take seriously the considerations touched on
just above, they might undertake to show that the pervasive relevance of
gender can be grounded in the demonstrably equally pervasive orientations to
it by participants to interaction. In effect, this would amount to showing that
the categories and terms of gender identification are omni-relevant for
interaction.

   Sacks' exploration of this issue in Winter 1967 is left unresolved. By the
time he comes to cast the indicator terms as ways of invoking the
settinged-ness of the interaction without formulating it, the problem of
establishing omni-relevance of either member-formulation or context-
formulation has been abandoned. In its place is the possibility of non-
formulation, of a kind of specific abstractness in treating the contexted
character of activity. But the exploration of omni-relevance is taken up again
in lecture 14 for Spring 1967 (cf. discussion below at pp. liii–livff.).

   One theme from the 1964–5 lectures which reappears in the Winter 1967
lectures, reapplied to a related topic, is that of 'direct' versus 'in-various-
ways-non-direct' speaking; the topic to which it is now applied is 'euphe-
mism' (or what may be, once the data are examined, better termed 'irony').
Although the 1964–5 lectures asked over and over again 'how to do X
without doing it overtly,' the message here is that to ask why a euphemism
or ironic trope was used instead of a direct or 'literal' saying is to get the
question wrong. What Sacks is urging here (March 9, 1967, pp. 545–6) is
that the first-order consideration is not directness/indirectness or literalness/
figurativeness. Rather it is (for the speaker) a saying which displays its
relevance at that point in the talk, and (for the hearers) a saying such that
their understanding (their *capacity* to understand) 'proves' the utterance's
relevance. The 'norm' is not, in the first instance, direct or literal reference,
but rather ways of talking that are *locally adapted* and can show *local
relevance*.

   The first-order considerations are thus tying rules and other local connec-
tions between elements of the talk, rather than 'saying it directly.' The issue
of 'directness/indirectness' comes to the fore only with academic analysts
determined to understand the talk 'in general,' stripped of its local context.
For them what comes to identify a bit of talk, to constitute its re-referable
core, is its semantico-lexical content and perhaps its pragmatic upshot. With
that as the core, then various ways of realizing that central identity can come
to be formulated as more-or-less straightforward, direct, literal, or 'tropic' in
some respect. What was *in situ* a production tailored to the details of local
context is reinterpreted as a design for indirectness when local context is

stripped away and no longer accessible as the source of the utterance's design.

How is this line to be reconciled with the analysis in the 1964–5 lectures, where just this question is asked – e.g., why seek out the other's name without asking for it directly? Perhaps this is one locus of development and change in Sacks' thought during this period. But it is also possible that when the embodiment-of-indirection cannot be understood (by recipient, or by professional analyst) as an adaptation to the local context, then the question of why the indirect rather than the direct may in fact be warranted and useful, and in just those terms.[34]

X

There are three predominants 'casts' to the lectures of Spring 1967.

As noted earlier, the first seven lectures (not published in this edition) constituted the first sustained set on turn-taking, expanding the treatment in the lecture of March 2 in the Winter 1967 set. This is a 'sequential organization' cast.

Lectures 8–9, earlier treated in lecture 3 for Spring 1966 and subsequently published as 'Everyone has to lie' (1975), have what might be termed more of a 'socio-logic' cast – juxtaposing to what might appear 'logical' ways of analyzing the conversational materials properly socio-logical ones.

From lecture 11 on, the materials take on the same flavor of anthropological/cultural analysis that so heavily informs the Spring 1966 set. This is largely the result of a focus on membership categories underlying talk and relationships between those categories (their relative positionedness for instance), notions of activities 'bound to' those categories, and the sorts of commonsense 'knowledge' organized by reference to those categories (in the manner of 'Y do X,' where Y is a category name, such as 'women,' 'freshmen,' 'politicians,' etc.) Some of this material was organized into a draft manuscript under the title, 'On a device basic to social interaction,' around the time of writing of 'An initial investigation . . .' As introduced into these lectures, much of the earlier statement seems to have been substantially refined.

The discussion here will be limited to some reflections on the "Everyone has to lie" analysis and on the reconsideration by Sacks of the matter of the

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[34] And Sacks does sometimes work on an utterance by addressing, what it *prima facie* would be *out* of context, in a more-or-less 'literal' hearing, and with good results; cf. Spring 1966, lecture 29 pp. 461–2, where he shows how various components of the utterance "Usually there's a broad in here" are neither produced nor grasped in their 'bare' literal sense: e.g., 'here', means not 'this place' but 'when we are in [therapy] session;' 'a broad,' means not 'some woman' but 'the same woman,' indeed 'a particular same woman,' and one who is a member of the group, etc.

omni-relevance of formulations of setting and participants, earlier taken up in Spring 1966 and in Winter 1967.

At least one underlying source and rationale for the animating question being addressed in the 'exercise' concerned with the assertion "everyone has to lie" is formulated by Sacks (Spring 1967, lecture 8, p. 549) as "How could we as social scientists go about saying about something that a Member said, that it's true." It may be useful to 'unpack' the background for this question at least partially.[35]

As rhetoric as a core method and discipline for the analysis of what can be said gradually became demoted in the intellectual hierarchy of western culture, and logic developed an increasing hegemony, it brought with it an increasingly exclusive preoccupation with 'truth' as the paramount feature of assertions requiring definition and assessment. In part this concern was in the service of 'science,' and its aims of establishing stable propositions about the world whose truth could be established once and for all.

When attention began in the 20th century to turn to statements in so-called ordinary language, the analytic apparatus available for use was that of formal logic, and it was in part by virtue of the results of applying a formal logic developed in the service of science and mathematics to ordinary language that natural languages were found defective and the need for 'formal languages' made compelling. But the goals of logic/science and ordinary discourse are by no means the same, and the use of language in them may be quite different. What is relevant to establishing the truth of a proposition in science – and what might be 'meant' by 'truth' – may be quite different from assessing the truth of a 'commonsense assertion' in ordinary circumstances. It is this gap which, in part, Sacks is addressing.

Here, as elsewhere, Sacks' exploration of this theme (the contrast between 'common sense' and 'scientific' procedures) is focussed on a class of terms which is especially symbolic of logic – quantifiers. In 'An initial investigation . . .' as well such a term had become a focus of analysis. There it was the term 'no one,' in the claim by a suicidal person that they have "no one to turn to," and Sacks undertook to explicate how 'no one' is used, and used 'correctly,' given the 'paradox' that the assertion is made precisely in the conversation in which its speaker has turned to 'someone.'

'Initial investigation . . .' showed how "no one to turn to" was not belied by having turned to someone for the conversation in which it was said because 'no one' had as its scope only certain categories of person; 'no one' was not being used in some formal logical sense, as 'no person.' It was therefore misguided to begin with a 'logical' understanding of the term, when that was not the use being made of it in the production of the utterance.

In lectures 8 and 9, the quantifier under examination is 'everyone.' Again, Sacks proposes not to begin with some sense of the term derived from logic (some 'strict usage' as he puts it), and find how trivially to disprove the assertion by showing that there is at least one person who does *not* have to lie.

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[35] A similar question is taken up in Spring 1966, lecture 26.

Rather, he proposes that we must investigate anew, and for its usage in ordinary conversation, how a term like 'everyone' is constituted and used.

And more generally, assessing the truth of the assertion involves not just a manipulation of truth conditions, but rather an explication of those practices of talk-in-interaction which the assertion could reflect an orientation to, and whose actual operation could be what is being invoked in the asserted claim. In the context of this lecture, this refers to the contingencies of the 'How are you' question, its privileges of occurrence, its types of relevant answer, and how the further courses of action which its answers make contingently relevant affect the choice of answers in the first instance (pp. 556ff.). By the end of the discussion, this structure is generalized well beyond 'How are you,' and is used to specify where lying may be generically suspected, where confessions of it will be readily believed, etc.

In any case, what emerges as criterial to the inquiry is not a *logical* analysis of the component terms of the assertion and an assesment of their combination, but a *social* analysis of those contingencies of interaction which could give rise to the condition which the assertion claims. The upshot here is to blunt the *prima facie* application of 'logical' analysis as the first-order consideration in much the same fashion as several of the Spring 1966 lectures had the import of blunting the *prima facie* linguistic analysis of an utterance (cf. above at pp. xxxvii–xxxix, the discussion of 'the ordering of analyses'). In both cases, the tools of linguistic and logical analysis are shown to have their relevance and applicability constrained by, and contingent on, prior sequential, interactional and cultural specifications of the practices of talking underlying production of the utterance.

What emerges is, then, a wholly different conception of what the analysis of ordinary discourse should consist in. It is this result which is adumbrated by asking at the outset how social scientists might go about assessing the truth of what a Member says, and this which animates that question.[36]

In lecture 14 (from p. 594 to the end of the lecture) Sacks again takes up the question of the 'omni-relevance' of a category collection. In the discussion of Winter 1967, the issue became redefined as invoking a context (and potentially associated membership categories) without actually formulating them – invoking the sheer fact of 'settinged-ness' (cf. above, pp. xlviii–l). Here, the discussion remains focused on the possibility of omni-relevance.

What he means by 'omni-relevance,' Sacks says, is two-fold: 'on the one hand, there are some actions which, for their effectiveness [i.e., to be recognized as that type of action], involve categorial membership in that collection, and, on the other hand, until the course of action is ended, one can't rule out the further use of that collection.' The elegant solution to the problem of showing 'therapist/patient' to be omni-relevant in the empirical materials under examination lies in noting that the effective doing of an ending to the occasion requires reference to the status of one of the parties as

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[36] This sort of inquiry may be seen to inform the first paragraphs of lecture 11 as well.

'therapist.' The point is made even more exquisite by 'the therapist' actually only hinting at the 'session's' closure, and one of the more experienced patients interpreting that hint for a new patient.

What is key to the solution is its focus on the efficacy of the utterance in implementing the action of initiating the ending of the session and the non-contingency of that action. Other actions could be understood to activate the relevance of the categories germane to their efficacy, but those categories might not on that account alone necessarily be claimable as omni-relevant. But accomplishing an ending is, first, a non-contingent occurrence for the occasion (the issue is not whether it will be done, but when), and therefore prospective, i.e., relevant even before an action might invoke it. It is this non-contingent prospective relevance of an action – an action which itself makes a membership category relevant – which grounds the argument for omni-relevance here.[37]

This lecture affords an especially clear example (as Sacks' own lead-in makes clear) of one form which his kind of theorizing took. It regularly began with an observation about the particular materials being examined (an observation, of course, commonly informed by his prior work and wide reading). That observation might then be 'developed:' its terms being given an 'anterior' development, i.e., he would find and explicate what his own initiating observation could be seen, on reflection, to have presupposed; those presuppositions might well be more 'observations,' and more consequential ones. That package of observations might be followed up through discussion of matters in the literature which they touched off, through exploring purely formal kinds of logics they suggested, purely 'theoretical' possibilities they seem to entail, etc. But, recurrently, these 'theoretical' developments would be brought back to empirical materials – either what had initiated the whole line, or other materials which the line of theorizing brought to mind. It was in this sense that the effort was prosecuted to put theorizing at every point under the control of empirical materials.

The actual presentations sometimes obscured this way of working. In lecture 14, for example, Sacks begins with what appear to be very abstract considerations about applying categories to partition a population, and the relationship between the partitionings yielded by different category collections. This then is putatively 'applied' to the material at hand, in the analysis of 'teenager/adult' as a 'cover' collection preserving partitioning constancy with 'patient/therapist;' and in the covering of 'patient/observer' with 'performer/audience.' It was initially an observation about the latter – re the utterance "Testing" (p. 593) in particular – which motivated much of this line. Of course, the most extensive such reversal of order of discovery and order

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[37] How Sacks' line of argument might bear on a claimed omni-relevance of gender (to re-pose an issue earlier discussed) is unclear. At the least, the constraint of "until the course of action is ended one can't rule out the further use of that collection" requires working out in any occasion being examined, specifically what 'the course of action' can be taken to be.

or presentation is the paper 'An initial investigation . . . ,' in which the originating observation was about "no one to turn to," the serious exploration of which led to formulating it as the result of a search procedure, which required formulating the terms of the search and the categories by reference to which it is conducted, etc. It was with the last of these that the paper itself began.

XI

The Fall 1967 lectures turned out to be the last at UCLA. Sacks' teaching during the Spring 1968 term was in seminar format, although he did offer sustained presentations on occasion, and these are included in the present volumes. And by Fall 1968 Sacks had moved to the University of California, Irvine (although there is no reason to think the prospect was already known at the time of the Fall 1967 lectures, or informed their delivery).

These lectures include the first extended treatment of turn-taking presented in these volumes, although the first seven lectures for Spring 1967 (not printed here) represented Sacks' actual first effort on this scale. The Fall 1967 lecture set is the only one in which Sacks offered extended treatments of both turn-taking organization and tying structures. Tying structures are discussed in several earlier lecture sets, but not again after Fall 1967. And the discussions of identification and categorization to which Sacks returned several times in the lectures preceding Fall 1967 are not taken up here, and henceforth reappear only sporadically and for much briefer treatment. Sequential organization increasingly dominates the agenda of Sacks' lectures, including expanding discussions of turn-taking, of sequence structure and adjacency pairs, of overall structural organization, of story-telling organization, etc.

If the Spring 1966 lectures were especially 'anthropological' in orientation, then the Fall 1967 lectures are especially oriented to linguistics.

This note is sounded early, when in the initial lecture, a general introduction, Sacks (pp. 622–3) projects the preoccupations of the course with 'sequential analysis' (though not under that name), which he introduces by remarking that ' . . . the discoverable aspects of single utterances turn out to be handleable – perhaps handleable only – by reference to sequencing considerations . . . ,' and declaring his interest in ". . . how it is that sequencing considerations turn out to be implicative of what happens in a given utterance."

"Linguistics," by contrast (he argues), "is that study of the utterance which involves detecting those features of it which are handleable without reference to such considerations as sequencing; i.e., without reference to that it has occurred in conversation" (ibid.).

One question, then, is whether "there is the *possibility* of . . . a fully comprehensive, coherent linguistics *without* such matters." Another is how such study of single utterances can be "brought into alignment with what we

know about sociology and anthropology. And if not, what then?"[38]

Recurrently throughout these lectures Sacks brings the results of a line of analysis or argument into juxtaposition with the main thrust of contemporary linguistic theory and analysis (i.e., of the early to mid-1960s). One result is the sketching of whole orders of observable regularity and apparent normative organization which have largely, in some cases entirely, escaped the notice of the main thrust of the contemporary study of 'language.' In some respects, this is undoubtedly related to the ambition of modern linguistics (tracable at least to de Saussure) to transcend particular contexts and media of language use – not only social and cultural settings, but also oral and written embodiments – so as to describe an underlying, presumably invariant, linguistic code. The attention to sequential organization – an order of organization seemingly inescapable in the effort to understand and describe actual, naturally occurring talk in interaction – forcefully belies the premise of the currently dominant commitments of linguistics. Running through both the Fall 1967 lectures and the presentations of Spring 1968 are several recurrent themes, whose central upshot is:

How sequential considerations necessarily inform or bear on the construction and understanding of single utterances;
How understanding of some talk is regularly displayed by its recipients; and
What that has required of recipients, and how those requirements are formative of *their* talk in turn.

These themes are returned to persistently, almost compulsively, and they are considerations of a 'foundationalist' sort – that is, they go to the matter of what foundations a discipline of language must be understood to rest on.

Sacks has seemed to some to have abandoned his commitment to contextually-sensitive analysis in turning to the study of sequential structure, and turn-taking in particular. But in insisting on the decisive relevance of sequential organization as furnishing the most proximate reference points of context, Sacks showed the consequences of disattending the fact that language was being used in a medium which was inexorably temporal and interactional. The results of these explorations of sequential context offer, in their own way, as sharp a contrast to formal linguistic analysis as did Sacks' earlier explorations in the 1964–5 lectures offer a contrast with Searle's efforts at context-free speech act theorizing (cf. above, pp. xxiv–xxix).

[38] Later (for example, in a letter to me in 1974) Sacks seems to have taken a different tack, namely, that a systematic discipline might not be buildable on the analysis of single utterances, or single instances of other units or occurrences, but that large amounts of material might be needed. At the time of his death, we had just begun a large-scale investigation of 'next turn repair initiators' which was going to be an exploration of that sort of undertaking. This subsequent development, of course, in no way blunts the impact which Sacks produced by asking what was to be made of the single utterance or the single sequence or the single exemplar of anything to be analyzed, and the detailed findings which this way of working led him to.

Appreciation of the recurrent linguistic orientation in many of these lectures should not be allowed to obscure the range and variety of matters taken up in them, and the diversity of the intellectual resources being called upon from many different traditions of inquiry. One case in point must suffice.

In lecture 6 for Fall 1967 Sacks returns to a point which had come up in earlier sets of lectures, concerning the inclusion in analysis of things which did not happen, here offering as one special relevance of 'next-speaker selection techniques' and 'paired utterances' (the later 'adjacency pairs') that they provide enhanced analytic leverage for speaking of something being absent – e.g., the utterance of an unresponsive selected next speaker, or the absence of a responsive paired utterance. The problem of warranting claims about 'absences' has resonated to many corners of the conversation-analytic domain of issues. Then Sacks adds (p. 670):

> A way, perhaps, to develop a notion of 'absence' involves looking to places where such a notion is used and attempting to see whether there are various sorts of relevance structures that provide that something *should* occur. Parenthetically, I'll give as a rule for reading academic literature, that whenever you see somebody proposing that something didn't happen – and you'll regularly find, e.g., sociologists, anthropologists, or historians particularly, saying that something didn't happen, something hadn't been developed yet – that they're proposing that it's not just an observation, but an observation which has some basis of relevance for it.

Sacks' interest in the matter of 'absences' antedates his work with conversational materials. He had taken a special interest in an observation of Max Weber's that some aspect of ancient Middle Eastern history was to be understood by reference to the fact that (as Sacks would put it in conversation) "that was before the appearance of the horse as an instrument of warfare."[39] The issue this posed was, how could something be the consequence of something which had not happened yet? Clearly some set of relevancies to which the theorist was oriented informed this way of thinking.

And, earlier yet, I recall a conversation at the Law and Society Center in Berkeley in 1962–3 (involving Sacks, a Marxist graduate student in sociology from Argentina and myself) in which the discussion lingered on 'explanations' for the absence of revolutions founded on the Marxist notion of 'false consciousness.' At issue were both the theoretical status of observations

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[39] Weber (1952: 6, emphasis supplied):

> Because the nature of military and administrative technology of the time precluded it, before the seventeenth century BC, a lasting political conquest was impossible for either of the great cultural centers. *The horse, for instance, while not completely absent, at least, not in Mesopotamia, had not as yet been converted into an implement of special military technique.*

concerning the non-occurrence of revolution, and the reliance, in the concept of 'false consciousness,' on a stipulated account by the theorist/analyst of what the 'real' interests of the proletariat were, a correct appreciation of which was 'absent' from their (i.e., workers') understanding of the world. What made those 'understandings' relevant, such that not sharing them amounted to their 'absence,' and rendered other beliefs of the working class to be 'false consciousness,' with sufficient explanatory power to account for the absence of revolution?

So when Sacks refers in lecture 6 to a 'rule for reading academic literature,' there is specific background informing the line he is recommending. Having initially engaged this issue in the social science literature, Sacks came to find it illuminated in his engagement with interactional materials. For the underlying 'logic' was, although encountered in the first instance in academic materials, but an aspect of 'commonsense' or 'practical' theorizing which had been incorporated in professional social science theorizing.

Eventually Sacks pursued this matter with a variety of interactional materials. For example, in one of the 1964–5 lectures he remarks on the special intimacy and power of a line reportedly addressed to a beloved in explanation of some past bit of biography, "That was before I met you, and I was lonely then." Here again a 'state-of-the-world' is explained by something that had not yet happened, in a powerful display of retroactive relevance.

So these lectures of Fall 1967, however oriented to exploring their interface with contemporary linguistics, retain their grounding in social (even 'sociological') and cultural analysis. Indeed, it is at the meeting point of these disciplines that the analytic action of these lectures is situated.

XII

This volume presents roughly the first half of those lectures which Sacks chose to tape record and have transcribed. The introduction to this point has attempted to provide some thematic overview of these lectures, and somewhat more detailed background and exploration of a few selected issues.

This effort at an overview has been truly daunting, indeed, beyond my own capacities at the present time. Part of this may surely be traced to my own shortcomings. But, for the most part, it reflects rather the extraordinary richness and multi-facetedness of Sacks' corpus. In its variety, depth, and freshness of vision it defies domestication into convenient guidelines to a reader. At least part of this derives from the methodological character of Sacks' initiative – the new way of working he introduced. Starting out with a commitment to lay bare the methodicity of ordinary activities, and with his talent for seeing in singular occurrences the structural elements of which they were formed and composed, a world of data which refreshed itself every moment more than a legion of Sackses could ever make a dent in provided a virtual infinity of opportunities for new observations, and new orders of observation.

Not that it was easy! Sacks often complained about how hard the work was, and that it did not seem to get easier. He spoke in the early 70s of giving it up and working on something less demanding. The problem was, he observed, the need to see "around the corner," to penetrate through the blinders of the implacable familiarity of the mundane materials with which we worked, and the commonsense models and expectations derived from a social science which had never addressed itself to the simple observational tasks of a naturalistic discipline in which such models ought to have been grounded in the first instance. If we were to try to build a discipline, we needed to be able to be freshly open to what could be going on in any given piece of interaction, and to how activities and conduct could possibly be organized. And it was hard to say which was more difficult – to see clearly what was going on in some bit of material, or to figure out how to build from such observations and analyses a worthy discipline. And, of course, these were not independent orders of task – for how to address the empirical materials was always being informed by the direction in which it appeared a discipline might be pursued, and one surely wanted the character of the discipline to be shaped centrally by one's sense of how social activities were actually organized.

In any case, the main line of engagement for Sacks was in directly taking up particular occurrences, particular bits of tape and transcript. And in leaving as open as he could what there was to be noticed about that bit of occurrence, what there was to be learned from it, what we might get to see the importance of for the first time. And this insistence on freeing each next engagement with data from the past – not only the past of the social sciences, but also past work of this sort, including (especially) his own – while still allowing it somehow to inform analysis is what allowed each new fragment of data, each next look back at an old fragment of data, to provide a possible occasion of discovery. Although the sorts of things which emerged (however rich and multifaceted) were constrained by the particular metier of his mind, their range was truly astounding. They overflow efforts to contain them and package them for overview.

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Introduction

Beginning with the Fall Quarter of 1968, Harvey Sacks' lectures were delivered at the then recently established Irvine campus of the University of California. The spirit of the new campus – at least of its School of Social Science under the leadership of its Dean, James March – was quite in keeping with the character of the 1960s. It was infused with a sense of possibility in its academic and scientific ambitions and was correspondingly innovative in organizational form. It dispensed with traditional academic disciplinary boundaries and encouraged small groups of faculty to develop new research enterprises and to define the terms – and requirements – of graduate degrees. The central theme was the unleashing of high quality minds to follow their scholarly and scientific instincts wherever the subject-matter, the theoretical thrust, or the methodological possibilities seemed to lead, free of the constraints imposed by traditional conceptions of disciplinary boundaries and other "professional" obstacles to developments which could genuinely surprise.

Whatever elements of his situation at UCLA suggested the possibility of leaving, the animating ethos of Irvine's School of Social Science was very well suited indeed to Sacks' own intellectual métier and character, and to the disciplinary iconoclasm of his intellectual enterprise. It was a felicitous matching of person and institution. Although Sacks developed a number of close ties to faculty colleagues and played a distinctive role in the inescapable politics of the academy – politics whose importance was amplified by the minimized institutional apparatus of the School – in his work Sacks pursued his own course and did not establish sustained collaborative undertakings with others on the faculty. This too was a viable possibility within the School's culture. Sacks spent the remainder of his academic career at Irvine, although at the very end he was considering another move.

There is little question that the character of Sacks' work as it is displayed in these lectures (as well as in those of Volume 1) was in various ways shaped

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The introduction to Volume 1 presented some biographical information on Harvey Sacks' education, and set the early phases of his work as presented in his lectures from 1964 to 1968 in the context of the academic social science of the time. That material is not repeated here, and the reader interested in this background is referred to the prior volume. The present introduction is concerned less with tracing linkages and contrasts between Sacks' work and other developments in social science (although there is some discussion of this sort) and more with the treatment of Sacks' work in its own terms.

I am indebted to Paul Drew and to John Heritage for reading a draft of this introduction on my behalf, and for the collegiality and helpfulness of their responses.

both by the larger social and cultural *zeitgeist* of America in the 1960s[1] and
by the specific local ambience of southern California during that period,
within which the scene at Irvine played itself out. A delineation of those
connections will have to await another occasion. But there is equally little
question that Sacks' *oeuvre* cannot be reduced to the socio-cultural environ-
ment in which it happened to emerge. The distinctiveness of his vision was
formed before the 1960s, and his pursuit of a distinctive path antedated that
special time as well. And it was formed not only in California but in such
bastions of academic tradition as Columbia, Harvard and Yale.[2]

   There is much continuity between the lectures published in Volumes 1 and
2. Most notably, the extraordinary, detailed analyses of small bits of
conversation in which whole social worlds and whole ranges of personal
experience are dissected from out of apparent interactional detritus continue
to be interlaced with more abstract theoretical and methodological discus-
sions. Various substantive themes persist as well – most importantly the
preoccupation with sequential analysis, and a continuing tacit preoccupation
with how to conceive of "culture."

   There are discontinuities as well. Topically, discussions of membership
categorization devices per se are not resumed, although on occasion the
resources of that body of work and the problems attendant on "doing
formulating" figure centrally, for example, in the lectures for Winter 1969.
A concern with storytelling in conversation which first emerges in the Spring
1968 term is much more fully developed, beginning with considerations of
sequential organization but extending into quite new analytic directions.
Observations about sound patterning and other "literary" aspects of word
selection emerge for the first time, and are taken up in several of the lecture
sets.

   Thematic and analytic continuities and innovations aside, there are some
new stances taken up in the lectures published in Volume 2 to which it may
be useful to call attention, if only briefly. Some of these may serve to suggest
connections between the several sets of lectures which compose this volume;
others may serve as ways of focussing an initial orientation to each set of
lectures in turn. I begin with a theme which first appears in Fall 1968 but
recurs thereafter.

I

One apparent shift of stance which appears concomitant with the move to

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[1]Recall, for example, (as a Los Angeles commentator recently did) that among the events
of just 1968 were counted "the year of McCarthy for President, the fall of L.B.J., the
assassinations of King and Robert Kennedy, the Beatles' White Album, Motown and "2001:
A Space Odyssey"; of war, orgy and dreams of peace, in the summer after the Summer of
Love" (*Los Angeles Times*, August 23, 1991).
   [2]Views which reduce work like Sacks' to something like the product of a California flower
child (for example, Gellner, 1975) are not only demeaning and intellectually evasive in
dismissing by epithet what they cannot decisively engage in substance; they are factually
ill-informed as well.

Irvine is a turn toward systematicity and toward the relevance of substantial amounts of data, that is, aggregates of conversations or of instances of particular phenomena in it. Consider, for example, the stance which Sacks adopts in launching his discussion of turn-taking in lecture 3 (and continuing into lecture 4) for Fall 1968. Among the key points in this new stance are the following (all from lecture 3, p. 32):

> What I want to do is to lay out in as general a way as possible at this point how the sequential organization of conversation is constituted.

Note the shift to "general" and the generic reference to "conversation."

> I start out with two observations about single conversations. . .

Note that although the observations are about "single conversations," they are about aggregates of them.

> I give in this first instance no materials for the observations, in that they are grossly apparent.

Note this shift in practice; nothing *in particular* is the point of departure; an observation about a regularity in an aggregate is the point of departure.

> By the term 'grossly' I mean that while they're overwhelmingly present features, they are also sometimes not present features – and their sometimes non-presence is something I will talk to at considerable length.

Note that the issue here is the dealing with occurrences that depart from a general practice, "sometimes non-presence."

The shift, then, is to:
an order of organization, rather than a particular practice, of talking;
a class of places in an aggregate of data, rather than an excerpt;
an organizationally characterized problem or form of interactional work, rather than an individually designed outcome;
invariancies of features rather than context-specified practices.

This is not, of course, a total shift of procedure. In lectures 5 and 6 Sacks again presents particular materials, and explores turn-taking issues (among others) in the context of a developing set of observations about that excerpt. But there are readily observable consequences of this shift in point of departure and analytic stance; one of these is an increasing (or increasingly explicit) orientation to organization and structure in the domain of conversational conduct. Again, discussion must be limited.

Near the beginning of lecture 4 (p. 44) Sacks develops the point that there

are grounds, built into the organization of conversation, for listening to every utterance for any participant willing to speak if selected, or willing to wait if another is selected to speak. The upshot:

> So again there's motivation to listen, which is independent of any rule that would say 'you ought to listen in conversation;' motivation to listen which turns on a willingness to speak or an interest in speaking.

This is not first time this point has been made in these lectures, but it has a different resonance in the context of the new casting of turn-taking. What is its interest?

Let us note first that the core point seems to be a grounding of listening to utterances in the technical requirements of talking or not talking, the technical requirements of the organization of proper conduct in that regard, rather than its grounding in a normative injunction directed to that outcome specifically. That is, an analytic concern for parsimony is at work here, setting aside a normative constraint, a "rule" if you will, designed specifically to secure "listening" or "attentiveness," or showing that such a rule, if there is one, is not there solely to secure attentiveness, because attentiveness is already a natural, a technical, by-product of the organization of turn-taking.[3]

Now this is surely not to deny a normative component to the organization of interaction or conversation; surely, the sorts of mechanisms by which the turn-taking organization is constituted are normative in character, for the participants and consequently for analysts.[4] On the other hand, it does seem to subordinate considerations which might be termed "politeness" to ones which might be termed "technically constitutive" or "sequence organizational."[5] The parsimony considerations here seem to take the form: what sort of basic organization would both drive the prima facie organization of the talk *and* engender whatever auxiliary effects seem to be involved.

One implication is that listening is not vulnerable to (or is less vulnerable to) whatever it is that may weaken persons' commitment to observe

[3]Subsequently, in lecture 2 for Spring 1972, pp. 535–7, Sacks returns to this theme in the context of his discussion of adjacency pairs, the virtually unrestricted freedom of occurrence of their "first pair parts," and the potential usability of first pair parts for selecting a next speaker. From this, Sacks observes, it "falls out" that a participant willing to speak if selected to do so will have to listen to everything said, for at any point a first pair part selecting them may be done. This account in Spring 1972 is different only in its focus on adjacency pairs as instruments of next speaker selection, rather than on the turn-taking organization per se.

[4]And, indeed, at Fall 1968, lecture 4, p. 50, Sacks proposes, "We have in the first instance, some formal normative features for conversation, which are in a way a public law for conversation: One party at a time. . ." etc.

[5]Compare here the discussion (introduction to Volume 1, p. xxviii–xxix; l–li) of the treatment of "indirect speech acts" with primary respect to considerations of politeness and sequential organization respectively.

normative constraints.[6] The point here is that the basis for listening is not as much at risk as injunctions to be polite, when violations of politeness had become, for example, a systematic political tactic on university campuses. Listening was grounded in self-interest (wanting to talk, or being willing to) and the technical requirements of implementing it. Departures from "features of conversation" should be understood, therefore, not so much by reference to motivated deviation from rules prescribing them as by reference to modified operation of the system of which they are a by-product – for example, in response to variations in context or transient problems in internal coordination.

Note the bearing of this tack on the claims of certain forms of "intentionalist" theorizing (such as those of Searle, 1991) that our knowledge of human action or conduct has only been advanced when "patterns" (as Searle calls them) can be shown to be the causal products of intentions to produce them. If the stance taken here by Sacks is correct, then observed distributions of attention (i.e., observed patterns of listening to others' ongoing talk) may best be understood not as the product of an intention to comply with a rule mandating such attention (even if there was such a rule), but as an imposed requirement for achieving such outcomes as talking if asked to, or withholding talk if another is asked to. (For a more general statement of this theme, see lecture 2 for Spring 1970, and the discussion of that lecture below at p. xxiv and n. 17).

Sacks' grounding of the organization of attention/listening in the individual participant's willingness to talk if asked to or to remain silent (even with something to say) if another has been selected to talk, itself embodies a distinctly sociological theme in accounts of social order. Developed in Sacks' account of turn-taking most explicitly at lecture 4, pp. 50–2, this theme understands the enforcement of the turn-taking organization to work by its identification with individual participants' rights and interests. So understood, individuals are mobilized to defend their rights and interests (e.g., their turn space); the emotions are recruited to this enterprise as well, such that violations of "one-at-a-time" become treated as invasions of some speaker's right, and that incursion engenders anger in defense of those rights, that emotional energy being put in the service of a socially organized enforcement mechanism for the turn-taking organization. Further, gossip, reputation, and the like can be recruited into that enforcement mechanism as well, e.g., under the aegis of violators being "rude." This, then, is how this class of violations gets seen as violations of "politeness," and it is in this light that we should understand at least some "politeness" considerations. That is, it is by reference to "politeness" that sanctioning is *vernacularly formulated*, while the actual occasioning of the violations may be less a matter of normative etiquette and its violations, and more a matter of technical organization or action implementation, effectuated through the identification of individuals'

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[6]Something which was, of course, increasingly remarked upon in the 1960s, and certainly not less in southern California than elsewhere.

rights/interests with the resource which the turn-taking organization distributes.[7]

Throughout this discussion, it is apparent that considerations of systematicity, structure and organization play an important role in understanding orderly conduct observed across aggregates of data.[8] Although not all of the Fall 1968 lectures display this stance, it does play a continuing (even an increasing) role in Sacks' subsequent work, including subsequent lectures, for example, the lectures of Spring 1972 on adjacency pair organization.

II

Although "turn-taking organization" is the substantive focus for the Fall 1968 lectures, Sacks does not begin the course with a lecture on that topic; indeed, he does not begin his discussion of it until lecture 3. The first two lectures present another "take" on the "second stories" theme first treated in the previous spring, at UCLA, and it may useful to linger for a moment on what Sacks was doing in starting this course the way he did.

Note that the first lecture announces that it will be concerned with something other than what Sacks otherwise plans to focus on. He begins:

> Hereafter I'll begin with some rather initial considerations about sequencing in conversation. But this time I'm going to put us right into the middle of things and pick a fragment that will introduce the range of things I figure I can do.

He does this, he says, in order not to stake his claim on the usual insignia of academic work (". . . its theoretical underpinnings, its hopes for the future, its methodological elegance, its theoretical scope . . ."), but on the "interestingness" of the findings. This was a task which Sacks set himself in the late 1960s – to have "bits" with which to tell lay people (including, for this

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[7]The theme of ensuring outcomes by identifying them with individuals' property, interests or rights – a familiar theme in certain "liberal" traditions of social theory – comes up again in a strikingly different context in Sacks' treatment of the motivated preservation of experiences in memory for later retrieval and telling (cf. Spring 1970, lecture 5, pp. 257–9, and below at pp. xxv–xxvi).

[8]Another kind of consequence of this new stance, especially with respect to asserting claims about aggregates of data rather than specific data fragments, is an occasional vulnerability in the grounding of some claims in these lectures. Without materials as a shared point of departure, it is at times unclear what actual things Sacks is talking about, and, therefore, how to assess what he is saying. There are assertions, when the work takes this form, about things which are said to happen "all the time," which may not seem all that familiar to the reader. (E.g., for *this* reader, p. 49: "Some people say about each other, 'Why is it that we can never have a conversation without it ending up in an argument?' And in that it is a thing that is said all the time, it is of interest to see how it could be sensible.") Of course, what Sacks asserts – at times *ex cathedra* – and the tack which he takes, regularly turn out to be of great interest for their strategy of analysis even when subject to such reservations.

purpose, other "straight" academics) what "the work" consisted in which would have a kind of transparent appeal and interest, readily presentable and graspable in a relatively non-technical way, capturing "experiences" virtually anyone would have had access to more or less directly, etc.

For a while, a regularly offered "for instance" was what Sacks proposed to be an exemption from the ordinary recipient-design "rule" or "practice," for (among other forms of talk) storytelling – "Don't tell others what you figure they already know." Sacks proposed that there is an exemption for spouses. This is to be understood as a practice coordinate with a mandate to tell spouses many things first, before they are told to anyone else. Then, given that spouses are present together on many interactional occasions and that each would have been first to be told most tellables, without the exemption many tellables would have major constraints on their subsequent tellability to others.

But the exemption engenders its own troubles. Because spouses' presence need not deter re-tellings, spouses may find themselves having to hear the same stories over and over again. And the presence of an already "knowing" person can have consequences for the form that the telling takes. As a result, there is a pressure for the separation of spouses in social occasions where these various cultural practices and orientations are in effect (thus, for example, rendering them free for groupings based on other features, e.g., gender).[9]

This was a neat little package, in which a familiar social experience did seem readily traceable to practices of talking which ostensibly had little to with them (or with anything of general interest), and was appealing and satisfying as an "illustration" of the work.

Much in these first two lectures has the flavor that would make it attractive on these grounds. Especially points well into the discussion of lecture 1, regarding the counter-intuitive relative paucity of "things to talk about" with those one has not talked to in a long time as compared with the ready supply with those one talks to daily,[10] are just the sort of thing that Sacks saw as useful in these ways. His departure from his planned theme in the initial lectures in order to do this repeat "take" on second stories may embody his treatment of the class members as part of a larger general public whch had to be appealed to, at least initially, on the grounds of common experience.[11]

One other aspect of these lectures which occurs in various of the sets but is striking in the Fall 1968 set is what I will refer to as an aspect of their rhetoric. One form which this rhetoric takes is the assertion, after some particular

[9]A version of this line of analysis appears in this volume as lecture 4 for Fall 1971, where, however, it is touched off by a particular data fragment, from which Sacks formulates the problem of spouses' talk.

[10]This theme is returned to in the initial lecture for Winter 1970, p. 172.

[11]In the lectures for Spring 1970, Sacks is explicit about the special cast being given the first lecture. Strikingly, the topic which here in the Fall 1968 lectures serves as the accessible beginning for the course becomes in the Spring 1970 lectures the "much more severely technical" (Spring 1970, lecture 1) material which warrants a more accessible introductory lecture!

analysis or type of analysis has been offered, of its "normality" as a scientific or disciplinary development. So, in Fall 1968, lecture 3, p. 38, Sacks proposes:

> In its fashion the history I've recounted is a perfectly natural history; i.e., it would be perfectly natural for whatever course of development of analysis of something that what you're looking for initially when you look at something – a plant, a social object, whatever it may be – is to find some parts. One would begin off, then, with things like 'greetings' and in due course come to things like 'one at a time' and 'speaker change' occurring.

Now, Sacks had read considerably in the history and philosophy of science, but the claim made here is merely asserted and not developed by reference to that literature. And what is asserted is an actual course of events of Sacks' own making, transformed into a putative generalized course of events which constitute normality or "natural history." The inter-convertability of modalities such as instructions and historicized descriptions is something Sacks was well aware of. It is a way of subsuming new departures, and a position staked out without benefit of colleagues close by, under an umbrella of "normal science."

Again at Fall 1968, lecture 4, pp. 54–5, Sacks invokes "naturalness". Having made a point about the co-occurrence of 'one at a time' and 'speaker change recurs' as features of conversation that are "basic," he then gives an argument for this basic-ness (i.e., that the system is self-organizing, in that breakdowns/violations are organized by reference not to some other rules but by reference to these very same ones).[12] And then:

> And I take it that that's an extremely natural criterion for some rules being basic; that is to say, when you reach them, you reach the ground. There are no other rules which deal with how to deal with violations of them.

It seems clear that this is not offered as an account of some actual history of usages of "basic," but as an effort to put into perspective the status of what he was proposing. Here the rhetoric of "naturalness" is "aggressive," in claiming a status within some putative developmental course of a discipline. Elsewhere, a more "defensive" (though hardly apologetic) tack is taken, as,

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[12] A similar argument is made with respect to adjacency pair organization in Spring 1972, lecture 2; cf. below pp. xliv–xlv.

The contrast, it may be useful to mention (or *one* contrast at least) to this "self-organizing" property is the sort of feature taken up in the 'Two preferences . . .' paper (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979), which is concerned with "second order organization." There, if two features meant to co-occur (in that context, "minimization" and "recipient design;" as here, "one at a time" and "speaker change recurrence") are not combinable on some occasion, there is an *ex*trinsic procedure for reconciling the conflict, i.e., relaxing one feature until the other can be achieved. The parallel argument for "interruption" (as an instance of non-combinability of "one at a time" and "speaker change") being resolved in a "self-organizing" fashion has yet to be presented formally.

for example, in lecture 4 for Spring 1972, where Sacks offers an aside while launching a discussion of adjacency pairs by formulating three abstract utterance positions in conversation – "last, current, and next utterance." He says (pp. 554–5),

> A lot of this will sound awfully banal but it's far from that, so you'll have to jolt yourself – if I don't jolt you – into thinking that it's not, after all, something anyone could have said; it's not that it's nothing; it's not that it has no consequences.

This should be appreciated as being at least as much self-directed as addressed to the audience – either the physically co-present class or the audience wherever. It is a sort of girding of loins before battle; a sort of assertion of resoluteness.

In the intermissions and aftermaths of days we were working together, Sacks used to bemoan the difficulty of the work. One of his metaphors for it was the need to be able to "look around the corner of the future," that is, to be able to see ahead to that formulation of the organization of the world which would appear in retrospect to have been obvious. And often this seemed to turn on seeing in some (but not other) apparently commonsense characterizations of empirical objects their potential for carrying heavy and complex theoretic/analytic loads. One problem which this posed was the vulnerability to lapsing back into a mundane, vernacular, commonsense hearing/understanding of those terms – one which would not sustain the analytic load they were to carry, but would reduce to some "banal" pre-theoretic assertion. It is that sort of vulnerability – both in his audience and in himself, however differently for each – that this invocation seems designed to confront; and it is similar vulnerability and transient self-doubts which the "natural development" rhetoric seems designed to combat.

III

The Winter 1969 lectures presented here do not themselves compose a thematically organized set, or even several such. Rather, they present a variety of analytic topics and problems occasioned by efforts to come to terms with a single stretch of material taken from the first of a series of group therapy sessions with "adolescents" which Sacks had recorded (and, later in the course, other materials as well). Although some considerations raised in dealing with one part of this excerpt may come up in connection with another, these lectures do not appear to have been designed to constitute coherent, systematic treatments; still, in some instances (e.g., lecture 3) they do seem to come together quite nicely. For the most part, however, some fragment of the data segment is isolated for treatment, and then several sorts of interest in it are extracted and addressed.

Not that this detracts from the striking and unexpected lines of analysis

which Sacks develops from his materials in the various, largely independent discussions. The tone is set from the very beginning.

In the Spring 1966 lectures Sacks had examined the notion of "possession," and in various respects reconstituted what sort of a cultural artifact it is. In lecture 1 for Winter 1969 (although not explicitly related to the earlier discussion), he makes another sort of novel use of "possession" or "ownership." In discussing the noticing/remarking by one participant in the group therapy session on the hole in another's shoe, Sacks notes that that the shoe is owned by its wearer may entail that another cannot *take* it, but it does not entail that another cannot *talk* about it. Further, if another talks about it, it is very likely that its owner will talk next, or soon. So "ownership" is conversationally consequential.

Furthermore, one of the generic matters conversation is centrally taken up with is the things that the participants have brought with them to the conversational occasion – their clothing, possessions, bodies, events they enact, etc. The talk works off what the parties have brought; and parties can then bring what they bring in part by virtue of the talk that may be made about it. And persons may avoid being present to a conversation by virtue of what they must necessarily bring to it (e.g., the current state of their bodies, possessions, etc.), in view of the talk which that company is likely to make about it. Possessions are then relevant not only to "the economy;" they are central to the "conversational economy" as well. And "ownership" turns out to be a social/sociological category which is consequential in hitherto unappreciated respects.

There are other sociological threads running through many of the discussions in these Winter 1969 lectures. One such theme concerns group formation, membership claims, and different ways of "partitioning a population"[13] to find who belongs together and who not. As the last of these clauses may suggest, it is by way of interactants' deployments of membership categories and ways of identifying or formulating one another that these various topics are addressed. In lecture 2, the issue is posed by how someone is praised without impugning the status of the others (the issue being who is the same category with the praised one and who not). In lecture 3 it is the alternative ways of grouping two of the attendees of the therapy sessions – Roger and Al – together vis-à-vis the observer, as between patient/observer and performer/audience. In lecture 7 it is the issue of who is a "hotrodder"

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[13]By "partitioning a population," it may be recalled, Sacks refers to the results of formulating a set of persons by reference to the categories in some empirically coherent set of categories, i.e., categories which compose "a set" in an empirical sense. "Partitioning constancy" (lecture 3, p. 110) describes the outcome when a same collection of persons are distributed in the same way by reference to two or more different sets of categories. Thus, later in this paragraph of the text, the category sets "patient/observer" and "performer/audience" divide up the co-present persons in cognate fashion – the ones who are co-members of the category "patient" in one set of categories being co-members of the category "performer" in the other; these category-sets then display partitioning constancy for this population of persons, or constitute "analog structures," as Sacks also refers to the matter there (ibid).

(or "hippie") and who not, who is "authorized" to make such a judgement and how some persons "patrol the borders" of the category. In lecture 8, the issue is posed by reference to alternative ways of seeing some collection of persons in some place as legitimate or not, via their alternative formulations as "gals and guys" or "den mother."

Another, more methodological, theme which informs a number of the lectures across considerable variation in substantive topic concerns the relationship between "intuition" and "formal analysis" on the researcher's side on the one hand, and the relationship between analytical "formality"/ "abstractness" in contrast to the "concreteness" of "lived experience" for the "ordinary actor" on the other.

Sacks' characterization of what he is doing in lecture 2 – on "safe compliments" – is instructive; its logic here echoes that of the analysis of "invitations" as early as Spring 1966. In a discussion initially targetted at "the weather" as a "safe" topic, Sacks begins elsewhere:

> I did some work on 'compliments,' specifically on what I called 'safe compliments,' the idea being to see what it was about some compliments that made them 'safe' compliments, i.e., *to turn an initial observation into an analysis* . . . The question then is, can we extract from the sort of thing [some particular compliment] is, a set of features which will locate a class of compliments like it, which are also safe compliments? Where that is a test of the fact that we had some generative features. [emphasis supplied]

Then, after developing an analysis of what makes one class of compliments "safe.":

> Now the question is, with respect to 'weather talk', what do we need, to be able to show that 'the weather' is a 'safe topic'? What we need is to develop a notion of 'safe' for topics *so that we can have said something when we say 'weather' is a safe topic.'* The discussion on 'safe compliments' was to give a sense that something could be done with a notion of 'safe', *something of a formal sort*, i.e., *it doesn't have to be merely an intuition*, but what's involved in something being 'safe' can be laid out. [emphasis supplied].

Now it should be clear from this treatment that what the professional analyst might come to analyze as the formal features that make for "safeness" – whether for compliments or for topics – is proposed to be "real" for parties to talk-in-interaction; it is for them, after all, that it is proposed that the "safety" matters, and they who may suffer from the lack of it. Still, such formal accounts are vulnerable to charges of "formalism," of imposing analysts' categories onto the lived experience of the participants, and the like. To this theme it is useful to juxtapose Sacks' discussion in lecture 3 of one way in which two of the "patients" in the group therapy session deal with the fact

(of which they have been apprised) that there is an observer behind a one-way mirror in the room. They "enact" a scene of "personnel just before a performance," calling out "Testing, one two three" and the like. It is in this regard that Sacks points out the "partitioning constancy" in that setting between "patient/observer" and "performer/audience," which allows the latter set of categories to provide a set of "cover" identities, at least transiently.[14]

Now this appears to ascribe to the teenage therapy patients a kind of abstract or formal analysis of their circumstances which may appear to violate our understanding of their lived experience. But Sacks argues (lecture 3, pp. 110–11) that what is at issue in using a "theater" frame to deal with the presence of an observer is that people

> have their circumstances available to them in an abstract way, such that they can use the abstract characteristics of their circumstances to locate other circumstances that stand in a strong abstract relationship to their current circumstances.

The relevance of this point is precisely to counter the objection to this whole direction of analysis that, in explicating underlying abstract or formal features of ordinary activities, violence is done to the lived-experience of those activities for the actors who engage in them. By contrast, Sacks is proposing here that part of ordinary Members' competence is specifically an abstract understanding of their circumstances and activities, an abstract knowledge drawn upon in constructing further courses of action, and usable to construct further courses of action in a fashion coordinated with others. Thus:

> How can they *use* that abstract knowledge? They are able to use such knowledge to locate circumstances which have features that stand in a strong relationship to the initial circumstance, and those features are then used to project actions by reference to those other circumstances, which actions have some hope of being picked up. It's not just one person who is by himself capable of that, but he can have hopes that others can see what he's doing, see it fast, and collaborate with him.

The transformation by analysts of intuition into "something of a formal sort" is thus not merely a requirement of disciplined inquiry; its results are themselves meant to capture features of the procedures by which ordinary conduct by ordinary members is methodically achieved.

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[14]See the earlier treatment of this episode in Volume 1, lecture 14 for Spring 1967.

Aside from the focus which the text brings to this discussion, Sacks' demonstration of what might be involved in seriously grappling with the effects which observers might have on a "scene being observed" is a salutary one in refusing to settle for a simple and clichéd concern about "Heisenbergian" influences of observation itself. Rather, it insists on a detailed attention to how and what sorts of changes in conduct there might be, how they are to be understood, and how they would/might bear on what an observer makes of that conduct.

IV

The lectures for Winter 1970 begin with a focus on the overall structural organization of the unit "a single conversation," linger in lecture 2 on the theme of exploiting whatever topics come to notice in the intensive examination of a single conversation, and then return to considerations of overall structural organization. There is much here that is penetrating and revelatory, concerning such objects as "the reason for the call" and "reason for the call relationships," as well as "no reason for the call calls," and relationships built on them, to mention only some of the attractions of the first lecture.

There are elements in these lectures whose relevance is related to some of the new emphases which I earlier suggested inform the lectures starting in late 1968. I want to take note in particular of a passage of two to three paragraphs at pp. 168–9 of lecture 1 in which a theme first appearing in Fall 1968 reappears, and that is the relevance of examining a fragment from a conversation in the context of (or juxtaposed with) other products of the sort of "machinery" conjectured to be involved, other instances of the "same sort of thing;" that is, the use of aggregates of data. In Fall 1968 this theme surfaced in passing with respect to turn-taking; here it comes up in a more sustained way with respect to the openings of conversations, both (and especially here) on the telephone and in co-present interaction.

This is a topic – single case analysis versus working with collections of data – which is not uncontroversial, and which Sacks and I discussed at considerable length over the years. This is not the place for a thorough airing of the issues or of those discussions. The key point here in Sacks' treatment in lectures 1 and 2, however, is that a proper grasp of what might be going on in a conversational opening in some particular setting might require a grasp of the range which the "machinery" involved in the production of the phenomena involved could produce, and this might require examination of a considerable array of data.[15]

Once dealing with an array of data taken to be "comparable," a comparative analysis may appear to be needed, and this can itself give rise to some methods of analysis which may obscure how the material being studied may have been produced, rather than illuminating it. One such analytic procedure requiring considerable care and reflection is "format-and-slot analysis," in which the prototypic problem is cast as a selection among alternative terms which could be used for a same reference, or alternative items which could be employed at a certain juncture in the talk, a juncture formulated by the format of the talk in which it is embedded. It is not that this form of analysis is flawed in principle; conversation analytic treatments of reference – reference to persons, to places, etc. – have exploited it.

Sacks points out, however, that there are circumstances in which alternatives to a term actually employed would/could not be used, even if they were "correct." He takes as his case in point a telephone call in which the caller has

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[15]See the discussion below at pp. xxxix–xl and n. 28.

called her friend about a commotion which was observed at the friend's place of work, a department store called "Bullock's." Sacks argues that in proposing that one has called to tell another "what happened at Bullock's today," the reference to "today" is not incidental. It is not properly understood as being selected from a set of cognate temporal references. Had the event happened several days earlier, the caller would *not* offer that temporal referent in the same utterance format; she might not tell the story, or find it tellable, at all. Indeed, given that the caller called in order to tell the story, she might not have called at all. For it is its occurence "today," Sacks proposes, which makes the event "news," and thus a possible "reason for the call," and hence in first topic position in the call. It is the fact that it was "today" that makes for a temporal reference being used at all, rather than a temporal reference being somehow slated to occur, with a selection procedure then invoked to find the term to be plugged into that slot. And further, it is not that its occurrence "today" makes it tellable as news per se; it makes it tellable to one with whom the teller talks daily. It might not be tellable to a twice yearly interlocutor, even if it happened "today," for it may not have the stature to be told in a six-monthly conversation. So all of the discussion is itself subject to considerations of recipient design. These widening ripples of analytic consideration surround the use of "slot-and-format" analysis, and may render its invocation questionable.

Lecture 2 for Winter 1970 (at pp. 184–7) contains what is to my mind one of the most striking discussions in all the lectures. Here Sacks turns a seemingly technical dissection of the mundane story mentioned above – about the commotion outside a department store told by one friend to another – into a stunning demonstration of the alternative grasps of a scene which may present themselves to different sorts of viewers – Sacks refers to it as having become "kind of a distributional phenomenon."

His account begins with the contrast between the actual teller's perception that there-was-trouble-and-the-police-were-taking-care-of-it on the one hand, and, on the other, what Sacks proposes others (e.g., residents of the "ghetto") might see as there-being-trouble-and-the-police-were-engendering-it. He proceeds through a series of further related observations, for example, the assuredness of the actual observer that her position as uninvolved witness is unquestioned, as compared with the possibilities which other categories of person finding themselves on such a scene would be required to entertain and protect themselves against – for example, the possibility that they would be treated as accomplices in whatever wrongdoing was suspected. The effect is to render the scene which the story is intendedly about as equivocal as the duck–rabbit of Gestalt psychology, and the actually told story as a situated, perspectival version of it.

Sacks' observations here carry the conversation-analytic treatment of an ordinary story told in conversation to an intersection with traditional themes of social and political analysis, and can well have served as a revelatory component of a liberal arts education for white middle-class undergraduates in Orange County, California in the aftermath of the Watts riots in Los

Angeles just to the north, in years which were, in all but their numerical depiction, still part of the 1960s.

This intersection with, and transformation of, vernacular understanding is, I would like to stress, *not* a time-out from technical analysis but a product of it. Sacks' discussion here should be juxtaposed with his discussion of "viewer's maxims" in the paper 'On the analyzability of stories by children' (1972b) (or the first lectures for Spring 1966 on which it was based), where the technical basis for these observations may be seen to have been rooted.

V

The set of lectures for Spring 1970 is as coherent and stunning in its range and perspicacity as anything in the collected lectures. It is the richest single set of materials on Sacks' treatment of storytelling in conversation, and surely central to our understanding of stories more generally.

Here as before (cf. lectures 1 and 2 for Fall 1968) Sacks announces the opening lecture[16] as one intended to appeal more broadly to the class than the material to follow, which he characterizes as "much more severely technical than most people could possibly be interested in." He continues here the practice of developing materials which could give "outsiders" a sense for this work and its possible payoffs in a relatively vernacular way. The "more accessible" materials of the Fall 1968 lectures, however, had become "much more severely technical" by Spring 1970 (at least they were going to be presented that way), and now were given their own, more readily accessible, introduction.

Whatever the long term relationship of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis turns out to be, this lecture as much as any other in the corpus of Sacks' lectures (at least those to which we have continuing access) exemplifies a convergence of the animating impulses of ethnomethodology and conversation analysis in its preoccupation with the "ordinary," the "normal," the "mundane" as achievements.

With lecture 2 Sacks begins the treatment of stories told in conversation. It is a beautifully organized and accessible account of the sequential problem of storytelling in conversation by reference to the organization of turn-taking in conversation, and the understanding of the "story preface" by reference to it (material later presented in Sacks, 1974). Perhaps two points may be underscored here which might be overlooked in a reading of the lecture for the aforementioned focus.

The first is Sacks' self-conscious attention to theorizing as an activity. He begins here – as he does in many other lectures – with what he calls an "utterly bland fact," one whose telling surely is not in itself of interest. The point, he remarks, is what can be made of such a bland fact. But many bland

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[16]This lecture – supplemented by excerpts from lectures 2 and 4, and lecture 1 for Spring 1971 – has previously appeared in print (Atkinson and Heritage, 1984: 413–29).

facts lead to nothing beyond themselves. It is necessary, then, to have found and pursued such a bland observation as allows something to be made of it. In the end, then, the blandness or "obviousness" of some observation is neither grounds for ignoring or suppressing it nor, in itself, for asserting it, but for seeing if its achievement or consequences can be seen to be more telling than the observation itself.

Such concerns with "theorizing" appear recurrently in this set of lectures (as they do in the corpus as a whole). To cite but one additional instance, in lecture 3 Sacks remarks on the common practice in everyday life that persons take note of "coincidences" – for example, that they rarely go to some place, and their interlocutor rarely does, and that it was a coincidence that they both happened to do so on the same day and encountered one another there. He then proposes:

> I want to see if we can get at the beginning of an answer to how we come to see these coincidences. The interest in the beginning of an answer is not so much in whether it's an answer – I don't have any idea whether it's an answer – but in some way that the answer is built.

As with the blandness of the point of departure in lecture 2, the concern here is with the ways of building an account, of theorizing in the presence of data per se, rather than with the final assessment of the adequacy of the account. By the end of the lecture, Sacks is again proposing that much of the observable orderliness of the world may be better understood as the by-products of ambient organizations which are quite unconcerned with these outcomes, rather than as products which were the design target of some organization.[17]

In passing Sacks here produces an account of the perception of coincidences that makes of it not a mistaken commonsense notion of probability, but something like Marx' notion of alienation;[18] that is, that persons' own activities (here the practices by which stories are formed up) produce a result (an account of activities that is designed to make for relevant-at-that-moment tellable stories), which is then perceived not as a product of the design of storytelling, but as an independently encountered – and somewhat mysterious – "external" reality.

Additional discussions of this explicitly methodological sort in the Spring 1970 lectures include an interest in "doing provings" (lecture 5, pp. 251ff), "getting . . . a problem" (lecture 6, pp. 267ff) and the relationship between a "sophisticated lay observation" and more technical treatments (lecture 7, pp. 271–2).

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[17]This is, then, a more general statement of a theme raised in Fall 1968, lecture 4, where "listening in conversation" was treated as a technical requirement and result of the operation of the turn-taking system, quite apart from any normative regulation explicitly concerned with "listening in conversation." Cf. that lecture, and the discussion above at pp. xii–xiv.

[18]For example, the account of "alienated labour" in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (cf. McLellan, 1977: 77–87).

A second point worth lingering on is Sacks' treatment of the term "story." Especially in the years following these lectures there has been an explosive growth in interest in, and writing about, stories, narrative, "narrative logic," etc., with whole fields and sub-fields (e.g., "narratology") addressed to this subject-matter. Unsurprisingly, the growth of this academic and literary industry has spawned a profusion of definitions of the focal object – such as "story." Sacks parries the issues of "what is a story?" and "is this a story?" by asking not whether the label "applies" (i.e., is "correct"), but whether it is relevant – that is, relevant to the participants in producing the stretch of talk in and through which the object in question was produced. The issue is thus transformed from an "external analyst's" issue into a "a Member's issue:" how does it matter to the teller and the recipients that the talk being produced (*in the course of producing it*) is "a candidate story"? Lecture 3, and the other lectures for the term, go to this question for stories in conversation in a fashion that yields analytic leverage on the notion "story" for students of stories-in-conversation distinct from stories in other contexts.

Lectures 4 and 5 present, respectively, an extraordinary discussion of "entitlement to experience" (and to just the experience the events in question will sustain) as well as of the cultural organization of experience and the emotions, and a beautifully wrought account of "first" and "second" stories. But what I would like to call special attention to is the way in which Sacks brings an orientation to classical issues in social theory to a hypothetical – but compellingly plausible – account of cognitive organization (lecture 5, pp. 257–60).

Using the metaphor of "designing minds," Sacks asks how the preservation of "experiences" might be organized. One cogent possibility might be to store experiences by what would commonsensically be considered their most important or salient aspects, or their most central character(s), or events, etc. As an alternative he proposes the possibility that experiences be stored "in terms of your place in them, without regard to whether you had an utterly trivial or secondary or central place in them" (p. 258). The consequences which this might engender – both for the organization of memory for experience and for social intercourse about experience – are then cast in terms of the concerns of social theory about the relationship between private interest and the public good.[19]

> And that might have the virtue of providing a generalized motivation for storing experiences. If it's your part in it that you use to preserve it by, then it might lead you to preserve lots of them, simply in terms of the idea of experiences being treatable as your private property. People can then collect a mass of private experiences that they then, by virtue of their generalized orientation to 'what's mine,' have an interest in keeping. You might, then, design a collection of minds, each one storing

[19] A theme which Sacks had invoked as well in the account of turn-taking presented in Fall, 1968, Lecture 4, pp. 50–4 and cf. discussion above, at pp. xiii–xiv.

experience which is to be used for each others' benefit, though you
couldn't necessarily say "Remember all these things so that you might
tell them to somebody else." You have to have some basis for each
person storing some collection of stuff via some interest like 'their own'
interest. Where, then, you get them to store experiences in terms of their
involvement, but have them be available to anybody who taps them
right.

This sort of linkage between social organization and the organization of
personal experience and its cognitive and emotional substrate – between the
social, the psychological and the biological – will surely have to be successfully
made eventually, and this is a novel and provocative direction in which it
might be pursued.

   In its more immediate context, however, Sacks relates it stunningly to such
diverse ancillary themes as the personal experience of being understood or not
and the training requirements for professional therapists.

VI

Whereas the lectures for Spring 1970 were thematically coherent and
focussed on storytelling, the materials for Winter 1971 (very likely a graduate
seminar, rather than an undergraduate lecture course) deal with a congeries of
more loosely related matters. But the central preoccupation is with "word
selection" (cf. Sacks' reference to "procedures whereby the words that people
use come to be selected;" March 4, p. 308), and in particular those
considerations of word selection that are often associated with "poetics." This
set of presentations (complemented by the lecture for May 17 in the Spring
1971 set, a lecture which deals with an eerie spatialization of metaphors,
idioms, and other aspects of the talk of both parties in an emergency
"psychiatric" phone call) constitute the basic point of depature in Sacks'
teaching *oeuvre* for this still largely unexplored domain of phenomena.

   This central preoccupation aside, special attention may be called to the
presentation of March 11 which (at pp. 325–31) offers another one of Sacks'
astonishing *tours de force* of analysis and interpretation. He starts with the text
of a sequence which seems to be ordinary enough, even if in it a couple appear
to press an offer of herring to an almost absurd extent. What Sacks does is to
lay bare layer after layer of organization and preoccupation (on the parti-
cipants' parts) – from the differing grounds for *making* an offer than for
re-making it, to the tacit relationships between the parties that emerge into
relevance over the course of the sequence and come eventually to drive it, to
the ways in which processes such as those which this sequence embodies can
be a major component in both the stereotype and the enforced actuality of the
elderly in a society such as this – that is, the United States in 1971. We cannot
know whether the account which Sacks develops is biographically accurate for
this particular family, but it feels compellingly on target for the sorts of

interactional processes which can constitute the lived interactional reality for many persons. It is a signal display of Sacks' ability to use a fragment of interaction to capture in an analytically compelling way a whole complex of social reality, from its social-organizational sources to its interactional embodiment to its experiential consequences. This discussion presents as well both ends of a range of types of analysis which often appeal differentially to readers of conversation-analytic work.

One end of the spectrum takes a particular episode as its virtually exclusive focus, with its scope of generalization being defined by "however this analysis turns out." Various particulars of context are traced through the full array of their consequences; here, for example, that the offer-recipient – Max – is a recent widower, and the offer-makers find themselves (on Sacks' account) newly responsible for his well-being. The contingencies of the offer and its rejection, the relevance of pressing the offer and the import of its further rejections – all are understood by reference to these attributes of the participants, and the growing relevance of these attributes over the developmental course of the sequence. The account thus appears compellingly context-specific.

The contrasting end of the analytic spectrum focusses on the *type* of sequence involved, across variations in particular settings of enactment. For example, how is this sequence type – e.g., offers – related to other sequence types? Sacks had a long-term ongoing inquiry on request and offer sequences, and their relationship to each other and to other sequence types. Some of Sacks' students have also pursued these questions in this more categorical fashion. Davidson (1984), for example, writes about "subsequent versions of invitations, offers, requests and proposals dealing with potential or actual rejection" (and see also Davidson, 1990). For dealing with the episode in the March 11 session Sacks finds it more in point to juxtapose

> an 'offer' as something different than a 'request' or a 'warning' or a 'threat.' But in some situations the offer is simply the first version of getting the person to do something.

That is, the mode of analysis being pursued can lead to different sets of alternatives providing the relevant comparisons or contrasts, "offer" making such alternatives as "warning" and "threat" potentially relevant here, even if they are not in other contexts.

Though there may appear to be a tension between these two modes of proceeding, with the former often appearing more "humanistic," "context-sensitive," and "holistic" and the latter appearing more "formalistic" and "scientistic," Sacks pursued them both. And the Winter 1971 materials show them pursued hand in hand – the word-selectional considerations being pressed in a generalized cross-context fashion, with this extraordinary single case analysis occurring in the same class session.

VII

In contrast to the Spring 1970 lectures which developed a coherently focussed account of storytelling in conversation and did so by sustained examination of a few data fragments, the Spring 1971 lectures (like those of the preceding term) vary both in topical focus (from sound ordering to professional–client interaction) and in data sources (from the "group therapy session" to a telephone call invitation from one student to another to a call to a suicide prevention center).

Among these lectures are included a series – those for April 30, May 3, May 10, May 17, and May 21 – in which Sacks takes up the empirical materials which he addressed at the start of the 1964–5 lectures. Readers interested in the developmental course of Sacks' lectures may wish to juxtapose these two treatments, separated by some seven years of intense intellectual work. It is not only that the same data are involved which might inform such a juxtaposition, but that themes reappear in the Spring 1971 lectures which have not come up in the preceding several years. To cite but one example, there is Sacks' discussion (May 21, pp. 405ff.) of the characterization of someone as a "stranger," a discussion which goes back to the issue of categorization (though not in that technical terminology) taken up in detail in the paper "The search for help: no one to turn to" which was being written just before and during the first of these academic terms of lectures.

Although the first lecture as delivered did include some initial discussion of a data fragment,[20] it was largely given over to the stance which Sacks was taking up with respect to his audience – both those present in the room and those interested from afar (including, therefore, the present readership). It is a rather franker statement than most instructors would give of the auspices under which they address an undergraduate class. And it reverses the relationship which might have been assumed to hold between the students sitting in the room and those far away – in place or time – who might be interested in "the work." Rather than the latter being incidental and "by-product" recipients of materials designed for the undergraduates, it is the undergraduates who are recast as almost incidental onlookers to, and overhearers of, this analytic undertaking.

"Almost;" for there is evidence throughout these lectures that the relevance of the co-present audience did in fact enter into the shaping of the issues and the manner of their presentation. There is, for example, the initial substantive discussion.[21] Sacks explores some ways in which speakers find or select words

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[20]Cf. April 5 lecture, n. 1.

[21]As in the case of several previous consecutive terms of teaching, Sacks begins the substance of the lecture set in the second of the consecutive terms with what he was exploring less systematically in the preceding term. (See, for example, Winter and Spring 1970 on storytelling in conversation.)

Note that parts of the text here have been rearranged for the sake of continuity and coherence, so that some of the material included here with the lecture of April 5 was actually part of the introductory lecture.

for use. In particular, he focusses on their doing so in "a history-sensitive" manner, for example, by reference to the sound or (later on, in the lecture for May 17) the metaphor composition of the prior talk. The tenor of the discussion is instructive.

There are aspects of this discussion which suggest that, the stance taken in the first lecture notwithstanding, Sacks did not entirely ignore the nature of his co-present audience. The upshot which he takes from the discussion of sound-patterning (lecture for April 5, pp. 341–4) is (p. 343):

> for now . . . just to get some idea of how closely attentive in some fashion people are to each other, where picking up the sounds, doing simple contrasts, etc., are ways that they may be doing being attentive to each other.

And again (p. 344):

> when we begin to collect the sorts of things that I'm noting here, we can feel that a serious attention to the way the talk is put together might pay. These sorts of things at least suggest some sort of close development.

And again, at the end of that lecture (in the present edition), after a discussion of strategic considerations relevant to the parties in the talk in the group therapy session materials (p. 347):

> And that paralleling of the attention to a distinctive weakness can suggest that they are moving with a kind of close attention to each other in a conflictive way.

Two things may be said about the drawing of such conclusions. On the one hand, they are in point for hearers with no previous exposure to conversational materials and to this kind of close analysis of them. They seek to warrant the kind of attention being paid to these materials in a way that would not appear to be directed to an audience interested from afar in what Sacks has to say. On the other hand, it was a task to which Sacks recurrently addressed himself – to warrant these materials as respectable objects of study, and to establish over and over again, in a variety of respects, that these materials were orderly at quite refined levels of organizational detail. It is as if he were forever justifying – to others and to himself – the undertaking, its starting point, and its key premises. The upshots drawn here, early in the Spring term of 1971, can then be understood to be addressed not only, or not especially, to the students in the room, but to any recipients of his discussion.

There are two matters taken up in the Spring 1971 lectures which have a history, either prior or subsequent, which it may be useful to call to attention – the relevant identities of conversational participants, and the notion of "preference."

In the lecture for April 19, Sacks begins a discussion of "caller–called" by reference to the possibility that

> some part of a sequential organization of conversation has to do with *identities that the conversation itself makes relevant*, such that for at least those facets of the conversation one needn't make reference to other sorts of identities that parties have which are, so to speak, exterior to not simply the conversation, but to its sequential organization. If, however, we found that such other identities were central to almost anything one could say about a conversation, then there would be a way in which conversation could not be said to have an organization independent from such other aspects of the world as yielded other identities, e.g.; the names, sexes, social statuses, etc., of the parties. You could imagine a world where some social status the parties had, operated in such a way as to determine how they could talk to each other, and in that world conversation would not be an independently organized phenomenon.

The issue of the relevant formulation of the identities of participants comes up recurrently throughout Sacks lectures. In the Spring 1967 lectures, it may be recalled, there was a discussion of the possible "omnirelevance" of the category-set "therapist–patient" for the group therapy session materials – those categories straddling the line between "exterior" and conversation-specific.

Elsewhere, in the lectures of Fall 1967 (and even more centrally in early lectures for Spring 1967, not included in this edition) Sacks launched a discussion of turn-taking by considering a claim in a paper by the anthropologist Ethel Albert (1964) about the practices of the Burundi. In this account, members of that society are all hierarchically ordered, and the society is small enough that on any occasion everyone present can assess their place relative to everyone else present. The distribution of opportunities to talk is organized by reference to this hierarchical ordering,[22] with the highest ranking person speaking first, then the next, etc., until each has had an opportunity to speak in an initial round; subsequent rounds reproduce this ordering.

Leaving aside a variety of problems which can be expected in a system which worked in this way (and problems with the description), this account embodies what Sacks has in mind by "a world where some social status the parties had operated in such a way as to determine how they could talk to each other, and in that world conversation would not be an independently organized phenomenon."

The point is that, if one could show for *some culture/society* that there is an order or domain of conversation which is relatively autonomous of interactionally extrinsic attributes, then the *possibility* of such a culture would have been shown. Although it might be claimed *in principle* that there were other

[22]As Albert put it (pp. 40–1), "The order in which individuals speak in a group is strictly determined by seniority of rank."

cultures where there was no such autonomous form, there would then be certain burdens and opportunities of demonstration and exploration that would have to be addressed. For one, it would have to be shown that there was an empirical instance of such a society/culture, rather than simply be asserted in the nature of the case. For another, it would be a feature of a society/culture which might then be explored for what else it was related to, how it came to be so, how it was embodied or implemented, etc.

This discussion, then, is intimately related to the issue of the omni-relevance of gender or class status, etc. (class and gender are singled out here because they are the features most often invoked as specially constraining and shaping the conduct of talk in interaction). For to show a relatively autonomous order of organization (or several such orders) for conversation would be to establish domains of interaction not necessarily contingent on gender, class, etc., and thereby to show conversation to be "an independently organized phenomenon."

One significance of the categorical identities "caller–called" is that they are conversation-specific (unequivocally so, unlike "therapist–patient"), and it appears that they serve as the feature by reference to which various aspects of talk are organized, especially with respect to the overall structural organization of single conversations. This had been shown in Schegloff (1967, 1968) for the organization of openings, e.g., with respect to who talks first. Part of Sacks' argument here turns on the relevance of caller/called not only for openings, but for "closings," for example, it being the caller's business to initiate arrangement-making and other ways of getting to the end.

It is striking that in a prior discussion of omni-relevance (in Volume 1, Spring 1967, lecture 14, and cf. the introduction to Volume 1, pp. liii–liv), Sacks argued for the omni-relevance of "therapist–patient" in the group therapy sessions by reference to its being the therapist's business – in *that* capacity – to bring the session to a close, and that a new patient has to be told that an "indirect" closing initiation by the therapist was doing that job, something which he did not himself see and which it would not have been doing had anyone else said it. The relationship of some identity to a bearing on "closing" (at least of a conversation as a whole) may, then, turn out to be of strategic importance in showing category omni-relevance.

The issue of the relative autonomy of conversation/interaction has had a continuing relevance for students of interaction. Perhaps the most prominent discussion of the issue within contemporary sociology was Erving Goffman's presidential address to the American Sociological Association, 'The interaction order' (Goffman, 1983) which also argued (albeit along different lines) for the relative autonomy of the organization of interaction from other aspects of social organization.

Another topic with a considerable later development figures in these lectures for Spring 1971. At the end of the lecture for May 24 (pp. 414–15) there is a discussion (the first of which there is a record, though Sacks refers to an earlier related lecture) of the asymmetry of "yes" and "no" answers – related to the form which a preceding "yes/no" question has taken. This is

an early form of what would eventually become, under the name "the preference for agreement" (cf. Sacks, 1987 [1973]), a much more general account. Here Sacks appears to focus on such questions as might be termed "pre"s, even if the future course of talk – the type of sequence – which the speaker meant to undertake is not at all clearly projected. Whereas the discussion in the May 24 lecture is quite specifically situated, and refers to courses of action in which some sort of sequence may figure as preparation or "setup," Sacks would two years later, in the public lecture at the Linguistic institute in Ann Arbor on which the 1987 publication is based, depict the preference for agreement as a much more general – structural – feature of question/answer sequences of the "yes/no" type, with still more general implications, for example, for adjacency pairs.

   A key component of this notion is that of "preference," and it has a longer (and variably focussed) history in Sacks' *oeuvre*. In these lectures, for example, in the lecture for April 23, Sacks proposes that some formulations of the event for which an invitation is being tendered are "preferred:" if the occasion is to include dinner, for instance, the invitation should be for "dinner;" anything else (e.g., "drinks") and recipients will hear that it is "not for dinner," for, given its "preferred" status as an invitation form, it would have been used if it could have been used. And two years later at the Linguistic Institute, where the "sequentialized" version of "preference" was extended from the usage here to that of 'On the preferences for agreement and contiguity. . . ,' the application of the notion "preference" to "formulations" was extended from formulations-of-events to reference-to-persons in the drafting of the paper 'Two preferences in the organization of reference to persons in conversation and their interaction' (eventually published as Sacks and Schegloff, 1979).

   And before the usages here in the Spring 1971 lectures, a similar notion underlies the conception of 'specific alternatives" (cf. Schegloff and Sacks, 1973: 305, 313–14; this paper was first drafted during the summer of 1969). There the notion of "specific alternatives" made relevant by an utterance such as a "possible pre-closing" was explicated by noting (p. 314) that

> the alternatives made relevant by an utterance of that form are not symmetrical. Closing is the central possibility, further talk is alternative to it; the reverse is not the case. . .

That feature of asymmetry – later central to the notion "preference" – came up in other working sessions of 1969 and 1970. For example, I recall Sacks remarking on it while examining tapes made by Melvin Pollner in a Southern California traffic court; the observations concerned the treatment by the parties involved of the source of income of a college student appearing before the judge; Sacks took it that some sorts of financial support (I do not now recall which) were central and "normative" (in the sociological terms of the time), and others were alternatives to them, but not vice versa.

The contrast figures, in essentially these terms, in lecture 6 for Fall 1971, at pp. 455–6, where Sacks is discussing a story told by a teenage girl to a teenage boy, a story which turns centrally on her spending half the night with a "guy that [she] liked a real lot." What is central to the telling of the story is that they spent the time "in the back house" (i.e., the house behind the main house, a sort of guest house) instead of "in a car." Sacks shows how "in the car" is built into the story as "normal" for teenagers, something with which the teller is trying to fashion a contrast. "In the back house" is then a specific alternative; it is an alternative to "parking" or "in the car," but the latter is not "an alternative;" it is the basic, unmarked (as linguists might put it) place. And in that same context Sacks introduces the use of the term "preference:"

> . . .She can. . .invoke the normal priorities, in which, for unmarried teenagers, parking is '*preferred*.' I don't mean that it's favorite, but there's some way it's preferred over the back house, if at least only in moral terms. That is to say, she brings off that *she* prefers the back house, but there is *a more abstract sense of 'prefer' which involves her in invoking the parking – that which is 'preferred' in the more abstract sense – as a first alternative*" [final emphasis supplied]

It is this sense of "preference," as "a *first* alternative, to which others may contrast but which itself does not contrast with them" which is one central thrust of subsequent uses of the term, both by Sacks and by most others[23]

VIII

Although the particular phenomena and data sources taken up in the lectures for Fall 1971 are quite different, the thematic commitment underlying this course is strikingly reminiscent of the lectures for Spring 1966. In both may be found explorations of how (a) culture is to be conceived which blend a fresh theoretical conception with a distinctive and organic relationship to "ordinary" conversational data.

One relevant bit of background for the first lecture of the term may well be an episode in law school (earlier recounted in the introduction to Volume 1, n. 6) which alerted Sacks to the mysteries of commonsense assessments of the plausibility and seriousness of conjectured events. Law students debating a point in the law of torts rejected as implausible the premise of an airplane flying at an altitude of five feet while willingly discussing hypotheticals only

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[23]This includes, for example, Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1977. The notion captured by "preference" figured in my own work at the time as well (especially in Schegloff, 1970), but not under any of these names. For further discussion, cf. Schegloff, 1988, and, for another view, Bilmes, 1988. For applications, discussions and reviews of the notion of "preference" (and "dispreference") cf. among others Atkinson and Drew, 1979: chapter 2; Heritage, 1984: 265–80; Levinson, 1983: 332–45; Pomerantz, 1978, 1984.

marginally larger. The concerns then awakened, which had driven the insistence on actual observation and then recorded and re-examinable data, may have served tacitly as the grounds for the line developed at the start of lecture 1 on the trouble of dealing with imagined occurences, and the impossibility of dealing with events that strain commonsense credibility, events which otherwise can be shown to be real.

This theme reappears explicitly later in the Fall 1971 lectures, in Lectures 9–12 "On some technical considerations of a dirty joke."[24] There Sacks points to a staggering number of implausible co-occurances on which the story/dirty joke being examined depends, and without which it collapses. And he addresses himself especially in lecture 10 to the devices by which the telling of the joke/story can survive these apparent implausibilities. He rejects an "Aristotelian" solution along the lines of a generic "suspension of disbelief" by noting that no disbelief arises to be suspended, and that the story could not survive if it did. He suggests instead that a recipient is fully engaged in understanding the story, and that the artfulness of the story in deploying the elements from which an understanding can be achieved channels attention in a fashion which circumvents the implausibility by naturalizing and sequentializing the events.

Still, the isolation of this problem and the treatment of the narrative form by ironic comparison to a quasi-realistic story suggests a continuing underlying preoccupation on Sacks' part with the relationship between the real and the unreal, the plausible and the implausible, the real and the plausible, the real and the implausible, etc. And here again (as in the Spring 1966 lectures; cf. introduction to Volume 1, pp. xxxix-xli) may be found echoes of the "commentator machine" introduced in Sacks' early (1963) paper 'Sociological description,' with its metaphorically articulated depiction of various possible relationships between real doings and the accounts offered of them, and the account-offering as itself a real doing relative to which another doing may be a defective exemplar.

Lecture 1 begins an announced preoccupation with "storytelling in conversation" with an observation about a pun, and the first several lectures are as much about puns and proverbs as they are about storytelling.

Sacks' concern with puns, which would eventually issue in a presentation at the Georgetown Roundtable in March, 1972 and the little paper (Sacks, 1973) 'On some puns, with some intimations,' is analytically located at the intersection of problems of word-selection of a "poetics"–like character on the one hand, and the practices of storytelling sequences on the other. His discussion of puns here in lecture 1 as well as in the Georgetown Roundtable paper is focussed on their use[25] by a story-recipient just after story completion. The occurrence of puns – unintended and unheard puns – in this distinctive sequential position may have recommended itself to Sacks as a case in point

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[24]These lectures were published under that name, as edited by Gail Jefferson, cf. Schenkein, 1978.
[25]And the use of proverbs; cf. the ensuing discussion below.

for the contrast between "implausible 'real things'" and imagined things one could get someone to believe as a basis for theorizing about them. Or perhaps the order was just the opposite; entertaining the possibility of opening the lecture and the course with a discussion on puns, some groundwork seemed called for, addressed discursively to the believability of the sort of thing he was going to begin with.

The discussion of proverbs (at lecture 1, p. 422) goes back to Sacks' reaction while still a graduate student at Berkeley to the beginning of George Homans' book, *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms* (1961). There (pp. 1–2) Homans remarks in passing on the traditional folk sociology which (it was apparently his view) it was scientific sociology's business and mandate to correct and supplant. The hallmark of this folk knowledge was for Homans apotheosized by proverbs with their "obvious" truths, but also directly contradictory truths.

This theme was by no means unique to Homans. Both Homans and the many others who contrasted scientific sociology with common knowledge were engaged in defending sociology as an academic discipline from charges that it was "nothing but common sense." Many took it that one line of defense was to show the weaknesses of commonsense knowledge, and thus the proper office of sociology in reference to it. That office was to replace "common sense" with something more scientific. This was, of course, one central point of reference for Garfinkel's observation (1967: chapter 1) that the social sciences were addressed endlessly to the substitution of "objective" for "indexical" assertions, and the alternative ethnomethodological program which he put forward – to make commonsense knowledge non-competitively a *topic* of sociological inquiry.

Sacks was struck early on (that would have been in the very early 1960s, most likely in 1962–3, while we were at Berkeley's Center for the Study of Law and Society; cf. introduction to Volume 1, p. xv) by Homans' non-analytical, non-sociological stance toward proverbs – treating them as primitive and faulted versions of scientific propositions. The issue for Sacks was, precisely, what *were* proverbs (as natural objects, so to speak), and what were they used to do, that might make the features which Homans treated ironically seriously understandable. He sought out a relevant literature and found Archer Taylor's *The Proverb*, but did not find the answer there, though he respected it as a work of scholarship.

It is striking then to read Sacks' treatment here (at lecture 1, p. 422) with this history in mind. Briefly, in the context of a discussion of the use of proverbs by story recipients on story completion, and having remarked on the common observation of the inconsistency between different proverbs, he asks,

> Now the question is, is that a defect of proverbial expressions? Or is it that, if it turns out that what proverbial expressions do is that they are used to understand something else, then the question for them is, are they applied to something that they evince an understanding of? If so,

it's quite irrelevant that, as a package, they can turn out to have an inconsistency among them. The problem is not, on any given one's use, is it true relative to other proverbial expressions, but, does it, as something one understands with, understand what it applies to? Where, what it applies to is the story it's used after. . .

. . .What's done with them is to take one and see how, for what it's positioned after, does it understand that. It can then be seen as irrelevant, somewhat arbitrary, to say "Let's take the set of them and consider whether they're consistent, to determine whether they're true." That may be not at all how, empirically, they work.

Here, some ten years later, is Sacks' answer to Homans — his contrasting account of how proverbs should be treated by sociologists. And in this little passage is the direct confrontation of the effort to treat proverbs as defective propositions — failures as "objective" expressions — with the claim that they are designed fundamentally as objects for *indexical* deployment. They are meant specifically to display understanding of the local object they are placed after — they are prototypically indexical in that sense. Each is to be juxtaposed to its occasion of use, for which it was employed; that specifically renders problematic the detachment of each from the environment for which it was produced, for juxtaposition with other such disengaged-from-context objects. And Homans' critique of them — based on just such a disengagement — is the apotheosis of the social science practices to which Garfinkel meant to set ethnomethodology in "non-ironic" contrast. For Sacks, this analysis grew directly from his effort to figure out how proverbs worked.

IX

Those familiar with the published corpus of conversation-analytic work will recognize in lecture 5 a version of the 'Two preferences. . .' paper (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979). I do not recall at what point Sacks and I found ourselves both focussing on the contrast between what Sacks here terms "Type 1" and "Type 2" identifications of persons and what I was calling (with no restriction to the description of persons) "description-for-recognition" and "description-for-understanding." The written version of the paper was initially drafted by Sacks while we were living in the same house during the Linguistic Institute at the University of Michigan in 1973. I did not know he was drafting it, until he gave it to me early one evening to look over. Although we worked over it intermittently, the changes made from the initial draft were relatively small and technical.

The discussion of forms of reference in lecture 5 (as well as the paper which followed) can be located in another course of development. While still at UCLA (probably about 1966) Sacks had drafted a paper which came to be referred to as the "two-person identification" paper. The data fragment which had given rise to the "two-person identification" line of analysis, and around

which the paper was written, was taken from the observational materials collected by Barker and Wright.[26] In this episode, a little girl enters the kitchen of her home and finds her mother talking to another woman, someone the little girl does not know. The following exchange is then reported:

Little girl : Who is she?
Mother : That's Rita. Do you remember the other day when you went to the party and met Una? Well that's Una's mother.

This data fragment was appreciated against the following analytical background.

Sacks had established in his dissertation work (cf. the published version in Sacks, 1972a) that there was no general solution to what he termed "the one-person identification problem." That is, faced with the task of identifying/categorizing a single person, there were demonstrably available multiple "membership categorization devices" which contained some category which could properly categorize any person.[27] And there did not appear to be any general solution for selecting which device to use – no general preference rule that would select some device from among whose categories "the correct one" for the person being categorized should be selected. This was a finding with many analytic and theoretic reverberations. For example, analytically, any actually employed categorization employed by a speaker in talk-in-interation had then to be viewed as a contingent product whose achievement could be subjected to analysis by reference to the particulars of its local environment. (And, theoretically, social scientists' categorizations could not be warranted solely on the basis of their descriptive correctness, but had to be otherwise warranted, e.g., by reference to their relevance, whatever grounds of relevance might be chosen.)

What the data fragment reproduced above suggested to Sacks was that, whereas there seemed to be no general solution to the *one*-person indentification problem, there might be a solution to a *two*-person identification problem. In his dissertation (1972a), he had described what he proposed to be a categorization device composed of *pairs* of linked terms – "paired relational categories" he called them – (e.g., friend–friend, husband–wife, relative–relative, parent–child, neighbor–neighbor, stranger–stranger, etc.), which constituted ". . .a locus for a set of rights and obligations. . ." (p. 37). This categorization device was used to categorize a population of persons not one at a time, but two at a time – as incumbents of one of these paired

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[26]Although Sacks had worked on some observational materials which Barker and Wright had published (for example, *One Boy's Day*, 1951), I believe the fragment involved in the "two-person identification" paper was taken from other, unpublished, material of theirs which Sacks had secured.

[27]Sacks had termed these devices "Pn-adequate," i.e., adequate for any, unspecified (hence "n") population (hence "P"). The devices/collections of "age" and "sex/gender" categories were his most commonly invoked instances.

relational categories. It appeared as well that there was only one such categorization device, only one which identified/categorized persons two at a time.

What the "Rita/Una's mother" data fragment suggested was that one way members might handle a one-person identification problem which had no general solution was to transform it into a two-person identification problem which *did* have a general solution. In the instance at hand, the little girl's mother adopts this solution: asked to identify one person ("Who is she?"), she introduces another person into the identification problem – Una – and then identifies the pair of persons by a set of paired relational categories: mother–[child] (". . .That's Una's mother"). This was an extremely elegant solution to the identification problem, and an extremely elegant account of it.

But there were problems, and on a visit to the west coast during the winter break Sacks and I discussed them at length, as we regularly did with one another's written work. The most telling – and ultimately fatal – problem was that this solution did not work as a general solution. For one thing, not all the paired sets of terms could be (or were actually) used by interactants; for example, although "stranger–stranger" was one of the paired term-sets (and one indispensable for the empirical context which first gave rise to the formulation of this categorization device), persons confronted with an identification problem do not respond by saying, "That's Rita. Remember Una? Una and Rita are strangers." Were stranger–stranger an eligible category-set for these purposes, there might be a general solution to the one-person problem by converting it into a two-person problem. Without it, it was not a general solution.

Another problem, equally fatal and with clear connections to the lecture which prompts this discussion (and to the 'Two preferences. . .' paper), was that not any person could be introduced as the second for co-categorization with the initial person to be identified, and not even any person in a specified range of relationships to the target problem. Only such persons could be introduced (or seemed actually to be introduced) as were expectably recognizable to the one posing the problem, the one for whom the categorization was being done. So again, persons confronted with an identification problem do not say "That's Rita; there's a little girl named Una, and Rita is Una's mother." There was, then, not only a constraint on which set of paired terms could be used for the target person and the one to be introduced as second; there were restrictions on which second person could be introduced for this purpose by reference to the knowledge of the recipient of the identification. Indeed, the possibility could not be ruled out that no second person could be found who would satisfy both containts (nor was it clear that these were the only constraints). The status of this categorization device as a general solution to a *two*-person identification problem was thus cast into doubt, let alone its status as second-order solution to the one-person identification problem. The "two-person identification" paper was shelved. But it was not without consequences, of which brief mention can be made here of only three.

First, the data fragment which motivated that earlier effort has here, in the Fall 1971 lectures (lecture 5, pp. 451–2) become an example of

> where a speaker doesn't figure that recipient knows who's being referred to, but knows something that involves it in being an 'almost,' i.e., that you know someone in some close relationship to that one being referred to.

Its bearing thus is incorporated into the discussion of "recognitional reference" and the preference for recognitional reference even when the possibility of its achievement is open to question (cf. Sacks and Schegloff, 1979).

Second, it seems to be relevant in a curious way to a tack taken in an earlier lecture, and on quite a different topic – lecture 6 for Fall 1968. A bit into that lecture (at p. 70), Sacks is discussing introductions (of one person to another), what occasions them and how they're done.

> One way to think about it is to consider that a way to simplify the task of doing any introduction would be, e.g., to constrain the occasions under which introductions could get done. You could say, for example, introductions should go 'first name to first name.' That can operate to constrain the initial use of an introduction to only people you can introduce that way.

But, Sacks points out, that runs up against the fact that the conversations within which introductions have to get made are generated by an entirely separate mechanism from the one that makes introductions possibly relevant.

The relationship to the problems with the "two-person identification" paper is this: one problem with that paper, as just recounted, was that the mechanism only worked for certain possible values of paired relational category terms (not for e.g., stranger–stranger), and setting such a pre-specification subverted the potential generality of the device. So here as well, where the point is that an introduction mechanism is needed which will have *as* general a scope as whatever occasions the relevance of an introduction and whatever occasions the already-ongoing conversation within which introductions come to be relevant. Pre-constraining introductions to certain values of introduction terms would subvert the viability of that institution. This is just another specification of the more general result that pre-constraining the elements of a device which can be employed subverts the possible use of the device as a general solution to some problem in the practices of interaction.

Third, the working through of the problems of the "two-person identification" paper seems to have deeply affected Sacks' thinking about the relative merits of single case analysis versus the use of aggregates of data *for the purposes of building a discipline*. Note that the issue is *not* the status of single case analysis per se, but the possibility of building the sort of desired *discipline* which had come to be the goal of conversation-analytic work. In a letter to me

a few years later (March, 1974), Sacks remarked on the relevance of "working with masses of data" as what "in the end differentiates what we do from e.g. French structuralism." And, in this regard, he invoked the experience of the problems with the "two-person identification" paper – and its effort to ground a general solution in a single case – as evidence enough.[28]

X

Having initially projected the Fall 1971 lectures to be about stories and storytelling, the first six lectures depart somewhat from a close focus on that topic, although remaining at least tangentially relevant with lectures 7 and 8, and then with the series of lectures from 9 through 12, Sacks comes back squarely to his announced topic.

Lectures 7 and 8 address the "motive power of stories." The theme is a penetrating and remarkable account of a particular class of stories. These are stories which come to be *re*told after a long time delay ("long" here meaning years), a delay during which one who had been the recipient of the story becomes the kind of person the teller then was, and tells it in turn to a recipient such as he was when he was told it – the retelling being done on just the sort of occasion which is appropriately analyzed by the story. Such a "delayed-fuse" story thus serves as a kind of cultural repository for occasion-ally relevant knowledge. (The material being analyzed involves an older man, seeable as "no longer having prospects," telling a younger man, who is about to depart for college – and prospects – about the time *he* was a young man, with prospects, and what became of them.)

These lectures call to mind the lectures of Spring 1966, for the way in which they speak to the nature of culture, the ways in which culture mobilizes minds as a repository of what it has to transmit, and uses stories as the vehicle for transmitting that knowledge, recruiting the interactional stances of the participants in the situations in which they find themselves – for which the stories provide analyses – as the energy driving the telling of the stories as matters of e.g., self-justification. They also recall lecture 5 of Spring 1970 on how memory for experiences can be motivated by having them stored as "the property" of the one to remember them, to be accessed by others by telling a "similar" story.

The theme plays off a by-now clichéd geneticist "witticism" that chickens are the device by which eggs reproduce themselves. Here persons, their experiences, and the stored versions of experiences in stories are the device by which culture reproduces itself and adapts to changing social circumstances. The line taken here is reminiscent of a term (though not necessarily the

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[28]He wrote, "The 'structures for particulars' direction [which is how Sacks had earlier characterized "the thrust of my stuff over the years"] doesn't work: recall the two-person paper failures, etc. and the 'system for masses,' for routine, etc. may." (The internal quotation marks have been added for clarity.)

correlative meaning) which the anthropologist Alfred Kroeber introduced some years ago for culture – "the superorganic."[29]

These resonances of lectures 7 and 8 are sustained in the following four lectures, 9 through 12, on the dirty joke as a technical object. In this discussion as well, the story form is treated as a packaging device for elements of culture, as was the case in lectures 7 and 8. There is a distinct shift in theme here, focussing less on the teller doing things via the story and more on the story doing things through the teller, and doing them through the teller as the instrument of a culture. The story in general, and the dirty joke as a technical object in particular, get worked up somewhat formally here in a fashion parallel to the account of games (and children's games in particular) as packaging units for a culture in the Spring 1966 lectures.

This is a weighty theme and it may be appropriate to understand Sacks to have prepared his audience for it in the opening lectures for the term. Recall that in the first lecture in this set for Spring 1971 Sacks had tried to provide grounds for taking seriously the possibility that there really was a pun in the story, that it was not just a "reading-in" by the analyst, just as he had done in other first lectures, to ground the seriousness of word-selectional or "poetics" observations. Here he proceeds in the same fashion by showing the "artfulness" of the dirty joke/story, the elaborate way it is put together in order to ground a claim for its status as a technical object, and eventually his claim for it as a serious transmitter of culture.

It is in lecture 11 that the theme of the dirty joke as a packaging device for culture, with its "dirtyness' serving as a form of restriction on its circulation, is stated most pointedly. It may be worth mentioning here again (cf. introduction to Volume 1, p. xxii) the relevance of the work of classical scholars such as Milman Parry, Albert Lord, and Eric Havelock, all of whose work Sacks was familiar with, and from whom he would have become familiar with the notion that the classic forms of oral cultures – such as the Greek epic – served as major instruments for the preservation and transmission of a culture, the story line of the epic being not so much the point of it as the shaper and guarantor of its transmission. It was just one aspect of the special métier of Sacks' mind and sensibility to see in this juvenile "dirty joke" told in a teenagers' group therapy session the contemporary operation of so grand a theme, otherwise treated as the special preserve of élite "culture."

Another echo of the Spring 1966 lectures in Fall 1971 is the appearance of a concern with children, and children's learning the ways of the culture and its rules, a theme which is central here in lecture 12. This lecture again calls to attention Sacks' extraordinary capacity to take apparently general views and characterizations of the world, ones which present themselves as "natural" accounts of it, and to specify them, often showing them to embody some distinct and limited perspective. Thus in lecture 12 he depicts what seems to be a potentially anybody's recounting of a scene as specifically embodying the perspective of 12-year-old girls. In the earlier lectures 7 and

[29]Cf. Kroeber, 1917.

8 for Fall 1971, he shows how a story embodies in particular the perspective of persons with live prospects for a future or those with already failed prospects. And in an earlier set of lectures (Winter 1970, lecture 2) he takes what appears to be a passing observer's "bland" general account of a scene in which "the police were handling some trouble at a department store" and shows that to other eyes – of members of different social groups with a different experience with authority – what might be seen might be not that there was trouble and the police came and handled it, but that the police came and there was trouble and it was unclear how it was being handled, how it would turn out, and how it would turn out to implicate them.

   Although seemingly quite remote from that tradition of analysis, these are exemplary exercises in the sociology of knowledge. Apparently unsituated views and understandings of the world and of particular settings – otherwise understandable as just "how things are/were" – are analyzed for the distinctive social groups to which they are affiliated, and with whose experience of the world they link up. These discussions illuminate our understanding both of the particular settings and utterances being addressed, and of the distinctive experience of social circles to which we gain access by way of these discursive practices.

   In this regard, it is striking that one of Sacks' characteizations of the special perspective of 12-year-old girls by reference to which the dirty joke being examined in lectures 9–12 should be understood is reminiscent of his depiction of the perspective of suicidal persons who see themselves (and report themselves) as having "no one to turn to." That phrase supplied the subtitle of Sacks' major early paper (and his dissertation), *The Search for Help: no one to turn to*. Now remembered primarily for its formal statement of the categorization problem and aspects of its solution, it may be useful to recall that, although textually at the beginning of that work, developmentally it was subsequent to the initiating problem, which was how someone might come to say "I have no one to turn to," and say it seriously (that is, as the reported result of a search procedure), delivered paradoxically precisely in an occasion in which it seems apparent that they have found "someone to turn to." Sacks *began* with that, although in the paper he *ends* with it.

   The proximate solution of "no one to turn to," Sacks proposed, was that the person involved (the suicidal person, that is) had such a problem as would alienate precisely the person(s) whom the normative search procedure would locate as the proper persons to turn to. That is, there are in general "persons to turn to" (formulated by reference to paired relational terms discussed above at pp. xxxvii), but the problem involved, if reported to those persons, might lead to their abandonment of just the status which made them the one(s) to turn to. Thus, for example, turning to a spouse with a problem engendered by one's adulterous involvement.

   What is striking is the formal similarity to this situation of the putative circumstances of 12-year-old girls in Sacks' account of the dirty joke: namely, the problem of checking out information about sex, information acquired illicitly, e.g., by listening in to the parent's bedroom from behind a door: with

whom can such supposition be checked? the parents one spied on? the friends to whom one cannot reveal just this inexperience? The formal similarity is striking: the nature of the problem is what precludes turning to just the ones one would otherwise turn to for its solution.

The last lecture for Fall 1971 is about dreams, and seems quite disengaged from the other lectures. In fact, Sacks developed a considerable interest in dreams (among other respects as a format in which stories are preserved), and pursued it, largely informally, during these years. In part, this had developed from his reading in Freud and in a variety of literary sources; in part it converged with an interest in popular culture (an interest which, in the last several years before his death, included such matters as advertising as well.) He was, for example, interested in the presentational modality of dreams – whether they were experienced as being read or being seen in action; if seen, like a movie, whether they were in color or black and white; what sorts of editing and directorial techniques informed their structure, and the like.

XI

The lectures for Spring 1972 begin in the same fashion as did those for Fall 1968, as a systematic and general account of an organization or a class of conversational occurrences – in this case, adjacency pairs and adjacency pair organization. It is not until the second half of the second lecture that a determinate, actual (as compared to intendedly exemplary or "characteristic") bit of talk is presented for careful and detailed examination. But the text of the first lecture and a half nonetheless makes clear that this general and systematic introduction to the projected subject-matter for the course is based in a detailed way on a substantial corpus of observations and analyses of particular stretches of talk of which adjacency pair organization is to be offered as a tentative account (though hardly preparing us for the illuminating detail exposed when the first bit of data is examined closely in the second half of the second lecture).

The general features of adjacency pairs are first introduced via a variety of particular sequence types – greetings, terminal exchanges, question–answer sequences, etc. – each of which names its own, recognizable class of sequences. Adjacency pairs are thus introduced as a class of classes. But the particular variety of sequence types is strategically selected to display something of the extraordinary provenance of adjacency pairs – used at the critical junctures of virtually all the main kinds of organization of conversation: at the opening and closing boundaries of particular episodes of conversation, as the central device by which next speakers are selected, as the basic tool for remedying various locally occuring problems in conversation, as the locus for departures from a single-sentence format for utterances (sub-sentential utterances characteristically being second-pair parts, and the construction of multi-sentence

utterances being mediated on this account by adjacency pair constructions), and so forth.

This introductory account of the generality of adjacency pairs by reference to the other types of organization in which they figure prominently and strategically is followed by another, an account of their provenance by reference to their distributional generality. That is, if we ask where adjacency pairs can go (and, in particular, where their first pair parts can go, since where the second pair parts go is given by the first pair parts, i.e., after them), we find that their privilege of occurence is unrestricted except by reference to adjacency pair organization. That is, they can go anywhere except after a first pair part, unless the one going "after" is initiating an "insertion sequence." The point here is two-fold: our sense of the centrality of adjacency pair organization is reinforced by its virtually unrestricted distribution, and our sense of its basicness is reinforced by its self-organizing character, that is, by the observation that the only restriction on its distribution is that imposed by adjacency pair organization itself. (Recall that a similar argument had been offered for the basicness of the turn-taking organization in Fall 1968, lecture 4, pp. 54–5, and this introduction, above, p. xvi and n. 12).

When Sacks turns to the examination of a specimen of an adjacency pair, the focus shifts sharply. The exchange – a question/answer sequence – occurs in

> a telephone conversation between two middle-aged women one of whom has gone back to college part-time, and is telling the other about a class she's taking

The other – Emma – asks:

> *Emma* :   Are you the oldest one in the class?
> *Bernice* :   Oh, by far.

In some five pages, Sacks shows an array of issues to be involved which most readers, I suspect, will not have anticipated. Here I want to draw out one of them, one which echoes themes raised in earlier lecture sets, especially that for Spring 1966 (and see the introduction to Volume 1, pp. xxxvii–xxxix). The issue concerns the proper understanding of the positioning of the subject-matter of these lectures – and of the area of inquiry which has developed with the name "conversation analysis" – among the disciplines.

One of Sacks' early observations about this exchange is that the question is not characterizing Bernice's position in the class as one of a possible set of positions, others of which might be "second oldest," or "one of the oldest," and the answer is not just a way of saying "yes," or saying it emphatically. Rather, Sacks proposes with respect to the former, the question is asking about a "unique position" in the class, with a variety of features which can go with occupying a unique position ("being the only X"); in that respect, its relevant alternatives are not the set of age-grade positions, but things like

"Are you the only woman? Disabled person? African American?" etc. Sacks continues (lecture 2, p. 538),

> So that what seems like a kind of obvious semantics turns out to be wrong for our language. It's one you hear around, and it says: Take "the oldest one in the class" and find its meaning by considering the set of alternatives to it, where the alternatives can easily be derived from it by just considering some obvious way in which it is part of a set of positions having to do with 'oldness.' . . . Now, *alternatives* are an obvious way to go about locating what something is doing or what something means. But the question of alternatives does not have an easy answer. It is, for any given thing, an empirical issue and not simply a transparent semantic issue to be gotten by lexical considerations. In saying what I figure to be the kinds of things that are alternatives here, both in the question and in the answer, I'm saying something that *has to be discovered from a consideration of the way the world works* that produces these kinds of sequences. This obviously produces a massively complex set of problems in analyzing things like a small question–answer sequence. For each one of them, if we're going to use alternatives to find out what it means, then we're going to have to go into a discovery of what the alternatives are. [Second emphasis supplied]

The point to which I wish to call attention is that this is not a matter of *linguistic* analysis in the usual sense; the closest might be some form of anthropological linguistics or linguistic anthropology, though those disciplines have shown qualified enthusiasm at best for this sort of analysis. The point here echoes a point like the one made in the Spring 1966 lectures apropos of "possessive pronouns;" they work linguistically as possessives only given an independent analysis of what they are affiliated to as "possessable" (hence the very different senses of "my shoes" and "my barber"). And the latter are not linguistic facts.[30]

But more is involved than there simply being a separate domain to be studied here, and therefore possibly a different discipline. When he turns to Bernice's answer, Sacks notes that it says "The question you asked me is correct. I am what you're supposing I am." Then (p. 539):

> And by using "by far" one indicates how one would know it; i.e., by looking around the class, without any particular interest in finding out the ages, she could age herself relatively to everyone else – which is after all not a thing that many in a class would do. But there are some people who can do it just like that, by virtue of that it's a 'by far.' That is to say, 'by far' is *glance-determinable*. And if it's glance-determinable, then that's how you could have known it . . . It's visible, like anything else

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[30]This discussion is clearly related closely to the one about "frame-and-slot" analysis in lecture 1 of the Winter 1970 set, and cf. above at pp. xxi–xxii.

in the room, that she is older by far. And as she knows it, so does
anybody else in the class know it.

Sacks then points out that "that the answer says how one knows what one is
saying is a common feature of answers." This is the sort of thing that linguists
(e.g., Chafe and Nichols, 1986) mean by the term "evidentials." But "by
far" is not, I believe, the sort of item (such as modals like "must have,"
attributions like "John said . . . ," access routes such as "I read that . . ." etc.)
that is ordinarily counted as an evidential. It is not a linguistic feature, but a
grasp of the course of action by which such a formulation would come to be
made, and via an appreciation of its consequentiality to the circumstances of
the one making it, that "by far the oldest" as glance-determinable needs to
be understood. For while "by far" may have these attributes for this question
by this asker to this recipient about this setting, it is by no means a feature of
its linguistic realization per se, or even one of its variants. The range of further
observations which an exchange like this can engender, and the theoretical
directions in which they lead (both of which Sacks pursues in the remainder
of this discussion) belong to a domain of inquiry that may well be a necessary
complement to a thoroughgoing linguistics but is not part of it, and should
be part of a thoroughgoing sociology or anthropology, but does not seem
likely to become that either.

    The Spring 1972 lectures present various of the juxtapositions or contrasts
which run through Sacks' *oeuvre*. Lectures 1 and 2 juxtapose discussions of the
most abstract and general sort – characterizing a formal structure, the
adjacency pair, not only as a type or class of occurence, but as a class of classes
– with a detailed examination of a single small excerpt from a conversation
which is turned into a window through which the phenomenology (in a
non-technical sense) of a person's social circumstances and experience is
captured and fleshed out in a compelling fashion, and in a manner which
resonates to the circumstances and experiences of many who might find
themselves in cognate circumstances.

    Lecture 3 begins with another excerpt, but uses it largely as the point of
departure for a discussion of a type of sequence and of a characterizable locus
of interactional experience – the initial contact between someone calling on the
telephone and someone answering. The launching of the discussion from a
particular exemplar of an opening sequence imparts the flavor of empirical
analysis to the discussion, but in fact it is mainly near the end of the discussion
that Sacks takes up particulars of that initial fragment. In between his
characterization is chock full of the products of many empirical analyses, but
only their upshots are offered, with intendedly typicalized reports of conver-
sational exchanges to instantiate the themes, rather than analysis in each case,
for each observation or upshot, with specific instances or exemplars. Here
again Sacks catches the phenomenology of a social-interactional place in the
world, but whereas the place in the first two lectures was something like
"being a certain type of unique person in a setting," here it is a transient
(though potentially recurrent) interaction state – answerer of the phone who

may or may not be the "called," and, if not, who may or may not get talked to.[31]

Lecture 4 is a specially striking exemplification of Sacks' ability to formulate an absolutely abstract issue, problem, or way of conceiving the organization of talk, and then to use it to set a vernacularly characterizable and recognizable class of occurrences into a relevant theoretical "space." Here, Sacks proposes to reconceive all utterances in (a) conversation in terms of three possible "positions:" last, current, next, and he then begins a course of theoretical observations about one of them – "next position" – as a purely abstract possible object; and he finds, given how conversation seems empirically to be organized (especially given the turn-taking system which it seems to employ) a set of characteristics of "next position" per se, characteristics which will always have some particular embodiment by virtue of the particular "current" utterance relative to which another is "next," but which are features of "next" position generically. From one such set of features – that any "next" can accommodate *some* range of possible utterances or utterance types, but *not any* utterance or utterance types – Sacks shows how competition for a turn falls out as a consequence. For a possible next speaker with something particular to say may see that it is possible to say it "next," but that each future "current" may restrict against this sayable in *its* next position. Were things otherwise organized, a speaker with something to say would never need to get a particular next position to say it in at the cost of not getting to say it; everything "intended to be said" could, and perhaps would, get said eventually – in some "any" next turn.

The power of this analytic tool is potentially very extensive, and some of it made its way into the eventually published version of the turn-taking paper (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974). More work along these lines was planned; perhaps some day more will appear, however impoverished by Sacks' unavailability to press it ahead in his own distinctive way.

XII

After the Spring term of 1972 Sacks no longer recorded his lectures,[32] and made no special provision for circulating the work which he was teaching in

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[31] I should remark that in this lecture – lecture 3 – more than any other place in the lectures, there is a dialogue going on between Sacks and myself – my own part in it having been developed first in my dissertation (1967) and the initial paper (Schegloff, 1968) drawn from it, and then, most proximately to this lecture, in a revision of several chapters of the dissertation for possible book publication, undertaken in the summer of 1970, and discussed extensively with Sacks at the end of that summer. Some of that work has subsequently appeared in modified form, e.g., in Schegloff, 1979 and 1986.

[32] As noted earlier, at least some of Sacks' lectures at the Linguistic Institute held during the summer of 1973 were recorded, though Sacks did not choose to have them transcribed for circulation. As well, Sacks continued to record many seminars and working sessions with students and colleagues.

his classes. As it happened, I was that summer moving from a position at Columbia University to one at UCLA, and for the next three years Sacks and I maintained an often intensive, and intermittently attenuated, period of collaborative work. Most of both Sacks' sole-authored work and mine which appeared over the following half dozen years was the delayed publication of work done and written up much earlier.[33]

Leaving aside for the moment work that was being newly launched or developed in fresh directions during the years from Fall 1972 to Sacks' death in November, 1975,[34] those years saw the drafting of the paper on turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974), the earlier-mentioned 'Two preferences . . .' paper (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979), a paper on laughter (Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff, 1984) and the paper on repair (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1977).[35] An extensive account of the foci of work during these years is beyond the scope of the present introduction.[36]

XIII

During the winter of 1974–5, Sacks and I were approached by several faculty members at the University of California, Santa Barbara about the possibility of establishing there an interdisciplinary program focussed on language, discourse and interaction. We explored the possibility through the first half of 1975; we each visited the campus, gave talks, discussed the prospects with the local interested faculty. It seemed increasingly clear that this was a serious possibility, and that what was wanted was just the sort of enterprise that conversation analysis was becoming – had already become. The prospects

[33]Thus: Sacks, 1972a was the published version of Sacks' end product, dated June, 1965, of what (rendered in more accessible language by David Sudnow) was Sacks' Ph.D. dissertation. Sacks, 1972b was a somewhat edited version of lectures from 1966. Sacks, 1972c was originally a graduate student paper, written in 1962–3. Sacks, 1973 was the published version of Sacks' paper at the Georgetown Roundtable held in March, 1972. Sacks, 1974 was the published version of a paper delivered at a conference held in April, 1972. Sacks, 1975 was the edited version of a lecture last given in 1968. Subsequent publications under his name are edited versions of all or parts of pre-1972 course lectures, assembled by Gail Jefferson (cf. introduction to Volume 1, p. ix, n. 1). Only Sacks, 1987 [1973], although edited by others from a lecture, was first delivered after spring 1972.

Of co-authored papers, Schegloff and Sacks, 1973 was drafted (substantially in the form in which it was published) in 1969.

[34]Including his beginning to work with video materials, prompted in part during the 1973 Linguistic Institute by seeing the work of Charles and Marjorie Goodwin and its fit to conversation analytic concerns.

[35]Which Sacks and I outlined together in the spring of 1975, and which I then wrote the intial draft of, after Sacks went off to the first Boston University Summer Session on Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis.

[36]After his death, I made a list of papers we had discussed more than once, and more than casually, as needing to be drafted. There were 26 of them. Some account of these years may yet be written.

became increasingly enhanced. Jefferson (on the UCSB faculty that year) could also be appointed; we could tailor a curriculum to the special character of the subject matter and our approach to it; scheduling could be made flexible; space for a collegial, "working group" arrangement was possible; there would be support for our equipment needs, etc.

Finally, in the Fall of 1975, we received a request from those who were guiding these developments at Santa Barbara. They wanted – quite reasonably – to know what we proposed to offer as a program in return for the resources and possibilities which had been discussed over the preceding months. Sacks and I had several informal conversations about this. Finally, in mid-November, we decided we really had to sit down together and draw up a serious plan to offer to Santa Barbara. We decided to meet at Irvine, in part because Sacks had been suffering from an ear infection. We tentatively agreed to meet on a Monday morning. When I called the Sunday night before the scheduled meeting, the infection had not yet fully cleared up, and Sacks was still taking medication for it. But he resisted the suggestion that we delay the meeting. We would meet at the Irvine campus.

It was on his drive from the back canyons of Orange County to the Irvine campus to discuss the specifics of the program in conversation analysis which we might propose to Santa Barbara that his car was involved in a head-on collision with a truck, and he was killed.

XIV

Reading the lectures now, and especially reading ones which entertain agendas of work to be done (e.g., the last pages of Spring 1972, lecture 5), poses again and again the question of where our understanding of language and talk, of interaction and the social fates played out in it, of human sociality from the most intimate emotion to the largest issues of social organization, where our understanding would now be had Sacks not died in November, 1975. Recalling the years immediately following the last of these lectures, when some of that work was being advanced, and imagining what might have been accomplished in a program designed to advance this undertaking, in a supportive institutional environment, enhances the fantasy.

Whether or not the efforts of others succeed in establishing a discipline with satisfactory payoffs and sustainable continuity, we shall not have the discipline, or the understanding, which we would have had with him. Nor will it avail for others literally to try to execute the plans of inquiry which he projected. They were built from the breadth of his own past reading, from the depth and range of his analytic and empirical work, and were the product of the very special métier of his mind. What is needed is a continuous re-energizing of inquiry by the example of his work and the possibilities which it revealed – each person bringing to the enterprise the best mastery of past work which they can achieve and the special contribution which the character of their own talent makes possible. Not mechanical imitation or extrapolation but the

best possible effort to advance the undertaking in original ways will constitute the most appropriate and enduring celebration of Sacks' contribution.

The first lecture presented in these volumes began with a consideration of a conversation's opening; the last ends with a puzzle about how much can be infused into a conversation-opening "hello." An astonishingly rich tapestry of analysis comes between, in an intellectual career which did not tire of repeatedly going back to the beginning, showing again and again that there was an enterprise to be undertaken here. The achievement of the work is to be found not only in its results, but in its prompting of an undertaking, and in its constituting a standing invitation to others to join, and to begin, that undertaking themselves.

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A Note on Some Effects of the Taping, Transcribing, Editing, and Publishing upon the Materials

Each process that the lectures have gone through, from taperecording to typesetting, has had its effect on what appears in these volumes. As the lectures were being taped, faulty equipment, excessive background noise, etc., could result in gaps within a recording, or the disappearance of an entire lecture. This has provided an opportunity for the presentation of samples of another instrument, as some of the absences have been filled in with materials from Sacks' research notes.

The transcribing process generated shoals of mis-hearings, only some of which have been corrected. For example, a rendering of 'Oral styles of American folk narrators' as "All styles . . . ", or the transformation somehow of 'Von Neumann' to "Baganin" were caught as the bibliographical references were being assembled. A description, "the police car . . . follows him along for a mile, finally pulls him over," emerged on some nth reading as much more likely to be " . . . follows him along for awhile." And a fresh and knowledgable eye discovered that ". . . and they had a fantastic scene with persons coming in . . . " was almost certainly ". . . and they had a fantastic team of persons coming in," and rather more consequentially, that "That's in part the problem with Reichenbach's second chapter" is in fact reference to his "seventh" chapter, that a murky reference to data consisting of "whatever it is that we have to have" was surely talking about "whatever it is that we happen to have", and reference to "the attending of a prepositional phrase" was obviously reference to the "appending" of the phrase. God only knows what further errors have slipped through.

There was never any requirement that the transcripts be verbatim, and there is variation across and within them, although one small batch was produced with a systematic concern for the very words. Not long after Sacks was killed, a cache of taperecordings of his earliest lectures turned up. These were treated, not as usual working tapes (to be transcribed as quickly as possible and then tossed back into the pool of tapes for reuse), but as something approaching a memorial. At attempt was made to capture as much detail as possible; i.e., to transcribe them at the level of detail used on the research materials, with Sacks' frequent and prolonged silences, long drawn out "uh"'s, and very slight New York accent faithfully notated. But the attempt was abandoned in the middle of the second page of transcript: At that level of detail the lecture was simply not followable. It was necessary to return to the standard format of the workaday lecture transcripts – the sense

of the specialness of this particular batch of tapes relegated to a commitment to word for word accuracy. For the most part, however, some degree of spontaneous editing occurred at the transcription stage.

The editing per se ranges from faithful conservation of the text to something very like wanton tampering. Now and again, remarks on particular editorial effects can be found (see pp. ix–xi, 126–31, and 507–12), but there is no comprehensive discussion.

As the volumes went to press, another series of changes occurred, geared to bringing the materials more into line with standard literary usage, for example, replacement of devices intended to emphasize the fact that these are transcripts of spontaneous talk rather than written text; e.g., the rendering of 'etc.' as "etcetera" and (rather more variably) the rendering of numbers as words, by the standard abbreviations and numerals. And, for example, the various references to books and articles now look very much more like standard bibliographical notes than spoken citations. A reference which went into the typescript as "I come by this sort of consideration via a paper written by a fellow named Richard Gunter, 1966, *Journal of Linguistics* called 'On accents in dialogue,'" became "I come by this sort of consideration via a paper by Richard Gunter, 'On accents in dialogue,' *Journal of Linguistics* (1966)." A typescript entry, reference to a review article "in a book called *Studies in Language and Literature*, edited by A. Marquart, 1954, called 'English sentence connectors,' by Seymour Chapman. That's on page 315," came back as reference to a review article "by Seymour Chapman, 'English sentence connectors,' in A. Marquart (ed.), *Studies in Language and Literature* (1954), p. 315." As a sort of compromise between good form and actual occurrence, the non-initial reference to the author, in this and other citations throughout the volumes, has been restored.

Acknowledgements

Part I

Fall 1964–Spring 1965

Lecture 1
Rules of Conversational Sequence

I'll start off by giving some quotations.

(1) *A*: Hello
    B: Hello

(2) *A*: This is Mr Smith may I help you
    B: Yes, this is Mr Brown

(3) *A*: This is Mr Smith may I help you
    B: I can't hear you.
    A: This is Mr <u>Smith</u>.
    B: Sm<u>i</u>th.

These are some first exchanges in telephone conversations collected at an emergency psychiatric hospital. They are occurring between persons who haven't talked to each other before. One of them, A, is a staff member of this psychiatric hospital. B can be either somebody calling about themselves, that is to say in trouble in one way or another, or somebody calling about somebody else.

I have a large collection of these conversations, and I got started looking at these first exchanges as follows. A series of persons who called this place would not give their names. The hospital's concern was, can anything be done about it? One question I wanted to address was, where in the course of the conversation could you tell that somebody would not give their name? So I began to look at the materials. It was in fact on the basis of that question that I began to try to deal in detail with conversations.

I found something that struck me as fairly interesting quite early. And that was that if the staff member used "This is Mr Smith may I help you" as their opening line, then overwhelmingly, any answer other than "Yes, this is Mr Brown" (for example, "I can't hear you," "I don't know," "How do you

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A combination of Fall 1964, tape 1, side 2 and tape 2, side 1, with brief extracts from Winter 1965, lecture (1) – the parenthesis indicate that the original transcripts were unnumbered, the current numbering likely but not certain – pp. 1 and 11–12 (transcriber unknown) and Spring 1965 ('64–'65), lecture 3, pp. 6–7 (transcriber unknown).

The lectures' titles are intended to give a handle on them, and only partially capture the contents.

spell your name?") meant that you would have serious trouble getting the caller's name, if you got the name at all.

I'm going to show some of the ways that I've been developing of analyzing stuff like this. There will be series of ways fitted to each other, as though one were constructing a multi-dimensional jigsaw puzzle. One or another piece can be isolated and studied, and also the various pieces can be studied as to how they fit together. I'll be focussing on a variety of things, starting off with what I'll call 'rules of conversational sequence.'

Looking at the first exchange compared to the second, we can be struck by two things. First of all, there seems to be a fit between what the first person who speaks uses as their greeting, and what the person who is given that greeting returns. So that if A says "Hello," then B tends to say "Hello." If A says "This is Mr Smith may I help you," B tends to say "Yes, this is Mr Brown." We can say there's a procedural rule there, that a person who speaks first in a telephone conversation can choose their form of address, and in choosing their form of address they can thereby choose the form of address the other uses.

By 'form' I mean in part that the exchanges occur as 'units.' That is, "Hello" "Hello" is a unit, and "This is Mr Smith may I help you" "Yes, this is Mr Brown" is a unit. They come in pairs. Saying "This is Mr Smith may I help you" thereby provides a 'slot' to the other wherein they properly would answer "Yes, this is Mr Brown." The procedural rule would describe the occurrences in the first two exchanges. It won't describe the third exchange, but we'll come to see what is involved in such materials.

Secondly, if it is so that there is a rule that the person who goes first can choose their form of address and thereby choose the other's, then for the unit, "This is Mr Smith may I help you" "Yes, this is Mr Brown," if a person uses "This is Mr Smith . . ." they have a way of asking for the other's name – without, however, asking the question, "What is your name?" And there is a difference between saying "This is Mr Smith may I help you" – thereby providing a slot to the other wherein they properly would answer "Yes, this is Mr Brown" – and asking the question "What is your name?" at some point in the conversation. They are very different phenomena.

For one, in almost all of the cases where the person doesn't give their name originally, then at some point in the conversation they're asked for their name. One way of asking is just the question "Would you give me your name?" To that, there are alternative returns, including "No" and "Why?" If a caller says "Why?" the staff member may say something like, "I want to have something to call you" or "It's just for our records." If a caller says "No," then the staff member says "Why?" and may get something like "I'm not ready to do that" or "I'm ashamed."

Now, I'll consider many times the use of "Why?" What I want to say about it just to begin with, is that what one does with "Why?" is to propose about some action that it is an 'accountable action.' That is to say, "Why?" is a way of asking for an account. Accounts are most extraordinary. And the use of accounts and the use of requests for accounts are very highly regulated

phenomena. We can begin to cut into these regularities by looking at what happens when "May I have your name?" is followed by "Why?" Then you get an account; for example, "I need something to call you." The other might then say, "I don't mind." Or you might get an account, "It's just for our records." To which the other might say, "Well I'm not sure I want to do anything with you, I just want to find out what you do" – so that the records are not relevant.

What we can see is that there are ways that accounts seem to be dealable with. If a person offers an account, which they take it provides for the action in question being done – for example, the caller's name being given – then if the other can show that the interest of that account can be satisfied without the name being given, the name doesn't have to be given. That is, if the account is to control the action, then if you can find a way that the account controls the alternative action than it proposed to control, you can use it that way.

It seems to be quite important, then, who it is that offers the account. Because the task of the person who is offered the account can then be to, in some way, counter it. Where, alternatively, persons who offer an account seem to feel that they're somehow committed to it, and if it turns out to be, for example, inadequate, then they have to stand by it.

The fact that you could use questions – like "Why?" – to generate accounts, and then use accounts to control activities, can be marked down as, I think, one of the greatest discoveries in Western civilization. It may well be that that is what Socrates discovered. With his dialectic he found a set of procedures by which this thing, which was not used systematically, could become a systematic device. Socrates will constantly ask "Why?," there will be an answer, and he'll go on to show that that can't be the answer. And that persons were terribly pained to go through this whole business is clear enough from the Dialogues. And it's also clear in our own experiences. And in the materials I'll present.

We see, then, one clear difference between providing a slot for a name, and asking for a name. Asking for a name tends to generate accounts and counters. By providing a slot for a name, those activities do not arise.

We can also notice that, as a way of asking for the other's name, "This is Mr Smith . . ." is, in the first place, not an accountable action. By that I mean to say, it's not required that staff members use it and they don't always use it, but when they do, the caller doesn't ask why. "This is Mr Smith . . ." gets its character as a non-accountable action simply by virtue of the fact that this is a place where, routinely, two persons speak who haven't met. In such places the person who speaks first can use that object. And we could say about that kind of item that the matters discriminated by its proper use are very restricted. That is to say, a call is made; the only issue is that two persons are speaking who presumably haven't met, and this object can be used.

Furthermore, the matters are discriminated in different terms than those which the agency is constructed for. That is, they are discriminated in terms of 'two people who haven't met' rather than, for example, that an agency staff

member is speaking to someone calling the agency for help. And where one
has some organization of activities which sets out to do some task – and in this
case it's important for the agency to get names – then if you find a device
which discriminates in such a restricted fashion, you can use that device to do
tasks for you.

Now, given the fact that such a greeting as "This is Mr Smith . . ."
provides for the other giving his own name as an answer, one can see what the
advantage of "Hello" is for someone who doesn't want to give their name.
And I found in the first instance that while sometimes the staff members use
"Hello" as their opening line, if it ever occurred that the persons calling the
agency spoke first, they always said "Hello."

Persons calling could come to speak first because at this agency, caller and
staff member are connected by an operator. The operator says "Go ahead
please" and now the two parties are on an open line, and one can start talking
or the other can start talking. This stands in contrast to, for example, calling
someone's home. There, the rights are clearly assigned; the person who
answers the phone speaks first. If they speak first, they have the right to
choose their form. If they have the right to choose their form, they have the
right thereby to choose the other's. Here, where the rights are not clearly
assigned, the caller could move to speak first and thereby choose the form.
And when callers to this agency speak first, the form they choose is the unit
"Hello" "Hello." Since such a unit involves no exchange of names, they can
speak without giving their name and be going about things in a perfectly
appropriate way.

Now, there are variant returns to "This is Mr Smith may I help you?" one
of which is in our set of three exchanges: "I can't hear you." I want to talk
of that as an 'occasionally usable' device. That is to say, there doesn't have to
be a particular sort of thing preceding it; it can come at any place in a
conversation. Here is one from the middle of a conversation, from a different
bunch of materials.

> A: Hey you got a cigarette Axum. I ain't got, I ain't got a good cigarette,
>   and I can't roll one right now. Think you can afford it maybe?
> B: I am not here to support your habits.
> A: Huh? My helplessness?
> B: I am not responsible for supporting your habits (   )
> A: My habits ((laughing))

Our third exchange from the psychiatric hospital has the device used at the
beginning of the conversation.

> A: This is Mr Smith may I help you
> B: I can't hear you.
> A: This is Mr <u>Smith</u>.
> B: Smith.

What kind of a device is it? What you can see is this. When you say "I can't hear you," you provide that the other person can repeat what they said. Now what does that repetition do for you? Imagine you're in a game. One of the questions relevant to the game would be, is there a way in that game of skipping a move? It seems that something like "I can't hear you" can do such a job. If you introduce it you provide for the other to do some version of a repeat following which you yourself can repeat. And then it's the other's turn to talk again. What we find is that the slot where the return would go – your name in return to "This is Mr Smith . . ." – never occurs.

It is not simply that the caller ignores what they properly ought to do, but something rather more exquisite. That is, they have ways of providing that the place where the return name fits is never opened. So that their name is not absent. Their name would be absent if they just went ahead and talked. But that very rarely occurs. The rules of etiquette – if you want to call them that, though we take etiquette to be something very light and uninteresting and to be breached as you please – seem to be quite strong. Persons will use ways to not ignore what they properly ought to do by providing that the place for them to do it is never opened.

I hope it can also be seen that a device like "I can't hear you" – the repeat device, providing for a repetition of the thing that was first said, which is then repeated by the person who said "I can't hear you" – is not necessarily designed for skipping a move. It is not specific to providing a way of keeping in the conversation and behaving properly while not giving one's name. It can be used for other purposes and do other tasks, and it can be used with other items. That's why I talk about it as an 'occasional device.' But where that is what one is trying to do, it's a rather neat device.

Let me turn now to a consideration which deals with a variant return to "May I help you?" That is, not "Yes . . ." but "I don't know." I'll show a rather elaborate exchange in which the staff member opens with a version of "This is Mr Smith may I help you" but the combination gets split. The name is dealt with, and when the "can I help you" is offered, it occurs in such a way that it can be answered independent of the name.[1]

> *Op*: Go ahead please
> *A*: This is Mr Smith (*B*: Hello) of the Emergency Psychiatric Center can I help you.
> *B*: Hello?
> *A*: Hello
> *B*: I can't hear you.
> *A*: I see. Can you hear me now?
> *B*: Barely. Where are you, in the womb?

[1] The fragment of data is reproduced pretty much as Sacks transcribed it, preserving his attempts to deal with simultaneous talk (i.e., *A*: This is Mr Smith (*B*: Hello) of the Emergency Psychiatric Center) and silence (e.g., *B*: I uh   Now that you're here . . .). See lecture 9, pp. 66 and 68 for two other approaches by him to simultaneous talk in this same conversation.

A: Where are you calling from?
B: Hollywood.
A: Hollywood.
B: I can hear you a little better.
A: Okay. Uh I was saying my name is Smith and I'm with the
     Emergency Psychiatric Center.
B: Your name is what?
A: Smith.
B: Smith?
A: Yes.
A: Can I help you?
B: I don't know hhheh   I hope you can.
A: Uh hah   Tell me about your problems.
B: I uh   Now that you're here I'm embarassed to talk about it. I don't
     want you telling me I'm emotionally immature 'cause I know I am

I was very puzzled by "I don't know" in return to "May I help you." I couldn't figure out what they were doing with it. And the reason I was puzzled was that having listened to so many of these things and having been through the scene so many times, I heard "May I help you" as something like an idiom. I'm going to call these idiom-like things 'composites.' That means you hear the whole thing as a form, a single unit. And as a single unit, it has a proper return. As a composite, "May I help you" is a piece of etiquette; a way of introducing oneself as someone who is in the business of helping somebody, the answer to which is "Yes" and then some statement of what it is one wants. We can consider this item in terms of what I'll call the 'base environment' of its use.

By 'base environment' I mean, if you go into a department store, somebody is liable to come up to you and say "May I help you." And in business-type phone calls this item is routinely used. And if you come into a place and you don't know what it's like, and somebody comes up to you and uses such an item, that's one way of informing you what kind of a place it is. So, if a new institution is being set up, then there are available in the society whole sets of ways that persons go about beginning conversations, and one could, for example, adopt one or another of a series of them as the ones that are going to be used in this place.

Now the thing about at least some composites is that they can be heard not only as composites, but as ordinary sentences, which we could call 'constructives,' which are understood by taking the pieces and adding them up in some way. As a composite, "May I help you" is a piece of etiquette, a signal for stating your request – what you want to be helped with. Alternatively, as a constructive, "May I help you" is a question. If one hears it as a question, the piece of etiquette and its work hasn't come up, and "I don't know" is a perfectly proper answer.

Further, "I don't know" may be locating a problem which "May I help you" is designed, in the first place, to avoid. In its base environment, for

example a department store, it's pretty much the case that for a customer, the question of whether some person "can help" is a matter of the department store having made them the person who does that. That is to say, lots of things, like telling you whether you can find lingerie in a certain size, is something anybody can do, and as long as the department store says this person is going to do it, that's enough. But we're dealing with a psychiatric hospital. In a department store, being selected to do a job and having credentials to do it are essentially the same thing. In a psychiatric hospital and lots of other places, however, they are very different things. That is, whether somebody can help you if you have a mental disorder, is not solved or is not even presumptively solved by the fact that they've been selected by somebody to do that job. The way it's solved in this society is by reference to such things as having been trained in a particular fashion, having gotten degrees, having passed Board examinations, etc.

Now, in the base environment of the use of "May I help you?" there is, as I say, no difference essentially between having credentials and being selected. If one can formulate the matter in a psychiatric hospital such that those things come on as being the same, then one needn't start off by producing one's credentials at the beginning of the conversation. And in my materials, again and again, when "May I help you" is used the person calling says "Yes" and begins to state their troubles.

As a general matter, then, one can begin to look for kinds of objects that have a base environment, that, when they get used in that environment perform a rather simple task, but that can be used in quite different environments to do quite other tasks. So, a matter like 'credentials' can be handled by this "May I help you" device. There will be lots of other devices which have a base environment, which do some other task in some other environment.

Before moving off of "May I help you" I want to mention one other thing about it. If the base environment is something like a department store, then, when it's used in other places – for example, a psychiatric hospital – one of the pieces of information it seems to convey is that whatever it is you propose to do, you do routinely. To whomsoever that calls. That is, it's heard as a standardized utterance. How is that relevant? It can be relevant in alternative ways. First of all, it can be a very reassuring thing to hear. Some persons feel that they have troubles, and they don't know if anybody else has those troubles; or, if others do have those troubles, whether anybody knows about them. If someone knows about them, then there may be a known solution to them. Also and relatedly, a lot of troubles – like mental diseases – are things that persons feel very ambivalent about. That is, they're not sure whether it's some defect of their character, or something else. That, in part, is why they're hesitant to talk about it. And it seems that one of the ways one begins to tell people that they can talk, that you know what they have and that you routinely deal with such matters, is to use manifestly organizational talk.

"May I help you," then, can be a reassuring way to begin. It can alternatively be something else. Consider the exchange I just showed, in which

such standardized utterances as "May I help you" and "Tell me about your problems" are used.

A: Can I help you?
B: I don't know hhheh   I hope you can
A: Uh hah   Tell me about your problems
B: I uh   Now that you're here I'm embarrassed to talk about it. I don't want you telling me I'm emotionally immature 'cause I know I am

That is, the use of standardized, manifestly organizational talk can provide for the person calling that they're going to get routine treatment. But 'routine', for them, may not be such a happy thing. Because, for example, they've been through it before. But they may have gone through it, as psychiatrists would say, part way. For example, they were in analysis for three years and ran out of money, or the psychiatrist wouldn't keep them on, or they didn't want to stay. Part way, they may have come to some point in the analysis where they 'knew what was wrong with them.' That is, they knew the diagnostic term. But that diagnostic term may have had a lay affiliate. By that I mean, if a psychiatrist says you're regressed, it's a technical term. But 'regressed' is also a lay term, and as a lay term it doesn't have a great deal of attractiveness. If one finds oneself living with a lay understanding of such a term, where the term is not a very nice thing to have in its lay sense, then when you hear someone using such an item as "May I help you," you can hear that some procedure will be gone through, the upshot of which will be the discovery of what you 'already know' – the knowing of which doesn't do you any good.

Related to that are such things as, some people seem to feel very much disturbed about the fact that their relationship to a psychiatrist or to other doctors is monetary. What they want, they say, is a personal solution. Ask them what they want, "Well, that you don't have to pay for it." When they hear "May I help you," they hear 'a professional.' But they feel that the way you get cured is by getting an affiliation to somebody which is like the affiliations that they failed to get in their lives. That is, they may already have come to learn from some other psychiatrist that the failure of love by their parents is the cause of their troubles. Then, what they come to see is that they need the love of somebody else. And they can't get that from a therapist. Because as soon as they don't pay, that's the end of the relationship.

Now let me just make a few general points. Clearly enough, things like "This is Mr Smith," "May I help you?" and "I can't hear you" are social objects. And if you begin to look at what they do, you can see that they, and things like them, provide the makings of activities. You assemble activities by using these things. And now when you, or I, or sociologists, watching people do things, engage in trying to find out what they do and how they do it, one fix which can be used is: Of the enormous range of activities that people do, all of them are done with something. Someone says "This is Mr Smith" and

the other supplies his own name. Someone says "May I help you" and the other states his business. Someone says "Huh?" or "What did you say?" or "I can't hear you," and then the thing said before gets repeated. What we want then to find out is, can we first of all construct the objects that get used to make up ranges of activities, and then see how it is those objects do get used.

Some of these objects can be used for whole ranges of activities, where for different ones a variety of the properties of those objects will get employed. And we begin to see alternative properties of those objects. That's one way we can go about beginning to collect the alternative methods that persons use in going about doing whatever they have to do. And we can see that these methods will be reproducible descriptions in the sense that any scientific description might be, such that the natural occurrences that we're describing can yield abstract or general phenomena which need not rely on statistical observability for their abstractness or generality.

There was a very classical argument that it would not be that way; that singular events were singular events, given a historian's sort of argument, that they just happen and they get more or less accidentally thrown together. But if we could find that there are analytically hard ways of describing these things – where, that is, we're talking about objects that can be found elsewhere, that get placed, that have ways of being used; that are abstract objects which get used on singular occasions and describe singular courses of activity – then that's something which is exceedingly non-trivial to know.

One final note. When people start to analyze social phenomena, if it looks like things occur with the sort of immediacy we find in some of these exchanges, then, if you have to make an elaborate analysis of it – that is to say, show that they did something as involved as some of the things I have proposed – then you figure that they couldn't have thought that fast. I want to suggest that you have to forget that completely. Don't worry about how fast they're thinking. First of all, don't worry about whether they're 'thinking.' Just try to come to terms with how it is that the thing comes off. Because you'll find that they can do these things. Just take any other area of natural science and see, for example, how fast molecules do things. And they don't have very good brains. So just let the materials fall as they may. Look to see how it is that persons go about producing what they do produce.

Lecture 2
On Suicide Threats Getting Laughed Off

Here are some lines that occurred in one of the conversations I collected. This is a woman talking.

A: But about two months ago I was still home on uh one Sunday, oh we had five children and I got home from church and he's got a butcher knife. He told the kids to go to the park and play. This is kind of unusual for him because he doesn't like them, especially the baby, to go anywhere unless we're there.

B: Aha.

A: After they were all gone, I was laying on the couch just reading the Sunday paper and he came over there and started holding this butcher knife at my throat. And I said what is the matter with you. He said I'm going to kill you. I'm going to end it all. And I said oh for goodness sake put it down and go.
 →I started to laugh it off. And he sat there for about an hour. So I thought well, he kept threatening to kill me. And then he would pull it back as if to stab me. And I just laid there and prayed. I almost believed he was crazy.
   And then he had been acting fairly good since then. He doesn't have any religion and I'm Catholic. But I said why don't you go down and talk to the priest. Maybe he would help you.

Here's another, from the same conversation.

A: What if you won't come. I mean how do I– about– Oh, the last time he tried to kill me he sat and wrote a long suicide note or whatever. I don't know. I didn't read it. This was on a Sunday when the kids and I got home from church and he wanted to know if I went to church with the kids and they said of course. She always goes to church with us. He said I know she's got a boyfriend. I said quit acting silly in front of the kids. What's the matter with you. He says oh, and then, I don't know. Anyway, this time he tried to kill me. He wrote this long note.
 →I just acted like I thought he was kidding. I didn't want him to think

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I was taking him seriously. He said well Joey run down to the police station before I do something I don't want to do. I said Daddy quit it. Joey says Daddy I don't want to go down there, they'll all look funny at me when they read the note. I says Joey run outside, Daddy's only kidding. He says no I'm not. You'd better let me do it. Then he got in the car and went tearing off. I looked for the note last night and he didn't have one, so I thought oh maybe he knew I'd wake up and maybe not. But I don't want to leave it go.

Here's another, from an altogether different conversation.

A: I mean the thing that makes it even more serious to me is the once or twice that I've mentioned it, not deliberately, but kind of slipping, to the family or anything like that, they try to make a joke of it, you know,

B: Well no, see, here we take all of that seriously.

A: And believe me it's no joke because as I say I just don't feel my life is worth anything at this point.

B: Well we take that very seriously and when someone feels that way we try to do whatever we can to try to help them work out of that feeling. And we'd like to help you.

A: Okay, fine then.

And another conversation.

A: I want somebody to talk me out of it, I really do.

B: Uh huh,

A: But I can't call any of my friends or anybody, 'cause they're just going to say oh that's silly or that's stupid.

B: Uh huh,

A: I guess what you really want is someone to say, yes I understand why you want to commit suicide, I do believe you.

Recurrently in these conversations, persons say that when they use the line "I'm going to kill myself," others laugh. And that's not only by self-report, I have things from police reports of suicides where the police then ask persons around, "Well, did they ever threaten to kill themselves?" and those persons say "Well, he said he was going to kill himself but we just laughed it off." And the question I began to address was, what kind of relationship was there between the statement "I'm going to kill myself," and laughter. How is it that laughter would be done there?

Okay, let's hold that problem now and turn to another set of materials, via which we'll be trying to see what might be involved in it. I said about the opening lines of conversations that they seem to come in pairs. And that one person could choose the form of greeting he used. And that if one person

could choose their own they could choose the other's. Now it seems that there is a general class of such kinds of things, which I'm going to call 'ceremonials.' Other examples are, for example, "How are you feeling?" to which you return "Fine." If one person, then, uses a ceremonial, the other properly returns with a ceremonial.

Let's look at "How are you feeling?" It's routinely used between persons as either a greeting or greeting substitute. And it's used between persons who needn't have very much intimacy. But there is a smaller group of persons included in the circle of persons who routinely use this object. Call the larger group 'others' and the smaller, a special class of others. I won't at this point go into describing in detail what the properties are of this special class of others. Roughly, they are persons who, if one has a trouble, one turns to them for help. Without giving some of the ways we could talk about their relation to some 'one' – call that one Ego – like, for example, they may be kin, I want to approach it in a little different way. One of the ways they stand to each other is, if something happens to Ego, then, whoever it is that might be trying to discover why that thing happened, could refer for explanations to these others. So let's say they're 'causally bound' to the person who may have trouble.

And that could quite easily make it apparent how it is that if such a one is turned to for help, they have a feeling of obligation. They would have a feeling of obligation by virtue of the fact that if, let's say, a suicide occurs, then, even if they hadn't been approached for help in the first place, the question would be asked, well what was up with that family that she should have killed herself? Many things that might happen to Ego will be causally explained by virtue of something that the other did. And if others want to avoid that happening to them, then when some Ego turns to them, they feel like giving help. And of course the fact that these others walk around with all kinds of guilt turns in part on that causal relationship. Now this is among laymen; you don't have to have scientific theories to feel this causal involvement. Any layman would ask, if somebody says "My brother killed himself," "Well what's the matter with the family?" That's where you would look for the source.

Further, somebody who is not a part of this small group of others can become causally involved by virtue of the fact that Ego has asked them for help in some way and been turned down. If something then happens to Ego, it seems that even if you aren't one of that small group of others, you know about the fact that Ego was troubled, how come you didn't do anything? So knowledge of the trouble is often sufficient to bring one into causal involvement.

Now these people, the whole circle, are going around constantly saying "How are you feeling?" Properly, the return is "Fine." And this can be fairly dramatic. I've sat around in hospitals, and in a hospital persons who are, say, recuperating from serious diseases may be sitting in wheelchairs outside their room or in the common room, etc. A doctor walks by a person who looks like they're just about to go, and says "How are you feeling?" and they say

"Fine." Sometimes, however, a person may take that "How are you feeling?" and attempt to use it to present their troubles. And one sort of thing that happens in that case is that persons who listen when somebody begins to tell them their troubles, talk about themselves routinely as 'softhearted,' 'fools,' and that sort of thing. And when persons talk about themselves as softhearted with respect to others, it's probably something like this that's happened to them: They listen, then they find themselves 'involved.' Involved, however, without the basic properties that would initiate their relevant obligation, but not knowing what to do. And not knowing how to get out, either, because they 'know too much.'

On the other hand, the fact that there is that ceremonial relation between "How are you feeling?" and "Fine," may set up the following situation. Routinely, if you look at first interviews (and perhaps later interviews also) between psychiatrists and patients or possible patients, they begin like this:

> *A*: How are you feeling?
> *B*: It's a long story.
> *A*: That's alright, I have time.

What is this "It's a long story," and things like it, doing here? The person knows that the line "How are you feeling?" is a ceremonial line, and it's a breach of the proper forms to begin to launch right then and there into what it is that's bothering you. So what they then do is try to initiate another ceremony which would provide the basis for them talking. Typically this other ceremony is nicely done, in that what one does is offer a tentative refusal, like "It's a long story" or "It'll take hours," which turns it back to the other, referring to their circumstances; for example, their schedule. And it invites the other to then say that their schedule does not control your activities, so go ahead and talk.

Now, persons who are causally bound are obliged to give help when help is asked for. That means in part that they're in bad shape if they don't give help and trouble occurs. They're responsible for someone. Others hold them responsible, and they feel responsible. The question is, is there some way that they can go about refusing to give help without 'refusing,' in the same way that I've talked about refusing to give one's name without 'refusing'? One solution would be to find a way to set up the first remark as the first remark of a ceremonial. Because then the proper return is a ceremonial. While there are some ceremonials that come off strictly by virtue of the particular object that's used, there are others that are classes of ceremonials. Three common classes are jokes, games, performances. They all have the character that the next move – or some other given move in the sequence – is the end of it, and that's the end of the whole thing. You tell a joke, there's a laugh. A game has a set beginning and end. A play has the same character.

That is, I think it's the fact that we have ceremonial relationships between various objects and their proper returns, that sets up the sort of business we started off with: "I'm going to kill myself" followed by laughter. When

somebody says "I'm going to kill myself," if the other can cast it into one of the ceremonial forms, then that can end the interchange. One wouldn't have heard the 'cry for help.' One would have heard a joke. And one would have behaved properly with respect to a joke. And it appears that, alternatively to giving help, one gets cases of just those three common classes of ceremonials. Somebody laughs, or they say "Nice performance," or "Quit playing." And that would provide, then, for closing that thing off without, however, having been in the situation of refusing help in the sense of saying "no," or other such things. So we can see how that form provides for this thing to happen.

We can also see how awfully painful it must be for persons who are deeply troubled, and who constantly have people coming up to them and saying "How are you feeling?" when they can't come back. Now and then we see that very problem referred to in a joking form. Here is an instance.

   A: How are you feeling?
   B: You really want to know? ha ha
   A: ha ha

That is, someone, asked "How are you feeling?" jokingly proposes: What if I were to take this, not as a ceremonial form, but as a serious invitation. Then where would you be? And when people are asked "Well why don't you tell somebody?" they say "It'd be like a melodrama!" or "How can you tell them, they'll just laugh!"

I want to say another thing about ceremonials. Here is something very nice. Very lovely. Lovely in a way, but quite awful, also. When I was thinking about this stuff, I came across a very frequently recurring kind of statement. I'll just give one case; a long extract in which a widow is telling a psychiatrist of some problems she is having with her married daughter.

   A: Well, I'll tell you really what got into me last week. You know I was
          just talking about Thanksgiving beingThursday, and she had to
   →prepare, but she didn't invite me. And I go home and I start to think
          about it, and you know, when I spoke to you alone there a couple of
          minutes, I shouldn't have talked about that, because there was
          something else that was— I mean I touched on it, but there was
          something else.
   →I just had a feeling that I wasn't wanted anymore in their house. At
          least by her husband. Naturally she can't do anything about it. You
          know, I mean if she could, she would start fighting with him, and I
          wouldn't want to be a cause of that you know. But I thought that
          because, when I first went to the doctor that I went to, this internist
          I was going to last July, and she suggested that I go to a doctor in the
          Valley that she knew. She says well, it's a good idea because if you
          have to be hospitalized, or if you're depressed or anything, you could
          stay with me for a couple of days. She says I can't get down to see you

that often, with the children. But I'll take care of you if you stay at my house.

So this is in July. And I wasn't able to go to him because I didn't have the money to go. I finally in October, had to go to the hospital. And I was there for three days and got these tests, which just made me awfully weak, and when I got out she called for me because she had my car while I was in the hospital. She called for me and didn't

→ask if I wanted to stay over that night. I get out of the hospital and I have no– and I have to drive home, and I felt so weak by myself. I mean, she couldn't because otherwise she couldn't have gotten back. I mean it was just one of those things. But the better thing would have been if I could have stayed up there at least overnight and when I felt

→fresh, take the trip down. But she didn't even ask. And I know it isn't like Lila not to ask, when this was the original reason for my going up there. And I just know that she was warned that she better not bring me home.

And of course I started feeling sorry for myself. And then, when we were there Wednesday, she said something about preparing a

→Thanksgiving dinner next Thursday and she didn't say anything about me. I figured, well, instead of the family, which we always had, the family together, it's not at my house, it's at her house. I mean during the time I was married I used to have seventeen or twenty for dinner because the whole family. And then she had taken over lately. So I thought well, maybe she's gonna have her son. And it's not up to me to expect her to have me. And then I thought well, maybe she figured Jay

that's the son

is going to be there, and we're not getting along right now, and she is leaving me out in the cold. And I just began to feel sorry for myself.

Etcetera. Then she goes on to say:

Well, it turned out that she said to me, when I said for Thanksgiving,
→"Well don't I <u>always</u> have the family?" I said "Well you didn't ask me, how am I supposed to know what's going to be <u>this</u> year?" I mean generally I don't stand on ceremony, but conditions are, they've been different lately, you know.

A recurrent thing that I've seen throughout this stuff is persons talking about not feeling wanted anymore. The question is, how is that kind of feeling provided for in this society? And what would be interesting about it would be if we could see some way in which, quote, the structure of society, provided for the focussing of kinds of troubles. That's what I think we can see

with this,[1] if we just consider ceremonials a little further. We can note that there are classes of events which, between persons who are not terribly intimate, get initiated via ceremonials. "Would you like to come over for dinner tonight?" "Sure." That is, for these kinds of events to occur, there has to be an invitation, an offer of some sort. So that's one task of ceremonials – they do the job of providing for these events to take place.

They do another job, in a way. When persons are quite intimate, then one way they measure that is by virtue of the fact that invitations are no longer relevant. You can go over to their house without being invited. And people will say to each other, "Come over any time you want." Now with a husband and wife, one gets a version of this not feeling wanted, which goes something like this:

> *Wife*:   Why don't you ever ask me to go out to dinner anymore?
> *Husband*:   If you want to go out to dinner why don't you just say so?
> *Wife*:   I don't want to go out, I just want you to ask me.

What she's picking up here is the absence of ceremonials. And ceremonials have this double use. On the one hand they are properly used to provide for persons to do things – come over, go out to dinner, etc. – at some state of a relationship. At another state those things happen without them. And they're not absent. Indeed, it surely happens that somebody might say, "Well why don't you come over tonight?" and the other says "Why are you suddenly making a big deal of it?" But this double use then provides that when somebody has some doubts of some sort, they could focus right in there; that

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[1] Throughout this volume many of Sacks' pronominal uses have been changed. Here, the operation is more or less innocuous. What is rendered as ". . . if *we* could see . . ." and "That's what I think *we* can see . . ." actually goes, ". . . if *we* could see . . ." and "That's what I think *you* can see," i.e., the second 'we' is actually 'you.' This change instances an editorial policy concerned with solving 'direct address' as a problem to a reader (e.g., "You ought by this time to be quite aware of the fact that . . ."). The policy takes as a resource and license Sacks' own use of the pronouns 'you' and 'we' in alternation (e.g., "We want to do [X and Y]. You want a method that generates this."), and his somewhat eccentric use of 'we' in particular. For example, he will use 'we' when he himself is the obvious referent (e.g., "Remember we said about the opening lines of conversations that they seem to come in pairs") or when the class is the obvious referent (e.g., introducing a "much more interesting thing that I doubt we've noticed"). For a more elaborated discussion, see Appendix A.

Of the range of changes made to the unedited transcripts, very few are marked and explicated. It might also be noted that the faithfulness of the unedited transcripts to the very words is in principle suspect. Such preservation of the very words as there is, is variable. That was not part of the enterprise – with the exception of the retranscribed Fall 1964 lectures, which were produced after Sacks' death. All of which is to say that the spontaneous nature of the lectures themselves, the variable fidelity of the transcripts, and the manifold changes made in the editing, result in a version of Harvey Sacks' work which from start to finish was in one sense or another not under Sacks' control.

they see this thing is absent, and see the absence via the position of one who is not in the position of intimacy. And they don't know quite how to handle that matter. Because if they complain, they get "Why are you standing on ceremony?" and if they don't complain and don't get the invitations, they figure "Jeez, it's the case that I'm not wanted anymore."

Now I can't make any statement psychiatrically about why persons would pick up that double use of ceremonials and use it – or feel used by it – with their doubts. But in any event, one can see how it is that the fact that those things get used that way, provides a locus for troubles to get focused on.

Here is another, related, phenomenon.

A: Hope you have a good time.
B: Why?

The "Why?" here is quite apparently a paranoid return, and the whole conversation from which this comes makes it quite clear that the person who produces it is paranoid. I won't quote the whole conversation, I want to just focus on this interchange for reasons I'll make clear.

One of the things that's reported about persons who have to deal with paranoids is that they feel weak, experience a terrific lack of control when they encounter them. Now you could go about trying to examine that, perhaps by studying let's say the comparative dynamics of the persons, or various other things. But I think you can get an idea of how they would have that feeling of weakness by just examining an interchange like this. We're talking about ceremonials. The normal answer to this "Hope you have a good time" is "Thank you." And if one uses a line like "Hope you have a good time" one can expect to control the return of the other. In this case the line doesn't control the return of the other, and we can at least begin to see what it means to feel weak: Having an expectation of doing something as controlling, and finding out that it isn't that at all.

But furthermore, this "Why?"–return casts this "Hope you have a good time" into the character of an 'accountable act.' Normally, when one does an accountable act, one knows that one is doing an accountable act. This one comes off like this:

A: Hope you have a good time.
B: Why?
A: Why? Well, I just would like– you know, you ought to have a good time if you're going on a trip.

What seems to be involved here is, doing something that wasn't seen as accountable, having it turned into something that is accountable, one doesn't have an account. One offers, then, an account which one feels is quite feeble. It's feeble in a special sense: Not only is it inadequate, but it's inadequate by virtue of the fact that there's no reason to have had an account in the first

place. But when one delivers the account, one may only see that it's feeble, and get the sense that, "Jesus I'm behaving inadequately here."

And that character, that others can by virtue of their return cast your activity into something other than it was produced to be – or that they can by virtue of their return cast it into what you thought it was – is a very basic problem. I call it Job's Problem. Remember the Book of Job? Job is a rich man, doing marvelously. Then everything is destroyed. Job's position is that he didn't do anything wrong; this was not 'punishment.' And now his friends come, and they say to him, "Just confess to what you did wrong and everything will be fixed up." That is to say, the appearance of his pain and of his loss is sufficient indication for them that he did something wrong. And the problem as they see it is that he isn't about to confess to it. Job, then, is in this position of, "Well Christ, the world has changed for me. And maybe I *did* do something wrong." But he is not about to acknowledge that. But most people do. Most people, when they get into a situation, will say, "What did I do wrong?" or "What did I do to deserve this?" That is to say, treatments are 'proper treatments.' And one isn't in a position of saying right off, "You're treating me wrong." Rather, one finds, the treatment occurred and it must be about my action.

Lecture 3
The Correction–Invitation Device

Let me give a quotation.

A: Do you have a gun at home?
B: A forty-five
A: You do have a forty-five.
B: Uh huh, loaded.
A: What's it doing there. Whose is it.
B: It's sitting there.
A: Is it yours?
B: It's Dave's.
A: It's your husband's huh
B: I know how to shoot it.
A: He isn't a police officer.
B: No.
A: He just has one.
B: Everyone does, don't they?
A: You have a forty-five and it's loaded.
B: Uh huh,
A: And I suppose maybe everyone in Burnside Park has one. I don't know.
B: No. But I mean a lot of people have guns. It's not unusual.
A: Oh sure. I see.

The first thing I want us to see in this, I think we have two of, more or less. It's this use of "Is it yours?" and then this one, "He isn't a police officer." I want to call them, and things like them, 'correction–invitation devices.'

By that I mean: Where one wants to get, from the person one is talking to, an account of something – why they did something or why they have something – one way you can do it is by saying "Why?" Another way you can do it is by asking with the name of the class of things you want. For example, a woman is talking to an officer from the juvenile division of the police force. Her 14-year-old daughter hasn't been coming home at night. The woman called the police, the police found the daughter, and now they're talking to the woman. And they say, "Have you ever had this kind of trouble with her?" That is, 'this kind of trouble' is the name of the class. She can then say, "No

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Tape 5, side 2, and a brief extract from Winter 1965, lecture 7 pp. 12–13 (transcriber unknown).

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I haven't had this kind of trouble," she can say "Yes" and then give some instances, or she can say "No I've had other kinds of trouble."

Now it also seems that one can ask for an account by naming, in question form, one member of the class, of which the account will be another member. For example, "Is it yours?" She doesn't come back and say just "No," though people sometimes do that. She says "It's Dave's." That is, instead of saying "Whose is it?" which he said earlier but didn't get an answer to, he gives one possibility and thereby elicits, as its correction, another; the actual class member.

For "He isn't a police officer," the problem is, how is it that the husband happens to have a gun? There are classes of good accounts which would explain why somebody has a gun – that is, has a gun properly. One member of that class is 'police officer.' And what could happen is, if "He isn't a police officer" is an instance of the correction–invitation device, and if the device had 'worked,' then the return would be, "No, he's a such-and-such," or "No, we have it because . . ." Here's another example. Two persons are talking on the phone:

> *A*:   What do you think was the cause?
> *B*:   It's a little difficult for me to speak now.
> *A*:   Oh it is. You're feeling badly yourself?
> *B*:   Oh no. It isn't it. I'm lacking in privacy.
> *A*:   Oh you're lacking in privacy. Well, why don't we arrange to talk tomorrow.

"You're feeling badly yourself?" would be one account of how it is that B finds it a little difficult to speak now, and the return is the correct account.

I'll just mention one way that these things get used, which can get us to one basis for their use in the first place. When police interrogate persons, one thing they do is, instead of saying "Are you the guy that murdered this fellow?" they say "Did you hit him with a tire iron?" And the guy says "No," and then they say "Well what did you hit him with?" where the guy hasn't admitted yet that he did it. And it may be the fact that this form is so routinely used elsewhere that permits it to set up the possibility of a trap like that.

Now, so far I've talked about the construction of these correction–invitation devices, and said that it's based on the fact that, using a range of classes, you can refer to one member to get another member. We might also be able to say something about the basis for their being used in the first place. And at least one basis for that is perhaps something like the following. If you say to somebody "Why did you do this?" then what they are being asked to present is something they may well know they have to defend. And you set up a different situation when what they have to present is something they know they have to defend, as compared to setting it up such that you're not asking for an account they have to defend, but you're 'inviting a correction.'

If these different forms can set up basically different situations, that would suggest that we're looking at extremely powerful matters. I don't know that they're that powerful, but if they are, that's a very important thing to know. That is, that just by the way you set up the matter, without regard now to the consequences in a large sense – as in the murder interrogations – this thing can work.

The fact that these things are not only recurrent, but that they do work, makes them worth looking at for the following sort of reason. Sociologists often talk about something called 'common knowledge.' And one question is, what is it that common knowledge consists of? One thing it can consist of is just lists of items that persons know in common. But there are some things it would be nice to know about the phenonenon of common knowledge. One of them is what we could call its 'structural properties' – and we'll talk about lots of them, I hope. Also, how it is that what persons know 'in common' is organized. Also, is it the case that the organizational features of what they know 'in common' are also known?

So if persons know that there are classes of accounts for some action, the question is how do they know those classes? For example, do they know them only if you name the class, then they know one or another which are members of the class? What this stuff seems to suggest is that on the one hand they probably do know, to some extent, the classes and items of these classes by virtue of the class name; 'kinds of troubles,' for example. But they also know them in this fashion: You can name one, and they know, by virtue of the use of that one, what class you're referring to, and can give you another. And that's a non-trivial way of seeing that, and how, common knowledge has its organization seen and understood by Members.

Now I haven't yet been able to track down when this thing works and when it doesn't work, or what we might say about the circumstances where it might be clear that a person knows how to use this, and knows what another account is, and doesn't pick it but instead answers only 'the question:' "He isn't a police officer," "No."

And in that regard, another question about this organization of common knowledge and the members of the class 'accounts' would be, how substitutable are accounts for each other? Is it the case that one is as good as another? Which ones would be as good as another for this or that account problem? And I ought to mention that the correction–invitation device may not only work for accounts, but for all sorts of things; that is, where you can name an item, and get in return another item.

Let me turn to another sort of thing that we can see in this piece of conversation. This line, "Everyone does, don't they?" is one of the most fabulous things I've ever seen. Where persons are engaged in trying to get an account from somebody, there's an object that the person who's being questioned can slip in. This is one of them. And what it does is, it cuts off the basis for the search for an account. I don't have a terribly elegant name for it. What I called it was, 'account apparently appropriate, negativer.' Or A3N. So, for example, having a gun is something for which an account is apparently

appropriate. The search goes on for an account, this thing goes in, and now an account is no longer to be sought. And this thing isn't an account of how she happens to have a gun. That would be quite a different thing.

Now these are extraordinarily interesting. One of the most interesting things about this one in particular – though it's not so for all of them – is that it seems to be a 'general purpose A3N.' By that I mean, it doesn't much matter what it is that you're seeking an account about, you can use this one, 'everybody does.' This object cuts off accounts about God knows what — where accounts are, of course, extremely crucial phenomena. It's a general purpose device. And we'll see some more later on, some of them much more extravagant than this. Just consider, with respect to the organization of the social world, that we're told how fantastically complex it is. How everything is a blooming, buzzing confusion. How everybody is different. Etcetera. That there are these general purpose devices might give a glimmer, perhaps, of an extraordinary kind of simplicity.

By and large I've only talked about verbal interaction. Let me just mention something that isn't a verbal device. My parents live in an 'exclusive' suburb. And when I was a kid in high school I always used to walk around at night in the streets. And when you walk in the streets at night in exclusive suburbs, you're liable to get – as I was routinely – picked up by the cops. "What are you doing?" "Just walking." Then they would take me and stand me in front of the police car with the light shining in my face and call up the police station to find out if I indeed did live there. This happened night after night. Finally, someone gave me the solution. If you bought a dog, that was the end. You never got stopped. And that has now become a matter of common knowledge. It has become so much a matter of common knowledge that in the book *Beverly Hills is my Beat* by a Captain Anderson, head of the Beverly Hills police force, he writes, "It used to be the case that an excuse to walk the streets was having a dog. However, the robbers started walking around with dogs. But don't try it in Beverly Hills, because we also know the dogs."

So we can begin to locate a range of general purpose A3Ns, with greater or lesser generality of application. 'Everyone does' has enormous generality. Another thing to notice about it is, it doesn't seem that evidence needs to be offered. That is, it's not the sort of statement about which someone will say, "How do you know that's so?," where there are lots of statements which will get such a question. It's been known for a long time that there are classes of objects – a very predominant class of which are proverbs – about which, on the one hand, Members don't have doubts, and on the other, it's not a matter of evidence that they're so. And the existence and use of such objects is fairly obviously the basis for a great deal of philosophy. Hume, for example, talked about the fact that when he was sitting and doing philosophy, there were lots of things he could doubt. But he found that as soon as he got up and walked out of his study, they were just there. And in an important sense, he had never doubted it. It may well be that these are the sorts of things he was trying to figure out what in the world they were, and how it is that they seem to do what they do.

Again and again we find that when such general-purpose devices as A3Ns and proverbs are used, others don't attempt to question them or contradict them. I think there's some reason why we don't much see attempts to question or contradict these things, and that is that they may be such basic objects – that is to say, Members are so committed to their correctness – that if you undercut one, exactly what you've undercut is not clear. And one doesn't know exactly how we can continue talking.

My reason for saying that is the following. A woman was collecting research materials by going into parks with her children and just starting conversations with people. One of the things she reported was how the conversations began. And one recurrent way they began was, there would be a woman sitting on a bench. This woman would go over to the bench with one of her children, and sit down. The little boy would wander around for awhile, then he'd come up to her and she'd say, "Go away, I want to sit and rest." Sometimes he'd go away, but sometimes he'd sit there, annoyingly. And then the other woman would turn to her and say, "They're all like that, aren't they." And she'd say "Yeah" and they'd get into a conversation. I asked her, "Did you ever say no, or something like that?" And she said "Yeah, when I first got out of college I was all full of information. People would say that to me and I'd say 'Well I don't know, my kids aren't.' And they'd always stop talking right then and there."

I don't know that that's generally true. I'd like to see whether it's so, that if you don't express commitment to these sorts of things, person feel that they can't really talk to you. But apparently proverbs and things like them have to be affirmed or membership is not seen as something both of us hold in common. That is, these things are known to be so – whatever that means – but if you ask for evidence for them, then apparently it's not clear what kind of a box you're opening up, what sort of things you're going to ask for evidence about next, what would stand as acceptable evidence. So they're just known to be so, whatever that may mean, in that they can be asserted, they can be used in conversations, etc. They're not known by virtue of ever having been established in some specificable way. In that sense, they're strictly traditional pieces of information.

Lecture 4
An Impromptu Survey of the Literature

Books like *Plainville, Street Corner Society, The Gang, The Irish Countryman,* and a series of others, were part of a kind of sociology done in the United States mainly 25 to 30 years ago. It's associated with the University of Chicago, and also with Harvard. At that time those fellows were trying to build ethnographic studies in a tradition that had been developed largely in England in social anthropology, and there largely by studying tribal societies.

That work essentially died out in the United States. But in recent years, anthropologists are again returning to detailed ethnographic work, and the term 'ethnographer' which had fallen into considerable disrepute, has been adopted as an 'in' term. *The Urban Villagers* by Gans is one recent book which is again attempting to do that sort of work. Two other recent books in the same vein are *Millways of Kent* by John Kenneth Morland and *Blackways of Kent* by Harlan Lewis.

This recent work is of a new sort, in a way. Where much of the early work was criticized as being impressionistic, casual, not hard; that is, not reproducible, not stating hypotheses, etc., the new ethnographic work — which is calling itself things like 'ethno-cognitive studies,' 'ethnocultural studies,' 'ethnoscience' and the like — is attempting to proceed without being subject to those criticisms. The concern is to try to describe the categories that members of a society use, but to describe those in a very hard fashion.

There are several bases for this renaissance — if it's a renaissance. First, the development of very strong tools by linguists. Second, the impact of the work of Whorf, whose collected papers are now in a paperback called *Language, Thought and Reality.* Third, and of pretty much equal importance, is Wittgenstein's later philosophy, which the anthropologists who do this work are familiar with. The relevant books are two volumes put out as one called *The Blue and the Brown Books,* of which *The Brown Book* is the easiest introduction, though it's not easy, and the book called *Philosophical Investigations.*

Tape 3. These materials were probably produced in response to a student's question.

Transcriber unknown. This is the first of several lectures comprised wholly by an early transcript for which there is no tape; i.e., which could not be retranscribed. There are several of these 'unknown' transcribers whose work is included here, without whom the first set of lectures would be significantly impoverished.

My own relation to that stuff is fairly tangential in some ways. Instead of pushing aside the older ethnographic work in sociology, I would treat it as the only work worth criticizing in sociology; where criticizing is giving some dignity to something. So, for example, the relevance of the works of the Chicago sociologists is that they do contain a lot of information about this and that. And this-and-that is what the world is made up of. The difference between that work and what I'm trying to do is, I'm trying to develop a sociology where the reader has as much information as the author, and can reproduce the analysis. If you ever read a biological paper it will say, for example, "I used such-and-such which I bought at Joe's drugstore." And they tell you just what they do, and you can pick it up and see whether it holds. You can re-do the observations. Here, I'm showing my materials and others can analyze them as well, and it's much more concrete than the Chicago stuff tended to be.

And I differ from the modern anthropologists, though I would recommend that work very much. There is a paper by Hymes called 'The ethnography of speaking' which is quite interesting. And then there is a collection of these anthropologists' most recent works called *Contributions to Cultural Anthropology* edited by Ward Goodenough. The trouble with their work is that they're using informants; that is, they're asking questions of their subjects. That means that they're studying the categories that Members use, to be sure, except at this point they are not investigating their categories by attempting to find them in the activities in which they're employed. And that, of course, is what I'm attempting to do.

There are other matters of a deeper sort which are perhaps relevant to why sociology took the course it did, and they're intrinsic in Durkheim's work. One of them is the notion that the order of social events is macroscopic, in the sense that you had to assemble lots of events to find statistically what it was that was doing the work. I think one can begin to see, in the stuff I've been talking about, that it may well be that things are very closely ordered. And what we have may be something like the following. There may be collections of social objects – like "How are you feeling?" – which persons assemble to do their activities. And how they assemble those activities is describable with respect to any one of them they happen to do. That's a different kind of order to a social world.

In a way, most of sociology could have been irrelevant, and what I do could have been done 50 years ago, 100 years from now, etc. As I said before, it stands in close parallel to classical naturalistic biology or zoology.[1] In fact, if you want to look at something, Darwin was doing this already. He wrote a book, *Expression of the Emotions in Man and the Animals*, where he collected pictures and tried to see if there were, for example, standardized expressions, and if so, how did they operate? Not until 50 to 60 years after that book was published did people again begin to use photographs. So, for example,

[1] This may be a reference to an introductory lecture, of which we have only a paragraph-long précis by an unknown transcriber.

Bateson and Meade began to do that some 25 years ago in *Balinese Character*.

But by and large the direct study of humans and their behavior wasn't done. And it probably wasn't done because nobody believed that it could be done, or perhaps because it wasn't interesting for some reason or another. More recently, those who have tried to study it very closely – for example, Bales in his laboratory work – have done something exceedingly foolish, I think. That is, Bales has the notion that you can categorize it as it comes out, so that you sit and watch people as they are talking, and write down categories of what they're doing as they're doing it. That makes it into some kind of trick. There's no reason to suppose that you should be able to see it right then and there. (I find it hard to imagine, for example, that a fellow would stand next to an electroencephalograph machine, or any other such machine, and try to give you an analysis of the data as it comes out on the tape.) Instead, you take these little pieces and you try to collect those that look alike, and it can take an awfully long time to understand any given one.

Another thing that might have been involved was the notion that you could tell right off whether something was important. So you would start to look at what kings did, or to look at votes, or revolution, for example, because those were obviously important. But, for example, the whole of biology has been revolutionized by the study of one bacteria, though when that bacteria was first being examined, no one had any idea that it would do that work. And it's possible that some object, for example, proverbs, may give an enormous understanding of the way humans do things and the kinds of objects they use to construct and order their affairs. That has to be seen by attempting to analyze the stuff.

And in that regard, a debt is owed to Freud, who did say "Now let's treat patients as sacred phenomena." That is, something that you would study in the sort of way that biblical critics have studied the Bible, where the fact that you were looking at one line wouldn't mean that you could only write a page on it. You could write 100 pages. You could spend your life studying it. The reason that sociologists haven't studied a line is that they treat it as something very ephemeral, where if you treat it as a machine itself, and as enormously recurrent, it has quite a different character. But, for example, the American philosopher Meade was a most extraordinary figure who proposed that psychology was the study of that which is not available to observation. He had an enormous impact on sociology, God knows how or why. It may in part have had to do with the notion that sociology studies 'society,' which has been a very troublesome idea because then you start out by saying, "Well, society isn't observable, but Meade has shown that you can study things which aren't observable. So let's go study things which aren't observable, like attitudes."

But social activities are observable; you can see them all around you, and you can write them down. The tape recorder is important, but a lot of this could be done without a tape recorder. If you think you can see it, that means we can build an observational study, and we can build a natural study.

Now all of this is background. I don't want to go through the history of sociology and show why one does this or that, because first of all if you want to do it seriously, you have to know what kind of work theorizing is, and that is an extremely obscure domain if you're going to take it seriously, at least as I take this stuff seriously. I have no idea why sociologists do what they do, and I don't want to get into long arguments about matters which really can't be taken seriously. My arguments can't be taken seriously, Mills' arguments about the effect of Parson's proposal to reraise the issue of 'are ideas important and what kind of resources do we have for asking that question' can't be taken seriously. We can talk about it as philosophers in conversation, but to talk about it in any serious way presumes that we have an enormous amount of information about how the animal operates, which we don't have. So the more material you have at your command, the more you ought to be able to pick up items and see their recurrence and get some idea of what they might be doing. But the way to proceed is item by item.

Q: How does this fit into the general definition of sociology and social structure, as structured?

HS: That's a good question, for the following reason. What has definition got to do with anything? Let's consider what a definition can do. A definition could be an epitaph to be put on a headstone: 'That's what this was.' The notion that it's a control of activity – that is, if you don't define what you're saying you can't do anything – is an absurdity. Just consider, for example, the fact that biology was said to be 'science of life.' Now they find out that maybe there wasn't anything such as that, or that it doesn't make much difference. In any case, it never controls any of their work. So one doesn't know what 'life' means until one knows all the things that the biologists try to show. And you may find out that it's not the kind of thing you started out with at all.

There isn't an answer to what you ask. But I'm not sure what you asked had, in any deep sense, a right to be asked. If you take it, as I do, that a question has to arise out of something you're trying to deal with, as compared to a way you've been taught about questions, then your question might not arise.

It's a big problem about the University as a scene, that you have almost a free right to ask questions. You can turn almost anything into a question, and it's not insane. You learn that much of the knowledge that you're going to get is formable as the answers to questions, because after all you have to be given it in such a way that you can answer it if I use it as a question on an exam.

Now that's a fantastic constraint on scientific research – that, for example, the product of research is subject to being used in a quiz. My own feeling is that it was the death of academic psychology that it grew up in a university. That implies that they did experiments for which it could be seen from the start how the results of those experiments would look as answers to quiz questions. If a research couldn't be formed as a quiz question eventually, then maybe you just didn't do it. Other fields, like biology and astronomy, developed well outside of the universities, so they had lots of materials already

worked up by the time they got into the universities to be taught in this
fashion.

And there is, for example, the notion of 'courses,' where there's a
beginning and an end – an organization. What has that to do with the
physical or social phenomenon you're studying? And textbooks. You have to
have introductory textbooks in sociology or sociologists don't know anything.
And the way textbooks teach sociology is quite exquisite. I'll give a marvelous
example of how you come to learn sociology. There's a line in Broom and
Selznick that goes like this: "Roles are more complex than they appear to be
at first glance." Now there's a basic sentence that you know as Members
without having done any sociology, which goes: "X are more complex than
they appear to be at first glance." And 'roles,' which first of all is a concept
that couldn't even be looked at 'at first glance,' now becomes something we
learn via that basic sentence that provides a blank for it. And you know a lot
about roles, you think. A book like this, built up out of these basic ways that
you already understand your world as a Member, and simply fits into slots,
is an especially powerful introductory textbook. But what you're learning is a
batch of terms, which you can figure you now know something about, by way
of what you already know about everything that could fit into that sentence.
But for us, the understanding and use of objects like 'X are more complex
than they appear to be at first glance' is precisely what we want to be
studying. It's not something that we can employ to give us the feeling that we
understand what is going on in the first place.

Q: How can you repeat the recognition unless there is some label to
communicate a definition?

HS: How do children learn to see 'another bird' when they saw a bird once,
or to re-see a car or a friend? It's a very obscure question, how it is that persons
learn to see generalities, or see objects again, or see 'another' of an object. I
really don't know how they do it, though it's an important thing to learn how
they do it. But they do it, and they do it with all sorts of things. You do it
with verbs, adjectives, sentences; for example, you can see "There's another
sentence." You look at them just as objects.

Now, what we're doing is developing another grammar. Right now I'm
using it with respect to verbal activities, or things like gestures, etc. And in the
same way you don't have any trouble seeing a variety of things such as birds,
or "There's another verb," you learn to see these things – at least people come
back and tell me all the time, "Oh, there's one of those things you
mentioned.' You can see it working, doing the thing it does. We want to
name these objects and see how they work, as we know how verbs work, and
that sort of thing. We want to see how activities get assembled, as with a verb
and a predicate and with whatever else, you assemble a sentence. The category
that you use to name that activity is given by the Members. They have these
category names, by and large. So what you're after is a way of describing the
activity that they have a name for.

Ideally, of course, we would be producing formal descriptions, as you
could give a formal description of how you assemble a sentence. It will not

only handle sentences in general, but it will handle particular sentences. Grammar, of course, is the model of closely ordered, routinely observable social activities.

"This is Mr Smith, may I help you?" "Yes, this is Mr Brown" was one kind of object and worked one kind of way. The way it works is the essential thing about it. There may be a large amount of things that Members can do with these objects. Or there may not be a large amount of things because someone might do something and people will laugh at them, put them away, etc. There may be lots of things that people might never do with these objects. What we're interested in is what do they do with them? Whether that's indefinite, definite, or not, is an empirical question.

We can say some of the things they may do with them. They may do other things, they may not do other things. For example, "This is Mr Smith, may I help you?" I have not seen occurring in the middle of a conversation, though "Hello" does occur in the middle of a conversation. For example, when you say "Wait I have to do something" in the middle of a telephone conversation, you may come back and say "Hello" though you'd been talking for ten minutes. So the latter has a use that the former doesn't seem to have. "This is Mr Smith, may I help you?" is strictly a greeting. The big thing is to see, what are the properties of an object which permit it to do this or that task? For example, the way the 'repetition device' works. There are special properties which provide for its use.

If you really want me to talk about what sociology ought to be about, or what relation any of these things has to what I do, I wouldn't want to do it in class, because that's like taking a position. These can't be handled seriously unless one takes them as the kinds of issues they are; like take a line out of a book and try to see how that fellow came to write that. And who knows? At least I don't know.

Lecture 5
Suicide as a Device for Discovering if Anybody Cares

I'll begin with a quotation. This is a suicidal woman, 40 years old, divorced, no children.

> A: Well perhaps you want to tell me uh why you feel like committing suicide.
> B: ((sigh)) ((sigh)) Well it's the same old childish reason that everybody wants to commit suicide.
> A: Why is that.
> B: You want to find out if anybody really does care.

There's a whole bunch of things that are interesting here, and large collections of things we have to do if we were going to be able to generate this interchange, most of which I'm not going to consider now. For example, you might look at the way this caller sets up giving her answer – by the use of "Well it's the same old childish reason that everybody wants to commit suicide" – and compare it to the A3N device.[1] That is, the A3N can provide that an account need not be produced. The sort of line this woman uses might provide that the account she is about to produce is not challengeable, needs no defending.

We might also notice how that's added to by the use of "you." That is, instead of saying "I want to find out if anybody really does care," she says "You want to find out . . . " And those usages, where a person says "you" or "one" as a way of stating something that they propose thereby to be a generally correct remark, and how they are defended, and what kind of attacks they can be subjected to, are something we can watch. And I'll deal with these matters later on.

I'm now mainly concerned with ". . . if anybody really does care" and not the particular objects by which this sequence gets done. But I do want to note the fact that this first question, ". . . tell me why you feel like committing suicide," can be asked as a sensible and appropriate question to which there is expectably or reasonably an answer – that why you want to commit suicide is something that you would have information on, or could propose to know.

A combination of Fall 1964, tape 4, side 2 and another lecture, ca. Spring 1965 ('64–'65).

[1] See Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 3, pp. 23–4, above.

That the question is askable can be considered this way: Given that there are sets of question forms which Members use, one of which is "Why do you want to do X?" where 'X' is some activity, then, 'suicide' being an activity-category, just by reference to the relevance of that form for any activity, it can be applied to suicide.

How it is that such a question can expectably or reasonably be answered is worth some consideration, since for professionals there are classes of things which, if you do them or want to do them, then ipso facto you don't know why. And psychiatrists — and psychoanalysts in particular – take it that a person who wants to commit suicide doesn't know why they want to commit suicide, in the sense that the psychiatrist could say why they want to commit suicide. (And of course sometimes a person says "I don't know.") Now that fact doesn't seem to stand in the way of asking the question. And the issue then is, what's the relevance of that question, and what would happen, insofar as persons come to know what it is they didn't know? That's Socrates' classic problem; that one thing about knowledge is that you know what you don't know, and to the question "Why?" the answer "I don't know" is sort of a deeper answer; that is, it might have an awareness of the character of this knowledge as something only professionals have.

The notion of 'opinion' as contrasted to knowledge (and Plato made a great deal of the difference between them) and the sheer introduction of a notion of 'opinion,' provides in part for professionals' talk to laymen. Because one of the characteristics of 'opinion' is that it's something which lay persons are entitled to have when they're not entitled to have knowledge — in the sense that they can offer it without ever proposing to have to then defend it. Like they say "My feeling is such-and-such on that, but I don't really know," as a permissable way of talking, where one then doesn't try to find out what kind of defense you have for that statement. So in a way, 'opinion' provides for the continuing discourse between professionals and laymen. And I presume that it's a means or a mechanism by which not just psychiatrists, but perhaps professionals in general can talk to clients — by the notion of the permission that 'opinion' gives to a person to talk. That is, under the control that one doesn't really know; which is to say, one isn't entitled to know. And very frequently when you see "I don't know" appended to some statement, that's what it seems to be doing – providing that "I'm not entitled to say this," that is to say, "I can't defend it professionally," if it's a matter of professional information.

But if it's the case that there's going to be discourse between clients and professionals, or between the public and professionals, then the fact of a distribution of knowledge which provides that professionals know and laymen don't know might seem tremendously interruptive unless you had some mediating device, like 'opinion,' which would permit laymen to keep talking even when they find out that they don't know. Otherwise they might not have any way, for example, of even turning to a professional.

What I want to focus on is, why is it that suicide seems to be a way to find out if anybody does care? The question I asked when I was sitting trying to puzzle that out was, what are the available ways in this society for going about

determining that others care, or that one is relevant to others? What are the means available for seeing one's relevance?

And while I had that stored at the back of my head, I was reading one of the greatest books in the social sciences, *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic Among the Azande* by Evans-Pritchard. And some of his observations can begin to give us a feel for what such a procedure might look like. Here's what he reports. Whenever anything goes wrong among the Azande – if an Azande feels lousy, gets sick, injures himself, is economically in trouble, etc. – he engages in the following procedure. He pretty much drops whatever he's doing and goes off into the woods with some oracle procedure. Like, say, one oracle procedure is they take a chicken and give it a little poison and ask questions to the chicken, which the chicken answers by dying or not dying upon being given the poison.

So the Azande takes a chicken and some poison and goes off into the woods with it. And he sits down and makes up a list, essentially composed of his neighbors. He considers what his state was before he got ill, and then goes through this list of neighbors, considering about each person how he takes it they feel about his situation. Are they unhappy that he just got married that week, that he just got some wealth, etc.? By going through this procedure he then locates some persons who he figures would like to cause him trouble. And for each person that he has in this way, he offers a name to the chicken and gives it some poison. On some giving of poison the chicken will die. The person whose name was offered on that occasion is the person who has done him the trouble – caused him to have some illness, caused the rain to fall before his crops were in, caused him to have a bad hunting trip, etc., etc. And once the one who caused the trouble is found out, there is some procedure for getting amends.

Evans-Pritchard reports that the Azande just love to do this. There is pretty much nothing that will stand in the way of them stopping and going off into the woods and making up a list and sitting down and considering, for all the people around, 'How are they interested in my good or bad circumstances?' Now, this is one rather nice kind of procedure, which is institutionalized in a society, whereby persons can take an occasion and determine for themselves properly – that is, there is a proper occasion for doing it – whether anybody cares, and what they care.

Let me make a parenthetical remark about the situation of the Azande as compared with this society. One of the things that lies at the basis of the availability of that procedure for the Azande, and which is not present in this society – and which then provides that we don't do that in this society — can be stated in the following way. The Azande do not have an institutionalized notion of chance. Things like falling ill, and most particularly things like dying, do not occur by chance for the Azande. There is always somebody who's responsible. And there is a set of procedures, the purpose of which is to find out who it is that's responsible. And these are not random procedures, because one has some way of finding out, in the first place, who would be interested.

Now it's not that the Azande don't have a good notion of 'natural causes.' They are perfectly well aware of of the fact that you can get ill from natural causes. That doesn't exclude the fact that there's somebody interested in those natural causes occurring. Evans-Pritchard reports, for example, that somebody will stub their toe on a tree and then go off with their chicken. Evans-Pritchard says to the guy, "Well after all, you know, it's your fault. You stubbed your toe on the tree." And the guy says, "I know perfectly well that I stubbed my toe on the tree, and that the tree caused that trouble, but I've been through this forest hundreds of times and I never stubbed my toe before. There must have been some reason, then, why it happened this time." And that, then, provides for the responsibility. So it's not a matter of they don't have a good notion of natural causes. It's that they don't use a notion of chance.

That being so, you can come to see how rather special it must be for a notion of chance to be in fact enforced, and how easy it might be for it to break down. Because what a notion of chance involves is that something that happens to you is not a matter of inquiry as to how it came about. It just happened. You simply don't investigate why this or that trouble arises, for a great many troubles. And that might provide for people to do you ill in more or less subtle ways. The notion of chance is a pretty tender one anyway, and persons suffering various troubles in our society will often feel that they have to shed it and begin to employ, for any given trouble, the question "Who did that and why? What do they have against me?" That is to say, they no longer feel able to – or they feel compelled not to – use a notion of chance where others use it. But in this society it's not proper, and in fact it's diagnostically significant, if you do not use the notion of chance. By 'diagnostically significant' I mean persons who do not have a notion of chance are persons who have the symptoms of paranoid schizophrenia. When some trouble befalls them, they take it that it is some persons who are in the business of generating it for them.

Okay, end of parenthesis. For the Azande, then, there is a device which is routinely employable for checking out how it is that others attend to your ill- or well-being. Once we have some idea what such a procedure looks like, we can begin to consider what are the sorts of things that look like that in this society? What are the occasions under which one can make up a list like that and just sit down and consider who cares and what do they care? I think you can find that there are very, very few.

One such occasion is the wedding. Before a wedding the parents of the bride sit down with a big list and have this enormous ball considering "Would this fellow be happy that our daughter is getting married?" "How would this guy feel?" Some people give parties, they say, to occasion such a device; that is, they say "I just gave a party to see who my friends are."

But I take it that the most prominent occasion in, so to speak, a person's life, is right after they die. In this society, on the occasion of death, people gather around and talk about how important so-and-so was to our lives, how much we cared about him, how much we miss him, what a marvelous guy

this was. And that's what this suicidal woman reports. Later in the call she says:

> B: And daddy died he won't suffer anymore now the family won't be
>   aggravated And he's not here aggravating other people He was
>   aggravating everybody before he died and as soon as he died you
>   know he wasn't aggravating anybody anymore so they just said he
>   was a great guy

And anybody who's ever witnessed that scene has learned what an opportunity it is. And of course it's a well-known fantasy, seeing yourself as the one who died, getting a chance to get those credits which persons never give you and that you can't yourself collect – that is, for which there's no occasion to collect them. You can see how, for someone in pain, that scene after death — which is known to everybody as an occasion for having persons propose that they care about somebody – may then come as something exceedingly attractive, and 'the only way.' And how, then, the 'attempted suicide' can be the attempt to actualize that scene.

There are, of course, less dramatic devices for considering somebody's relevance by reference to missing them, or absences. For example, when somebody comes back from somewhere, the question is, "Did you miss me?" as a way of deciding whether it is that one cares. The question of absence and loss, then, seems to be a basic way that one has of dealing with relevance.

Now there are other, more specialized devices for doing a similar task. I'll start considering one of them in a slightly tangential way. One of the things I came across several times in the telephone conversations I've been analyzing, involved a widow or widower who was suicidal. They would say that time hangs heavy on their hands and what they find is that "nothing happens." Nothing happens to them. And I wanted to see if there was some way of finding out how that comes about; that somebody sees that nothing happens to them.

I also have conversations between young married persons. And one of the most exquisite kinds of things that young married persons do with each other is, they say things like, "Kennedy was assassinated two weeks after we got engaged." I want to give the name 'private calendars' to that sort of talk. And I want to note that married couples, each one, by themselves, independently, construct these private calendars. And what private calendars do is to provide for the locating of, not only events within that relationship, but events of the world in general, by reference to the relationship.

Further, these calendars are 'causally powerful.' What I mean by that is, there are all kinds of events which can be explained by reference to the relationship. There is a generic statement: 'Because A did X, B did Y,' where one can substitute for A, 'wife' and for B, 'husband,' and substitute for Y the event to be explained, and for X the activity which can explain Y. This provides a large class of sensible statements which persons in units like

husband–wife are able to employ. Indeed for many events, such statements *have* to be employed; that is, for many events, such an explanation is the only sensible explanation. So it's often said that while you can give a whole list of explanations for why it is that somebody succeeded, in the last analysis it's because of his wife. It's said without knowing the guy, or knowing anything else.

Another sense in which the private calendar is causally powerful can be seen in the paradigmatic statement, "That was before I met you and I was lonely then." There is a class of logical statements which the logician Nelson Goodman named, and pointed to as creating very basic problems for the philosophy and logic of science. He calls them 'counterfactual conditionals,' of which an example is, I think, "If one had lowered the temperature to such-and-such a degree, then the following would have happened," where one hasn't lowered the temperature and the thing hasn't happened, but one has done something else and something else has happened. Many scientific statements are made that way, and Goodman argues that there isn't currently a logic providing for them. But counterfactual conditionals are nonetheless routinely used, and they are, nonetheless, enormously powerful. Which suggests that perhaps a logic can be invented, or that they're building on something very strong.

Many uses of the private calendar are such uses. See, one of the problems in developing a relationship is finding out that the states of the person you're with are to be accounted for by *you*, and not by the sheer fact that they're with somebody. That is, they want to be able to say that even if they were with somebody before, they would still have been lonely. And that's one wants to do with these private calendars. They're ways of building up, in deep and repetitive ways, the relevance of 'you.' And perhaps one of the big things about marriage is that that's just what you're constantly doing for each other. The notion, for example, that marriage is made in heaven, is kind of an underpinning to the use of these things. That is, it's an account that would provide the basis for saying "That was before I met you and I was lonely then." Our meeting was virtually guaranteed, and it's just a matter of, until then one drifted, and now it happened. By virtue of this causal structure, of course, persons who are members of such units have built-in procedures for finding that someone cares. And for a lot of things it's the only way you can find the sense of what's going on.

Let me point out something about the private calendar that turns out to be rather important. I don't have a very large set of features of these things, but one thing I have found out is that if we compare these private calendars to everybody's calendar, then there's one striking difference between the two of them. And that is, everybody's calendar has, and private calendars do not have, guaranteed continuity. Everybody's calendar runs on into the indefinite future, without regard to anybody in particular being present. Private calendars end when 'we' end. The end of a relationship, in one way or another, can provide that there's no more events on the private calendar.

Now then, what we can see the widowed person saying, when they say

"Nothing happens anymore," is that with regard to the private calendar whereby events between me and my spouse happen and the value of my life is found, no more events can occur on it. You can get, then, a sort of task that a therapist, or somebody else to whom one of these persons would turn, might have. The task is at least programatically simple, whether it's easy to do is another question. It involves bringing them back to the use of everybody's calendar, whereon events can still occur sensibly in their lives.

I'll add another thing, and this is somewhat more conjectural, though not strictly made up, and it may be relevant for our materials here. For widowed persons, the fact that they've had a life with somebody is something that the other's death doesn't take away. And they can say "We had a marvelous 25 years together," pointing to all the things we did together, how it is that I was happy on this day because of what he was doing, because we were together, etc. Now, when persons get divorced, something quite different seems to operate. Apparently a divorce can provide for the fact that one can't even retrospectively use the private calendar one had going. The fact of a divorce, perhaps with the reconsidering of whether one ever did care, and what after all they were doing these last five years that led up to this, seems to involve that one can't then use it for the past that one was 'together.' That the woman in our materials is divorced may then not only provide that she has no current access to the built-in procedures for finding that others care which such a unit as husband–wife provides, but also that she is deprived of whatever retrospective use she might have had of that unit's private calendar.

Via this sort of a sketch we can begin to see where the relevance comes of having others care. And that is that the whole class of causal statements that are built out of such units as husband–wife and the relationships between categories in these units, provide an apparatus in which everybody is supposed to be entitled to become a member of such a unit and thereby to have these things done for them. And if they don't become a member, given that they're entitled to become a member, they have a clear way of seeing that something is missing. It's not the easiest thing in the world to find a way to say that something is missing. But if you have some objects for which there is no rule of exclusion in the first place – everybody is entitled to them – then if someone doesn't have it at some point that one is entitled properly to have it, one can say that it, and its consequences, are missing.

We can tie this up to some extent by asking what, then, is the consequence of not having persons care? Well, these lay theories – and all these causal statements and entitlement propositions are lay theories – have a rather interesting property. If you consider our prototype of a scientific theory, then, if some object doesn't conform to what the theory proposes about the object, then the theory has to be revised. This world has been constructed in a rather more exquisite way. What goes on is the following. A large class of lay theories are properly called 'programmatic theories.' If they don't describe your circumstances then it's up to you to change. And if they don't provide for you as a Member, then it's up to you to rid yourself of being a Member, for example to kill yourself. In that way you keep the theories going as descriptive.

If you're a member of one of these units you have essentially automatic ways of finding that others care. It's built into the structure of ordinary discourse, and the way persons see how events come off. If you're not a member of such a unit, it's still relevant, but its structure is not available to you. And you may then try that procedure which works for everybody – dying – either as a way to find that somebody does care, or as a way of providing that the theory that people ought to care is made correct by virtue of your no longer being a Member. And we'll see constantly that persons talk of a whole range of things where if something is not so for them, then that doesn't provide that what's supposed to be so is thereby wrong, but that they're wrong.

Let me add one more device relevant to "Does anybody care?" It is, of all things, trash mail. The next time that they have hearings about removing trash mail, I'm prepared to go and testify against its removal. Because trash mail is a most interesting thing. I've mentioned this woman who used to go to the park and sit and talk to people. Many of those were old ladies. They were all utterly isolated. They came to Los Angeles after their whole family died, or they came with their husband and he died. They live in apartments near a park and they spend their day in the park. But they regulate their lives in most interesting kinds of ways.

Even though they have almost no money they, for example, never purchase at supermarkets and never purchase more than a day's food. Because if they did, they'd have nothing to do the next day. And they routinely will get up – you'll be sitting in the park talking to them, the only person who's talked to them since God knows when – they nevertheless get up and say "It's 11 o'clock, I have to go home and check the mail." Now there's nobody who's writing to them. What it is, is that there's that trash mail coming, and that's something.

Consider their situation: The mailman comes every day, and they know it. And that means that for them, they have to go check the mail every day. The only mail they do get is this mail that everybody gets. But for them, it's something. And if they had to recognize that he would come every day, and every day they would find no mail, and they could look forward to that day after day, then that situation of theirs, of isolation, would so be built into their circumstances and shown to them routinely, that it might become far more unbearable than it is – and it's pretty unbearable – because this is a device that happens every day, for whomsoever. You don't know who is getting telephone calls, you don't know how many phone calls are being made, but every day, everybody has the mailman go by. And if you just consider the comparative cost of trash mail versus an enormous mental health operation, then trash mail is not expensive. And for these people it's by and large the only means by which the routinely-used device of delivering mail does not become the kind of thing it would otherwise become – this persistent statement to them that nobody cares.

Lecture 6
The MIR Membership Categorization Device

I'll begin now talking about some very central machinery of social organiza-
tion. Let me indicate how I came by the findings I'm going to present. In
dealing with first conversations I've very frequently found, as anyone can
easily find, that especially in the early parts of these conversations certain
questions are prominent; questions like "What do you do?" "Where are you
from?" etc. I wanted to see if there was some simple way that I could describe
the items that those questions contain, so as to provide for their occurrence by
rather abstract descriptions. That was the initial task. Its consequences are
rather powerful, and I'll develop them as I go along.

It seems that there is *a class of category sets.* By 'category sets' I means just
that: A set which is made up of a group of categories. There are more than
one set, each of which can be named, and they have common properties. And
that is what I mean by referring to them as a 'class.'

A first thing we can say about this class of category sets is that its sets are
'which'-type sets. By that I mean that whatever number of categories a set
contains, and without regard to the addition or subtraction of categories for
that set, each set's categories classify a population. Now, I haven't made up
these categories, they're Members' categories. The names of the sets would be
things like sex, age, race, religion, perhaps occupation. And in each set are
categories which can classify any member of the population. I call them
'which'-type sets because questions about any one of these can be formulated
as, "Which, for some set, are you?," and "None" is not a presumptive
member of any of the categories. And that would suggest what it is that
provides for such questions occurring at the early part of first conversations:
You don't have to know anything about somebody to be able to formulate a
set of questions for which "None" is not an expectable answer. And of course
for some of the sets you don't have to ask the question.

A second thing we can say about this class of category sets is that its
categories are what we can call 'inference rich.' By that I mean, a great deal
of the knowledge that members of a society have about the society is stored
in terms of these categories. And by 'stored in terms of' I mean that much
knowledge has some category term from this class as its subject. And the

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A combination of Fall 1964, M1, sides 1 and 2, and Winter 1965, lecture (4–5)
(transcriber unknown). The discussions are the same in both sets but are more formal
in the latter, and much of what is shown here is taken from the more formal version.

inference-rich character of these categories constitutes another warrant for their occurrence in early parts of first conversations: When you get some category as an answer to a 'which'-type question, you can feel that you know a great deal about the person, and can readily formulate topics of conversation based on the knowledge stored in terms of that category.

A third feature is that any member of any category is presumptively a representative of that category for the purpose of use of whatever knowledge is stored by reference to that category. So, for example, a foreigner comes to the United States and you find yourself asking them about the political situation in Ghana, or how they like the food in the United States, without reference to whether they stand as a member of the Gourmet Club of France, or don't ever eat out, or aren't interested much in food, or are just ordinary citizens, so to speak. But one finds that it's done. And it's done for any of these category sets.

Let me emphasize that we're dealing with categories, and not necessarily with what sociologists might call 'groups,' 'organized groups,' 'organizations.' It's quite important to see that presumptive representativeness holds whether or not the members of that category are or are not organized. If they are organized, it holds whether or not they choose their representatives. The fact that they are organized and choose their representatives does not mean that one cannot apply the knowledge stored about such a category to persons who are not selected by the group. And, furthermore, the fact that it is not a group in the sense of being organized, doesn't mean that one cannot apply such knowledge.

I'm calling this whole apparatus the MIR device. And that is an acronym. 'M' stands for membership. 'I' stands for inference-rich, and 'R' stands for representative. That's the core of the machinery. I take it one can readily notice how absolutely central this is, for a vast amount of stuff is handled by Members in terms of the categories that it locates and the way it locates them, and the activities that those categories are used to handle.

Now one might get a sense here of a certain problem, and I'll mention it right now. I take it to be a central problem of sociology, and I'll try to show some sorts of solutions to it eventually. The problem is this: There are these category sets. For any person being talked of, how is it that Members go about selecting the set in terms of whose categories that person is going to be talked of? It's perfectly obvious that there is a range of sets whose categories could be used; from the set 'sex,' "a woman". From 'race,' "a Negro." From 'religion,' "a Catholic." From 'occupation,' "a psychiatric social worker," etc., etc. Each of these categories could apply to the same person. And it's perfectly obvious that Members do use one set's categories for some statements and another set's categories for other statements. If we're going to describe Members' activities, and the way they produce activities and see activities and organize their knowledge about them, then we're going to have to find out how they go about choosing among the available sets of categories for grasping some event.

All the sociology we read is unanalytic, in the sense that they simply put

some category in. They may make sense to us in doing that, but they're doing it simply as another Member. They haven't described the phenomena they're seeking to describe – or that they ought to be seeking to describe. What they need to do is give us some procedure for choosing that category which is used to present some piece of information. And that brings us back to the question, are there procedures that Members have for selecting categories? One of my aims is to show that there are.

For now, let me show one of the tasks this MIR device, in combination with a particular sort of operation, can be involved in. I'll be talking now about some extremely basic and extremely generic social control devices. The particular sort of operation consists of one way that Members go about making new knowledge. Suppose some event occurs and is known about by reference to the name of the person who did it. The way you get a piece of knowledge involves pulling out the name and putting in some category. Then one gets, not 'John did X,' but 'a such-and-such did X.' In that way one gets additions to any given body of knowledge about such categories. And what we find is that an enormous amount of what we could call the lay theories of social actions are fitted onto these categories.

Given the MIR device, and given this operation whereby new knowledge is formulated – by replacing a name with a category – we can begin to see how a class of social control devices gets set up and is used. It has as its basis that members of the society are constantly engaged in monitoring events; on the one hand by reference to whether something that has happened is something that they're accountable for, and on the other hand, to find out what is getting done by members of any of the other categories.

Apart from the routine monitoring terms of these categories, we get nicely special kinds of occurrences which provide a beautiful view of tensions arising as persons await the discovery of which of them is going to be found to have done this thing. For example, the hours between the assassination of President Kennedy and the determination of who it was, and thus what category it was that performed the act. If you have access to a variety of materials from that time, you can see persons reporting themselves going through "Was it one of us right-wing Republicans?," "Was it one of us Negroes?," "Was it a Jew?." etc. That is, "Was it me?" in that sense.

This sort of monitoring makes for great sophistication in kinds of ways of doing trouble. For example, in the recent Russian economic trials, it was quite sufficient for those who were encouraging anti-semitism in Russia, to simply publish the names of the persons who were tried. The names turned out to be seeable as belonging to Jews. And you could leave the rest to everybody's routine procedures: "See? Jews are economic criminals, as everybody knew."

What you get then is a whole series of teachings, all of which have the same form: "Remember you're a such-and-such" (a lady, an American, a Negro, a Catholic, etc.). That is, any action you take is exemplary. Any action you take is something we're going to have to come to terms with. Such teachings belong to a class of activities which are often called 'internal systems of social

control.' They may be informal or formal, but they're not like such things as, for example, a government. What they have in common is that they are all operated by and enforced by and taught by and used by members of the category whose members are to be controlled.

These internal control devices all seem to be built on, and have their power by virtue of, this very simple apparatus the MIR device, which is utterly disjunctive to whatever these groups happen to be, or whether they happen to be 'groups' in the organizational sense of the term. Indeed, some of these classes' categories may set out to become organizations by virtue of the uses that are being made in any case of their categorial membership. It is no mere plea, for example, that women have got to get organized. If an event occurs where what somebody does is seen by reference to the category 'female,' then women in the society find themselves constructing explanations for how it would have happened, or proposing that they can't figure out how such a one would have done that – though of course they need know nothing about the person except that category of membership.

To get some contrast on these control devices, we might notice that they're much unlike a characteristic thing to which we give the name 'scapegoating.' In scapegoating, if a member of a group does something which is sanction-able, then either that member or some other member of the group may be selected by some procedure – perhaps the group itself selects them, perhaps an outsider selects them – and a sanction is applied to that person or persons. That being done, guilt is purged. This doesn't happen. If somebody does something that is formulated as an action of the group, then a piece of knowledge is thereby legitimately usable and you don't have some procedure for cutting off its use – such as the scapegoating procedure – where it's thereafter not proper to say about a group that they did this thing. So, Members' stake in the actions of other Members is not conditional in that sense; that is, it is not conditional on being or not being purged.

Now, given what I've said so far, there are certain things that can be examined pretty clearly. One of them has to do with a situation where some person who is a member of some category does something to another person, where that other person happens to be a member of the same category. The pain of it, that it's something awful, operates not merely by virtue of the fact that somebody did something to you for which you have some legitimate feeling of being injured, but in addition you have the sense of having injured yourself. And in such cases people talk of being ashamed of being a member of the category they're a member of.

So, for example, I have materials in which a person in one or another trouble will call the social agency of their religious denomination (Catholic Family Service, Jewish Welfare Group, etc.), and get rejected. I have two cases in which such a person subsequently calls someone else and is reporting this. And in each case they report – as is not reported when persons are rejected by, say, a municipal agency or some hospital – "It's not just that I was rejected by somebody, but I feel ashamed of belonging to a group that does that to people." That is, impersonally they are now observing the group

in operation, where they take it that whoever it was that spoke to them is a representative of the category (Catholic, Jew, etc.), and that such a one did something to another is something that reflects on themselves and devalues their membership. That is, not only non-members, but members of a category take it that the actions of that category can be assessed. It's not merely that a non-Catholic could hold this up and say, "See? Catholics don't take care of their own," but that a Catholic will say, about their own group, the same thing. The generic importance of such a phenomenon is that it's not just one category's view of another, but that knowledge is standardized across the categories.

I want now to notice several affiliated features of the MIR device. I'll start off with a feature I found in a few pieces of conversation – and indeed it was looking at these materials that really launched a lot of the considerations here. First I'll show the materials. In the first extract, two teenagers, a fellow and a girl, are talking about dating.

> *A*:   Corliss the g– this chick that I'm hanging around with now, she's real nice she's got a real good personality, she's not– you know she's //
> just a real cute little kid.
> *B*:   Mm hm,
> *A*:   And last night we went to the Mardi Gras together and we were both well we were both pooped because I–I ran in the track meet yesterday. And she–she's in the girls' tumbling team. I mean she doesn't like it she's just on it because she needs the credits.

The second is from the emergency psychiatric hospital.

> *A*:   How old are you Mr Bergstein?
> *B*:   I'm 48, I look much younger. I look about 35, and I'm quite ambitious and quite idealistic and very inventive and conscientious and responsible.

What struck me was that a thing was presented, "She's on the girls' tumbling team" and "I'm 48," and then you get a modifier in a long or short statement. At this point in our considerations I take it that what we have here is very apparent. For some category, like these two, there is a set of things known about a member which can be applied to any member, for example that being on the girls' tumbling team is presumably something very gauche, and that someone who is 48 is past their prime, which any person now talking about such a category membership has to come to terms with.

So we have a class of things, these modifiers. And they consist of attempts to provide that what it is that may be said about any member is not to be said about the member at hand. "I'm 48 but I look and feel younger," "She's on the girl's tumbling team but . . .," "He's a Negro but . . . ," etc. Having seen this, I think we can see a solution to something I had been puzzled about for quite awhile. It is, I suppose, a rather minor kind of interest, but it's

related to just this business. There is a class of what look like tautological statements, "Women will be women," "White folks is white folks," a whole large bunch of them. It looks like they are simply tautological statements; that is, that they say nothing. But given the use of MIR modifiers, these tautological statements seem to be – to use an awkward phrase – 'anti-modifier modifiers.' That is to say, under a condition where for some reason it's proposed, or one has been going along under the notion that, the person whose behavior is being considered is to be classified by reference to one of these modifiers – for example, "He's a Negro, but the things you can say about Negroes you can't say about him" – you have this other class of statements available to flip in and provide that in the last analysis he's like the others. They provide for the re-relevance of whatever it is that's known about the category. And if you watch conversations in which these things occur, that's the way they get used.

In certain kinds of relationships these anti-modifier modifiers can be extremely deadly kinds of things to have around, because they can always be used in the following way. There is the kind of relationship that proceeds between some set of persons under the modification that what is known about the category that one of them is a member of, is not to be applied to this one. And now the one who is living under that modification has always to carry the possibility that some time somebody is going to say, "Well, now it really comes out . . ." and invoke a set of things that can properly be said about that category, removing the modification under which they've been living.

There is another feature I want to mention. Some of the category sets of the MIR device have to be differentiated from others in some special ways. If one considers categories like age and social class, in contrast to those like race and sex, one finds some rather interesting differences. For all of them there may well be a stable set of categories used by everybody. But whereas for, say, sex and race it will be by and large the case that one can take it that whatever category somebody applies to somebody else or to themselves, anybody else would apply that category, that is not so for categories like age and social class. What you have with these latter sorts of categories is a rather lovely series of things going on. If any Member hears another categorize someone else or themselves on one of these items, then the way the Member hearing this decides what category is appropriate, is by themselves categorizing the categorizer according to the same set of categories. So, if you hear B categorize C as 'old,' then you would categorize B to decide how *you* would categorize C. And again, the same procedure works for such a thing as social class.

This sort of operation is probably basic to something which sociologists are talking about as a generic matter (but which is by no means generic) and which Members also use. And that's the notion of 'perspective.' If somebody calls somebody 'old,' what you want to know is, how would you call the person who called the person old? That way, even if you don't know the person being categorized, you can have, for example, some notion as to the range that's involved. If you're an adult and it's a ten-year-old who calls somebody old, then you can figure that the somebody could be anywhere from 20 on up;

that is, they're possibly young. Now it may well be, though I can't say this with any confidence, that even though this sort of business is going on, it's largely the case that the same information is stored for any category. So that A and B, being from different categories, may place C in different categories (A categorizing C as old, B categorizing C as young). But whoever A and B would place in the same category (whoever A might call old and whoever B might call old), they would say the same things about that one. So that when kids talk about 'old people,' though they're talking about somebody who is 20, they may have the same information about that one that a 30-year-old has about someone who is 70.

It may not be the case, then, that on the different 'perspectives' – that is, on the different uses of the categories – depends a whole different body of information, but that the knowledge is stable for any category like 'old.' It's just a matter of what category is using the term 'old.' The same thing may work for social class. For these, there may be no position that provides for the definite classification of somebody. One wouldn't then find that somebody carries around an identity which is stable for any environment they come into; for example, that they would be 'old' no matter who it is that's around them. Nor would it be the case that for each of the persons around them they would be seen as the same person that they have to see themselves as. There is no supposition of agreement on any categorization for such persons all categorizing each other.

Let me mention another minor thing which this machinery can clarify. Where it might not be proper to say certain things about another person, or for that matter about oneself, what one can do is to propose membership in some category, where that category stands as the adequate basis for inferring those certain other things. So, to take a sort of extreme example, here is a first conversation between a psychiatric social worker and a suicidal man. Earlier the man had said that he's been married three times, he's not working and not married now.

A: Is there anything you can stay interested in?
B: No, not really.
A: What interests did you have before?
B: I was a hair stylist at one time, I did some fashions now and then, things like that.

They go on for a couple of minutes. Then:

A: Have you been having some sexual problems?
B: All my life.
A: Uh huh. Yeah.
B: Naturally. You probably suspect, as far as the hair stylist and, uh, either one way or the other, they're straight or homosexual, something like that.

In this case, while it might not be proper for this man to say about himself that he's troubled by possible homosexual tendencies, he finds a way to invoke a subset of occupational categories, "hair stylist. . .fashions. . .and things like that," which constitutes an adequate basis for inferring homosexuality. And in his subsequent talk he proposes that such an inference has "probably" been made by the other. Apparently, then, there are ways of introducing a piece of information and testing out whether it will be acceptable, which don't involve saying it.

Now, I have by and large been talking about negative information stored in these categories, but they obviously provide that system of rewards which any young person can expect by virtue of becoming a member of any category that they can become a member of – for example, occupation, or changes of religion – since to become a member is to make stateable about yourself any of the things that are stateable about a member. So they're the basic system of incentive for persons to do a variety of things. That's now fairly well known, so all the various occupations are engaged in trying to sharpen up their images so as to make it attractive for persons to come into them.

Also, there are paths that can be constructed in terms of set movement, which persons may use to consider what their likelihoods are of ever getting to be a such-and-such, given that I'm a this-and-that. And the fact that 'somebody has made it' provides a path. But this can be used in very negative ways just as well. For example, I heard on the radio the other night an interview with congressman Billy Mills. And he was asked, "Well, you're a Negro, you came from the lowest part of the economic structure and nonetheless you've made a great success, why can't any other Negro do it?" That is, there is a path which your history has laid out. Why does that not stand as a way to get from one place to another which any person in your initial state can use? And now Mills has to come up with some argument about why it couldn't or shouldn't. Or, for example, the notion of 'token integration' can be used in business establishments in just that way. The fact that there is a such-and-such at this place provides that there is indeed a path from the position they started with. And since there is a path, and since Members at that initial position know how to use it, the burden now lies on them to do so.

Finally, let me offer something to consider. I have no idea whether it's so. It sounds altogether too smooth to me, and nonetheless it also looks, on the face of it, to be very descriptive. Many of these classes are, or can be built as, two-set classes. Sex is a two-set class. Race can be formulated as a two-set class; for example, non-whites and whites. And there's rich and poor, old and young, etc. The question I'm asking is, does it matter, for the *kinds of things* that can be done with these classes, how many sets they contain? Two-set classes would seem to have certain kinds of attractions. For example, they're tremendously easy to compare. With a two-set class you can apparently make an observation of comparative lack much more easily than otherwise. And I wonder, for example, whether many kinds of conflict and perhaps most sorts of revolutions occur by virtue of these two-set classes; as we say, the haves and

the don't haves. Under such a view, you can see all sorts of different things being fitted to the notion of haves and don't haves. Marx can be seen to have used this two-set class. The movement for equality of women can be seen to be using it. And the Negro revolution as well.

To establish a two-set class you might start with one group who you locate as the group in power, or the haves. Give them a name: Whites, men, the old. And then assimilate all the others to some predominant feature of those others; for example, a lot of them are Negro so you call it 'the black revolution.' But if you just go through the ways revolutions tend to organize themselves, or the ways movements tend to organize themselves, or notice that games – which are model conflict situations – are so often either two-party systems or variants of two-party systems, it begins to look as though formulating in terms of two-class sets is a method of doing things. Whether this is so or not, I haven't the vaguest idea and it needn't be taken with any seriousness. But what I said earlier, about this device as a basic mechanism of social control is, I think, important. If we can come to see what's involved in it, I think we can see something useful, and something that's of theoretical importance in sociology.

Lecture 7
On Questions

A few days ago I asked people to go out and collect first lines of 'pickups.' I did that because I want to return to some considerations of rules of conversational sequencing, and to introduce a rule. But it has initially such a vacuous sound to it that I wanted to see if there was some way of making its relevance clear, more quickly and more intimately than the materials I had on hand permitted. Looking at my materials, these long collections of talk, and trying to get an abstract rule that would generate, not the particular things that are said, but let's say the sequences, or their continuity and things like that, then you come up with a rule that says something like: *A person who asks a question has a right to talk again*, after the other talks.

That sounds enormously empty. One reason it sounds empty is, at this point I can't put in ". . . after the other answers." I can't put it in, in part because 'questions' and 'answers' are in some ways altogether different objects. For example, a question is a grammatical matter and an answer isn't. I don't think you can locate 'an answer' grammatically. Also, a question can be paralinguistically described. An answer doesn't have that character. That is, if you play a tape or listen to a conversation and forget about what's being said but just try to get the tone, pitch and that sort of thing, then you can describe what a question looks like. A question has a form. And an answer doesn't, apparently. So we can talk about 'asking questions' and identify some object as 'a question,' but we can't do that very much with 'an answer.'

But anyway, there looks to be a rule that a person who asks a question has a right to talk again afterwards. And that rule can provide a simple way of generating enormous masses of sequences of talk: Question, talk, question, talk, etc., etc. We can say it's a rule with a repeat device. But what else can we get from it? About 60 first lines of 'pickups' were handed in. Seven of them were other than questions. More than 50 were questions. And by reference to this rule, that wouldn't be an incidental fact. You might begin to see why questions get used.

Here's a classic Yiddish joke on just this issue. A young man gets on a train and sits down next to an older man. The younger one asks, "Can you tell me the time?" and the older man says "No." "What do you mean no?" the younger one says. The older one says, "If I tell you the time we will have to get into a conversation. You'll ask me where I'm going. I'll ask you where you're going. It will turn out we're going to the same place. I'll have to invite

you for dinner. I have a young marriageable daughter, and I don't want my daughter to marry someone who doesn't wear a watch."

I'll make something of an excursion and talk a little bit about pickups. Let me sort of mock one through; one that I saw at the airport. A bunch of about 20 people are standing around waiting for a plane to arrive. At the edge of the crowd a girl is standing. A guy comes up somewhat behind her and says, "What time does the plane arrive?" She turns and says "In 20 minutes" and turns back. Then he asks another question. She turns, answers, turns back. This goes on for five or six questions. Then she just turns her body to him, without especially any expression, or even looking at him. He keeps asking questions. She keeps answering them. She turns her head up when she answers and then brings it back. So it looks like if at any point he was to stop, that would be that. At some point she takes out a cigarette and he lights it.

Now, it's a very well known fact about homosexual society that in bars frequented by male homosexuals the bartender keeps a pack of matches behind the bar because it's impossible to ask for a light. That is to say, asking for a light is so much a 'move' that if what you want is just a light, you just pretty much can't do it. It also seems that between males and females, asking for a light is a tremendously sexual thing to do. In any case, in such things as pickups it's a key point. And I don't think that's incidental. There are a series of areas which are closely regulated, especially between persons who don't know each other, which lighting a cigarette can be involved in.

First is eye-to-eye contact. If, for example, you sit in the library and have somebody sit opposite you watching you, you can get the following results. You start to look at somebody. You'll find that even when *you* can't tell that the other person has caught your glance, the person sitting opposite you can – and they're not looking at the other, they're just looking at you. Your eyes flick, like magic, across the room. A glance just drives them away. So eye-to-eye contact is a highly regulated thing. But of course when a person lights a cigarette for you, that's an occasion for persons to align with heads very close to each other, looking at each other directly.

A second thing is touching; a very closely regulated matter as between persons who don't know each other, and even between persons who know each other. But again, lighting a cigarette can be an occasion for taking someone's hand, for example. In any case, some touching can very easily go on.

It's also a point when business is being done between the persons such that they're not talking and nonetheless together. Whereas previously, every time they stop talking there's an issue about whether they are together. But here you have a first occasion when the persons can stand together, looking at each other perhaps, without ever saying anything, and pick it up again. And the development of the ability to have a pause in a relationship is very crucial. Just remember, for example, when we were very young, going out on dates for the first times, how it was that gaps in conversation were treated as such tremendously painful things. The developing of an ability in a relationship to be silent is a very important thing. And this is a first step to that.

Another thing this act of getting a cigarette lighted does – this is of course

completely apart from anything like psychoanalytic theories about cigarettes
– is that when a woman has a cigarette, she has an occasion to be moving.
You don't smoke a cigarette with your hands at your sides. And, for example,
as the cigarette is lighted for her, she can bend her head and look up through
the top of her eyes – which is in our society a very sexual kind of way to be
looking at somebody. And when she has a cigarette in her hand, she has then
a routine opportunity for bringing her hand to her face, which provides the
minimal condition for him to be looking at her face; that is, it's perfectly
legitimate to follow a moving object, your eyes do it normally. So she can
begin to get into physical action, moving her head and her arms, etc., which
then provides for, literally, a dance.

That ends the excursion. I wanted to give some idea about the relevance of
this rule that if you ask a question you have a chance to talk again afterwards.

Now, there are some situations which have their particular character by
way of the fact that this rule *doesn't* hold. The easiest one to get examples of
are Presidential press conferences. A bunch of reporters are in, say, the State
Department auditorium, and one of them is pointed to. They can ask one
question. Then somebody else will be pointed to. This isn't so for Johnson's
recent conferences because he's been doing them informally; people wander
around together. And there it seems to be permissable for a fellow to ask a
second question, a clarifying question. But in general, you could take the
Presidential press conference as one extreme: You only get one question. One
thing you could then do is move to the other extreme: Places where one has
an enforced right to ask further questions, a right which is not violatable by
the person who is answering – cross examination, for example. Then you
could try to see what questions look like under this or that control. For
example, do they have a different shape? And what's the position of either the
questioner or the answerer in each situation?

Here's one of the problems for a questioner at a press conference. Persons
come in with questions. They all move to be called by doing various things
– standing up, waving their arms, getting front seats, wearing odd clothes,
etc. One of them gets recognized. He asks a question. An answer comes out.
If he had an opportunity to talk again, he might want to push further on what
that answer suggests. But he can't. Somebody else is now called on. Now their
problem is, they may know that there's a good question one could make up
to follow that one. But if they follow that one, what happens to their
question? They may have come with something of particular interest to their
area, "What's your policy on Idaho potatoes?" They want to get that out. But
what's just been raised is something about the defense policy, which is a
generally important issue. Should they ask their question or the follow-up
question? They won't get another opportunity. Now for some questions
they've brought with them, they can know that these are so topical that
another might well raise it, and they can 'sacrifice' their use of it to doing
what's in the interest of the press conference; that is, asking a follow-up
question. But of course the President has some control over what questions get
asked in the first place, because he will have some pretty good idea about

what various persons might be interested in asking. (Kennedy apparently sometimes gave them the questions, or they told him what they were going to ask if they were recognized.)

Another sort of problem for a questioner at a press conference is that the answer might be nothing more than a "Yes" or "No." Or, for example, the Kennedy format, responding to a question with a quip. And that in its way is akin to "This is Mr Smith may I help you?" as a way of getting the other's name without saying "What is your name?" and also akin to laughing when someone says "I'm going to kill myself" as a way of refusing to give help without saying "I won't help you." The Kennedy quip is a way of refusing to answer a question without saying "I'm not going to answer that question." Because after the quip, the fellow who asked the question can't come back. And whether anybody else will come back to it remains to be seen.

What might stand as a solution to this problem was something that was noticed when they were thinking of televising the press conferences. One of the matters that arose was, if they televised these things, people would ask very long, involved questions to get themselves time before the audience. Then it was realized, well they do that anyway. Now the question is, what are these long involved questions doing? One thing they might be doing is this: You try to ask a question, providing in the question for a sub-answer: "Would you do so-and-so or not, and if not, then . . . ?" That is, you'd want to provide that he could not just say "Yes" and you wouldn't have anything, but "If 'yes,' then is such-and-such relevant, and if not, is such-and-such relevant?" These sorts of questions sometimes get so involved that after one of them the President says "Well you've made your point, thank you." Because it looks like a speech. Now that elaborateness may not be so much due to the guy's being on television as to his having to make a question under this constraint of not having a second chance, to ask for a clarification of the answer or to pose a follow-up question. You have to try, then, to build the one question to do that job, whereas in other situations you can just ask them piece by piece.

So we can begin to see how things might look different by virtue of the presence or absence of the rule and how strongly that is enforced. For example, in cross-examination the presence of the rule is strictly enforced. You're sworn in and you stay on the stand until the guys says "No more questions". You can't say "Well that's enough, don't bother me anymore," which you can do in ordinary conversation. And, for example, in ordinary conversation you can produce an answer, append to it a question, and now take over. The roles are not set so that one is 'a questioner' and one is 'an answerer' from now until the end of time, or from now until the end of this interchange. So something as limited as this rule can have rather considerable and observable consequences.

I'm going to introduce another rule. I'll start out with some quotations.[1]

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[1] Cases (1)–(4) are from Sacks' research notes. He often put big blocks of data on the blackboard, usually reading it out. He does not do so this time, but he refers

(1) *A*: Do you have any physical problem? Any illnesses?
  B: No. Just a little bit (   ) and overweight.
  A: Overweight?
  B: Just about 20 pounds.
  A: Now when you get depressed, how is your appetite?
  B: It's usually always good. No when I'm depressed I don't feel like eating, I can't eat.
  A: And how do you sleep?
  B: Alright, but not as much as I'd like to.
  A: That happens. Do you lose much interest in sex when you're depressed?
  B: Well, just in everything when I'm depressed.
  A: Now, right now you're feeling a little better.
  B: Yes.
  A: But you figure on past experience that you might become depressed again any time, like tomorrow.
  B: Yes.
  A:→Well, it certainly sounds as if you need some help, and there are many things that can be done for this.

(2) *A*: Are you working?
  B: No I'm not.
  A: Your husband supports you?
  B: Yes.
  A: Well, what do you do with yourself?
  B: Oh, I have a lot of interests. I work with theater. I do, oh, little community theater direction and things of this order.
  A: Do you find there are times when you lose interest in it?
  B: Yes. Very d– I find there are times when I lose interest in everything and there have been times when I have stopped speaking for days.
  A: I don't know anything about your sex life now, but are there times when you lose interest in sex?
  B: Yes. Completely so.
  A:→Right. Sounds pretty clear cut as a depressive illness.

(3) *A*: Hello, this is Mr Smith.
  B: How does the Emergency Psychiatric Hospital work out?
  A: How does it work out?
  B: I mean what do you do. I'm sure a telephone conversation wouldn't save me.
  A: Well, it sometimes is a first step in the process, going a very long way in being helpful.

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to the materials in such a way that at least two of them can be located with some certainty, and the other two stand as decent instances of what is being talked of in the lecture.

B :   A first what now?
A :   A first step.
B :   In a telephone conversation. Then what's the next step?
A :   Well, we would If it's a problem involving suicide we would invite you to come in for an interview, explore the problem more fully with you, and then see if we could recommend something helpful.
B :→It sounds too slow.
A :   What's that I'm having difficulty hearing.
B :   I said it sounds too slow.
A :   Too slow, we can act very rapidly when the need arises. Are you a person with a suicidal problem?
B :   Yes.
A :   Could you tell me something about it?

What we find in these exchanges is that the person who is asking the questions seems to have first rights to perform an operation on the set of answers. You can call it 'draw a conclusion.' Socrates used the phrase 'add them up.' It was very basic to his way of doing dialectic. He would go along and then say at some point, "Well, let's see where we are. Let's add up the answers and draw some conclusion."

And it's that right that provides for a lot of what look like strugglings in some conversations, where the attempt to move into the position of 'questioner' seems to be quite a thing that persons try to do. (We can just note that in our third exchange there's a shift in the middle, A, the answerer, appending to his answer a question, which B answers, and then a next question.) As long as one is in the position of doing the questions, then in part they have control of the conversation.

Now, we do find questions followed by questions. For example, you can propose a request for clarification of the question.

(4)   *A* :   This is Mr Smith. May I help you?
      B :   Yes, I heard that you help people who are on the verge of committing suicide or something.
      A :   What was that?
      B :   I said that you help people who are on the verge of committing suicide.
      A :   Yes, we do, certainly.
      B :→In what way?
      A :→Well, let me ask this. Are you calling about yourself?
      B :   Yes, uh huh.
      A :   Well, what we do is talk with them. We usually invite them to come into the office, try to determine what the problem is, and see in various ways how we can help by talking   understanding the problem and sometimes making recommendations   sometimes getting them in contact with a psychiatric person to help them.
      B :   I see. Where is the office?

But as compared to ceremonials – where once the slot in which the next piece of talk goes is filled with something else, then the ceremonial doesn't hold the floor, so to speak – I don't think that's so for questions. For example, here's one where, after two questions by someone who had been asked a question, the first question is answered.

A: Hey did you talk Marcia into coming down here?
B: Was she here?
A: Yeah.
B: When did she leave.
A: About a half hour ago.
B: Yeah, I talked her into living here with me.

So an answerer can ask a question after a question. But what happens is, you get a parenthesis in the conversation. There is a question on the floor, and an interlude in which some question or set of questions operates, where, once that is answered the initial question comes back into its relevance as controlling what's supposed to go next.

As I said, as long as one is doing the questions, then in part one has control of the conversation. In our first four instances the person who is calling is doing so, presumably, for help. One difference in them is that in the latter two, the caller starts holding the floor with a series of questions. And by doing that, they have the opportunity to assess whether the proposed help will be something that can help them and whether they're going to use it. They can say, as we get in the third instance, "It sounds too slow." In the first two, that doesn't take place. And what one has in the latter two is a situation where the caller is in the driver's seat; they can hold back asking whether they should come in, and go about deciding that on the basis of the answers they get. Whereas in the first two, the recipient of the call gets the materials, on the basis of which they can propose that the other ought to come in for help.

There is a lot more detail about how, in particular ways, the bringing of an agreement or the holding off of an agreement to come in, takes place. But the outline of it, by reference to this rule that persons asking questions have a right to make the first operation on the answers, is the first thing I wanted to see. You can then watch for it happening in altogether different kinds of scenes.

Let me now focus on the fact that the one who is doing the questions has control of the conversation, *in part*. There can be a sense in which, while you're asking the questions, you could *not* be said to be in control. I'll give one of the best examples I've ever seen of this sort of thing. I took a course called Constitutional Litigation with an enormously smart man, a guy named Telford Taylor who was chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg Trials. The first day, we came into the class and there were twelve people. He went through the list of persons who were supposed to be there. Thirteen had signed up for the course. The door opens and somebody walks in, just as Taylor has finished going through the names. He says "Mr Jones." The guy says "No." Walks

over and sits down. Taylor says, "You're not Mr Jones." "No, I'm not." So he's used the correction-invitation device, asking "If you're not Mr Jones, who are you?" without saying that. In return, he's gotten "No, I'm not." So he says, "Well, on the list here, Mr Jones is the only one who isn't present, who is signed up." The fellow says, "I didn't sign up." Taylor says, "Well I ought to have the names of all the people who are taking the course." The fellow says, "Well I'm not sure I'm going to take the course." Taylor says, "But even anybody who just happens to *be* here!" "Well, maybe I'll leave."

So then Telford Taylor sits and scratches his head, says "I'm sure if I go to the Dean's office I'll find a rule that says if I ask somebody for their name, they have to give me their name." The fellow says, "You haven't *asked* me for my name." At which point the class starts wildly laughing, and Taylor points and says, "Now sometimes you get a witness like that!" And you do, of course, get just this kind of thing; the ability to extend a series of returns which avoid what's being asked for but hasn't been asked for point blank.

Now, in contrast to that, we get something we can call an 'answer constructed by reference to the project of the question.' We've talked about this correction-invitation device. What you got there was, for example, "Is your husband a police officer?" to which you could answer "No" or "No, he's a such-and-such." And it's the latter answer which we can call an answer constructed by reference to the project of the question. That is, what you can see that the question wants to find out, is something that controls how you answer it. Here is another instance of such an answer.

B: I just thought you sent somebody out to talk to somebody. You know, Twelve Step type of thing. Because I must have a—
A: Have you ever been in AA?
B: I don't drink.
A: You don't drink?
B: I mean, I drink if I'm out at a party and everybody's having a drink. I take one to everybody's two, but I've had friends . . .

That is, the caller has mentioned that this clinic might work like Alcoholics Anonymous (Twelve Steps being one of their procedures). Asked if she's ever been in that organization, she gives this answer, "I don't drink." She could have said just "No." But she understood what it was that he wanted to find out, and produced an answer by reference to that.

These sorts of answers take a kind of cooperation which is not present when the answerer leaves the questioner 'in control' of the conversation – which can also be characterized as letting the questioner go off on as many wrong tracks as he pleases, where you can get a long, involved project that generates a series of questions, none of which turn out to have any use.

Lecture 8
On Measuring

I'll begin off with some quotations.[1]

(1)   A: People have to be pretty upset to want to kill themselves.
        B: Oh I have been. Don't think I haven't.
        A: Have you been sleeping?
        B: No I haven't.
        A: And how's your appetite.
        B: Well, not too good.

(2)   A: Let me hear a little more. How's your appetite.
        B: Not too good.
        A: Yeah. Haven't felt like eating?
        B: (   ) other day
        A: And you haven't been sleeping too well?
        B: Not very well.

(3)   A: How are you sleeping?
        B: Well, that's a peculiar part, I sleep very well.
        A: And how is your appetite.
        B: My appetite is very good. That's what I don't understand.
        A: You sound as though you know something about the symptoms of depression.

I want to notice the following sort of thing. Recurrently in these conversations you get a question like "How are you sleeping?" "Not too good," "How's your appetite?" "Not good." Now it looks like absolutely nothing is going on. And quite frankly when I thought I was essentially finished with analyzing this stuff, I hadn't seen something that's going on there that is utterly fantastic. Absolutely unbelievable in a way. And let me just try to begin to show what it is.

I'll start out with something I'd already worked up, which just begins to set this problem. And that is, there are a variety of items on which persons can

[1] Only the first of these extracts is on the tape; the other two are taken from Sacks' research notes.

monitor their own states. They either do it routinely, or, when asked, they have the information which permits them to engage in some consideration and then give an answer as to a current state or current variation from a prior state. The items are things like sleeping, appetite, etc. And all I'm saying, then, is that persons can go about monitoring how they're eating and sleeping. on those questions, they know.

Now for each of these there is a category that Members use, and that category is 'normal.' That is an extraordinarily special category. Each Member employs it. Questions can be asked about it from one to another. But for a large variety of uses of the answer to questions within which 'normal' might be an answer, and for a large variety of the monitorings which might go on by oneself without anybody asking you anything about it, it's quite irrelevant what, for any given person, that notion 'normal' denotes. It's irrelevant whether it's similar to or different from the features that anybody else uses to decide that on some item they're 'normal.' So 'normal' is a standardized category, where whatever it refers to for any given person doesn't have to be specified to control its use.

And there are variant categories which are also standardized, like 'poor' and 'great.' There are whole bunches of terms: Fantastic, cool, terrible, whatever you want. It's essentially the same. We'll call them 'directional differences.' Minus and plus. So we get 'normal,' 'minus' 'plus.'

Variations from 'normal' are noticeable phenomena. They're noticeable by reference to whatever it is that's 'normal for me.' And it's the fact of the variation which is relevant to some state being noticeable, and *not* what the normal state's features are. That is to say, if you sleep four hours a night normally, that doesn't make how much you sleep noticeable. Two hours might be 'poor.' That would make it noticeable. Six hours might be 'poor' for somebody else; that would make it noticeable for them. You don't have to have an equivalence.

It's also to be observed, and equally crucial to the whole business, that the variation categories are standardized, and they're standardized without respect to what they contain or what the normal contains. Any Member can employ the set of categories to formulate their current state; that is, they can say 'normal,' 'poor,' or 'great' without reference to what it is that that stands for, or how what it stands for compares with what anybody else has theirs stand for, and they can talk about it. And if the product of some monitoring comes up with one of the variant states, that provides that that state is noticeable, and provides, then, an occasion for an account of that variant state. That is, it provides for an inquiry being launched as to how come it's that. If there is a collection of variances, then the problem that an inquiry has to solve is their co-occurrence.

Now consider how extraordinarily elegant this is, as compared to a situation which is imaginable if one had to have a standardized content to these things. That is, if one had to have a standard measure such that persons would have to decide whether 'my normal' was 'normal,' and if one had to have measures for the variants, and it was required to know what the 'normal'

was, for any given person to decide that 'my poor' was 'poor.' But such standardization is, not absolutely irrelevant, but essentially irrelevant to the way these measurements are actually done.

There are very special cases, which are set up just by this thing being so extraordinarily simple, where these matters do come into question. That is, there are some physiological states which are dramatically different with respect to what is 'normal,' where that might be taken as something that ought to be found out about. But an enormous amount of diagnostic talk – with professionals, and in conversation which is not with professionals – can go on without much further specification than that; without having to check out what is 'normal,' what is 'poor,' whether that's 'really normal,' whether that's 'really poor,' etc.

It's that set of facts, and the set of items for which those facts hold that provide part of the superstructure that permits these conversations to take place. People don't know each other? They don't need to know each other and nonetheless all this can go on. With respect to these kinds of items we do not have what we ordinarily refer to as 'ambiguity troubles.' Asking, for example, "How's your appetite?" and hearing "Not too good," that's sufficient. What it is that "Not too good" is for that person doesn't have to be known. And, for example, that someone eats an awful lot normally and now what he eats would still be a lot for most people, doesn't matter.

What I'm trying to differentiate here is the following. These are clearly measuring categories of a sort. And one might have the idea that, given the way measuring is done, these are 'rough versions' of something that is mathematicalizable; that persons are talking loosely about something which our business would be, in studying it, to find out what the specific measures are. What I'm saying is, there aren't any such measures built into the use of these categories. I'm pointing to the fact that here's a medical device of a sort. Its power comes from its emptiness in a way. It measures directions, and it can work for normality apparently by reference to 'whatever it is that normal is,' and that's enough. That there is a set of items like this is fantastic. Consider what a time system would look like, or what a monetary system would look like, built on this kind of a device.

What we want to consider carefully, much more carefully than sociologists have ever considered the matter, is what kind of an object do you have for the purposes of counting? Here is another way I came to think about this matter. In about 1956, in the *Journal of World Politics*, Talcott Parsons wrote a review of C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite*. I'm not a great fan of Parsons, but there he made what I thought was a really basic kind of point. He said, "In this book Mills seems to propose that power is a zero-sum phenomenon." And what that means is, if I have it, you don't. Something adds up to a number that can be divided among the set of persons such that if 90 percent are X, then 10 percent are Y; that is, there can only be 100 percent.

Quite obviously there are lots of things that are not zero-sum phenomena. For example, an economy may not be a zero-sum phenomenon; it can expand. If you put something in you can get more out. And if everybody has a certain

amount, that doesn't mean that that's all there is. And when you're considering social phenomena, one thing you want to do is to try to find out what kind of a counting system you need. Is the object zero-sum or non-zero-sum, or something quite different? And then, how is it that persons go about counting this or that matter?

Let me give a rather simple kind of consideration. Here's a quote from a group therapy session of seventeen, eighteen-year-old kids. The group is made up of four boys and a girl. However, the girl left the group the week before. In this exchange, one of the boys is talking to the therapist, also male.

> *A*:   Did Marian call or anything this morning?
> *B*:   Why, did you expect her to call?
> *A*:   No.   I was just kind of hoping that she might be able to figure out some way of coming to the meetings. She did seem like she wanted to come back.
> *B*:   Do you miss her?
> *A*:   Oh, in some ways   yes   it was nice having the opposite sex in the room, ya know, having a chick in the room.

The first thing to notice here is that MIR categorization device is being used to formulate the absent person, the relevant set 'sex,' the category 'female.' In general, it's to be noticed that the MIR device provides one of the basic ways that Members go about counting all sorts of things. This can be done, since for any category-set there is a known set of categories, and what you do is examine some population – a meeting, a party, one's employees – deciding whether, for this or that category-set, every category is represented. You can have, then, a notion of completeness and a notion of absences. You can then formulate the sort of thing you need to make this or that population complete, where you don't have to know the people you need; you only have to know that they have to be 'females,' for example.

In this particular case, the way this fellow finds of formulating someone's absence is psychodynamically interesting. He is, for various reasons, much afraid of ever showing affection for anybody. And as much as he could do was to provide for the fact that 'some such one' was absent, and that was good enough grounds for him to miss her. But he wasn't going to say that he likes her or anything like that.

More abstractly, such a use of the MIR device is a way one can go about making what I think can reasonably be called 'safe' or 'non-commital' compliments. A category, in this case 'female,' is applied to someone, which discriminates that one from every other person in the place, so that someone is characterized by reference to a category that applies to nobody else. The relevance of that for making a safe compliment may be considered if you think of compliments like "It was nice having someone smart in the room" where, on its use, anybody else can say "Well what about me?" That is to say, there is a whole range of categories which also *can* apply to any other person in the room, and thereby if one is singled out for notice on that item, the

others may be implicitly derogated. Another thing is, just to mention it, that on the category-set used to provide for the way that she's located, it's not simply the case that she's a member of a category that nobody else is a member of, but that everybody else is a member of the same category by reference to the one that's been used to locate her.

Now, there are whole series of ways in which we can talk about Members' counting, measuring, adding up, etc.; that is, we can go about mathematizing social events. Here's an interesting way in which this matter comes up. A woman is talking to her husband; their son had a birthday that day.

> A: I said did Grandma bring you anything for your birthday, I forgot all about it. And Nicki said uh
> B: Yeah I did too this morning.
> A: Forgot all about it.
> B: Oh boy. Well.
> A: I said, Nicki I said Mama has so much on my mind I forgot all about it.

What we can see here is how some set of things can exclude some other thing. The issue wouldn't be that one had 18 things on one's mind and therefore by some logical operation the 19th could not be held in mind. We need to ask what it is that stands as excluding something, when and how any given set of things can provide for the exclusion of another thing, or can substitute for something – all of which are mathematical operations.

Then there is a very nice issue, that of 'erasability.' Some things are in a sense erasable; for example, one can be forgiven. But in another sense it can be seen to remain there, on the sheet as it were, such that if that thing happens again, someone can say "I already forgave you once." Other things don't seem to have even that sense of erasability. Take, for example, suicide attempts. For many diseases, let's imagine that the record of your life is a hospital log with a series of entries. Now let's say there's an entry: "Had pneumonia on such-and-such a date. Cured." That's that. If you get pneumonia ten years from now nobody says "Gee, how come they didn't cure him of pneumonia?" You can get it again and this prior one had nothing to do with it.

So in that sense, pneumonia and many diseases are erasable. The cure removes it from the record. And the next occurrence is not seen as explainable by the earlier one. But suicide is not that way. If you make an attempt at some point in your life, then the fact that, for example, you went through therapy, or you were seven years old and now you've grown up, does not remove it from the record. That thing remains alive. So that if you kill yourself 40 years later, persons will refer back: "See? He made a series of attempts." It's not an erasable matter.

One relevance of suicide not being erasable is the following. Let's say you're now considering whether to go into therapy, as compared to killing yourself, where this would be your first suicide attempt. If you just do it, and do it in

a way that might not look like suicide, your family won't have stigma, can collect insurance, and all the rest. You're in a situation quite different than if you go for help. If the help fails, thereafter you can't kill yourself in the same way. And people know that. And that provides a real trouble about getting people into therapy. Because if they come in under suicidalness, just by going in they have cut off what they see as an opportunity. Because what happens is, if you die in some way which might not look like suicide, the fact that you had that record provides that people ought to look at this death by reference to that record, and they may decide "Suicide."

If you keep suicide attempts off your record, then if you do kill yourself, you may have something important going for you. And that is, the procedures employed for deciding that somebody committed suicide. There are kinds of events which are well recognized to occur. For example, somebody can sit down and drink themselves to death. However, it's a very hard thing to do, and if pills are available, people, it's said, just don't do it that way.

Now if you had a statistical operation for deciding did so-and-so kill himself, you'd take 100 cases and you'd have a notion of the probability of events occurring, so that in 5 percent of the cases where persons died of alcohol they may have killed themselves. You could then bunch those cases and you'd get a distribution at the end, where 95 percent of deaths by alcohol are accidental and 5 percent are suicide. You could pick the five cases that looked closest to being suicide and propose them as probable suicides. It doesn't happen that way. Cases get decided one by one. And each time a case comes up, the fact that there's a 95 percent chance that any death by alcohol is not suicide, is used to decide, "No." And you get the statistical outcome which is that they never occur.

My own feeling about such matters is that a range of decisions are made in terms of 'odd events' versus 'normal events.' And odd events, by and large, are just not added together. So that if one has a notion that some X is a normal event, then the fact that occasionally or two or three times in a row something else happens, that doesn't provide for a shift. One doesn't now say "Well, maybe X isn't the normal event." But, in part perhaps by way of the fact that what is normal gets incorporated into things like proverbs and becomes very stable, odd events are just sloughed off. They don't get incorporated. The fact that it's odd is enough to mean that one doesn't have to consider it on this particular occasion. What you get is, "Those things happen, sure, but . . . "

One thing about odd events, then, is that they're very hard to report. This fact can occasion the relevance of a category that this society has, called 'believing.' So, for example, there are classes of events which are very closely tied to activities that someone ought to do. If the event occurs, the activity ought to be done. Now for some events that are so tied to an activity, those who ought to do that activity may not be in a position to observe the event, but they have to deal with a report. Somebody says the event happened. Fire. Wolf. There's a kind of gap, in the sense that one can't wait to see whether

the thing that stands as a condition for some action has happened, but one has to act on the basis of a report. And of course the Cry Wolf fable is the fable about this problem.

What's to be done when if something happens some action has to be done, and nonetheless the persons who have to do that action can't see to decide? And that's of course where 'believing' fits as a category. 'Believing' can operate on such a basis as the following. A notion of credit is built up about somebody's reporting of events. And his credit is used to decide whether the action ought to be done. It might be that somebody has a specific task, reporting event A, for which some action should be taken. And if they report it wrongly a series of times, they're no longer creditable on event A. It can also be the case that 'believing' does not become event-specific, but that for some person, whenever they say something happened for which some action should be taken, whatever the event and its relevant action, they just don't have any more credit. It may be they have no more credit across whole sets of classes of events, or it may be that while they're not believable in general, for some events you'd figure this is not the kind of thing anybody lies about. And if one was interested in mathematizing social events, one would want to find out what the classes of events are, when they overlap, etc. For example, which kind of event is used to decide that persons are unreliable on another kind of event, and which are not.

Now one of the things about 'believing' is, if you can propose that a person has no credit, then it seems to be quite adequate to use the fact that you didn't believe them, even though the event they reported did occur. In my suicide cases there are situations where a person has killed himself, investigators ask a friend or relative or neighbor, "Did he ever threaten?" They say, "Threatened all the *time* but never *did* it, so we never took him seriously." And that's treated as quite an adequate account by the persons involved, and apparently by those they tell it to.

Well, that's fine, if what is at issue is building an adequate account. But suppose you have the following problem – and it's a live problem. You're setting up a missile receptive system, where dots appear on a radar screen. And the people who monitor the radar screen have to tell somebody to act. Now 'believing' is the resource the society has. But the one who has to act can know that the screens can show dots when there's nothing there, or can show dots and there's something there but it isn't missiles. And if you believe and act upon the reported dots, you're in plenty of trouble. And if there are dots and they are missiles, and you haven't believed the reports, then you're also in plenty of trouble. But that's the category that people seem to be stuck with. And of course in this case an account will obviously not be adequate in the sense that, whether there were no missiles and you acted, or there were missiles and you didn't act, nobody is going to be around to say, "Well, so you did your best."

I've heard talks by persons who are in the business of, I think they call it 'human systems' for things like the Air Force, and as I understand it, this is an actual problem that they don't know quite how to deal with. It seems

they've tried some experiments designed to select persons whose reports would be reliable. And that would be decided by how persons behaved in the experiment. Now that would seem to be fairly reasonable. Except that these guys know it's an experiment, and now they're going about considering what happens if they behave too conservatively, will they ever be chosen? And if they're not conservative enough, will they ever be chosen? And that of course affected the outcomes of the experiments.

Now, for some sorts of organizations there seems to be a system for deciding reliability that has to do, not with behavior but with category membership. One day I was going through some police files on suicide and I came across a series of notes to the police involving the discovery of a body in a college dormitory. A fellow was found hanging in a closet. Here's the sequence of notes.

The first note says, "I am Mrs so-and-so. I am a housemaid in the such-and-such dormitory. At 10:08 in the morning I was cleaning out room 472. I had swept around the room. The closet door was slightly open. I opened it a little more, and there was somebody hanging there. I immediately stopped. I went down and found my supervisor, Mrs so-and-so."

Next note. "I am Mrs so-and-so, supervisor of such-and-such floor in such-and-such dormitory. Mrs so-and-so came to me at such-and-such time and said that there was a body in the closet of room 472. I went to room 472, looked in the closet, and there was a body there. I called the head of the dormitory."

And then a note from the head of the dormitory. "At 10:14 I was called by Mrs so-and-so, the supervisor for such-and-such floor, who said that there was a body in the closet in room 472. I took the elevator up, went into the room, looked in the closet, there was a body there, which I then cut down. I then called the police."

You could figure my God if you want to talk about organizations and hierarchies, isn't that something? That on such a matter that's the way it operates. Well, but maybe it's occasional. Maybe it just happened that time. No so. Recurrently when a body is found in an insitution, you get that sequence. I routinely clip the newspapers, and when you look at things like murders, suicides, etc., you find things like this. There was a recent murder in New York, and the report says, "The body was discovered at 5:24 a.m. by the janitor who woke up the superintendant who then went and checked and then called the police." Some categories in a hierarchical organization do not have enough rights to say that there's a body somewhere without some other category checking to see that there is indeed a body somewhere. Nobody touches the body until somebody who is 'responsible' comes. And they're the ones who bring it into contact with the outside world.

Now, such a sequence is not reserved to those sorts of organizations. And it can sometimes operate in extraordinarily tragic ways. There is, for example, the possibility that if the fellow who hanged himself in the college dormitory was alive when he was first found, he might have been saved. But the first time I ever thought about this matter, the following happened. I was in a

hospital waiting room. They came charging in with this dead eight-month-old baby which they were trying to revive, the young mother, about 18, and her parents. What had happened was, so the mother thought, the baby had suffocated by a pillow over its face. Actually the baby had some disease, but the mother thought it had suffocated. The mother and baby lived about five blocks from the hospital. When she discovered the baby was not breathing – she happened to walk into the bedroom and noticed this – she goes to the phone and calls up her parents who live 45 minutes away, sits down on the front steps, waits until her parents come, and they call the police. And the police then call the ambulance.

These built in sequences! I've been interested in the possibility of orderliness in what people do for a long time, and not known that they could be working in that kind of order. Now, the way I work has been called 'microscopic' with, then, the usual sociology as 'macroscopic.' And it's not a bad distinction. But then it's proposed that social events are not closely enough ordered so that we can get results at the 'microscopic' level of investigation. I take it that we just don't know whether or not that is so. Certainly there has been an argument, and certainly the statistical position has won out. Durkheim posed the matter – which is the basis for the statistical approach to sociology – that if you take the statistical figures on suicides, you find quite an order. And you can study those. And construct theories. Then he says if, however, you deal with such things as the accounts that accompany each suicide, you don't find order at all. They're hastily made up, by low grade officials, etc. But he did not in fact attempt to deal with the accounts. And, in fact, his arguments as to why you shouldn't do non-statistical work were statistical arguments. And it may well be, for example, that the accounts of suicides are closely ordered phenomena.

Another objection to the way I work is that it seems to be enormously laborious, and sociologists are not given to doing things slowly. But one reason I'm operating as I do is, I take it that the big problem is not that we know that social events are not closely ordered, but that we wouldn't know how to describe them to see whether they're closely ordered or not. I want to see if such work can be done in the first place. Then we can repose the issue of where are social events closely ordered and where are they not closely ordered. But it's then an empirical issue that has to be discovered. It couldn't be solved by an argument. And we'll see.

Lecture 9
"I Am Nothing"

B: I'm   a grown woman an attractive woman I have a
                                          ⟋real nice date
A: Do you have any   (at same time as)⟋
B: good looking guy for a date tonight and and I somehow I'm feeling
     that   I'm nothing   (smiling sigh)
A: Uh huh
B: And I know nobody's a nothing   But I am.   It's like everybody
     else is somebody or something and somewhere along the line I muffed
     up

Suicidal persons recurrently say about themselves such things as "I'm
nothing" or "I've got nothing." The question I'm going to address is, can we
describe how they're able, properly, to so speak? Is there some way we can go
about constructing the procedure whereby 'nothing' is a possible product?

We might first ask what would the relevance of such a procedure be for the
persons involved? Maybe for suicidal persons it is said of them, and they know
it is said of them, that they and the project are irrational. If there were
procedures available so that they could report how they arrived at the
conclusion "I am nothing" or "I have nothing," and the person they were
talking to could go through the procedure again and find that their conclusion
was correct, then that might provide that at least this part of their project is
logical and not irrational.

Or, for example, if to arrive at this conclusion one uses materials that are
properly to be considered in producing an activity, and handles them
properly, then another claim that is raised against persons who are suicidal can
be undercut. The claim has been put by Menninger who says about neurotic
or psychotic persons in general and about suicidal persons in particular, that
they lack a loyalty to reality. (Which suggests that 'reality' is, for this society,
a special category. Some scientists and philosophers might say that whatever
is, is 'real,' and the category 'reality' encompasses whatever happens.) A
person might use a procedure which is otherwise properly used to make
assessments, to arrive at the conclusion "I am nothing" as a warrant for
suicide, so as to show that they are committed to what the society holds is
important or sacred, and that it's out of just this commitment that the project

A combination of Fall 1964, tape 7, side 2, tape 8, sides 1 and 2, and Winter
1965, lecture (6) with a brief extract from Winter 1965, lecture (4–5), pp. 1–3.
Transcriber unknown on all these.

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arises: "I'm not disloyal, I'm forced to conclude that I'm nothing." And persons recurrently do propose that the suicide possibility is becoming very logical: "I tried to reason it out and that's the way it looks."

If we're going to construct these procedures whereby "I am nothing" is arrived at properly and reproducibly (i.e., others could go through the procedure again and find that the conclusion was correct), a first thing we might ask is, what are the objects by which Members in general make assessments of their lives? We'd find that those objects are some subset of the society's recognized values; in particular, those which have a sanctionable way of being counted.

Of those there is a special class of values, which are what I call 'cumulative.' These have two features; (1) If you can properly have them at some stage of your life, then you ought to have them at any time thereafter. (2) You can lose them, so that having them at one stage of your life is no guarantee that you will have them thereafter. And the way they're counted provides that the fact that you had them once is quite irrelevant if you don't have them at the time you're doing the count. The fact that you had them once doesn't count.

That differentiates between things like money and children, and things like 'kicks.' For example, the cumulativity of the value 'having children' is recognized in the proverb 'Children should bury their fathers.' If you had children at some point, you ought still to have them; if they are now dead or if an irrevocable break has occurred, they don't count. Money is counted in the same way. When persons assess their circumstances they don't feel that they may add up how much money they earned over their lifetime, but consider how much they have now. If they do talk about how much they've earned in the past – if they don't have any now – then they'll talk about it by reference to a disparity.

Aside from values like these, for which one can say "I have none," there are other sorts of things which are cumulative, but on which you get a yes–no alternative; for example, being married. For such things, 'no' is apparently equivalent to 'nothing,' and 'yes' at least to 'something.' That is, just because a thing does not have the countable property of money does not make it unassessable in the sense we're examining.

Kicks are different. We can sanctionably say, "Well I had a lot of kicks." The fact that we're having none now, or few, doesn't seem relevant. There may be other things of this sort. For example, if you do something that counts in the society – an invention, a discovery, a contribution – then that can follow you. At any future time, should a person who's done such a thing try to make the conclusion "I'm nothing," it can be countered with "You've done this."

Now, some of the assessable values are so structured that they are only relevant at a certain stage of life. For example, a caller to this emergency psychiatric hospital talks about himself for awhile and then says "I feel I'm a bum. I'm just nothing." And the fellow answers, "No, you're not a bum, you're not old enough to be a bum." That is, that's one thing you're not eligible to be at this stage, so you can't use that to count yourself as 'nothing.'

So there's a notion of a stage in life in which you're entitled to say whether or not you have nothing on this or that value. When persons 25 years old say in assessing themselves that they're unmarried, they're told, "No, you can't say that yet." That's not anything that counts as 'nothing' at this point. These things are standardized; it's a matter of certain formal properties, that your age has to be X before Y counts as 'nothing.' This is without regard to the fact that a child, for example, could be said to be 'unemployed' or 'unmarried.' It may be true, but it's not relevant in this society.

But to get a sense of this 'stage of life' feature as a formal one, we can note that not all that long ago, a quite young child could be relevantly characterized as 'unemployed;' say, before the child labor laws. And, for example, there are old neighborhoods in New York which are partly populated by descendants of Spanish Jews. Among them the proper age to get married is about 15 or 16. Girls who want to graduate high school – not to mention college – find themselves under tremendous pressure from their families, and themselves. That is, the girls themselves talk ambivalently about behaving quite progressively when they're 19 years old and aren't married – or as being failures. And there are Jewish guys in the neighborhood, but not Spanish Jews, who date these girls and find it tremendously troublesome because they are too well received by the families. The fact that you're 17 or 18 makes you perfectly eligible to get married to their daughters, and if you're taking them out, you must be prepared for that.

Related to the stage of life feature is that of 'prospects.' A person who engages in the assessment procedure I'm describing, and arrives at "I am nothing," may then find somebody saying, "Well, that's where you are now but what about your prospects?" Or, as we find consistently for any relevant question, this question could be expectable without ever being asked; that is, it can be independently dealt with by the person doing the assessment. So how do they deal with the matter of 'prospects'? Here's some further talk by the woman I quoted at the start of this conversation.

> *B*: And I do think what man wants a neurotic childless forty year old
>   woman   No man.
> *A*: Well I'm not
> *B*: I know that
> *A*: sure about that
> *B*: I know that   outside of to hit the sack with
> *A*: Uh huh
> *B*: That's not what I want
> *A*: Uh huh

There seems to be a notion of 'entitlement,' whereby one examines some problematic outcome by reference to the Members' theory of how that outcome is arrived at. When I talked about the MIR device, I mentioned that arrangements of its classess provide pathways which persons can use to talk about what they're entitled to expect; given where they are now, where they

could come out. Such a use of that device can involve formulating one's present state in such a way that for the collection of categories one is presently in, one has no legitimate expectations of 'getting there.' One can then propose that one has 'no prospects' on that item.

In this particular case, what is being dealt with could be called a theory of how it is that men go about selecting a mate, and who is eligible to be selected. And there are some very specially interesting things going on in this statement, ". . . what man wants a neurotic, childless, 40-year-old woman? No man." What has to be seen about that formulation, "No man," is that it's to be understood as 'no man Member.' That is, we're always talking about classes and class members. That's important, because you can propose that any actual man who would go about selecting you is not 'a man.' Or, if he is 'a man,' if he claims to be selecting you, that's not what he's up to; that is, he's not up to selecting a wife, but, as she says here, he just wants someone "to hit the sack with." So this business of finding oneself unentitled is not simply a way of assessing some possible future, but a way of dealing with any currently encountered person to find either that they're not eligible, or they're just using a line.

In general, the notion that you can't get there from here has to do with the ways in which persons arrange membership classes to do things; to find pairs, to get appointed to jobs, to become successes, etc. Such arrangements are taken as ways of assessing whether it's possible that you could do that, and as I said, it works not simply to argue that you haven't any prospects, but also as a way of deciding what it is that's happening to you.

Further, if it actually happens that somebody marries you, or you get a job or a promotion, there is a notion of ineligibility that can get used even though it seems that you're eligible by virtue of having been selected. And that's the notion of 'phoney.' "I'm a phoney" focuses on just that sort of thing. The most exquisite statement I've ever seen of that sort was written by a woman in the course of a psychosis which has been named 'depersonalization.' She says, ". . . the feeling itself is one of unworthiness, in the way that a counterfeit bill might feel when being examined by a banker with a good understanding and appreciation of real currency."[1]

We might go about describing this in the following way. For any MIR device category, there's a set of inferences attached to it, which are 'common knowledge.' Some person is a nominal member of a category, but feels that the set of inferences that are properly made about that category are not properly made about them. They can count down along that list of inferences and find "I'm not this, I'm not that," by reference of course to a rule of relevance as to what one is or is not. That is, one is not just saying "I'm not the sheik of Arabia" or something like that, but: "I'm not one of the things that, given my categorial membership, I ought to be." And that again provides for the difficulties such persons have in getting into a relationship

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[1] In the lecture, Sacks does a rough paraphrase. The exact quote comes from the research notes, and is in *Psychiatry*, 23 (1960).

because they have the notion that what will happen over the course of any relationship they get into will involve the discovery by the other person that each of those inferable facts do not hold with respect to them.

Let me just mention a related category, that of 'imitation.' I'm not using the term with respect to actors in stage performances, but where persons observe some activity and say, "He's imitating." I came across an extraordinarily interesting use of this category in some of the older ethnographies, dealing with the situation of Negroes in the pre- and post-Civil War periods in the South. Again and again I found references to the activities of Negroes as 'imitating whites.' And they were characterized as being 'marvelous imitators.' Such reports are very similar to the way the behavior of children is characterized. And in that sense, then, it's being said of Negroes that they're children.

Now, we want to ask what does 'imitation' consist of, procedurally? How is it that some behavior is seen as 'imitation'? One of the central things that seems to be involved is this: When one normally deals with the activities of a Member, apparently one takes it that they have some right to do some class of activities, and that when one engages in making out what they're doing, one takes it that what one sees them doing is what they are doing. 'Imitation' seems to involve a way of characterizing some action which somebody does when they are unentitled to do that class of action. And if you watch the way the Negro slaves got talked about, or the way the emerging Negro is talked about, you can see how marvelous a category 'imitation' is, because it turns out that everything whites can do Negroes can imitate, but they can't *do* any of these things that whites can do.

So 'imitation' becomes a category which involves the construction of a parallel set of knowledge for those unentitled Members, where it doesn't happen that as they do something one finds that there is 'the doing,' but as they do something one finds that they're able to imitate. One doesn't see that thing which would, by reference to the category 'knowledge and capacity,' be taking place; that is, one sees a child 'behaving like an adult;' following adult rules of etiquette, being able to produce sentences like an adult, "talking like a big girl," etc.

It's noticeable in relation to this, that if the capacities of some persons are treated in this way, then one finds that certain sorts of accounts that can be applied to Members in general cannot be applied to them. So one finds that they can't be found to be 'responsible' for what they do, in a non-trivial sense. If you watch, let's say, the way that children's suicides are described, you'll see that it's not enough to say that the child was depressed, the child got a gun and shot itself or whatever, but there's an added item: How it is that the child was free at that time to do it; for example, their mother went out of the room and then the child took the asprins. That is, part of the causal account is some competent person's actions which permitted this thing to take place.

I take it that 'imitation' is one of the basic categories one wants to focus on when one talks about the phenomenon of ideology. Because it makes noticeable that there are a whole range of things that these persons obviously

can do, which are by and large not seen as things they can do in the sense of things that a Member can do, and the addition of capacities is treated as more things that can be imitated. And that's an extremely interesting kind of blindness, if you want to put it that way. It shows you the power of this procedure because it's apparently a perfectly consistent and reasonable way to talk, and the materials are thus never shifted over to be seen as, "They can do those things." In rather more abstract terms, we can come to see a way in which such categories as 'imitation' and 'phoney' provide us with something very central, in that they serve as boundary categories around the term 'Member.'

Lecture 10
Accountable Actions

I'll start out with several quotations.[1]

(1) A: Hello. This is Mr Smith.
     B: Hello. I was referred to your office by Mr Jones from the
         Conciliation Court, and I felt perhaps someone there would make
         an appointment for somebody there to talk to me. I don't know
         what I want to say to you except I'm confused and the trouble –
         Ask the questions.   I can answer them . . .

(2) A: Hello Mr Brown, this is Mr Smith.
     B: I was told to call down from the Conciliation Court and speak to
         someone. He gave me a card introducing myself to whoever I was
         supposed to speak to, and we had been recommended to Family
         Service I believe it was, and they said they couldn't do anything
         until I had talked to someone at the Emergency Psychiatric Clinic
         for psychiatric examination or something.
     A: Why did they refer you to us?
     B: Because I had tried to commit suicide.

(3) A: Mr Green?
     B: Yes sir,
     A: This is Mr Smith may I help you.
     B: Yes sir, it was suggested by Miss Geno that I call you.
     A: Who?
     B: Geno. With the Epilepsy League.
     A: Oh yes.
     B: We have a problem with my daughter.

(4) B: Hello.
     A: Mrs Gray?
     B: Yes.
     A: This is Mr Smith of the Emergency Psychiatric Clinic.

A combination of several lectures: Fall 1964, tape 6, side 2, pp. 5–17, tape 7, side
1, p. 1, M6, side 1, part 2, and Spring 1965, lecture 3, pp. 3–10 (transcriber
unknown).
   [1] Only the third fragment is actually given on the recording. The others are taken
from Sacks' research notes.

B: Yes.

A: I spoke to your daughter who was quite concerned about you and I wanted to talk with you and see if we could help in some way.

(5) A: Hello Ronald

B: Yeah.

A: My name is Smith.

B: Uh huh–

A: I'm a psychiatric social worker with the Emergency Psychiatric Clinic.

B: Yeah.

A: Your father called us this morning and was very concerned for you.

(6) A: This is Mr Smith and I'm one of the social workers at the Emergency Psychiatric Clinic.

B: Oh yeah. I would like to have an appointment if I can. I'm kind of a depressed personality, and I've been under psychiatric care for–   I had been at one time, and I thought possibly some therapy might kind of help snap me out of it.

(7) A: Hello this is Mr Smith

B: Say, my husband is suicidal and, I mean, he's attempted it about a half a dozen times . . .

I'll begin off by noticing that these phone calls seem to be 'accountable actions.' By that I mean that by and large on the first opportunity to talk after greetings, the person who's called gives an account of how they happened to make the call. We can also notice that they are 'symmetrically accountable.' That is, if somebody calls the agency, the somebody calling gives an account, as in the first three quotations. If the agency calls somebody, the agency gives an account, as in the fourth and fifth.

Now, as I mentioned once it seems to be a fact about invitations that at some point in some relationship, invitations are the proper way that activities get started, whereas a measure of intimacy between the persons is that they don't use invitations.[2] The same seems to hold for accounts of phone calls. Persons who call up someone they are not intimate with, often construct accounts of how that came about. In fact, the way I began to focus on these things in the first place was coming across something I thought was extraordinarily strange, but I guess it isn't. It's a phone call between a man and woman who don't know each other particularly well. At some point he says:

A: Oh I was in the bio med library and I had big intentions of working all day and they flicked the lights and kicked me out. Well that's just–

[2] See lecture 2, pp. 18–19.

I was just gonna call and see if you and your husband would like to
come over.

He constructs the operation of the university as providing for how it is that
he happens to come to make this phone call. There he was, he was going to
study, then he gets kicked out, he's left with nothing to do, and now, by
virtue of that, he comes to make the call. It seemed a little elaborate to me,
but persons do that. And at a little later point in intimacy it seems that they
don't. They just call up and say "Hi, how are you." And if you ask "Why
did you call?" they say "No reason, just felt like calling."

    In the calls to the emergency psychiatric clinic, some of the accounts that
persons offer involve another organization proposing that they make the call:
"I was referred to your office by Mr Jones from the Conciliation Court," "It
was suggested by Miss Geno of the Epilepsy League that I call you," etc., etc.
Some of the accounts have a different character, simply announcing the
trouble: "I'm kind of a depressed personality," or "My husband is suicidal."

    Now, for the purpose of getting a hearing, and perhaps for the purpose of
getting help, there is a sense in which the two sorts of accounts are
substitutable. You can use one or the other, and either of them can work. But
I want to notice that the use of each of these has a different source; that is to
say, different search procedures would have generated the organizational
reference and the announcement of a trouble.

    To call an organization and propose that the call takes place by virtue of the
operation of some other organization, involves informing those you're now
calling that this action is not the first step in the search. That's non-trivial
because persons tend to start a search for help with that place about which
they have the most rights to have an expectation that they'll get help. That's
very unfortunate in a way, because if they don't get it there, they may apply
a formula to that fact: "If not there, where I had most rights to expect help,
then where can I expect help from?" That is, they treat the sequence of calls
as informing them about the likelihood that any next call will be a success.
And they may, then, give up. I have mentioned a few calls in which that's
proposed.[3] In one, for example, a woman says, "I'm a Catholic and you
know, I wonder about Christianity. I just called three Catholic sources. None
of them offered anything." In another, a fellow calls up and says, "I'm very
ashamed to be a Jew," and goes through a report of the difficulties he had
when he called a Jewish agency. He says, "Now there's nothing you can do.
I'm going to kill myself. This treatment I got was the last straw. I only want
it to be known why, and that's the reason I'm calling. You should tell them
they ought to treat people better than they do." And I talk about the way in
which persons take it that when they call an organization the treatment they
get is representative. As this Jewish fellow says, "It's not that they did it to
me, they don't know me, and I don't feel personally affronted. But that they
treat *people* that way!" And at least some organizations have a solution to such

[3] See lecture 6, pp. 43–4.

a problem. They can come off without having refused help by proposing that they are giving help, where the help they are giving you is telling you to call this other agency which is specially capable of doing it.

Let's turn now to the other sort of account; those in which persons propose straight out that they need help. With respect to how that would have come about, a first thing that seems to be worth considering is how asking for help is regulated. In an earlier discussion I drew a distinction between two classes of 'others,' and said something to the effect that one class were persons with respect to whom there was such a bond of obligation that you could directly say to them "I need help," for example, 'family.'[4] We can talk of the two classes as 'insiders' and 'outsiders.' The issues involved here are extraordinarily interesting, but to consider them fully I have to introduce a series of other concepts. I will deliver a long discussion on the matter eventually; for now, I'll just sketch it.[5]

There are strong feelings – and strong maxims which provide those feelings – that you don't turn to "a stranger" for help with personal troubles. And you certainly don't as a first act. There's a proper sequence. And the first place you turn is to your family, or to some insider with respect to yourself. When somebody calls up an agency and says "I need help" – which is the proper thing to say when you're talking to an insider – a signal ought to go up that something is going on here. What can be present is, they've turned to an insider and gotten no help, or for some reason they find that they're not able to turn to an insider. And in this regard, something which might stand as just another way that callers to this agency start off, may be seen as an alternative to "I need help." Things like this:

A: Hello. This is Mr Smith
B: How do you spell your name?
A: S-m-i-t-h
B: I would like to have some information about your Emergency Psychiatric Clinic.

A: Hello. This is Mr Smith
B: How does this Emergency Psychiatric Clinic work out?
A: How does it work out?
B: I mean what do you do.

A: This is Mr Smith. May I help you?
B: Yes, I heard that you help people who are on the verge of committing suicide or something.

[4] See lecture 2, pp. 14–15.
[5] The several lectures in which these matters are discussed are not included in this volume: Fall 1964, tape 10, sides 1 and 2, tape 11, sides 1 and 2, and tape 12, side 1. For a formal version see H. Sacks, 'The search for help: no one to turn to' In E. Schneidman (ed.), *Essays in Self-destruction* (New York: Science House, 1967), 203–23.

A: What was that?
B: I said that you help people who are on the verge of committing suicide.
A: Yes, we do, certainly.
B: In what way?

That is, we get callers starting off with 'requests for information' which involve, then, that over the course of the conversation help will be offered without being 'asked for.' Because asking for help is something that one doesn't do with respect to strangers. So, "I need help" and "How does this organization work?" seem to be alternatives in the sense that persons who use them have perhaps come to do this call by the same paths.

Now, if a person does turn to an insider and does get help, it's notable that the form of help may be that the insider calls the agency for them – thus setting up the sort of thing we see in our fourth and fifth extracts. Or the insider may refer them to the agency. And calls made on that basis will take a very similar format to the calls where the person says "Such-and-such organization told me to call." For example:

A: This is Mr Smith. May I help you?
B: Well, I don't know. My brother suggested that I call you.
A: I see, well he must have had some reason for making the suggestion. Has there been some personal problem or difficulty that you're experiencing?
B: Yes, I just lost my wife and I feel awfully depressed.

And there's another which goes, "A friend of mine told me to call." "Why?" Caller says something, and then the receiver says, "She certainly did the right thing."

I want to stop here and show a way to analyze classes of statements for sorts of things we can find in them. I had these exchanges, where a person calls and says "My brother suggested that I call you" and "A friend of mine told me to call." I thought gee, that's curious. And I tried to think of a paradigm line, of which 'X told me to call' is an instance. It looked like the kind of line about which a psychiatrist would say, "This is a dependent person." And then I tried to see what it was that made it look like a matter of 'dependence.' I thought of the following. A kid comes into a grocery store and says "My mother told me to buy a dozen eggs." It looks exactly alike. It looks very much alike, anyway. And that's one of the major prototypic types of childrens' accounts; naming some adult who told them to do some activity.

Parenthetically, we can note that the fact that such an account by a child is sufficient and they learn that this is sufficient very rapidly, causes rather nice trouble. They can go from one to another among the set of adults who can warrant some activity, to find one that will say "Okay." And I have some stuff in which children were watched over a period of time, and we find that they do systematically go from one to the other without telling the one that

they asked the other, or what response they got, so as to provide that one of them will say "Okay." Then they go back and say, "He said okay." And of course that's known to generate fights in the family, etc.

So we get this prototype, 'an adult said to do it,' and something much like it done by callers to these agencies. And what it does, of course, is to provide that some person other than the caller – or in more general terms, the doer of some action – is the competent individual in the case. Now, apart from the fact that a person is proposing that they're not a competent actor where as adults they might be expected to be competent with respect to some item, the importance of this is the following sort of thing. If one can formulate what a child's set of resources are at some point, then one may be able to examine those behaviors of adults who are said to be 'infantile,' to find just what it is about them that provides that character. By comparing a child's and adult's version of similar statements, one may get an idea of what some of the tasks of socialization are. One can then watch the development of an 'adult' by the shift in the use of such blank forms as 'I'm doing X (action) by virtue of Y (competent agent).' One may begin to see over the course of a child's growth that the child will be using himself as a competent agent for an expanding class of activities. On the other hand, where someone is a presumptive adult, about whom it's said, "They're infantile," we might find that they are producing a statement in which X is something that this person could do on their own, but the Y proposed is some other agent.

Or, for example, by examining childrens' resources we can get a sense of what the psychotherapist is talking about when he says that neurotic adults do not have a good sense of reality and, again, that they remain children. Let me give a conversational excerpt.

> B: How do you make people love you? How do you do it? I wish I knew
>   I wish   I see people doing it all around me and I try to imitate
>   them and I don't know how you do it.
> A: Uh huh
> B: I don't know   It isn't because   You don't do it by loving them
>   you don't do it by   being thoughtful of them   You don't do it
>   by being understanding . . . I I really I don't know how you make
>   people love you I just don't know

One of the things the woman is doing is asking for instructions: "How do you make people love you?" Then she goes through this list: "You don't do it by loving them, you don't do it by being thoughtful of them, you don't do it by being understanding." Now where does she come by that list? They're pretty familiar objects; norms. They're a set of things one is told one ought to do to get what she proposes she didn't get, presumably by using them.

I want to focus on things like this for awhile; they're extremely important: It's rather well known that very young children have, from the perspective of adults, a rather poor notion of causation. They don't know how things happen to happen. Now, among the ways that adults go about formulating

rules for children, are two which it's important to distinguish. Call them Class 1 and Class 2. A prototype of Class 1 is, "Don't stick your hand on the stove." Prototypic of Class 2 is "Honor thy father and mother' – and such things as "If you want people to love you, you should love them, be thoughtful of them, etc." belong in that class.

With respect to an adult's conception of reality we would say that these two are different, in that for Class 1 the consequences, whatever they are, naturally flow from the act done. If you stick your hand in the fire, you get burned. Whereas for Class 2, that's not so. For a lot of things that you do that are said to be wrong or harmful, somebody has to do something to you for you to get the negative consequences. You can 'get away with' things of the Class 2 sort.

Now it's supposed, and it seems reasonable, that there's a stage when children don't know the difference between those two classes. That fact is very important for adults because they exploit it heavily. The way they exploit it is, they'll formulate a whole range of what, as adults, we would talk about as Class 2-type rules, in terms of Class 1 operations. That is to say, they formulate a whole bunch of those rules for which the consequences occur only when somebody does something, as though the consequences occur as a natural fact of life apart from anybody's doing anything. They'll do that even though the consequences obviously involve the adult doing something. So that parents say to children while giving them a spanking, "I don't want to do this, it just had to be done," retaining thereby the relevance of Class 1.

The fact that there are these two separate classes, and that adults do not make a large point of discriminating them, but instead assimilate the one to the other, formulates a very serious set of problems for children. And that is that children are repeatedly faced with the question, "What kind of a rule is that, that I've been told? Class 1 or Class 2?" There's no principled way for them to find out. They have to proceed case by case. And proceeding case by case, they can get into a hell of a lot of trouble. Adults know this and have a whole class of proverbs on it, an instance of which is, "If you tell children not to stick beans in their ears, they stick beans in their ears." Children have to find out what 'sticking beans in their ears' is a case of. Bettelheim, for example, reports kids in Chicago who do things like get into a barrel and roll down a hill onto a main street where there's fantastic amounts of traffic, just checking out whether it's so that you can get hurt. And seriously disturbed children are those who go about assimilating the whole range of Class 1 phenomena to Class 2. They then go about checking out the causal properties of the world as though they were normative properties in the sense that Class 2 rules are.

When children get brought up with a certain amount of assimilation of Class 1 and Class 2 rules, of course they cause tremendous trouble for their parents and other adults. For one, if the child is about to do things like sticking forks in outlets and other such things, then an adult has to be around a lot of the time. And if an adult is around a lot of the time, and is saving the child from these pains, then we get another sense in which the child is learning

that the rules are indistinguishable. Whereas an adult spanking a child might want to retain the relevance of Class 1; here the child is learning that Class 1 rules are Class 2 rules because it depends on whether an adult is around to punish you, that you get hurt or not.

Now a major device for children, for separating these things out, are things like lies and secrets. They begin to discover that there are some things which they can violate, that, if the adult doesn't know, isn't told, doesn't find out about, nothing happens. And that may operate in alternative ways. One way it may operate is that they develop an adequate notion of reality; that is, they separate Class 1 and Class 2 rules. An alternative way that it may operate – and this is one of the ways that a person who is said to be neurotic can be seen to be neurotic – is that one doesn't see rule violations which have had no consequences as involving, therefore, Class 2 rules, but as involving Class 1 rules with no time-bounds on their operation. And one spends one's life awaiting the natural consequences of those actions which were violative of the rules. Persons in such situations live out a great part of their lives under the sense of the impending consequences of their violations of Class 2 rules seen as Class 1 rules. That's a considerable part of the 'neurotic sense of guilt;' an ever-present sense of guilt which consists of their knowledge of the set of Class 2-type violations that they've done, like not loving their parents, etc., for which they haven't – yet – been punished.

What they tend also to do by not putting a time-bound upon the operation of these rules; by not saying if at some time the consequences haven't occurred then they must be Class 2 not Class 1, is to formulate these sets of rules as 'prophecies.' So when their parents had told them "If you don't change your ways no man will ever love you," then you'll find forty or fifty year old people who eventually can give as an account of the failures of their romances that indeed they never changed their ways, and their parents were right. So they live out their lives under these rules as prophecies of what it is that will happen to them.

And persons can be found to hold the notion not only that the fact that it hasn't happened yet doesn't mean that it's not going to happen, but that that only means, for example, that when it does happen it'll be even more ferocious. "Things look great now, but boy, wait till it happens." And positive things are treated, not as contradictions with what your parents told you, but, for example, as the rise which will make the fall even more dramatic. There are whole sets of paradigms in the history of the culture which stand as examples: Sodom, the decline and fall of Rome, etc., where the enormous rise can be treated as an example, not of a rise which inevitably happened to fall, but the rise that was so great to make the fall worse. There's a thing that the therapists who are lucky enough to have such patients – lucky enough because the patients are all rich – call a 'success syndrome.' And that involves, let's say, a man who comes from 'nowhere,' 'the wrong side of the tracks,' and at a fairly early age amasses enormous success – in business most particularly. And at that point when he's been elected executive vice-president or whatever, he goes into a depression and becomes suicidal. And what it's

made out to be is the fear that he's finally arrived at that point where the drop will be appropriate to the kinds of sins he's committed. The sins were such that it wouldn't be sufficient for him to lose some trivial $50-a-week job, but now he's being primed; fattened as it were, for a more appropriate slaughter.

So that just gives, I think, a sense of what it is that the psychotherapist is talking about when he says that neurotic adults do not have a good sense of reality. And also when they say that they remain children, and that the projected operators in their presumptively adult lives are always parents, you can see what it is that the psychotherapist is seeing.

Lecture 11
On Exchanging Glances

An assignment has been given, having to do with observing people exchanging glances. The recording starts after whatever description of the assignment has been made.

Q: Can I ask a question about this assignment.[1]

HS: Yes.

Q: For each person that we notice looking over at somebody are we supposed to ask them if they know the person?

HS: No! Don't ask!

Q: But we have to write down the class and everything, how can we possibly know if we don't ask.

HS: Yeah, class membership doesn't mean Junior, Senior.

Q: Oh I realize that.

HS: I don't mean social class, either. I mean class in the sense that I've been talking about class. Any class. Whatever it might be. You figure it out. When two persons exchange glances, see if you see anything similar between them, and see if you see what it is that might be what they're noticing. If you find that you don't know at all, you can say that. I don't think you're that naive. You walk through the streets and you're constantly classifying the persons you see.

Q: ((re would it matter if the glancers knew each other; e.g., were sitting at the same table and someone walks by and the two at the table exchanged the glance.))

HS: No, I said I wanted persons who are not interacting with each other. Though you can add variations if you please. But the specific assignment is for persons who are not otherwise interacting with each other.

A combination of three sessions. On tape 6, side 2, prior to the lecture proper, an assignment is given and discussed. Then on M4, side 1, part 2 an entire session is given to remarks based on the papers handed in by the students. That is continued on tape 14, side 1.

[1] This lecture differs from the others in that, among other things, it includes many student comments, contributions, and questions. These have been omitted from the other lectures as much as possible, materials generated by them having been assimilated into the text.

I'll give you an example of what I mean, just from a lay approach to the matter. I was walking down the hall the other day, to give an exam to one girl. She was standing, leaning up against the wall. In between us walked another girl. She passed this girl first, and then me. And the girl who was standing leaning against the wall looked at me and gave a shrug of her shoulders with a big smile, which I returned. And I don't think it was a big puzzle over what was going on. The girl who walked by was smoking a pipe.

Now, the two of us knew what we were noticing. But that can be problematic. For example, on the Berkeley campus or in places in Berkeley, you often find interracial couples wandering around, one of whom is Negro, one of whom is white. And people who look like tourists, visitors to the campus, etc. – that is, strangers – will stop to look at these couples, and then check out with others around. The question-form might be seen as something like "Am I in Rome, or am I here?" That is, Rome, generically. "Do I know where I am so that I know that that's something okay or something odd." And when they do that, people will not infrequently just look back at them and give them a negative stare. As if to say, "Who the hell are *you*." And that's treated as very disturbing.

So sometimes when you search out somebody to exchange glances with, it may be about something you took to be deviant. And for something deviant it may be that you look at anybody. Now, for other noticeables, persons may pick out special classes. I want you to try to see what the classes are. I have by no means collected these things systematically, and it's done all the time.

Q: Something occurs to me. I can usually tell when some sort of interaction is occurring, let's say, and someone is looking at me. But if someone is looking at someone else, it's going to be kind of hard to differentiate between people that just happen to be looking at each other, as opposed to ones that there's some reason for an interaction.

HS: Try it and see.

Q: and if you make a mistake, you're liable to come to a lot of false conclusions.

HS: Try it and see. If you feel doubtful, put down that you're doubtful. I spend a lot of time watching people watch people and exchange glances. And it's often no big deal to see that people are exchanging glances. They turn at each other, across a room or from a distance, and exchange big broad smiles sometimes. In some places there's enough turnover so that these exchanges will happen pretty frequently. And it seems to me that people are noticing all the time. I may be all wrong. Maybe you can't tell when people are looking at each other, but you can only tell when people look at you. Maybe you couldn't even tell that. But I would find that odd.

Q: Do we have to watch others watching each other? or can we watch.

HS: No, I want you to be watching others watching each other. You can add personal remembrances if you want to, or you can begin to record the encounters happening to yourself. But as the assignment,

you're to be watching others looking at each other. And I'm willing to make a fair bet that you can guess, seeing somebody get up and start to move out of a place, whether they will be somebody that others will notice. And you can probably say who will notice them, knowing nothing about the persons except what they look like; both the person who gets up and the other persons around. Because after all, when persons look at somebody passing, they know from having scanned the room in the first place, who to turn to to get an exchange of glances.

Q: Is it okay if we write down, if it happened in different places–

HS: Yes. Put down the place and the time. The more detail the better. And if you can type these it would be a help, since I'm perfectly willing that anybody in the class takes the collection of them and sees what they look like, writes a paper on it, whatever else. We'll have the product of a bunch of persons going out independently. Now we'll see if they look alike.

I'm going to start to talk about your first assignment. I don't have all that much to say yet. I find them something to think about, and I want to begin with something that was suggested by some of the papers. Let me make a couple of remarks about the problem of 'feigning ignorance.' I found in these papers that people will occasionally say things like, "I didn't really know what was going on, but I made the inference that he was looking at her because she's an attractive girl." So one claims to not really know. And here's a first thought I have. I can fully well understand how you come to say that. It's part of the way in which what's called your education here gets in the way of your doing what you in fact know how to do. And you begin to call *things* 'concepts' and *acts* 'inferences,' when nothing of the sort is involved. And that nothing of the sort is involved, is perfectly clear in that if it were the case that you didn't know what was going on – if you were the usual made up observer, the man from Mars – then the question of what you would see would be a far more obscure matter than that she was an attractive girl, perhaps. How would you go about seeing in the first place that one was looking at the other, seeing what they were looking at, and locating those features which are perhaps relevant?

Now the matter is important because there are many occasions on which you might *want* to feign ignorance. I want you to come to see that that has to be learned as a special task. Here's the sort of thing I mean. In a short story by Conrad Aiken which I forget the title of, some fellow is engaged to some girl who claims that she's exceedingly innocent. And what bothers him is that her body doesn't seem innocent; that she knows what to do. She knows too well how to behave, it seems to him, to have not done elsewhere what she's doing with him. And the task can be quite delicate. For example, sometimes women can be in a group of persons one of whom is their husband, and their

husband takes it that they're not very knowing. And they play that with him, but can perform in such a way that others will know that that's not so.

Here's a related sort of issue. I once glanced at a paper concerned with teaching actors how to learn to make an error in doing something. For example, if your job is to be some professional, and in the play that professional makes an error, you have to learn how such a one, who knows how to do something, could do that erroneously. And the various set of things that you go about doing erroneously may give away the fact that you know just what you're doing. There could be erroneous ways of doing integration in calculus, one of which would indicate that you have no idea what those symbols are, others of which might indicate that you know how to do integration.

I think of a classical story, a very fantastic event that happened in the last couple of years. There was an automobile accident outside of Moscow. One of the victims was the leading theoretical physicist in the Soviet Union, and one of the very few leading theoretical physicists in the world. He was killed. But they didn't want him to be killed, and so, through some unbelievable exercises they organized a staff from around the whole world to bring him back. And they reassembled him, essentially. He was absolutely destroyed; clinically died five times in the first ten days, and they had a fantastic team of persons coming in to put him together again. Now the question was, was he going to be the same guy? So as he began to recover – and that meant very dramatic kinds of developments from essentially infantilism – his colleagues would go in and talk to him.

One crucial day, one of the colleagues comes out very depressed and says, "He's not himself." And they said "Why?" He says "Well, we were having this discussion about some problems and I asked him a question, and he came back with this answer, and that's just not so, and anybody knows it's not so." And they all sat there bemoaning the fact that it looks like he's finished. Then it suddenly occurred to somebody, "My God, look at that answer!" It was a far more elegant solution to the problem than anybody had thought of. And it was just not available to any of them, but they knew that that's the way he would work. So that situation was transformed very dramatically. And in that regard, let me just note that, for example, things that children say, which they have no right to say, can be treated as 'errors.' That is, errors are socially stratified in many ways.

Let me go at this business of 'inferences' in another way. The problem that I am stuck on at this point, and I don't have anything like a solution to it, is how does a glance become an action? What kind of a world do you have to build to make a glance an action? Let me start off by reading you a quote from an extremely important book, the title of which I also forget. I think it's called *Sight and Sense*, but you can easily find it given that the author's name, Von Senden, is not that common, and he only has one book translated into English. It was written in, I guess, nineteen twenty something. It by and large reports on others' investigations which had never been brought together. The book is exceedingly important in a lot of ways. The very eminent psycholo-

gist, Head, made a great deal of his reputation on his analysis of the materials Von Senden presents, which Head was able to do because he knew German and the book hadn't yet been translated into English. And the theory that he developed is built largely on Von Senden's work. So far as I know, sociologists have not used the book; the place where you would expect to find it among the classical sociologists is Sandeke, but I don't see that he even had any reference to that kind of material.

The book is about persons who, typically, were blind from birth and who got sight, and what kinds of things they could learn to observe afterwards, and what kinds of things they never learned to observe if they got sight too late. On pages 61–62 we get a report by Dufau of "a girl who only discovered at the age of 12 that she differs from other people in lacking a sense, and who now seeks to discover the nature of this unknown sense." And she says:

> I posed myself a host of questions about this new and unknown state which had been described to me, and did my best to come to terms with them. In order to satisfy my doubts I had the idea of trying a strange experiment.
>
> One morning I again put on the dress which I had not worn for some time because I had been growing so rapidly then from month to month, and thus attired I suddenly showed myself at the door of the entry room in which my governess was already working at the window. I stood listening. "Good heavens Lucy," she said, "why have you put on that old dress that only reaches to your knees?" I merely uttered a few idle words and withdrew. This was enough to convince me that, without laying a hand on me, Martha had immediately been able to recognize that I had again put on the dress that was too short. So this was seeing.
>
> I gradually recounted in my memory a multitude of things which must have been daily seen in the same fashion by the people about me, and which could not have been known to them in any other way. I do not in the least understand how this happened, but I was at last persuaded. And this led gradually to a complete transformation of my ideas. I admitted to myself that there was in fact a highly important difference of organization between myself and other people.
>
> Whereas I could make contact with them by touching and hearing, they were bound to me through an unknown sense, which entirely surrounded me, even from a distance, followed me about, penetrated through me, somehow had me in its power from morning to night. What a strange power this was, to which I was subjected against my will, without for my part being able to exercise it over anyone at all. It made me shy and uneasy, to begin with. I felt envious about it. It seemed to raise an impenetrable screen between society and myself. I felt unwillingly compelled to regard myself as an exceptional being that had, as it were, to hide itself in order to live.

Most of Von Senden's work concerns the perception of patterns. If persons are blind from birth and they get their sight as adults, it turns out that certain patterns just can't ever be learned. They may not ever learn how to see a rectangle. They know what a rectangle is, and they can find it by counting the points. But where one sees, quote, at a glance, a rectangle, a triangle, and other such things, they never learned how to do it. Now there are lots of other things that people see, quote, at a glance – and perhaps that blind persons know the categories of. And how it is that persons come to see these things that they do see in this fashion we don't know very much on. But what's important in the first place is to try to determine, in part, what it is that is seen in this fashion.

And that's why it's sort of a pain to intellectualize this stuff such that you already talk about it as though, "I see a blob, and then I infer that it's my mother because she's a blob like that," when what you see is not that. And it's an extraordinary experience when it turns out that you do see somebody in something like that fashion. I just recalled, in Fitzgerald's novel *The Last Tycoon*, he reports a scene where this girl remarks that walking in New York, seeing a man approaching, finding a whole series of properties of him which she doesn't especially like, it turned out it's her father. That is a special sort of experience, but I can understand why you talk that way. You may find that some philosopher has convinced you of this. But 'inference' has another kind of use.

So where are you going to start to try to build a way of dealing with this stuff? We start out with the fact that glances are actions. That's the first fact. There's a beautiful report to this effect. A guy is looking at a girl, looks around to find somebody to exchange glances with, catches the eyes of another girl who looks like this one in some way, and turns away quickly. That is, he sees her sanctioning his looking. And how do we start to provide for glances as actions? I take it we have to start building classes. Earlier I was talking about persons being representatives of classes of which they were members. And the sorts of things you've reported suggest that what persons see is a class member, for whole collections of classes. You see 'a girl,' 'a Negro,' 'a such-and-such.' That is, the class permits you to see what it is that's there. It permits you to see.

To liven this matter up, I'll read you something from *The City of Plains* by Proust. And Proust is an incredible sociologist, as you may know if you've read it – and if not you certainly ought to, even if you're not interested in literature. There is a scene where Proust is watching events take place in a courtyard below. He sees a whole sexual confrontation between two guys, which he describes absolutely fabulously. Then he writes:

> From the beginning of this scene an evolution in my unsealed eyes had occurred in M. Charleaux. As complete, as immediate as if he had been touched by a magician's wand. Until then, because I had not under-stood, I had not seen.

The vice – we use the word for convenience only – the vice of each of us accompanies him through life after the manner of the familiar genius who was invisible to men as long as they were unaware of its presence. Our goodness, our meanness, our name, our social relations do not disclose themselves to the eye. We carry them hidden within us. Even Ulysses did not at once recognize Athena. But the Gods are immediately perceptible to one another, as quickly as like to like. And so, too, had M. de Charlieux been to Chiupien.

Until that moment I had been, in the presence of M. de Charlieux, in the position of an absent-minded man who, standing before a pregnant woman whose distended outline he has failed to remark, persists, while she smilingly reiterates "Yes, I'm just a little tired now," in asking her indiscreetly, "Why? What is the matter with you?" But let someone say to him "She is expecting a child," suddenly he catches sight of her abdomen and ceases to see anything else. It is the explanation that opens our eyes.

So, the classes and their categories permit you to see. That's a start. It's not enough to make a glance an action. As some of you noticed and reported, it's not merely that some observer is seeing by reference to some category, but that the one being observed sees what the observer is, and is seeing. And we get into that whole jumble there: A, seeing that B is looking at A, sees what B is, and what B sees, etc., etc.

That A can see what B is, and what B is seeing, may seem the most trivially obvious fact. But it was the economist Bagnanin's seeing that fact that provided for the modern revolution in economics. Until the book *A Theory of Games in Economic Behavior*, the major theory of economics used the Robinson Crusoe model: A man alone in an environment, and now he has to go about deciding what to do, what things will work, etc. And any other person is to be conceived as a part of the environment. That meant that you could give statistical treatment to the various parts of the environment. Now Bagnanin was, among other things, a great poker player. And he saw that economics could not be constructed along the Robinson Crusoe model, and took poker as a model. And in poker you can't treat the other person as a statistical object, but as somebody who, whatever strategies you might employ to deal with 'that piece of the environment,' does the same about you. And then, furthermore, knows you do use strategy, etc., etc. If you just read the first chapter of the book, you see that laid out. As I say, it provides for a complete reconstruction of the way of doing economic theorizing. It's a very curious bit of history that Parsons, in his *Structure of Social Action*, posed essentially the same facts – and he left economics because of a similar complaint against economics. But the sociologists apparently didn't appreciate what Parsons was posing, and have come to this kind of position through Bagnanin and Morgenstern, and not through sociology itself.

So, A can see what B is, and what B is seeing. How is it that, given there's a whole bunch of classes available, A can see that? I have to introduce a notion

that will help this problem along. Let's talk about there being, for some collection of classes, an 'order of relevancy' with respect to categories. It seems that a set of circumstances can provide that order of relevancy for some membership class. If the circumstance is that A is being looked at by B, that in itself might inform the consideration of what order of relevancy is operating here. And if there is an order of relevancies, we can begin to locate certain facts that obviously do occur. For example, 'failures' can be located that way. And 'absences.' People talk about "missing something," "not seeing something."

Now a third thing may be very extendable, but for now I'll only deal with classes that have two subclasses. For some classes, A, being observed, sees that B, doing the observation, sees that A is a member of some contrast class such that A is one part of a paired class and B is the other. Where for each, there is an order of relevance which provides for the other as being an observable, and – and this is absolutely important and the thing would not work unless it was present – the order of relevance of each was available to the other.

With that, we can begin to handle some rather nice kinds of events; you can begin to see what the following kind of trouble is. A girl looks at a guy. And what he does is, he takes her glance and then looks over his shoulder. And what's going on is that he knows enough to know the sort of thing she's looking at, by reference to the class – she's looking at 'an attractive male' – and he has that sort of insecurity which provides that he's not eligible, so it must be somebody else. This complementarity of orders of relevance permits us to see how persons are operating when they talk of themselves as 'worthless' or as 'nobody.' And it's this complimentarity – that one knows what the other classes do – that begins to tell us what may be going on, in part, where some guy is looking at a girl, now looks around and catches the eye of another girl who is somewhat similar to the first, and turns away. That is, he does not seem to just continue looking around as though, "Well, she's not a male so how would she know what I was doing?" Or, for example, some of you report a person will be walking, sitting studying, just doing nothing, and then see somebody looking somewhere, and, quote, follow the glance, knowing that there would have to be something at the end of the glance which is worth looking at. And if you can see what it is that is doing that looking, you could have a pretty good idea of what it is that would be at the end of it. So this complementarity is equally as crucial as the fact that one is able to see what somebody with whom you are a member of a class in common is seeing when they look at you, or another. The sense of there being 'a society' is that there are many whomsoevers, who are not members of this or that class, who are able to see what it is that one is looking at.

Now there are other things that you talked about, which are worth thinking about. For example, people talked about the fact that persons didn't exchange glances over an average person. Now what you have to attend is the notion of 'average' that you employ. Because I don't think it's the case that you use it in the following way: You're sitting someplace, a set of persons pass you by, and you construct a distribution over that set of persons and provide

that those that stand out from that set, after let's say, watching awhile, are the unaverage ones. Rather, somebody's being outstanding may be quite irrelevant to the collection of persons surrounding them in the scene; that is to say, those who have passed before or who come after.

A while ago I gave some examples of odd suicides, and I said then that given the procedure that's used – that is, case by case – what you have is that an odd suicide gets separated off and is not used to consider the, quote, normal ones.[2] So a stream of odd ones is only something to be remarked upon, like "Isn't it amazing today, there's such a stream of absolutely beautiful women who walked through such-and-such a place." It isn't that one then finds that one is going to modify the notion of 'average' because of that. And that then means that those categories have to be given special attention.

In many of your reports it's proposed that what makes something noticeable is that it's an 'incongruity.' I've given a glancing attention to the phenomenon of incongruity for a long time, but it's only now that I feel that I'm beginning to get a handle on what I might be able to say about it.

A first thing we need is a notion that what Members see is decomposable by them. That Members can decompose some event, situation, complex, whatever you want to call it, is no surprise at all, given the sorts of things we've been considering. That is to say, we've been talking about activities as being 'assembled.' And if that's so, and if Members can see that that's so, then, that they can take them apart would not be especially surprizing. The question then is, having taken something apart, how do they put it back together again so as to find what it is that's strange.

The way they seem to do this involves treating something that they see as a combination of parts, some of which have names. And to those nameable parts are affiliated standardized procedures for producing those objects in some combination. I'll give you an example. You see a man in a car. Now a car is a 'possession,' and there are ways that one properly, normally, legitimately, expectably comes to have it. And apparently what goes on is that when one sees 'an incongruity,' one of the things one sees is that it does not seem that the proper procedure for this possession having come to be possessed, has produced the combination of this person and that car.

A guy I know told me the following story. He looks like a bum, is usually unshaven, wears very tattered clothes, and has a big flashy car. He's driving down the Massachusetts Turnpike and there's a police car sitting in the grass that divides the highway. He passes the police car, drives along below the speed limit, the police car starts to follow him, follows him along for a while, finally pulls him over. The policeman asks him for his license, the guy shows him his license. And now we get the following interchange. "What do you

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[2] See lecture 8, p. 62.

do?" "I go to school." "Where do you go to school?" "Harvard." "That's very nice. Where are you going?" "I'm going home." "Whose car is it?" "My mother's." Then the policeman says, "Look, would you do us a favor?" "Sure. What do you want." "Would you get a shave? if you don't, every policeman on the Turnpike is going to have to stop you." That is to say, for such a person, how it is that they come to have gotten that car is a problem. And the incongruity is seen in that way; by virtue of the car being a possession, how would it come to have been possessed by such a one?

Or, for example, I talked about a woman who proposed that she was 'nothing,' and said "What man would want me?,", given her set of features. And in analyzing that, I said that what she was proposing was that given her features, the correct procedures for somebody selecting a woman would not arrive at her being in some pair.[3] And we can see a sense in which, whether in any given circumstance the person who says that is correct or not, they are in fact employing a procedure which might be employed if they happened to be together with someone; that is, people would say "How did she come to get him?" That is to say, one thing which seems to be observable as an 'incongruity' involves two persons being present, a man and a woman, where there's some special difference between them: A worn old man and a very young pretty girl, or the reverse. And now they get noticed, an exchange of glances takes place, and the question that seems to be asked is "How did he get her?" or the reverse. What one is doing is employing the procedure by which persons properly come together and finding that that does not produce these two persons as a pair. And one can then produce an explanation; for example, "He bought it" or "she bought it."

So that the procedures whereby persons come to be in some combination, or come to have some object, seem to describe in part what it is that you've observed, and what I had observed earlier but had never really been able to figure out – how it is one sees an incongruity, and also sees the possible illegitimacy of some combination.

Now, in some of the reports what we seem further to find is that where persons are concerned, units of larger-than-a-member are observable. People can see 'a family,' for example. That may be trivially obvious, but it's very important, and it has to be achieved in some way. One of the reports has a powerful instance of the relevance of persons seeing such a thing as a 'family.' One of you reports that you were driving along and a car pulls up and stops. It doesn't seem to stop anywhere special, just pulls up and stops on a street. The door opens and a girl of about 18 charges out, runs across a lawn and stops, and starts shrieking. In the front seat are an older man and woman. The guy jumps out of the car, charges across the lawn, comes up to the girl and gives her a smack right in the face. At which point some of the passing cars slam on their brakes, and some people start getting out of their cars.

The man and the girl stand there, face to face, screaming at each other, and then he just grabs her and drags her back to the car. And people look at each

[3] See lecture 9, pp. 68–9.

other, shrug, and say "*Well*," get back in their cars and go on their way, taking it that it's not after all a kidnapping scene or an attempted murder, but it's 'a man and his daughter' and he's punishing her for something she did, or something to that effect. No attempt at intervention is made. Whereas I take it that were the unit 'family' not available to them, and relevant features of it not observable in the scene, then it could be expected that people would intervene. But given what they saw, intervention becomes 'meddling.' And one wonders, again in part, how much of the failure to give help in dramatic scenes is a product of some order of relationships where the combination of persons and what they're doing is something seeable as 'their business.'

Q1: I read in the paper where a girl was in a car and she had parked a couple of blocks from her home. And another car pulled up and the guy driving asked her for information, "How do you get to the freeway?" She started to tell him, still being seated in the car. The guy said "I can't see you, come around and show me on the map I have with me." And she immediately got frightened, rolled up the windows and stayed in there. And he said "That won't help you," and he tried to get in. And she started honking her horn, hoping that someone would come out, hearing the horn. And so what he did was honk *his* born *back*. And therefore it sounded more like a game, and no one came to her aid.

Q2: The was another situation that was in the paper last week where a woman was sitting in the car waiting for her daughter and her date to come out from a show. And this man got into the car and started beating her up. And she yelled for help, and there was a couple watching, and another man. And no one would help. And afterwards, when the guy left, she said "Why didn't you help me?" And the woman in the couple said "Well we thought you were married and it wasn't any of our business."

Q3: But then on the other hand there was a story in the paper about this young motorcyclist who stopped on the freeway, who looked down below, evidently at another freeway portion where a car had stalled. And he leaned over the railing to ask if this man needed any help, and the answer was a shot from a gun, and he got killed. So these are the kinds of things that may be part of people's fear.

Q4: Which all points to a kind of a pattern of three things: A normal way of going about things, a subversive way of going about things with a normal appearance, and an uncertainty feature operating with regard to all events, since it's known that persons can be acting in a subversive fashion and appear to be acting normally, at the same time it's not known whether in fact they happen to be operating in a subversive fashion. And as a matter of fact it would be more of a problem to account for why that uncertainty factor is not operating, than to account for why it is operating when it is.

HS: Well, that may be. The problem about what you say is, in part, that

in this society there is a considerable shift of the responsibility for locating subversives, from whomsoever to a special group, the police. And persons otherwise feel that they're entitled to suppose that people are what they look like. And if they're not, then that's not their problem very much. It's fairly special that people use a supposition that somebody is not what they seem to be.

Q4:   It's Goffman's argument, the notion that persons feel that if some-body is acting in a particular fashion which they may doubt as being an example of such-and-such, then they're entitled to inspect him for other features that they assign to a such-and-such. I think that's much more common than the other. Because they're engaged in the prob-lem of attempting to make out persons and what they're like, and if they now do something that you didn't figure on, it's obvious that they did something. I mean they *did* it. So it's obvious that

HS: Yeah but the fact that they did it is not sufficient. The first thing that we find is that events are decomposable. And the question is, "Could somebody have done that?" and it could be decided that they couldn't have done it properly, and now we get all these incongruity observations. Now the fact is, Goffman talks about incongruity but he does not tell us what incongruity is. That's what I think I'm beginning to see here in this stuff. *How* it is that one sees it. He has not analyzed how it is that you do 'an incongruity,' what makes it an incongruity. And I think I have the beginning of how it is that you do it.

Now such issues as its import for integration in the social structure, which is what you're talking about when you raise 'uncertainty,' is another matter altogether. Not to say that it's not worth looking at. And the question of uncertainty is in part handleable in the observations you've made in these reports; that is, that people check out the things they've noticed with somebody else. What we have to consider is, what is it that they get out of checking out their noticings with somebody else? Some of you talk about 'reinforcement;' one reinforces their determination that someone was doing something wrong, or that a combination was wrong, by making a check-out with somebody else. And thereby the norms are reinforced. Which is a nice, Durkheimian kind of argument, and it may be true. But there's something that has to be seen about that claim, and that is the mechanism of the procedure in the first place, which is what I'm interested in.

In the first place, if one were engaging in some device for getting reinforcement, it might be supposed that one would want to know the status of the person one uses to get reinforcement from. That is, if you have a question, "Is it the case that this thing I've seen is a violation of the norm?" you might write a letter to Dear Abbey, or ask a priest, or ask your parents, or ask somebody who has special rights. In any case, it might be presumed that you'd be concerned to check with somebody who you knew to have some information about it. But in your reports, apparently what we find is that it's

pretty much an 'anybody' who can be turned to for that check-out; 'anybody' as long as they're a member of an appropriate class, so let's say, a woman turns to a woman, or a man turns to a man. You don't ask for their credentials in the first place, and if they return your glance, give you the smile back that you give to them, or the disapproving glance, that seems to be okay. And that's a fantastic kind of simplicity.

And furthermore, it might be supposed if one was getting a reinforcement, that if the person did not return the same glance, give the same thing back to you, then you would say "Maybe I'm wrong," figure that you're having a wrong response. But no, that doesn't seem to be the case. Given what you've reported in your papers, what seems to be the case are several things. First, if they don't return the same glance, a smile for a smile, etc., you look for somebody else, whereas if they do return the glance, you feel satisfied and look no further. And second, if they don't return the glance, you may make an assessment about *them*: "Who do they think they are?" or "What's up with him?"

So the norms don't seem to be in doubt; that is, the norm that provided for the incongruity that provided for the noticing is not something that seems to be held in doubt. And the notion that it's 'reinforcement' that you get is somewhat obscure. Though the question certainly has to be asked, what is it that people are doing when they exchange these glances? We've already observed that they get exchanged with whomsoever; there's no special credentials involved, except class membership. Another, equally extraordinary part of this – and why, again, 'reinforcement' is a tremendous gloss or oversimplification – is that one takes it that they know what it is that you saw, that they saw the same thing, and they know what you're smiling about, and they make the same assessment. Their smiles tell you that. Now, that that gets done would seem to involve a fantastic kind of social integration. And it can give us a way to talk about 'alienation.' Because one of the senses of alienation would presumably be that you would feel tremendous doubts about doing that. And one would have tremendous doubts about what those smiles and disapproving glances are about; what they're looking at *you* for. Schizophrenics are always reporting that people are looking into them, talking about them, know what they're thinking. And you can see that they haven't constructed a machine which produces events going on in the world, wholly out of their heads. For that thing which they propose is going on by reference to them, while it may not be going on by reference to them, is indeed going on, enormously, and *how* it's going on is an absolute mystery.

The sense of alienation with respect to a schizophrenic would be, in part, that they can't tell when it's being used with respect to them. Or, that they think it works better than it works. Because it's perfectly routinely the case that persons know what others are thinking – without knowing those others – in just the sense that 'thinking' is used as a non-technical term. People seem to know what others are thinking without having any idea who they are, apart from their class membership. Now schizophrenics claim that

others, who don't know them, know what they're thinking. Routinely. Well, there's a sense in which others *do* know what others are thinking, routinely. Again, then, a schizophrenic may be wrong as to when it occurred, but the notion they have is obviously correct; is obviously so.

Q: It seems like that was the basic assumption of the assignment; that we could notice them doing it.

HS: Right. It was the basic assumption, which could have been wrong. But of course it's not like I came into this world the day before I gave that assignment. I know that people can do this, I've watched it many times, and I take it that you've seen it also. However, people who get this far in their education are very prone to intellectualize the whole operation and not see it. And so you don't see that people know what other people are thinking; you figure it's a philosophical impossibility, or you'd have to go through four years of analysis, etc. It was an assumption. And it could have been the case that everybody came back and said "No, I never saw that happen." And that's possible. It might be something that's dying out. A thing that our forefathers had. Like God.

Lecture 12
Sequencing: Utterances, Jokes, and Questions

For the linguists, almost exclusively the largest unit of investigation, the largest unit they seek to describe, is a sentence. So grammar is directed to providing rules for generating sentences, and every time you have a different sentence the grammar is to be reapplied. If we want to study natural activities in their natural sequences, we have to deal with, for example, the obvious fact that a sentence is not necessarily a 'complete utterance.' Thus, linguistics is not sufficient, at least so far as it's by and large done. There is one major exception and it's extremely close to what I'm trying to do. That is Fries' book *The Structure of English* (1952).

We want to construct some unit which will permit us to study actual activities. Can we construct 'the conversation' as such a unit? Can we in the first place make of it 'a unit' – a natural unit and an analytic unit at the same time? The question then becomes, what do we need, to do that?

First we need some rules of sequencing, and then some objects that will be handled by the rules of sequencing. Now, if we restrict our attention at the beginning to two-party conversations, then we can get something extremely simple – though not trivial, I assure you. And that is, that for two-party conversations the basic sequencing format is A-B Reduplicated. It's not trivial in that with three-party conversations it's not the case that the sequencing rules are A-B-C Reduplicated. There's something else; what it is, I don't know. So: A-B Reduplicated. One party talks, then the other party talks, then the first party talks again, etc. I use the term 'two-party' so as to provide for the fact that this does not necessarily mean two persons. The 'two-party' conversation may be a basic format such that conversations having more than two persons present can take a two-party form. That would involve persons dividing themselves up into teams of a sort, and alternating according to team membership, where, then, one team talks – a whole series of persons might talk for that team – then the other team, etc.

Restricting our proper considerations to two-party conversation with the

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The nine Winter 1965 lectures (all of them owed to 'transcriber unknown') pretty much recapitulate the considerations of 'Fall 1964,' sometimes in a more developed, formal way. Most of them have been incorporated into those earlier lectures: lecture (1) has been absorbed into lecture 1; lectures (4) and (5) into lecture 6, lecture (6) into lecture 9, much of lecture (7) into lecture 3, leaving lectures (2), (3), (8), and (9). lectures (2) and (3) comprise this lecture 12, (8) and (9) comprise lecture 13.

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sequencing rule A-B Reduplicated, what we have to come up with as a first object is something we can call an *'adequate complete utterance.'* And that will be something that a person can say, which, upon its completion, provides for the relevance of the sequencing rules. That is, on its completion, the other talks, properly. A sentence may be complete, and one could tell that it's complete, but that wouldn't tell you that the person is finished speaking for now. But if they use an 'adequate complete utterance', then, by virtue of the fact that that unit is complete, the sequencing rules are relevant. Again, a sentence is in general not sufficient, though some sentences may be as much as a person is going to say. Nor, for example, is it generically the case that a 'question' is sufficient, though questions may comprise, and frequently do comprise, complete utterances. That is to say, it is not enough to propose that an item was 'a question,' to know that upon its completion the other was to have talked, or did talk.

We want to see if we can get something that stands as an 'adequate complete utterance,' such that upon the use of one or several of these, we have minimally constituted something that will be, recognizably, 'a conversation.' This is not to say that conversations are only built up out of adequate complete utterances, because persons can have ways of detecting that something is or is not complete, apart from the fact that the object is standardized in such a way. Though insofar as they're using other things than adequate complete utterances to make up their talk, they have a special task of detecting that the other is or is not finished, and perhaps what they ought to do now.

Another way that we could tell that 'a conversation' has taken place is if there were some invariable part. We might then go about identifying the fact that a conversation occurred by reference to the fact that the invariable part occurred. Only, as far as I can tell, there aren't any. However, there is something pretty close to that. Take something like "Hello," "Hello." Now, a 'greeting' is an 'adequate complete utterance.' It's standardized as such. When you hear 'a greeting,' then you can take it that when it's complete, it's your chance to talk, if you're the one that's been greeted. There are several things we want to notice about greetings, apart from the fact that they are adequate complete utterances. Greetings are *paired*. And by that I mean simply that if A picks a member of one of those things, then a proper move for B when he has an opportunity to speak – right after it – is to pick a member also; the same, or another. So one party's use of a greeting provides for that minimal exchange, "Hello," "Hello."

Now, it's the case that if A-B Reduplicated is the format of conversations, then there is no specific length that a conversation takes, to be 'a conversation.' And there may be no generic way built into the rules of conversational sequencing, that a conversation comes to a close. So, for example, there can be enormous variance between two conversations as to how much was said. That is, you don't have a situation where some certain amount of talk is required before the conversation can, or ought to, close. Or, for example, there can be an enormous variance as to how much one person has said, as compared to the other. It's not a situation where persons have to monitor how

much they've talked as compared to how much the other has talked, to find that the conversation can, or ought to, close.

Thus – if two things were so which are not so – we could say that we have a 'minimal conversation,' "Hello," "Hello." And we could say that if at least that took place, then a conversation occurred. And we could describe how that could take place, given this A-B Reduplicated format, given an 'adequate complete utterance,' given the 'paired' characteristic, plus a few minor things which I'll point to later on. But the two things are not so. One is, it's not invariably the case that things we would say are 'conversations' contain greetings. The second is, it's not invariably the case that 'greeting items,' such as "Hello," occur as 'greetings.'

Now those facts lead us to require the following: We need to distinguish between a 'greeting item' and a 'greeting place.' Where, then, something is a 'greeting' only if it's a 'greeting item' occurring in a 'greeting place.' If a greeting item occurs elsewhere it's not a greeting, and if some other item occurs in a greeting place it's not a greeting – though some items that are close to greetings might take on the character of a greeting by occurring in a greeting place. We need, then, to be able to say that there's a 'greeting place,' and that any 'conversation' has it. And I take it we can say that there is a greeting place in any conversation, by virtue of the following kind of consideration.

First of all, it does seem that there is no rule of exclusion for greetings. People can know each other 35 years, talk to each other every day, and nonetheless greet each other when they begin a conversation. But take a whole range of other items, for example 'introductions' (telling someone your name, etc.). About introductions it can be said that there are rules for their historical use. At some point in the history of persons' conversations, introductions are no longer relevant. And if they're not relevant, then, when they don't occur, one can't say they're *not* there because there's no reason to suppose that they would be there. Notice that what we're trying to do is find some way of saying, non-trivially, that something is 'absent.' If there were something that was invariably present we would have no trouble. We could say if that thing happens, then 'conversation' occurs. But we need to be able to say that we have a conversation if that thing is present, or if it's absent. And to say that something is 'absent' is a much harder task. The way we can go about doing that is to find that it's always *relevant*. If it's relevant, then if it's not present, we can say non-trivially that it's not there. And greetings have that sort of relevance, in that there is no rule of exclusion for them. So we can say that greetings are relevant for any conversation.

Secondly, we can distinguish between the greeting item in the greeting place, and the greeting item elsewhere. That is, somebody can say "Hello" in the middle of a telephone conversation, where what they're doing is not 'greeting,' but checking out whether the other person is still on the phone, and a variety of other things like that. Thus, the greeting item, to be 'a greeting,' has to occur somewhere in particular, and we can say, then, that there's 'a place.' And in that greetings are relevant for any conversation, that place in

which they are recognizably not something else, but 'greetings,' is present for any conversation, whether there is a greeting item in it or not.

It's not, then, that we just need "Hello," "Hello" or members of that class to have taken place, to have 'a conversation' and to warrant our being able to say that there is a natural analytic unit, 'conversation.' But if we can say about some piece of talk – either a greeting item or a greeting substitute such as "How are you?" – that it occurred in 'the greeting place,' and that piece of talk, whatever it was, provided for the relevance of the sequencing rules, then we could say that we have 'a conversation.' And then we would be able to warrant, at least in part, the fact that there is a unit, 'conversation,' which is natural and analytic, and is generically usable. Of course the description of cases of it may be far more complicated than this, but it has to be noted in the first place that such a warrant has never been made, and that such a unit has not been established. And it's for that reason, at least, that it's of interest.

Now, it does seem to be the case that "Hello," "Hello" is a 'minimal conversation.' Persons take it that it's a minimal conversation. It's not sub-minimal; you don't need more to have had 'a conversation.' And you do need that, or substitutes for it. Children learn this at a rather young age, and you find them producing perfectly recognizable ways of indicating that they have engaged in the beginning of what may be only a minimal conversation, and have not been properly treated. That is to say, one of the ways that one shows that one has done something which is an adequate complete utterance – that is, which is appropriate for the use of the sequencing rules – is to repeat it. So I have these reports where a child says "Hi," there's no answer, and the child says again, "Hi!" And then there's a "Hi" in return, and the child will take that as having been sufficient, and go about his business – which he doesn't do when he says "Hi" and there's no return.

That use of repetition as a way of indicating in the first place that an item was adequate for whatever it is that's supposed to come next, is obviously the simplest way of doing that task. In the child's use of it, however, we get something that's worthy of some brief mention. And that is the way that adults come to see that the child knows something of language. The way adults know that the child is now 'speaking' and not babbling, involves the fact that the minimally recognizable units of infant speech – and this is essentially cross-culturally valid – are combinations of 'p' or 't' or 'd' followed by a vowel like 'a'. And those combinations seem by and large to be used without respect to what the language is; that is, without respect to however the adult language may be constructed. And the way, apparently, that one tells that the child is now speaking is by virtue of the fact that it doesn't simply produce a series of syllables, but it repeats a syllable. In this culture, then, prototypically the first word that a child speaks is the word for 'father,' "da da."[1] The interest of this phenomenon lies in the fact that if you get that

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[1] Sacks cites the paper in which "this is all discussed," but the title wasn't caught by the transcriber. One possibility is Ruth Hirsh Weir, *Language in the Crib* (The Hague: Mouton, 1962).

kind of stability, across fantastically different languages, then the social sciences and biological sciences come to some close relationship.

So, in the first place, this duplication business is a non-trivial fact, and it's pretty much as simple a way as you can have of indicating a range of things – in this case, that something had been done, and was adequate for the relevance of the sequencing rules. And you can notice the way that parents point out to children their violations on this matter. Suppose somebody comes to the house and says "Hi" to the child and the child doesn't respond. One thing the parents will say is, "Didn't you hear them say 'hi' to you?" Where they take it that they don't have to restate the sequencing rules, but simply point out that the rules have been adequately invoked.

I take it we can say, then, that the unit 'conversation' is warranted by the fact that we have at least a minimal thing that's recognizable as 'a conversation.' For it, the sequencing rules are relevant. We can talk about places in it, or a place in it anyway, and by virtue of this we can also see that – at least for the discipline of sociology if not for any lay interest in it – these things, 'greetings,' are of some central theoretical importance, though "Hello," "Hello" looks like nothing that one would want to attend to very much. Their consideration does an enormous amount of work for us. And once we're dealing with the fact that we've got sequencing here, and it's regulated, we're no longer in a position where linguistic investigations are usable. Because grammars don't differentiate this way.

With "Hello," "Hello" and things like it – members of a class of paired activities such that if A uses one, B's proper move is to use one also – we're examining the sequential building blocks of conversation which are specially relevant in terms of their sequential character. Now, in that light, we can consider jokes. The following comes from a group therapy session; the members are teenagers.[2]

A: Hey wait I've got   I've got a joke.   What's black and white and hides in caves?
B: Alright I give up. What's black and white and hides in caves?
C: A newspaper
A: No.   Pregnant nuns.

     silence

B: Whyn't you run across the street and get me some more coffee?
A: Why don't you drop dead?
D: Whyn't you just run across–?
A: What's black and white thump   black and white thump   black and white thump?   nun rolling down stairs.
D: You know what a cute one is. You want to hear what a cute one is? What's purple and goes bam bam bam bam A four-door plum.

[2] The fragment is taken from Sacks' research notes and is slightly different from, and closer to the actual data than, the one in the transcribed lecture.

A: Terrific
D: I think it's much better than about a black and white nun going downstairs
A: No. that's the new fad. Instead of having elephant jokes, now it's nun jokes.
B: Nothing. A nun.
D: hmmmmm
A: hehhhhh
C: What's black white and grey? Sister Mary elephant.
A: hehhhhh
B: Say whata nuns really do?   they must have some function?
C: ⌐ Nothing
A: └ They travel in pairs.
B: Nothing nothing hehhh
A: They travel in pairs. One nun makes sure the other nun don't get none.
B: You know what's a ball. Whistle at 'em whistle at 'em when they walk down the street.
D: You know   they usually ah pray.
A: Yeah.
D: That's about all.
B: But the rest of the church does. Or they pray harder.
A: They're women who have devoted their lives–
D: They marry God.
A: –to God
A: No. they're women who have devoted their lives–
B: They're women who've had a bad love life and become nuns.
A: –their lives their lives to uhm the devotion of the church.
B: J.C. and the boys.
D: We're on an awfully bad God kick.
A: OK let's change the subject.

The first thing that's important about jokes is that to use one is something like buying a drink among a bunch of people: They come in rounds. And if some person tells a joke then every other person present has the right to tell a joke. So we can say about a joke when it's used, that it's a 'first joke' and that it will provide the occasion for each other person present to have a chance to talk, and to have a particular kind of chance to talk; that is, a chance to tell a joke.

So what? So there are a variety of cases where you get more then two persons present, where exactly what the rights to talk are of the various persons present, may be quite obscure. For example, there may be large status differences or a variety of things like that, and how one goes about providing that each person can talk under such circumstances may be, then, a real question. For someone to use a joke on that occasion is then to give each other a set place to talk, and also to give him something to say.

And in this group therapy setting, those facts are quite non-trivial. The persons are there for two hours, and that they keep talking is absolutely crucial, for the occasions of silence are extremely dangerous to all persons concerned. What happens when they're silent is that various persons in the place now begin to look for a face that's noticeable among themselves, and then pose for that person the problem of giving an account of why *he* is silent. Or, for example, if any given person is silent for any length of time, then their silence is a noticeable fact; something about which they can be questioned. Now, if they want to raise their personal problems they're quite free to do so, but if they don't want to, and given that silence is something noticeable, then it's important to have some sorts of things that will permit everybody to talk, where they can talk without saying anything that can be 'used against them.' It also seems to be the case that any given body of talk, starting at any given place, will, if allowed to go on, end up dangerous. That is, it will end up on some topic which is perhaps too important to be talked about except under real feelings of relaxation. Things like God, death, sex, for example, which always come out, whatever topic is started. And persens are – and the people in this therapy group are – much given to watching when it is that a topic looks like it's about to shift into something that from the group's point of view is to be avoided – though any given person can talk about it 'themselves.'

What seems involved, then, is the development of things which permit talk to go on, and to go on in an 'unaffiliated' manner. Notice about jokes, that when jokes are told they're things that are 'going around;' they're quotes. So they're unaffiliated remarks, and in that sense it's hard to say about somebody that the fact that they told some particular joke has some special significance. They just heard it, and now they're repeating it.

Persons can then monitor the conversation, watching either for silence or for the approach of something dangerous, and start a bloc of talk by flicking in a joke, thereby giving each other person their chance to talk, and to talk 'safely.'

I'll just note here that there are other things which have the 'unaffiliated' character of jokes – that is, the speaker does not disclose his position by using it – but which don't have that sequential character of going in rounds, which seem to get used in similar circumstances. At least these kids use them, and until I noticed that they were being used in similar circumstance to the jokes, I found them puzzling. What they do is, at points in the conversation when either nobody is talking or they haven't talked for a while, insert slogans. They'll just come out with a piece of an advertisement from the radio, or a jingle, or obvious quotations sarcastically said. Again, then, it seems that they go about monitoring when they ought to be talking or when silence seems to be present, and flick out these things which, again, have this unaffiliated character.

Let me turn now to another sort of sequencing issue. I said about "Hello," "Hello" that it's a paired phenomenon, and that when the second one comes out, it may well be that the conversation is complete. And we can note that either one, or both, can be delivered in such a way as to provide for the size

of the conversation. For example, by not slowing down at all as you pass somebody. You say "Hello," the other says "Hello," and there's no indication by either party that there's going to be any more to it than that.

Now, some of the ways that conversations can begin, provide at least a slightly different set of sequential characteristics, although there are ways in which they're related to paired beginnings. Perhaps the best way to introduce it is by just reporting what I did the last time I was trying to introduce this some material, so as to indicate right off that it wasn't as trivial as it looks. Before I presented the phenomenon, I'd asked people in the class to write down the first lines of what they took to be 'pickups.' I got 60 first lines, of which just under 60 were questions.

What I had wanted to be saying to them, and which they could see once they had those collections, was that a person who asks a question has a right to talk again after the question has been answered. So, with a question beginning, the conversation goes at least something like A-B-A. It can go on from there, or it can end like that. And that may be without regard to what the question consists of or what the answer consists of. Now, one way that the conversation can go on from there is that the person who asks the question can use his initial right to talk again, to ask another question, and the same right holds. So you can get indefinitely long chains, running, Q-A, Q-A, Q-A, etc. Eventually I'll go over the special relevance for certain conversations of the 'chain' possibility. It turns out to be extremely important. Whenever it happens to occur in a conversation – and it doesn't necessarily have to occur in the beginning, but that point where somebody starts questioning – then the 'chaining' possibility can be quite crucial to the way that the conversation goes.[2]

Now, of the sorts of questions that occur in first conversations, let's begin by looking at those which have a close relationship to "Hello," "Hello." Note that the use of "Hello" is a regulated matter. It is the sort of thing which can be used to begin a conversation where two persons have some initial right to talk to each other, such that the fact that they happen to be physically co-present provides the occasion for the conversation. But, especially for things like pickups, the fact that the two persons are physically co-present is not sufficient grounds for them to begin talking, and "Hello" may be inappropriate. You can get conversations which go:

A: Hello

[2] This, and the following materials, constitute a next run at some of the phenomena considered in lecture 7 of this Fall 1964-Spring 1965 series. These materials were not incorporated into that earlier lecture although such incorporation has been done with most of the Winter 1965 materials, because in this case it would introduce an anachronism. Specifically, in this second run we see the first reference to "the 'chaining' possibility," which later crystallized as 'the chaining rule' (see Spring 1966, lecture 2, p. 256 and lecture 2 (R), p. 264). Not incorporating these materials into the earlier lecture makes for some repetition, but the genesis of 'the chaining rule' seemed worth preserving.

B: (No answer)
A: Don't you remember me?

Where that involves proposing that there had been an initial right to use "Hello."

In the absence of some obvious warrant for the conversation to take place by virtue of two persons being copresent and nothing else, you get that sort of question which provides that although it doesn't seem to be the case, there is indeed a warrant. There's a whole range of things which tend to formulate a first conversation as a version of an nth. Things like "Don't I know you from somewhere?" "Didn't I see you at such-and-such a place?" "Didn't you go to such-and-such a school?" "Aren't you so-and-so?", etc. All of these provide for the fact that it may be the case that we know each other, and if we do, then this conversation can take place as 'a further conversation.' In those cases, then, and more generally, we have a class of questions which provide an account for a conversation developing; that is, that this is not an initial conversation.

There are a variety of other accounts which focus on different matters. For example, very frequently the first question will be a request. And the request will be such a thing as can be asked when any two persons are physically available to each other; you're standing in a crowd waiting for a plane to arrive and someone asks, "When is the plane expected?" A variety of such informational matters can be offered. Note that for any one of these, to whatever the first answer is, another question can be constructed:

A: When does the plane arrive?
B: 7:15.
A: Are you going to San Francisco also?

It's also to be noted that such standardized questions as "When does the plane arrive?" "What time is it?" etc., by virtue of the fact that they are standardized, provide for the relevance of the sequencing rules such that one knows when one of those questions is complete. Further, one knows what an answer to such a question looks like, so that the one who asked the question can know when the thing that stands as an answer will have finished, and thus provide that the other can talk again. This stands in contrast to discursive talk, where it may not be clear in that fashion when it is that somebody has finished. For persons who don't know the discourse patterns of somebody they're dealing with, the use of standardized objects to build the beginning of a conversation may be quite important. First of all, that you don't wait too long after the other has stopped, where waiting too long might provide for their withdrawal altogether. Secondly, that you don't interrupt, where of course one doesn't want to be 'rude' to someone with whom one is making an effort to get acquainted.

((Thereafter is a discussion of the question "Do you have a light?" See lecture 7, pp. 50–1.))

Lecture 13
On Proverbs

I'm going to talk about proverbs, trying to develop what's interesting about them. I'll begin by doing something I don't normally do, which is to read you the way that proverbs are largely used by social scientists – because it's quite relevant to the task they seem to have set themselves. The first quotation comes from page 3 of a book called *The Study of Thinking* by Jerome Bruner and some associates of his.

> That there is confusion remaining in the adult world about what constitutes an identity class is testified to by such diverse proverbs as 'plus ça change, plus la même chose' and the Hericlitan dictum that we never enter the same river twice.

A very similar sort of remark comes from pages 1–2 (these always come in the first several pages of a book) of George Homans' *Social Behavior: its elementary forms*.

> My subject is a familiar chaos. Nothing is more familiar to men than their ordinary, everyday social behavior; and should a sociologist make any generalization about it, he runs the risk that his readers will find him wrong at the first word and cut him off without a hearing. They have been at home with the evidence since childhood and have every right to an opinion. A physicist runs no such risk that the particles, whose social behavior in the atom he describes, will talk back.
>
> The sociologist's only justification is that the subject, however familiar, remains an intellectual chaos. Every man has thought about it, and mankind through the centuries has embodied the more satisfactory of the generalizations in proverbs and maxims about social behavior, what it is and what it ought to be . . . What makes the subject of everyday social behavior a chaos is that each of these maxims and proverbs, while telling an important part of the truth, never tells it all, and nobody tries to put them together . . . every man makes his own generalizations about his own social experience, but uses them *ad hoc* within the range of situations to which each applies, dropping them as soon as their immediate relevance is at an end, and never asking how they are related to one another. Every one has, of course, every excuse

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A combination of Winter 1965, lecture (8), and lecture (9), pp. 1 and 8–12 (transcriber unknown on these two) and Fall 1964, tape 13, side 1.

for this shortcoming, if it be one. Social experience is apt to come at us too fast to leave us time to grasp it as a whole.

I don't intend to make any detailed comments about those remarks, except to note parenthetically that Homans' procedure for starting a book is one of the most recurrent you'll find, and in a way it's enough to tell you about the kind of book you have here. He has to have an excuse to study the phenomenon he wants to study. That it happens is not a sufficient excuse. He has to show some problem. And he starts off with the supposition that persons think they know about the thing he wants to study, so he finds a way to show that they don't. Now, to notice that is to notice that in the ordinary world, in everyday life, 'engaging in inquiries' is an accountable thing. Where, then, the work of sociologists remains constrained by that format.

I want to focus on this sort of thing, available in both these quotes: It's a very usual use of proverbs among academics, to refer to them as 'propositions' and to suppose then that it goes without saying that the corpus of proverbs is subjectable to the same kind of treatment as, for example, is scientific knowledge. They then build the basis for an inquiry – which has nothing to do with proverbs – by virtue of the fact that these propositions, when compared – without showing that they are actually compared in their use – are inconsistent.

So one question is, are the collections of proverbs indeed a set of propositions in the sense that Homans proposes? Do you find any reason to suppose that that's so? For example, here's something from a newspaper:

> Premier Krushchev's removal was viewed in Paris today as a serious blow to the improvement of relations between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. The primary reaction of government officials and diplomats was surprise. But they were also deeply concerned. "Better the devil you know," one diplomat said, "than the one you do not know."

Would somebody seriously say to this fellow, "What's the evidence for that?" If it were a proposition in the first place, then the statement "How do you know?" which is used not only among scientists but is offered by Members, might occur.

But one of the facts about proverbs is that they are 'correct about something.' That fact is especially important since some of them contain rules, and are invoked to govern various situations. Now, for many other kinds of rules, even in highly rule-controlled situations like the legal courts, if you invoke a rule by reference to precedent, the occasion of using it can provide the occasion for reconsidering that rule to see whether, not only in this instance but in general, it ought to obtain for anything. So that a rule introduced to govern a situation in a law case can be changed altogether. Which is to say, even a strict precedence system such as that, doesn't have objects as powerful and as limitedly attackable as proverbs.

It's in part that this is so that makes it quite irrelevant when a proverb was established – and in that sense, Bruner's citing of "the Hericlitan dictum that we never enter the same river twice," which is several thousand years old, is a correct use of proverbs – whereas it might be relevant in, say, a lawsuit, when a rule was established and what the circumstances were that generated it. So, for example, in current civil rights cases you occasionally find an extremely old statute introduced, where, then, the fact that it was introduced many years ago by reference to, say, the buying and selling of slaves, can be used to argue that it really isn't worth anything now. For proverbs, such considerations are just quite irrelevant. Likewise, the organization or the society within which they were established is often almost as irrelevant. Where an American court would never think of using a Russian precedent, those Russian proverbs we come to know are treated as quite appropriate in ordinary discourse. For one, then, the object 'proverb' is enormously widely found, and, further, many proverbs are applicable quite across cultural boundaries.

Now, aside from the social scientists' orientation to proverbs, anything I've ever looked at on that matter involves a list of proverbs and where they come from, their age, variations, etc. Nobody seems to deal with actual occasions of their use. And that's because it is the folklorists, with their particular interest in proverbs, who have been collecting them. I want at least to make a start on considering proverbs in terms of occasions of actual use.

There is a class of proverbs known as 'proverbial phrases,' one set of which I'll focus on; things like "You're stacking the deck," "He's hitting below the belt," "You're way out in left field," etc. This set of proverbs comes from domains which have clear parameters. In baseball there are demarcated areas, so that "left field" is a locatable place within that domain. And "stacking the deck" is a locatable violation in playing cards. It seems to me that, for one, this sort of proverb may provide a clarification of the sense in which we might talk about 'families of actions.' And by 'families' I mean this kind of thing: Wittgenstein talks about 'families of games' and proposes, for example, that there is some intersection of rules between games in a same 'family.' I once tried to see what such an intersection of rules might involve, with the following kind of trick. We took violations of rules in one game, which were not violations in another game, and began to use them just to see what might happen. So, for example, if you're playing cards, it's not proper to stand behind your opponent and look over his shoulder, but there's no rule about it in chess. It's nothing. So we did it in chess, and it did cause some kind of disturbances. There was a sense that somehow something must be wrong. And that perhaps had to do with the fact that it was a violation of a rule in *some* game. It seems, then, that there may be a sense in which rules in games can carry over into situations for which they haven't been specified as rules.

And for 'families of actions' we might talk about the following sort of situation. For some kind of activity there may be an event which is, in that activity, not regulated. It's not even seen as an event; there's no language for it, or if it's pointed out descriptively, nothing much would be said about it.

But if you invoke a rule from another activity – especially those which can be produced in proverbial form – then you find that you can come to see the event as indeed an 'event,' and as possibly illegitimate. So, for example, suppose we have a meeting, and there are various interests present at the meeting. The way in which persons arrange their seating may not be treated as something noticeable, and if pointed out would only be treated as, "So they happen to be sitting in some order, so what?" But with respect to playing cards, the way in which a deck is shuffled is something that's regulated. And there are clear ways of violating that, which are observable, and which are talked of as "stacking the deck." And when we propose at a meeting that "the Commies are stacking the deck," then it's clear what it is that's going on, and it's treated as something suspect.

So apparently one uses proverbs of this character to make events noticeable, perhaps to make their ordered character noticeable, and then to formulate their ordered character by reference to their possible illegitimacy – where there is in the first instance no rule governing this or that particular event. We might loosely talk of this as a matter of 'analogy,' though it only becomes analogy once it's proposed that some order is relevant in both circumstances.

What we can come to see is that there can be a very limited set of paradigms or models, each of which may have demarcated areas of order which can operate generatively for an enormous range of further areas – without, however, it being necessary to produce a further set of rules at all, or to further demarcate the parameters of this other mass of events. Once one knows that "stacking the deck" is something that can be done with a set of cards, it can be seen that 'something like it' is being done with a set of people. Or, for example, where "hitting below the belt" is something that is done in an exchange of blows, it can be seen as comparable to something that can happen in an exchange of remarks, and thus to operate in conversation and other sorts of exchange activities. One doesn't have to construct a new language, but can retain the base source of this or that rule, as providing the terms.

I want to turn now to a consideration of proverbs as pieces of the language. In Archer Taylor's classical book *The Proverb*, he mentions in passing one aspect of these things, which got me started on the line I'll be discussing. Right at the beginning of the book he's talking about defining proverbs:

> The definition of a proverb is too difficult to repay the undertaking; and should we fortunately combine in a single definition all the essential elements and give each the proper emphasis, we should not even then have a touchstone. An incommunicable quality tells us this sentence is proverbial and that one is not. Hence no definition will enable us to identify positively a sentence as proverbial.

When I read the book a couple of years ago, what was important in that statement just never occurred to me. I'll formulate it in what may sound a very queer way: If we take it with the linguists and the grammarians that the

sentence is constructed according to some rules, and that it is a kind of unit, then one question we might be led to ask is, what other ways, aside from linguistically, can we talk of a sentence as 'a unit'? What can be done with it? That is, what are the sorts of activities that persons can hope to accomplish within a single sentence?

Such a question is obviously relevant to the analysis of social activities. Leaving proverbs aside for the moment, we could say that there would be at least a special kind of tension in a world where single sentences could do exceptional work. For instance, in the phone calls I collected at an emergency psychiatric hospital, you'd occasionally get the following. A man might report that he's suicidal and offer as the immediate warrant that after 25 years of marriage his wife said, "Well, the fact is I never really loved you." A statement like that has a dual consequentialness. It not only can bring something to a close, but it can provide that some series of events have been falsely seen; that is, it can erase them.

And there is a whole set of things like that. Some religions are carried on that feature. The fact that you can know that at any last moment – if you get a last moment – you can always change your ways sufficiently to erase whatever it is you've done in the past, means that you do not have to order yours sins day by day. That is, no matter how your sins have added up, it's possible at any last moment to change, and to get what anybody can get no matter what they've done earlier. Of course the fact that you may not get that last moment, itself sets up a variety of other kinds of considerations. But the sort of religious existentialism which focusses on every moment as a possible last moment, is itself only relevant given the notion of what can be done in any given moment.

So the issue of what can be packed into some single unit is obviously interesting. And with respect to language, we can examine the variety of ways that the resources of a language have been explored in terms of how much can be packed into something while retaining such central features as, for example, transmissibility and reproducibility. Now, poetry and proverbs have taken a quite different tack from other explorations. It is said that poetry is very similar to mathematics, in the sense that you pack in knowledge with far more economy than prose would offer. And that is shown in elementary mathematics books when they ask you to "rewrite in English the following equation." The same kind of test can be done for a poem. And it may be recalled that early Greek science, for example, did use poetical forms to write up the results.

Now, one of the crucial things about proverbs is that they're objects from an oral body of knowledge. They do indeed get written down, but their basic power and relevance seem to be as oral objects. There is a literature on oral traditions and how they're preserved and used, and I'd like to suggest a most extraordinary book on this subject which is misleadingly titled if you're looking for material on oral traditions, and that's *Preface to Plato* by Eric Havelock. It is about Plato, but you could have no interest at all in Plato and learn an awful lot from it. Its basic concern is, what is Plato up to in his attack

on Homer? Havelock argues that for the Greeks, Homer was an encyclopedia. His poems stored the enormous amount of relevant knowledge that the Greeks had to use, where the Greeks in this period did not, except in very exceptional circumstances, use writing. Homer's poems were one of a variety of very powerful devices used to store that information. Plato's concern was to break down that way of preserving knowledge because of a variety of things that bothered him about it. It's not that Plato didn't like poetry, in the modern sense of poetry, but that he was aware of the ways in which poetry is powerful – and the limits of that kind of power.

I couldn't begin to give an elaborate discussion on the relation of poetry and proverbs, but I can say a few things. Proverbs, like poetry, have a large use of metaphor, and they often have a kind of alliteration, rhyming, etc. There are more or less standard forms which are used, to which any given instance is fitted as far as I know; proverbs are formed as single sentences or phrases of sentences, they're not longer than that. And, like poetry, their reproduction consists of the exact repetition of them – a poem and a proverb lose their character when they're paraphrased. These sorts of features have some real advantages for maintaining a body of knowledge; we can say that they are constructed in mnemonically efficacious ways. That is to say, they're very easily remembered and are thereby transmissible as 'that very item' and not in a paraphrase. Their stability, then, can be something independent from any occasion of use.

Now for proverbs, I take it that one of the core features of their sense and of their use is that they are 'atopical' phenomena. So, for example, the sense and relevance of 'a rolling stone gathers no moss' is not found by reference to geological or botanical considerations. Some of the work of the neuropsychologist Kurt Goldstein and his associates may be relevant here. One of the things they've found for children, brain-damaged persons, and sometimes among schizophrenics is that a kind of test devised by psychologists indicates that these people cannot handle proverbs – they don't understand them, they don't know how to use them. There are many protocols of persons presented with a proverb and asked to interpret it, and they produce long discussions about various features and behaviors of, for example, stones and moss.

Goldstein proposes on the basis of those tests and other indicators, that there's a big split between what he calls 'abstract' and what he calls 'concrete' thinking, and that persons who can't use proverbs are persons involved in a failure of abstract thinking. But I take it that if you look at the protocols, the persons involved seem to be quite capable of dealing with proverbs 'abstractly.' First of all, the proverbs themselves are quite abstract. 'A rolling stone gathers no moss' doesn't contain any reference to a particular rolling stone, a particular kind of moss, etc., etc. And these people who are not able to deal with proverbs properly are nevertheless talking abstractly. They'll talk about "a stone" and how it might roll, and say this or that about moss, without any insistence that it has to be some particular stone.

That seems to me to stand in contrast to 'concrete' thinking. So, let's say, when you talk about some kinds of schizophrenics being "enmeshed in the

concrete,'' you might be pointing to certain kinds of strange things they can do that nobody else can do. For example, one day I was sitting having lunch with a friend of mine and she said, "What day is it today?" I told her what day it was, and she said "Last year on this day I had the following for lunch . . . two years ago this day I had the following for lunch . . . " and she went through ten years, just spieling out the details of her menus. That, I take it, is a pretty clear example of concrete thinking. But the troubles in dealing with proverbs were not of that sort. Again, if the proverb contained the item 'cat,' then people would talk about cats and use the plural term 'cats.' They did not start talking about 'my cat.'

This suggests that we may not be dealing with inability to do 'abstract' thinking, but an inability to do 'atopical' thinking. Where, then, proverbs can be seen to constitute a very clear example of whole collections of pieces of knowledge that are organized atopically. And I take it that it may be this feature that I'm calling 'atopical organization,' that Homans proposes as a possible 'shortcoming,' in the remarks I quoted earlier:

> What makes the subject of everyday social behavior a chaos is that each of these maxims and proverbs, while telling an important part of the truth, never tells it all, and nobody tries to put them together . . . but uses them *ad hoc* within the range of situations to which each applies, dropping them as soon as their immediate relevance is at an end, and never asking how they are related to one another.

But there are some obvious virtues to having a body of knowledge organized in an atopical fashion. You get a piece of knowledge, like 'a rolling stone gathers no moss,' which is in the first instance correct about something. If you paraphrase it into some particular domain, like "a man who doesn't settle down doesn't gather possessions," then it may not have the same kind of correctness; it may be questionable. And as I mentioned earlier, one of the most striking things about proverbs is that while on any occasion of use they may be, for example, inappropriate, people do not propose about them, "Is that so?" "What is your evidence for that?" If there is a question about them, it is in terms of, is it appropriate to apply that proverb to this person, activity, etc.? That is, proverbs are in the first place correct. And that can be accomplished by formulating a proverb from a domain within which it is correct, and having it always be used elsewhere. In that way, instead of constantly revising a body of knowledge by reference to the discovery that it's not correct here, now, for this, you maintain a stable body of knowledge and control the domain of its use.

I've already mentioned the feature of 'single-sentence packing' for proverbs. Let me offer a few more remarks. It's the case that both maxims and descriptions can be produced as proverbs, formulable as single sentences. "A woman's place is in the home" is an instance of the former, and for the latter, they are frequently those 'proverbial phrases,' "stacking the deck," "hanging by a thread," "barking up the wrong tree," etc. Both types of knowledge,

then, can be had and used via the single sentence, and thus it's not necessary to have some combination of sentences so as to minimally understand and transmit such information. Having that, you have a setup designed to permit you to learn new members of that class of information much more quickly than might be otherwise possible. That is to say, at that point when children can make single sentences, their task is now to see what it is that can be packed into that form they've learned. And that provides that they will have solved the theoretical problems of being able to know norms, or know knowledge. They would not then be faced with such a task as learning which set of sentences can constitute a piece of knowledge. Rather, once the single sentence is gotten, a whole series of things can be fitted to it, instead of having to deal with various combinations, which might set up quite different sorts of tasks.

In this regard, an extremely important thing about proverbs is that they have the character of being *potentially* descriptive or relevant. Persons learn them and have them available for use. They don't, that is, learn them on the occasion of their appropriate use. We could imagine that humans were built such that their language was alike to that of other animals, and to the way in which young children very heavily use language; either as narrative comment on what they're doing, "Now I'm putting on my shoe," or only uttering something on the occasion that it's appropriate – though it may be wrong, they could say "That's mommy" and it's not mommy; that is, the domain of application would be correct or incorrect, but the thing is not uttered apart from some possibly appropriate occasion. But you can have these potential descriptions and see them as 'correct for something,' where what it would be correct for remains to be seen.

And if you watch kids learning language, then learning that sort of thing seems to be an important part of it. Observations have been made of children talking to themselves before they fall asleep. And it's been found that they're not coming out with a bunch of random noises, but with a training procedure. For example, they've been observed doing exercises in phonetics, combining and assembling phonemes. I don't think it's been pointed out that once they have words, they play with combinations of terms that involve building possible descriptions. We could say it would be strictly a matter of learning the linguistic features of the language – learning the language in this very technical sense – that kids begin to use, in close relation to each other, the paired antonyms (things like in–out, up–down, etc.); that is, to produce these paired items as pairs. However, if they not only did that, but did – as I think they do – use them in proper sequence, then we've got them learning something more. They're learning potential descriptions. That is, they don't say, for example, "He fixed it, he broke it," but "He broke it, he fixed it." And for such things as in–out, which in some cases have proper sequences and you don't turn them around, then they do them in proper sequence, "Kitty got into the box, he got out." And if they do turn them around, they do it properly: "Kitty got out of the box, he got in again." They're learning, then, not only the relation of certain types of words, but that strings of words can

assemble potential descriptions, only in certain arrangements. And that is to say, they're learning that there is a correct way of assembling potential descriptions, apart from the particular occasions of their use.

Now, the phenomenon of 'potential description' has a variety of special consequences. One of them is that it sets up the possibility of a logic which involves examining statements apart from an occasion of use – and by 'an occasion of use' I mean an application to some actual situation, not, for example, an attempt to make a proof. Another is something which I had to be brought to see as noticeable, and that is the possibility of literature; stuff that is about nothing in particular, in which an author isn't talking about any actual set of events. It occurred to me that the phenomenon of 'the possibility of literature' is something noticeable while I was looking at psychiatric reports about delusions that patients have. In these reports, the writers take it that the delusions are understandable, though what makes them 'delusions' is that they couldn't possibly describe something. Literature has a similar character; it's composed of possible potential descriptions and possible potential rules, and a reader can look at assembled strings of language and decide that it's 'realistic' or 'not realistic,' compelling or not compelling. And in that sense, the possibility of literature and the possibility of logic are very, very closely related.

These sorts of considerations may have a bearing on a classical controversy, mainly within linguistics, which concerns the question: Are grammar and meaning separable? It may be that "Are they separable?" is not the problem, but that if 'meaning' is, in part, reference to something, and grammar is understandable apart from reference to anything – that is, formally correct in some way – then it's not simply a technological linguistic question, whether it's so that they're separable, but that it's an essential fact of language that they are separate.

Lecture 14
The Inference-Making Machine

(1) A: Yeah, then what happened?
(2) B: Okay, in the meantime she [wife of B] says, "Don't ask the child nothing." Well, she stepped between me and the child, and I got up to walk out the door. When she stepped between me and the child, I went to move her out of the way. And then about that time her sister had called the police. I don't know how she . . . what she . . .
(3) A: Didn't you smack her one?
(4) B: No.
(5) A: You're not telling me the story, Mr B.
(6) B: Well, you see when you say smack you mean hit.
(7) A: Yeah, you shoved her. Is that it?
(8) B: Yeah, I shoved her.

One of the basic things I want to be able to give you is an aesthetic for social life. By that I mean in part that we should have some sense of where it is deep, and be able to see, and to pose, problems. I'll try to do somewhat more than that. I'll also try to develop a variety of notions of what kind of business sociology is, what its problems look like, what the form of the solutions to those problems are, and perhaps to some extent, some of those solutions.

The kind of phenomena we are dealing with are always transcriptions of actual occurrences, in their actual sequence. And I take it our business is to try to construct the machinery that would produce those occurrences. That is, we find and name some objects, and find and name some rules for using those objects, where the rules for using those objects will produce those objects. And we also consider conversation per se, looking at the rules for sequencing in conversation.

The quotation I started off with comes at about the fifth interchange into a first telephone conversation, where A is a staff member of a social agency that B has called. B was told to call this agency because of some marital troubles he's having. A doesn't know anything about B's marital troubles, except what B tells him. So apart from the four or five previous interchanges,

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these persons do not know each other, they've never met. And – though it's not exactly correct to say it this way – we find that "nonetheless," given essentially B's statement number (2), A is able to have some notion of what it is that has happened, in a story that he has only heard part of. Without knowing B at all, hearing "When she stepped between me and the child, I went to move her out of the way. And then about that time her sister had called the police," A can say, "Didn't you smack her one?"

And there is more to it than that. Because it would be one thing if A had some expectation about what the sequences of events were that brought on the coming of the police, where A would use that expectation to make a guess, but if it turns out that he's told it's not so, then so far as he knows, it's not so. But apparently A has a stronger grasp of the situation already, in the sense that it's not merely that he can have a guess, but that he takes it that – perhaps without regard to what B tells him – his guess is correct.

And we can notice that the fact that A has a guess here is not anything very extraordinary for *B.* He doesn't say, as a person sometimes says, "What makes you say that?" He says "No." And when it's proposed that his "No" is not correct, he doesn't say, "Look, I'm telling the story. How the hell would *you* know?" (Parenthetically, when I say "He doesn't say . . .," that is a rhetorical device on my part for loosening things up. I don't mean it in a serious sense. I am not making a statement that is intendedly descriptive. To propose seriously, descriptively, 'B doesn't say X' is another order of proposition.) But B takes it that A does know, and B corrects himself.

Furthermore, A is able to see as well, that B "isn't telling the story." And I want to briefly focus on that kind of thing: Seeing lies. I want mainly to focus on it because it seems that adult intuition may be misleading in trying to see what the problem is that seeing lies poses. In one of the early classics of psychoanalysis, a paper entitled 'On the origin of the influencing machine in schizophrenia,' which was published in English in the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, volume 2, in 1933, Victor Tausk reports on one of his patients. The patient was a young schizophrenic girl, and one of her symptoms he found in the following way. He often questioned her, and one time when he was questioning her she started laughing at him. He asked, "What are you laughing at?" She said, "Why do you always ask me questions? After all, you know what I'm thinking."

And Tausk worked at this symptom, that schizophrenics think other persons know their thoughts. The problem had been posed: How is it that schizophrenics come to think that others know their thoughts? And he tries to solve this problem. Now, Freud's comments upon the presentation of the paper are included in the journal publication. He says, "That's not the problem at all. After all, when you learn at least your first language, you learn it from your parents, from adults. And children must take it that adults, giving them the concepts, know how they're being used; know how the child is using them. So the problem is not how is it that people come to think that others know their thoughts, but how is it that people come to think so deeply that others don't know their thoughts?" Then, in a characteristic type of

observation, Freud says that the crucial event is the first successful lie. That event must be traumatic. The kid must have to say, "My God, they don't know what's going on!"

Whether that's so or not, I certainly don't know. But intuitively I take it that most adults don't see things that way, and that it's certainly not an inconceivable formulation. And the interchange we're looking at has a form which is very characteristic between adults and children; that is, the mother says to the child, "What were you doing?" the child gives some answer, the mother – who wasn't there – says, "No you weren't," and the child then corrects itself. And again, it isn't the case that persons proposing that one is lying, or "not telling the story;" are treated as doing something quite extraordinary.

Now let's try to begin to consider what our task is if we're going to build a machine that could in the first place produce this conclusion, "Didn't you smack her one?," with this piece of information, "When she stepped between me and the child, I went to move her out of the way. And then about that time her sister had called the police."

A first rule of procedure in doing analysis, a rule that you absolutely must use or you can't do the work, is this: In setting up what it is that seems to have happened, preparatory to solving the problem, do not let your notion of what could conceivably happen decide for you what must have happened. So, for example, when we get this kind of conclusion drawn at statement (3), you might say to yourself, how in the world could anybody think so fast? Because this just comes off. There is no pause more than three seconds between (2) and (3). You're going to say, "How? People aren't that smart." And therefore what happened must be something very simple; something which will require only a simple solution.

And that leads to our second rule. There is no necessary fit between the complexity or simplicity of the apparatus you need to construct some object, and the face-value complexity or simplicity of the object. These are things which you have to come to terms with, given the fact that this has indeed occurred. And insofar as people are doing lay affairs, they walk around with the notion that if somebody does something pretty simply, pretty quickly, or pretty routinely, then it must not be much of a problem to explain what they've done. There is no reason to suppose that is so. I'll give an analogical observation. In a recent review of a book attempting to describe the production of sentences in the English language – a grammar, in short – the reviewer observes that the grammar, though it's not bad, is not terribly successful, and it remains a fact that those sentences which any six-year old is able to produce routinely, have not yet been adequately described by some persons who are obviously enormously brilliant scientists. Of course the activities that molecules are able to engage in quickly, routinely, have not been described by enormously brilliant scientists. So don't worry about the brains that these persons couldn't have but which the objects seem to require. Our task is, in this sense, to build their brains.

Now, what features do we need to build into this machine? the first thing of course, is that it is an 'inference-making machine.' That is to say, it can deal

with and categorize and make statements about an event it has not seen. And the first thing about the sort of events it can handle is that they can be sequential events. In the interchange we're looking at, if we keep things very simple what we see is that if we have (a), (b) . . . (d), then if we suppose that A is a user of the machine we're going to have to build, he can find what (c) is. He is not merely in a position to make a guess about (c), but there are stronger features to this machine. As I said earlier, it's not that he guesses something, is told "No" and says "Okay." For him, there is some fit operating between (a), (b), (c), and (d) such that the fact that he's told that what he proposes as (c) has not occurred does not constrain what he can continue to insist on; that it was *that* (c) which occurred. And you can just quickly contrast that to the situation of a riddle. I ask you a riddle and invite you to give an answer. You give an answer and I say "No, the answer is . . ." something else. And by definition that's the answer. Where people do riddles you don't get an insistence, "No, I'm right." The inference-making machine we are building can handle riddles, but riddles set up a simpler task than those which this machine is capable of handling.

Now let's begin to examine, in a rather informal way, how it is that the machine-user, A, seems to make conclusion (3), "Didn't you smack her one?" and then (5), "You're not telling me the story, Mr B." And here we can use that information which we have as members of the same society that these two people are in. What we have is roughly something like this: A knows that the scene is 'a family problem.' So (a) is the family quarrel, (b) is the guy moving to the door . . . (d) is the police coming. And (c) is the grounds for the police to have come. That is, apparently on some piece of information the police have come, and that piece of information is the thing that A has guessed at. A apparently knows, then, what good grounds are for the police to be called to a scene. And he's able to use those good grounds, first to make a guess, and then to assess the correctness of the answer to that guess.

We can note as well that it's not simply the case that A and B don't know each other, but we have a set of other persons who are being talked about, and A is listening to this. Whatever A knows about B, he certainly knows less about these others. A knows essentially only the set of terms that B uses to name them; that is, that there is something called a sister, something called a wife, something called a child. It seems to me that the information that is being used by A is held in terms of collections of these categories. For one, you can easily enough come to see that for any population of persons present there are available alternative sets of categories that can be used on them. That then poses for us an utterly central task in our descriptions; to have some way of providing which set of categories operate in some scene – in the reporting of that scene or in its treatment as it is occurring.

To get a sense of the way in which the inferences that can be made from a story are geared to these categories, we could try, for example, using different categories. What if it were, not "her sister," but 'a neighbor' who had called the police? A possible inference in that case would be that the grounds for calling the police had something to do with 'creating a

disturbance;' crying child, husband and wife yelling at each other. Or, for example, just shuffle the one category around a little bit. Would the same inference be made if it was 'my' sister, not "her" sister who had called the police? The rules with respect to who owes what to whom, and who takes care of whom may be so formulated that those things matter a great deal. The inference in this case might then be, not that the husband had produced some activity which served as good grounds for calling the police, but that the wife had done so.

And that is extremely important because it is an awesome machine if one needs to know only that it is "my wife" and "her sister." And you can do this because that holds for every like unit in society, such that you don't need to ask for example, "Well tell me some more about your wife's sister, is she elderly? Is she prone to hysterics?" which is something that would be absolutely essential in psychology. But if something like what I've been saying is so, then: It is not merely that the notion that you need to know a great deal about somebody before you can say this or that about them may be a lot of nonsense, but the way that society goes about building people *makes* a nonsense of such a notion. That is: A task of socialization is to produce somebody who so behaves that those categories are enough to know something about him.

One of the things we always want to be watching for is to see how simple or how complex this animal is. In this regard I'll raise a question but not attempt to answer it here. There is what we can call an 'order of depth' in dealing with various kinds of occurrences. So, for example, we can say about A here that there can be a list of good grounds for police to be called to a scene, and that list is built into his brain as a mature member of the society, and he can, when told of some scene where the police come, now throw out an item from that list as a guess, and perhaps furthermore insist on it being correct. That would be one order of depth. But for the issue of how simple or complex this animal is, we can notice that, for example, for dealing with such a situation as 'the police arriving on the scene,' we need a machine; a set of rules, that is, and a set of objects that those rules handle. We can then ask, is that machine altogether distinct, such that if something else happens, we need another machine for making another kind of inference, etc., etc.? Or will it be the case that this use of an inference from the 'police' situation will be absolutely similar to the way in which some other event is found? Then 'police' just becomes one category of a general machine that handles a whole set of things. If that is so, then the task of describing how this animal operates will be tremendously simplified. And the work of the animal itself is, of course, tremendously simplified.

What we're working with, for now, is that apparently A knows what the good grounds are for the police to come, and uses those good grounds to monitor what B tells him, and makes a guess and then challenges B's assertion that he's wrong. I want show how this stuff can cut; how it can be interesting. For example, it's clearly the case – A knows it and B knows it – that the police don't only come for the good grounds that police come for. Cranks call

up the police all the time. And police answer calls that turn out not to be based on good grounds. But apparently that fact has a special status. The proper ways that the police come to some house are available to Members in general, and it is those which may be used, for example, to decide what happened at that house. And if you see somebody being led away by the police, you may quite naturally feel that you know what's up with him, at least generically; that is, that he's 'done something wrong.'

Now that suggests two things: First, the fact that some procedure which has a correct way of getting done, gets done correctly – independent of any issue of police answering calls that are not based on good grounds, or any issue of people getting harassed or misunderstood – may be quite crucial in permitting persons to find the sense of an event which happened by reference to those procedures. And second – and here we're going to pose one of the central dilemmas of Western civilization – a person who stands in the position of having some procedure which has a correct basis for use applied to them, stands in the position of having that procedure presumptively correctly applied. And we can give that problem a name: Job's Problem.

Job, the rich, good man, had lost all his wealth, his children, all his possessions. His friends come to him, and there are series of long discussions. What his friends propose is, look, you take it that God punishes the wicked and rewards the good. We take it the same way. Your situation is understandable only if you're guilty. So confess. And for Job the question is, "I don't know that I'm guilty. I'm convinced that I'm not guilty. But then how could this have happened to me?"

A central dilemma, then, is that some procedure which has a proper way of operating, may not so operate. Kafka is dealing with the same kind of issue. And Mr B here is in the same boat. What A suspects may indeed have happened. Or B may have just felt . . . what can he say? After all, A knows how those things happen, and how is B going to insist that it's not so? That is, a problem that people in a range of circumstances can be faced with is: Is there a way available to provide from some event to have happened, apart from the normal and proper way these things happen? We are talking about something quite general here. Talking about it by reference to the police doesn't mean we are talking about a procedure set up by and for the police. Rather, it may be the case that in order for the police to operate successfully, they have to be able to produce their activities such that these ways that Members have of looking at activities can be applied to the police. Likewise, when I talk about Job, I'm not trying to deal with literary criticism. Job's problem focusses on a central problem in the way that persons go about orienting to the occurrence of events, and that is, that it is somehow extremely important that the inferences they do make can be taken as correct, and thereby that those persons who produce those activities which are described by these sequences so behave as to provide for the fact that these sequences do describe them.

In that regard it is interesting to note that the phenomenon of presumptively correct descriptions, and behavior produced to fit those descriptions, can

be found by reference to illegitimate as well as legitimate activities. So, for example, in his book *Order and Rebellion in Tribal Africa*, in the chapter 'The reasonable man in Barotse law,' Gluckman offers us the 'reasonable wrong-doer.'

> The last case suggests that the Barotse have a picture not only of reasonable and customary right ways of behaving, but also a picture of the reasonable wrongdoer – the reasonable thief, adulterer, slanderer, and so forth.
>   By this paradox – the reasonable wrongdoer – I sum up the fact that wrongdoers in any society also behave in customary ways which are socially stereotyped. There is the 'criminal slouch' as against the 'scholarly stoop,' the spiv's clothes and hairstyle, the whole manner of loitering with intent to commit a criminal action.
>   When there is only circumstantial evidence, these sorts of actions build up before the judges until they conclude that . . . the total picture is that of a reasonable wrongdoer; as we say, a person guilty beyond reasonable doubt.
>   And I have heard cases which indicate that these customary ways of doing wrong in fact influence adulterers and thieves, so that they give themselves away in circumstances in which they could have acted so as to cover up their misdeeds.

Our task, then, is not simply to be building a machine which can make inferences, and make them in the strong way that I've proposed. A problem for a sociology interested in describing socialization will consist in large part of how it is that a human gets built who will produce his activities such that they're graspable in this way. That is to say, how it is that he'll behave such that these sequencing machines can be used to find out what he's up to. Under that notion, then, we would propose that at least one core focus for trouble would be persons who are so socialized that they don't permit these sequencing machines to be used on them. And that is one way that 'psychopathic personalities' behave. If you read Cleckley's book *The Mask of Sanity*, the psychopathic personality is reported to be that person who, at any given point in their behavior, you never know what's going to happen next. You're never able to say "Here is an nth point in this sequence, and now X, Y, and Z will come." And they are taken to be about as painful a person as you can have around you.

Now, what I have been proposing could be restated as follows: For Members, activities are observables. They see activities. They see persons doing intimacy, they see persons lying, etc. (It has been wrongly proposed that people do not see, for example, 'my mother,' but what they 'really see' is light, dark, shadows, an object in the distance, etc.) And that poses for us the task of being behaviorists in this sense: Finding how it is that people can produce sets of actions that provide that others can see such things.

Earlier I observed that one way that persons go about seeing activities is by reference to some procedures which they take it properly occur as the activities occur. That is, it can be seen that Mr B "smacked" his wife by virtue of the fact that the police came, by virtue of the fact that the police come when people smack their wives. While in many of its aspects the use of procedures to find the sense of some set of observables – that is, the phenomenon I'm calling Job's Problem – is utterly central, this fact of observability of actions is much more generic.

We can be led, then, to investigate, for example, how it is that persons learn that by virtue of their appearances, the activities they have gone through are observable. Where, again, this observability is not specific to each activity, but is learned as a general phenomenon. And we could suppose that the following sort of report might be the sort of thing we could use to find out how this learning takes place, and to see where those things may or may not be difficult. I will take this utterly mundane report and suggest some of its relevance. It is a quotation from *One Boy's Day* by Barker and Wright (1951). What they did was to have a bunch of people follow a kid around all day, writing down as best they could, everything that he did. They worked in half-hour shifts, and they compiled, then, a record of his day.

> 7:20 Raymond got up from his chair. He went directly out of the kitchen and into the bathroom.
>   Coming from the bathroom, he returned to the kitchen. His mother asked pleasantly, "Did you wash your teeth?" Mr Birch looked at him and laughed saying, "My gosh, son, you have tooth powder all over your cheeks." Then both parents laughed heartily.
>   Raymond turned instantly and went straight to the bathroom. He smiled as though he were not upset by his parents' comments.
>   He stayed in the bathroom just a few seconds.
>   He came back rubbing his face with his hands. The tooth powder was no longer visible.

Presumably Raymond can learn through things like this, that his parents can tell that he washed his teeth by virtue of the appearance on his face of tooth powder. And that fact sets up the phenomeon which I'll call generically, 'subversion.' With this example in hand one can think quite rapidly of the way that children can learn subversion, having learned that the procedure is applied to them. For example, they will wash those aspects of their body which are at a glance observable, so when they appear, it seems "Oh, you washed." And the fact that that adaptation goes on, provides, then, the sense in which they orient to this way that their activities are grasped.

Now, in watching these obviously trivial things that children might do, it is conceivable that one may have analyzed matters that are treated as being of larger moment. So, for example, the quotation I just gave, in which Raymond's having brushed his teeth was seen in his face covered with some

white powder, is in its character extremely central, and deserves the name 'generic.' Simply enough, the first human event in Judaic-Christian mythology consists of man's discovery that his moral character is observable. We might call it Adam's Problem.

(Genesis, 3.6–12, King James Version)

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

And He said, who told thee that thou was naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou should not eat?

And the man said, the woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

And Adam learns, like Raymond learns, that one has to come to terms with the fact that from one's appearances the activities that one has engaged in are observable.

Let me mention one further thing, which is again relevant to the conversation we're examining. The matter I'll be dealing with is one which you might not, given the way one goes about considering scientific materials, formulate in the way I'm going to. When we think about facts, insofar as we are thinking of scientific facts, we tend to pose problems in the following way: If it's the case that something has occurred, then our problem is to explain it. Now, with such things as lies, untruths, confabulations – the possibility of which persons are often attending to – we've got to notice that something like a reverse procedure is very much used. The reverse procedure consists of the following. In deciding among possible competing facts, one may decide that that fact occurred which has an explanation, and that fact that hasn't an explanation did not occur. Here is a beautiful instance of this way of proceeding. It comes from an arbitration case involving a company which discharged some of its employees for causing a disturbance. Here's what the arbitrator writes:

(Shulman Decision A-70 Ford-UAW Arbitration)

The story of the other discharged employees approaches the bizarre. Twelve of them testified before me. Each of them claims to be a completely innocent bystander, wholly at a loss to understand why he was picked up for discharge. None of them admits being part of the crowd in any of the demonstrations. None of them admits even the normal curiosity of an innocent bystander. Each claims that he knew very little about the cause of the stoppages, and cared even less after learning the cause. Each claims that when the lights went out or the line stopped he asked his foreman what to do and on being told to stay or go home as he pleased but that his time stopped in any event, he left for home. One of the men, a lively young boxer, asserts that after seeing the crowd and the excitement he calmly repaired to a warm, comfortable spot and went to sleep. He did this, he asserts, on two of the three days (being absent on the third), and slept the peaceful sleep of the just, until the excitement completely quieted down. All, it seems were veritable angels, above and beyond contagion by the excitement in the department.

Now there unquestionably were serious stoppages in Department 84 on November 5th, 6th, and 8th. There were vociferous and angry men milling around and demanding action. Who were the incensed men who did take part? Who were the angry men who were so difficult to get back to work and were so incensed that, the union claims, they turned against their own committeemen and even assaulted two of them? How, indeed, were these fourteen chosen?

The union advanced no explanation. There is no suggestion that these men were chosen by lot. And even such a method would normally be expected to catch some of the guilty. And there is no basis whatever in the evidence to suppose that the men were selected because of any personal animosity against them, with the slight possible exception of one man. Nor are the men generally regarded as troublemakers, of whom the company would be glad to be rid.

The company's explanation is simple and without any contradiction other than the incredible stories related by the men themselves. The labor relations conciliator, with the help of his assistant, took the names or the badge numbers of the most active men in the crowds that demonstrated in his office. This accounts for twelve of the fourteen.

. . . Under these circumstances I cannot give credence to the men's protestations of innocence.

In this case the two competing facts are that a group of employees are innocent, were wrongfully discharged, and that they are guilty, discharged on good grounds. If they are innocent, there is "no explanation" for their being selected to be fired. If they are guilty, then the "explanation is simple and without any contradiction." The finding is that they are guilty. Here is another instance of that sort of procedure, taken from a coroner's report. The competing facts in this case are death by suicide or accident.

> While Mrs S.'s drinking during the past twenty years may be symptomatic of problems, there was nothing in the history to indicate any sudden change in her life pattern, or any unfortunate or untimely occurrence in her life. And therefore there seems to be no reason why she should have chosen this particular time to end her life.

That is to say, since there is no reason for her to have ended her life, she didn't end her life.

This gets very, very subtle and curious at times, where you find the following kind of situation. One recurrently problematic kind of death involves alcohol and pills in some combination, where alcohol and pills in combination are extremely deadly. That is to say, given some amount of alcohol, far less pills are necessary to kill somebody than without alcohol. And where persons die of alcohol and pills, with a few pills, then you get something like the following argument proposed: It's not suicide, it's an accident, because if they wanted to kill themselves they would have taken all the pills they had, and they didn't take them all. To which you might say, well, but they did die, and maybe what they did was to kill themselves in a perfectly efficient way.

One of the nicest cases I have is from the autobiography of an ex-mental patient. It's a very long description so I'll give it in condensed form. He's just committed himself, he's been there maybe a day or two and now he wants to inform his family, but nobody will let him out of the ward to make a phone call. He finally asks a doctor, who tells him "Wait here five minutes, I'll look for your file. If I find it you can be let out to make a phone call." So he waits. He stands there waiting for five hours. At some point a nurse comes by and tells him to move away because he's blocking the door. He says, "No, I have instructions to stay here." She says "From who?" He says "From the doctor." The nurse goes off and gets the head nurse, who asks him "Why do you refuse to move from that spot?" He says "Because the doctor told me to wait here." The head nurse, as he notes, "couldn't assume the risk of overruling the doctor" so she leaves and returns a few minutes later with her supervisor. Here is the conversation with the supervisor.

> "Which doctor," she asked, "told you to stand there?"
> "I don't know, he didn't tell me his name."
> "How long ago," asked the supervisor, "did the doctor tell you to stand there?"
> "It must be about five hours ago," I replied.
> "Do you expect us to believe that a doctor whose name you don't even know told you to wait there five hours ago and that he hasn't come back yet?"
> I remained silent. The question was extremely sharp, and I winced under its impact.
> "Are you sure that the doctor is not just a figment of your imagination?"

I must admit that my confidence was shaken. I began to doubt, myself, that this had happened. Plainly doctors don't break their promises. If one of them tells you that he'll return in five minutes, he won't keep you waiting for five hours. Such things just don't happen.

"I must be crazy," I said weakly, "Maybe it didn't happen."

The supervisor nodded. "That's better," she said grimly.

My head reeled and my legs tottered. I was beginning to feel like the prisoner who is kept in a padded cell for years without ever being informed of the charges against him in Kafka's novel *The Trial*. Everything was turning topsy-turvy. Guilt was innocence and innocence was guilt. Nothing admitted of any rational explanation. If that doctor who had told me to wait for him for five minutes were merely a figment of my imagination, then I was losing all contact with reality. But if that doctor really had existed, then why did all these people maintain that he didn't? I knew that he existed. I had seen him and spoken to him. Then all these people must be engaged in a monstrous conspiracy to drive me mad. No other theory seemed to fit these facts.

The supervisor interrupted my thoughts. "Come with me," she said.

I obeyed meekly and followed her towards the center of the hallway.

"You're very confused, young man," said the supervisor. "Because you're new here I won't report how you've just behaved. But I warn you, don't do it again. I want no further trouble from you."

Again, then, we see the use of this procedure – that one can choose among facts according to the presence or absence of an explanation. It's absolutely routinely used. I'm not proposing that it's obscene, I'm only proposing that that's the way it's done. At least in this society, facts and explanations have more than a one-way relation to each other. That is, it isn't the case that if something has occurred, that sets the problem 'construct an explanation,' but the notion that persons hold of possible facts is that those facts are possible for which there is an explanation. One can't merely say "Well, I saw it. You explain it." Something proposed to have occurred can be treated as not so, by virtue of the fact that there's not an explanation for it. That's important in this society, given the fact that miracles are no longer usable. And miracles are that class, in part. They're events for which there is no account, which now systematically would be given an account, i.e., an account not of this world. But most persons who consider themselves to be modern individuals don't read, for example, the psychical researcher, Rhine. They just take it that whatever he says, he's a fraud in one way or another, and you don't have to bother coming to terms with what he reports. Given that what he proposes as an explanation couldn't be an explanation, then it hasn't occurred. And further, there is an explanation available which provides that there is no such phenomenon: Statistical chance. Such an explanation proposes that out of a population there will be some persons who produce these responses, and he's happened to have found them. But that does not provide any basis for psychic research; random distributions would do the same job.

That's a classical problem. It can always be raised if you have a limited amount of research, where, then, if you propose there's a phenomenon, it is said that you have nothing but the working of a random distribution, which you happen to have caught at some point. And it's raised more than occasionally about psychic research, and I suppose more than occasionally it turns out to be relevant. Or, for example, people say "How does it happen that there have been two earthquakes on this day?" and then they go about constructing some explanation: The gods are angry. Or, "Isn't it odd that the weather pattern has changed this year?" and then they construct an explanation: Fallout. And now what's proposed is that if you use such a unit as 'years' to measure weather, where weather as a phenomenon has to be measured over eons, then you're liable to find something which looks like order. But given the proper unit, that proposed order is not present. Now, there are all sorts of units available, and for any proposed phenomenon, that unit which would make that proposed ordered set of facts simply a coagulation of random events can be proposed to be the relevant unit. Either side may be right or wrong. Nonetheless it's done.

Appendix A
A Note on the Editing

In lecture 2, p. 17, Sacks introduces a consideration:

> A recurrent thing that I've seen throughout this stuff is persons talking
> about not feeling wanted anymore. The question is, how is that kind of
> feeling provided for in this society? And what would be interesting
> about it would be if we could see some way in which, quote, the
> structure of society, provided for the focusing of kinds of troubles.
> That's what I think we can see with this . . .

Throughout this volume many of Sacks' pronominal uses have been changed.
Here, the operation is more or less innocuous. What is rendered as '. . . if *we*
could see . . ." and "That's what I think *we* can see . . ." actually goes,
". . . if *we* could see . . ." and "That's what I think *you* can see . . . ;" i.e., the
second 'we' is actually 'you.' Following is the unedited version. (Emphasis on
pronouns is always added: it is not in the transcripts.)

> Now, a recurrent thing that you have probably seen, and I've seen
> throughout this stuff, is persons talking about not feeling wanted
> anymore. The question is, how is that kind of feeling provided for in
> this society. And what would be interesting about it is, if *we* could see
> some way in which, quote, the structure of society provided for the
> focussing of kinds of troubles. That's what I think *you* can see with this.
> <div align="right">(Fall 1964, tape 5, side 1, p. 10, unedited)</div>

And this 'we'/'you' alternation is preserved in the abbreviated earlier
transcript (transcriber unknown).

> The recurrent thing is people talking about not feeling wanted. How is
> that kind of feeling is [sic] provided for in this society? If *we* can see
> some way in which the structure of society provided for the focusing of
> certain kinds of troubles. That's what *you* can see above.
> <div align="right">(Fall 1964, tape 5, side 1, pp. 3–4, transcriber unknown)</div>

Another 'you'/'we' alternation occurs just a bit further in the discussion. Here
is the unedited version.

> Now *you* see that what she's picking up here is, quote, the absence of
> ceremonials. Now, *we* see that ceremonials have this double use.
> <div align="right">(Fall 1964, tape 5, side 1, pp. 10–11, unedited)</div>

(Neither the edited version nor the earlier transcript show the repeated, pronoun-alternated reference to 'seeing.' The edited version has it:

> What she's picking up here is the absence of ceremonials. And ceremonials have this double use.
>
>   (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 2, p. 18)

And the earlier transcript goes:

> She picks up the absence of ceremonials. Ceremonials have a double use.
>
>   (Fall 1964, tape 5, side 1, p. 4, transcriber unknown)

So, in close order there are two of these pronominal alternations: ". . . if *we* could see . . . '/'I think *you* can see" and "Now *you* see . . ."/"Now, *we* see . . ." And such alternation is recurrent across the lectures. Following are a few instances, taken from the Fall 1964 and Spring 1966 unedited lecture transcripts.

> Now, what *you* can see is this . . . And what *we* find is . . .
>
>   (Fall 1964, tape 1(R), p. 6, unedited)

This cross-paragraph alternation survives in the edited version (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 1, pp. 6–7).

> If *you* look at [X and Y] what *we* seem to find in them is . . .
>
>   (Fall 1964, tape 4, side 2(?), p. 1, unedited)

This alternation is edited out and rendered as: "What we find in [X and Y] is . . ." (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 7, p. 54).

> *I* could say [X is the case] but *I* wouldn't be able to show why that's so, or how it's so. If that's the case, *I* don't establish my point. *I* could say [Y] and *we* could [find A but not B]. That again wouldn't do what *we* propose to do. *We* want to do both: [A and B]. *You* want a method that generates this.
>
>   (Spring 1966, lecture 4, pp. 1–2, unedited)

In the edited version, a 'we' referring to 'I' is changed to 'I' ("That, again, wouldn't do what *I* propose to do"), and a 'you' following a prior 'we' is changed to 'we' ("*We* want to do both: [A and B] . . . *we* want a method that generates this line. (Spring 1966, lecture 4, p. 301).

> In short, what *you* want to do is [X]. And *we* can take it that [Y].
>
>   (Spring 1966, lecture 21, p. 6, unedited)

This alternation survives in the edited version (Spring 1966, lecture 21, p. 420).

If *you* can claim that it could be another thing, first *one* wants to show how it's another possibility.

> (Spring 1966, lecture 22, p. 2, unedited)

This alternation is revised to, "If *one* is claiming that it could be another thing, first *one* wants to show how it's another possibility" (Spring 1966, lecture 21, p. 422).

Many of the pronominal alternations are edited out or revised. One major basis of revision is an attempt to deal with the 'direct address' problem.

Sacks often addresses remarks directly to the class, as occurs in the unedited transcript of the paragraph in question here:

> Now, a recurrent thing that you have probably seen, and I've seen throughout this stuff . . .

He also makes such meta remarks as, "I would like very if you could collect instances of the uses of [X]" (Fall 1964, tape 4, side 2, p. 11, unedited). '. . . if it isn't clear, stick up your hand and tell me" (Fall 1964, tape 1, p. 2, unedited), not to mention things like "Oh by the way. Somebody tell me when I get − I don't have a watch. So just keep me vaguely informed about (   )" (Fall 1964, tape 1, p. 9, unedited). These have been edited out.

But also, lecture-relevant talk which was addressed to the class was often deleted or changed because it could be troublesome to readers, either estranging them, making them onlookers or overhearers, or over-intimatizing the talk, seeming to address this particular reader directly. So, e.g., such a remark as, "You ought by this time to be quite aware of the fact that . . ." (Spring 1966, lecture 6, p. 1, unedited) was changed to "By this time it ought to be quite obvious that . . . "(Spring 1966, lecture 6, p. 312). In the actual situation, of course, members of the class were neither overhearing, nor being individually addressed by, such utterances.

There are, then, variously problematic uses of 'you.' And the fact that Sacks not infrequently uses 'you,' 'one,' and 'we' in alternation became a resource − and license − for changing them. Most often 'you' was changed to 'we,' a word Sacks makes extensive use of, sometimes in rather idiosyncratic ways. So, for example, he will use 'we' where he himself is the referent, e.g.:

> That again, wouldn't do what we propose to do.
>> (Spring 1966, lecture 4, p. 2, unedited)

> Let's start out with something we mentioned before . . .
>> (Fall 1964, tape 14, side 2, p. 2, unedited)

> Remember we said about the opening lines of conversations that they seem to come in pairs.
>> (Fall 1964, tape 5, side 1, p. 3, unedited)

Now we originally introduced the notion of an omni-relevant device . . .
> (Fall 1966, lecture 4, p. 6, unedited)

in each case it being he himself who has "propose[d]," "mentioned," "said," and "introduced [a] notion."

In one case, Sacks recasts his own utterance:

> We haven't said that they have a right to be told. I have not said that they have a right to be told some trouble of A's.
> (Fall 1964, tape 10, side 2 (M3 side 2), p. 11, unedited)

And in the edited versions, either 'we' is changed to 'I:'

> That, again, wouldn't do what I propose to do.
> (Spring 1966, lecture 4, p. 301)

> I'll start out with something I'd already worked up . . .
> (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 8, p. 57)

> I said about the opening lines of conversations . . .
> (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 2, p. 13)

or the talk is revised to accommodate 'we:'

> We have now, the notion of an omni-relevant device . . .
> (Spring 1966, lecture 6, p. 316)

Sacks also uses 'we' to refer to pretty much anyone *but* himself, e.g.:

> Hopefully the thing I want us to see in this first is . . .
> (Fall 1964, tape 5, side 2, p. 1, unedited)

> I raise this because while we all can see that that's quite so, there's a related and in a way much more interesting thing that I doubt we've noticed . . .
> (Spring 1970, lecture 1, p. 7, unedited)

> We tend somewhat to be perhaps overly taken with the constraints that Weber sets for an objective social science . . .
> (Spring 1966, lecture 33, p. 9, unedited)

where it is members of the class, and not Sacks, who will "hopefully" come to "see" something, and whom he can "doubt" have "noticed" something. And it may be an even larger population, but in any case one that doesn't include Sacks, whose members "tend to be perhaps overly taken with" Weber's constraints.

While these self-inclusive, 'we'-references may be incorrect in a strict sense, they may be doing the sort of work Sacks discusses in one of the lectures; that of saying 'everyone.'

> If someone who needn't include themself in some class . . . wants to say in a stronger way than 'you' (which can be misheard as only the recipient) that 'everyone is that way,' they can say 'we.'

He offers a case in which a psychiatrist remarks, "We can be very blind to the things around us," and goes on to say:

> That is, by virtue of the sequence in which 'we' is heard, the inclusion of the speaker is partially gratuitous; is heard as doing something he 'needn't have done.'
>
> (Spring 1966, lecture 11, pp. 351–2)

As it happens, in the edited versions those instances of "gratuitous" self-inclusion in the environment of a demand, ". . . I want us to see . . .," or criticism, ". . . there's . . . a much more interesting thing that I doubt we've noticed" and "We tend somewhat to be perhaps overly taken with [X]. . ." were preserved. (See Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 3, p. 21, Spring 1970, lecture 1, p. 00, and Spring 1966, lecture 33, p. 487.)

In contrast to those pronominal changes mentioned earlier, both the changes from 'we' to 'I' when Sacks himself is the referent, and the preservation of the self-inclusive 'we' in the environment of touchy assertions, were not matters of policy; they were decided upon one at a time. But they can be seen to add up to something like policies, or perhaps to reflect underlying policies.

The paragraph at the start of this consideration, plus a bit of subsequent talk, happen to instance another phenomenon that was often revised. The unedited transcript shows a format, "quote, [X]," which occurs once,

> . . . if we could see some way in which, quote, the structure of society provided for the focussing of kinds of troubles . . .

and is then used again some 16 lines later.

> . . . what she's picking up here is, quote, the absence of ceremonials.

(These two fragments are from Fall 1964, tape 5, side 1, p. 10, ll. 4–6 and p. 10, l. 23–p. 11, l. 1, respectively. See p. 126 of this Appendix for fuller fragments of each.)

This phenomenon of a *repeated format* occurs throughout the lectures, and often – as here – one of them, usually the second, is deleted in the edited

version, for both aesthetic and technical reasons. Only the latter will be considered here.

One sort of technical problem posed by the repeated format is that a term which may appear to be analytically based, can be merely format generated. And a glimpse of that problem may be gotten from the recurrence of the term 'quote' in ". . . quote, the structure of society . . ." and ". . . quote, the absence of ceremonials." Roughly, the quote-marking of the familiar phrase 'the structure of society' seems to be doing its standard 'as they say' work, where a new way of working with an old concept is being offered. It is not clear what sort of work the quote-marking of the newly minted technical descriptor 'the absence of ceremonials' is doing. One could not in this case substitute 'as they say' for 'quote.' It may simply be a format-recurrence. In any event it was treated as such, and deleted from the edited version which simply goes: "What she's picking up here is the absence of ceremonials" (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 2, p. 18).

Part II
Fall 1965

Lectures 1 and 2
"The baby cried. The mommy picked it up."

Lectures 1 and 2 were not recorded, but Sacks had made preparatory notes for the "first lecture(s)" which seem to have turned out to cover lecture 1 (see Appendix A). The second lecture is covered in notes Sacks made after its delivery (see Appendix B).

Handout Group Therapy Session Segment

The door opens in the middle of a group therapy session, and in comes a new entrant. Until now, at this session, the members have been three teen age males, and a male therapist of around 35 years of age. The new entrant is a male teenager.

Time

0:00 *Therapist*: Bob this is uh Mel
      Bob: hi
      Th   Joe
      Bob   hi
      Joe   hi
      Th   Henry
      Henry   hi
      Bob   hi
      Th   Bob Reed
      Joe   (cough) We were in an automobile discussion,
      Henry   discussing the psychological motives for
      Mel   drag racing on the streets.
      Joe   I still say though that if you take, if you take uh a big fancy car out on the road and you're hot roddin' around you're you're bound to get, you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted. We– look
      Mel   Now did you do it right. That's the challenge That's the challenge You wanna try
      Henry   That's the problem with society. Hahhh
      Mel   And do it right so you do not get caught.
      Henry   That's the
      Joe   In that Bonneville of mine? I could take it out with me and if I got a tie and a sweater on and I look clean? 99% of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car the same color, the same year, the whole bit, roll up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby tee shirt and the guy will pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before I before he'll pick me up.

1:00   Just – just for –

This is as close a copy as possible of Sacks' transcript.

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	Mel	Not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon.
	Joe	Now I agree it looks like a daddy's – It looks like a damn mommy's car.
	Henry	Joe, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.
	Joe	Yes Mommy.
	Henry	Face the music
	Mel	Ok Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're a poor little rich kid we've told you that.
	Henry	And we also decided you're a chicken shit.
	Joe	I decided that years ago. Hell with you
	Mel	Now let's see what else can we decide about you?
	Henry	Hey don't tear him down
	Joe	I've been torn down for–
	Mel	ok
1:30	*Henry*	We got company
	Mel	oh ok. Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you.
	Joe	Yeah. Hurry up.
	Henry	Well first of all you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here.
	Joe	heh heh
	Bob	Yeh I guess
	Mel	Secondly, you must be an under-achiever
	Bob	yea
	Henry	You hate your mom and dad, huh
	Mel	Third of all–
	Bob	oh sometimes
	Mel	Fourth, you like to drive cars fast.
	Bob	yea
	Mel	Fifth you like uh you like wild times
	Bob	Yeah
	Joe	He smokes like me see.
	Mel	Sixth, you like booze
	Bob	yeah
	Mel	Seventh you like to smoke
	Henry	And seven you've been arrested for rape and other things.
	Henry	Ha
	Mel	Eight you–
2:00	*Bob*	No. not that.
	Mel	Eight you Eight you give lip back to everybody.
	Bob	Yea
	Mel	Nine you uh cut classes.
	Bob	yea
	Mel	Ten, you've been kicked out of school once.
	Bob	yea

	Mel	eleven uh
	Joe	hah hahh
	Henry	We're doing better than he is. haha. Proceed, I'm with you. ha ha.
	Mel	Your turn.
	Henry	Are you just agreeing because you feel you want to or what?
	Bob	huh?
	Henry	You just agreeing?
	Bob	What the hells that?
	Mel	Agreeing
	Henry	Agreeing
	Bob	Agreen?
2:30	*Mel*	Agreeing. With us. Just going along with it.
	Bob	No.
	Henry	Saying Yes. Yes. hahhh
	Bob	Its true, heh, everything you said is true. so.
	Mel	You wouldn't be in this group if you didn't.
	Joe	What school did you go to?
	Bob	I went to Palisades
	Henry	Went?
	Bob	Yeah. And then University.
	Henry	Oh I went to Uni. I graduated there.
	Bob	You did?
	Henry	Bitchin school isn't it
	Bob	Yeah I guess
	Henry	Yeah I never did ( ) it
	Mel	What did you do with the matches?
	Henry	You don't like it do you?
	Joe	I got them
	Henry	Here you go chum
	Joe	Everybody's faster than me today
	Henry	You got reflexes like a slow turtle
	Joe	God damn you ha
3:00	*Henry*	Remind me later. I'll show you a litte game about your reflexes.
	Joe	Got any more cigars.
	Henry	No it's last one
	Joe	Last one
	Henry	Pity heh
	Henry	Usually there's a broad in here. Pretty –
	Joe	Her name's Barbara. She pretty good. She's real nice.
	Joe	(cough)
	Mel	A lot of her to love but
	Bob	Sounds like an old man
	Joe	Huh. This is the old, this is the couch society of what is it?

	Mel	Wanna join our army?
	Bob	hmmm?
3:30	Mel	Wanna join our army? We're gonna go defeat the king of Greece.
	Joe	We're gonna
	Mel	The academic counselling center fightin' army's gonna go
	Henry	Alright Mel, he's been here ten minutes
	Joe	Mel. Your match is still going Mel
	Henry	Mel He's been in here ten minutes let's judge his character.
	Mel	ok. ready Henry?
	Henry	ok.
	Mel	You're first
	Joe	You're gonna get killed
	Bob	ha
	Joe	Keep your mouth shut and don't say a damn word. ha ha
	Henry	He's not at all like Joe.
	Mel	No
	Henry	He's more like Mel and I
	?	( )
	Henry	What you refer to as – hippie. ha. He's been in it up to his neck
	Bob	yeah˙
4:00	Henry	A couple of times
	Joe	Ha ha. Taste good?
	Mel	No. I bit off the end of it. I was chewing the end of it.
	Henry	umm.
	Joe	Bitchin
	Henry	Havin a big hassle with your folks
	Bob	yup
	Henry	Right. Daddy wants to keep you down Mommy
	Bob	hmmm?
	Mel	Mommy you can tell what to do
	Joe	(cough) God damn cancer
	Mel	See. I told you, we know everything about this guy already
	?	Sure
	Henry	Do you have any brothers or sisters?
	Bob	No
	Henry	Daddy's sort of sheltered you
	Bob	No not really
	Henry	No?
	Bob	Not really
	Mel	You sorta shelter them?
	Henry	Do you have a car?
	Bob	No
	Joe	(gasp)

4:30	*Mel*	oh oh. One point against you.
	Henry	You had a car?
	Bob	No
	Henry	You want a car
	Bob	oh hell yes, ha.
	Mel	You've stolen a car?
	Henry	Daddy doesn't want you to have one.
	Bob	No he wants me to have one, my old lady doesn't.
	Henry	oh!! Main conflict with mother.
	Bob	yes
	Joe	hehh
	Henry	Mother's too dominating.
	Bob	yes
	Joe	But you've been had already fella. ha ha
	Mel	ok
	Henry	Bring your mother in, we'll work on her. ha ha
	Bob	ok
	pause	
5:00	*Mel*	What are you thinking, old man?
	Therapist	hahh I'm thinking Bob has certainly had it. hahh
	[*Henry*	Whip out your pad
	T	Five minutes and you guys
	[*Henry*	No No write down what we say take the ( )
	Joe	You gotta pardon these guys they're all they're all the social outcasts of the world.
	Henry	This one's chicken shit. He's a bastard, and I'm a Mau Mau.
	Mel	ok. good. Now we're all settled, what are you?
	Bob	oh I'm
	Joe	You a hood?
	Henry	This is an abnormal session. See we're not together without the broad.
5:30	*Bob*	yeah
	Mel	See we gotta have the broad here. Cause she unites us.
	Joe	She unites us – she keeps us on the road. Ha ha. Table's always ready and ha –
	Henry	She sorta keeps us on the road
	Henry	oh well
	Mel	oh well you know that the way things go. That's the way things lie down.
	Henry	He sorta keeps his mouth shut and writes down things whenever you say something important
	[*Mel*	And then if you ask him
	[*Henry*	He's a good guy though
	Mel	to do something then you have to pay him though

	Bob	yeah
	Henry	Eventually you'll become sane.
	Joe	yeah but you –
6:00	*Henry*	Or your mother will which is not what you think.
	Bob	I hope so
	Henry	You're not crazy, it's your mother, hah?
	Mel	But uh it takes about, I've been here four months and it's getting better now. I used to think that I was a bird and would fly.
	Henry	Yea He used to walk out on us, he thought he was above us.
	Mel	Yea. But now I'm now I'm below you.
	Henry	Yeah. I corrected I corrected that quality. I gave him an inferiority complex. ha.
	Mel	And I got him to shave.
	Joe	hehh.
	Henry	Yeah. I'm not grubby or nothin
	Bob	No. hehh
	Joe	hah. Hey this is the academic counselling center. It's called the family, family circle.
6:30	*Henry*	It's not really an academic counselling center; it's sort of a drive in nut house. ha ha.
	Mel	Then you rent a counsellor; $5 an hour and 50¢ a question.
	Mel	ha ha.
	Henry	Don't consider this one– but on the whole you'll enjoy 'em. Ha. In fact it's a good way to spend Saturday morning.
	Joe	hahh.
	Mel	After Friday night.
	Henry	The morning after the night before. Ha ha. After a couple cups of coffee you're alright.
	Bob	yeah
	Joe	A couple dozen cups of coffee.
	Mel	Chew a cigar now and then and
	Henry	I don't smoke (he's been smoking a cigar)
	Mel	He just started last night
7:00	*Joe*	You gotta believe it. You gotta believe it we're the only two in here that smoke other than him.
	Henry	Doesn't Barb smoke?
	Mel	No. she doesn't smoke. She said she used to.
	Henry	She's a good girl. ha ha
	Joe	She smokes cigars. That's about all. ha ha.
	Mel	They smoke. I chew them.
	Joe	He eats it.
	Henry	Well chewing them is half the fun – oral gratification. heh heh

	Mel	Let's see, what else can we tell him?
	Henry	They say that's why bubble gum and all that shit's good uh so popular
	Joe	Why?
7:30	*Henry*	There's a trend to put things in your mouth – like thumbs
	several	(laughter)
	Henry	No really. Why do you think babies suck their thumb and adults chew gum and smoke? Everybody wants to keep something in their mouth.
	Mel	Well. you know –
	Henry	Now I'm not talkin about eating or nothing. And I'm not talking about what you're thinking of either. Hahh.
	several	(laughter)
	Henry	No really I read this in some book
	several	(laughter)
	Mel	oh come on
	Henry	It's really the truth
	Mel	one more thing –
	Henry	Look at him. Look at him sucking at that pipe all goddam morning.
	several	(laughter)
	Mel	He sucks on his dentures too. Now listen, one more thing. There's people watching us now. They got a tape recorder and –
8:00	*Henry*	That is the microphone (pointing). Occasionally there's somebody in there judging us. They're baby headshrinkers. They're learning how to be.
	Joe	Don't worry about 'em. They destroy the tapes afterward.
	Mel	He's not quite one. He won't be one until two months. He's writing a –
	Henry	paper. But today we're not being uh viewed. We're just being taped.
	Mel	No. we're being viewed. There's somebody in there. Cause they lit a cigarette.
	Henry	But he's blind.
	Joe	Hey. Don't worry about it.
	Bob	How how could you see him?
	Mel	Well he can see us but you can't see
	Bob	Can you see through this here?
	Henry	When you turn the lights on. See it's darker in there. I think –
8:30	*Joe*	Wave at him. He's a nice guy.
	Mel	Anything else Henry?
	Henry	And if it gets private we can always shut the curtain.
	Bob	heh great.
	Mel	to do something.

	Mel	Anything else Henry? D'you think we oughta let him in on? or tell him?
	Joe	We're all nuts?
	Henry	Naw. Let him slide for a few weeks.
	Mel	ok
	Henry	Get the hang of things, heh.
	Mel	Then we'll really go after him. Then when we – when we get –
	Henry	We'll let you rest with your problem now
	Mel	We've told you all your problems now you gotta rest with them.
	Joe	Yeah
	Mel	Then we'll tell you how to solve them.
	Henry	You gotta get warmed up
	Joe	(cough)
9:00	*Henry*	And vice versa.[1]

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[1] On the original transcript, the materials fitted precisely onto six pages. The tape goes on for another hour and 40 minutes, or so. Whether the fragment would have continued on until the bottom of a next page, or have cut off at this neat time-and-topical place, is an open question.

Lecture 3
A collaboratively built sentence; The use of 'We'

I'm going to begin discussing this eight-minute segment from a group therapy session for teenage kids that I gave out last time. When I used this last year as a final exam, I offered as a suggestion for considering it, that I took it to be an initiation ceremony, and as such, among the things in it that are of interest is the fact that it isn't done via a script. I think it may be the case that one of the participants in the group knew beforehand that somebody new was going to come that day, but that's about it. There isn't any basis at all for supposing that this thing was planned by them. And yet (if 'yet' is at all a relevant term; it's relevant vis-à-vis the literature on initiation ceremonies anyway) there are certainly features in it which are proposed to be present in initiation ceremonies. But our task is not going to be so much to see the extent to which that is so, but to try to come to terms with this thing, as best we can.

I'm going to begin consideration of it with what I take to be Segment 2, which runs from the cough which is right after the introduction of the various personnel, until that point which is very close to the 1:30 marker, where Mel says "Oh, ok." So it runs from "cough" to "oh, ok," inclusive. That's going to be the subject-matter for these first considerations. Perhaps we'll eventually move backwards and forwards.

There are, in the conversation itself, a lot of events that are to the altogether naive eye, quite remarkable. That is, without any analysis and simply by inspection you can find some things that you might take to be worth thinking about, without any special consideration of what we've done here at all. Probably the most striking thing right off, would be that part of the third section where there's a series of eleven questions run off in about 45 seconds, by the given members of the group to the new entrant, in which they ask him things about himself, giving in each of the questions what they take to be the answer. And where the questions have some rather extraordinary detail in them, for example, question ten, "Ten, you've been kicked out of school once." The issues of how these guys have that information, and what they do with it, are quite obvious ones. And perhaps we'll eventually get to consider that.

Segment 2 begins with what is, in its way, also a rather remarkable occurrence; and that is, the three boys collaborate to produce a single sentence:

   Joe :   (cough) We were in an automobile discussion,
   Henry :   discussing the psychological motives for

Mel :   drag racing on the streets.

It's not altogether unheard of for two persons to collaborate to produce a single sentence. The normal way that is done, however, is that, say, one person produces an almost complete sentence and finds himself searching for a last word or a last phrase which he can't find, and the other offers it. Another place where one gets something like this is in the following sort of thing: A person makes a request – 'Would you pass the salad." Somebody else, maybe the person who got the request, then appends to the request some word or phrase that they propose properly completes it. . .((voice from the gallery: "Please")) . . ."Please;" which they propose that, lacking that, the request is not complete.

Now those are two sorts of things worth considering in their own right. But they're far off from this thing we're looking at. It's a kind of procedure of such power that if it were used as a literary technique it would just be rather vulgar, I suppose. I know a couple of literary uses, though I can't really pin them down for sure, and if anyone knows of any you could tell me sometime, or collect them yourself.[1] In a musical version of Edgar Lee Master's *Spoon River Anthology* he uses this as a way that the pair of lovers talk.[2] That is, the pair of lovers talk in the following sort of way: Each one produces part of a sentence, which the other then may complete. So you write out a sentence, break it somewhere, and have the other part of the pair continue it.

Now Masters was writing a while ago, and I take it that we would take it that that's an altogether obvious device to show, through this playing with the syntactic features of an utterance, that these people are close to each other. They're a unit. Because a sentence is obviously a prototypical instance of that thing which is done by some unit. Normally, some single person. That then permits it – for those who have the wit to do it – to be a way that some non-apparent unit may be demonstrated to exist.

We get, then, a kind of extraordinary tie between syntactic possibilities and phenomena like social organization. That is, an extremely strong way that these kids go about demonstrating that, for one, there is a group here, is their getting together to put this sentence together, collaboratively.

It's hard to figure how they could do that right off, in anything like as sharp a way as they picked. As it happens, as rare as I take it that this kind of a thing is – and until I saw it I don't think I had seen anything like it before – in the very same segment there's another. Between 1:00 and 1:30 we get the following sequence:

Mel :   Ok   Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're a poor
           little rich kid we've told you that.
Henry : And we also decided you're a chicken shit.

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[1] Written in at the margin: "Donald Duck. Huie, Louie & Dewey." A student contributed this.
[2] Written in at the margin: "cf. Freud."

In the case of the participle "discussing," which constructs what is being said as a dependent clause and makes, then, the statement before it a clause also, the phenomenon is rather sharper than this one, where "and" is a rather normal way to begin a sentence. But it seems to do exactly the same kind of job, for, now a different group. That is, if the first group (Joe, Henry, Mel) is formed through their production of "We were in an automobile discussion . . . ," etc., and is demonstrated to be present through that production, as an organized entity in this terribly powerful sense of being organized in such a sufficient way that a task properly done by a single person is done by all of them together – and not as a chorus – then, there are clear ways that Mel's "Now your're a poor little rich kid we've told you that," followed by Henry's "And we also decided you're a chicken shit" is very similar. I'll consider this one when we get down that far into the conversation. And if you examine the conversation with the slightest attention, certainly one would take it that at that point in it a subgroup is being formed, consisting of the two people (Mel, Henry) who collaborate on that sentence.

Such mobilizations of syntax are normally assigned to purely literary phenomena – poetry, the novel, the play – as their expectable environments. That they might be explored by laymen doing quite unformalized tasks is something that is, I take it, quite worthy of being investigated – for other things than just this particular way that these syntactic features are being handled.

Now let's see to some extent how that thing is done. Joe's utterance, "We were in an automobile discussion," is something which by itself could be a perfectly decent sentence. And it is, then, in the first instance, what Henry does that makes it the independent clause of a sentence which is now to have a dependent clause. That is, Henry makes his own statement not possibly a sentence by using the participle "discussing," which is just not a way of beginning a sentence.[3]

About the third part (Mel's "drag racing on the streets") there is no question that it collaborates with the second in making of the first, 'the independent clause.' Neither the second or third alone are sentences, and the two together do not make a sentence. Only with the first is it all a sentence. So that particular choice of participle is to be accounted for by reference to some task of social organization, solved by reference to syntactical features. And not by any, quote, purely linguistic considerations. Or even stylistic considerations. The participle, then, becomes an object in the technology of social structures, I suppose. And we get some work that it can do which one isn't going to find much in whatever radical grammar you're going to look at.[4] That would be trivially true for almost every grammar, since they would never make a distinction in the first instance, between speakers. And yet it's obvious that, that this statement is made by three persons makes it quite a different statement than if it was made by one. And if you took it as all made

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[3] Written into the margin: "Needs to be modified, for it can begin a sentence."
[4] Written into the margin: "And we don't find this in sociology texts either."

by one, the various ways that they might have of doing the kinds of things they can do when they make it together, would be enormously weakened. Suppose, for example, Joe had said the whole thing. And the two of them either said "Yeah," or nothing. The character of what they would be affirming would be possibly obscure.

So it's not only that they present themselves and demonstrate that they are organized, but by collaborating on the sentence they have this extremely powerful way of showing that they do agree as to what it is that the topic was: They all have some part in saying what it was. And I take it that that's a different kind of technique of affirmation than is, A says the topic was X, and B says yes it was. And that would be especially relevant where the question is, what does that topic mean; where, for example, a person who hears it may take it that he is not sure, and perhaps neither of them really agree on it.

In the way that these fellows fit their talk together, which would involve a hearer in seeing that they 'know what's on each other's minds,' he could presumably as well take it that what it is they're talking about, they also know. And that the thing works this way would of course be further evidenced if we had more studied uses of it; that is to say, literary uses, for example, where it is obviously just that point that's being made. That is to say, what better way is there for lovers to show that they are one.[5]

In that regard it's perhaps worth opening up one's notion of what it is that organization might be directed to doing. There is, I take it, a considerable tendency to think of the task of organization as being the solution, by a set of persons, of some job which no single one could, or could efficiently, do. Although that is certainly so to some considerable extent, the fact that there is a job that any person could clearly do by themself, provides a resource for members for permitting them to show each other that whatever it is they're doing together, they're just doing together to do together. That is to say, if one wants to find a way of showing somebody that what you want is to be with them, then the best way to do it is to find some way of dividing a task which is not easily dividable, and which clearly can be done by either one alone. And that, I take it, obviously is done rather frequently, if not with the putting together of sentences, then with all sorts of other things. Where neither party can then readily take it that the other is simply being of help, but is involved in seeing that what they're doing is 'doing whatever you're doing with you.'

Now there's certainly ambiguity in 'divisible' as a term. And what I'm pointing to is not something which is not readily divisible and is also unmanageable by one person, but something which is not readily divisible but which is manageable by any single person. The point can be made by paraphrasing a fantastic aphorism of Kafka's. He loved to play with the problems of social organization, and give them queer formulations. And at one time he's considering Neptune's problems. Neptune is the bureaucrat who runs the oceans, according to Kafka. And he has the following kind of problem: How in the world is he supposed to divide up that kind of work?

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[5] Written into the margin: "cf. Freud"

You can't, after all, assign somebody an ocean. It's not that sort of non-divisibility that we're talking about.

Now there are, aside from what I've just mentioned, a variety of other things involved in this segment that we're going to have to consider in one way or another.

An extremely sharp formulation is made of the term 'we,' where it remains the subject of the sentence without each person affiliating himself to it. And we might then say about 'we,' that what it refers to is 'those three guys.' That, however, would be a possibly troublesome kind of way of characterizing it. For what we might have to decide, then, is what kind of form of 'those three guys' does it refer to? That is, is it a list in which they happen to be the only people on the list – that is, directly pointed to by 'we'? They talk in a sequence which might permit one to say they are a list of persons, and previously they are introduced as a list; a list of nameables. Now if it is a list, then there are of course a variety of kinds of operations which might be permissable on that. For example, order might not matter at all. If we wanted to write them down we could say 'we:' (Mel, Henry, Joe) or (Joe, Mel, Henry), it doesn't matter. As long as you have them there, that's it. At least for some purposes it would seem intuitively obvious that order is not irrelevant to the use of those names, and if we go back to the first segment, we can see such a one.

When the new entrant comes in, the others are sitting around the room, in chairs. There is the therapist, then Mel, then Joe, and Henry. Bob comes in, and he's introduced. There's a pause in the introduction, right at the beginning: "This is uh Mel." Now we can take it that at that point matters are open as to how they're going to be introduced, i.e., in what sequence. And we can take it that probably only two alternatives are present: Go around to the therapist's left, or around to his right. But you wouldn't start in the middle, i.e., with Joe. Once the therapist has named Mel, presumably anybody who came in and knew that Mel had been introduced, could do the job of introducing. And if it were done in any other sequence, we would take it that something special is being done. For purposes of introduction, then, if the persons are in some way physically arranged with respect to each other, then we would take it that it isn't simply an open matter as to what sequence they ought to be introduced in. There may be some openness to it, but probably, given the first name, there's a proper further sequence to the end.

Now the problem about 'we' that we have to deal with, which is only roughly posed by the issue of orderability, is the following. Is it the case that 'we' is some collection of these guys' names, directly? Or is it some category or a set of categories for which these fellows are incumbents? Where, then, their names are usable to refer to them, but there is some organization, perhaps, of those in that category. Where that organization is what's important. And saying that, then we have to turn to it first. Do we have to build a category here? Or can we turn simply to the list of names as the thing being referred to?

'We' clearly can refer to a category, which has as one of its crucial properties that no intention exists of listing the incumbents, and furthermore they're not

listable. That is, 'we' can refer to an infinite population. For example, 'Americans.' That's an obvious infinite population. People on a bus are an infinite population, insofar as you don't say 'at time T.' 'We' is stable over the use of 'Americans,' and therefore it might be only incidental that these people are listed.

Now, "What's the difference?" may be a question for you. If it were the case that 'we,' in this instance, is properly used as the substitute for a listing of the personnel and could not be used unless a list could be made, and a list were intended, then it's clear that 'we' must get a tremendously more restricted use than it in fact has.

One way we could go about approaching the issue of, is there some category that is being referred to by 'we', is to consider what may be a same use of the term in this segment – where there are quite different uses of it, clearly. That is, there are some uses in the middle which perhaps refer to a group whose incumbents are two persons. But the last use of 'we' in this segment, in the sentence "We got company," looks to me, anyway, like a similar use to this first use. And now we've got an alternative category to the unknown category we're dealing with, which is 'company.' Whoever 'we' are, 'company' is something in alternation to that. And 'company' is a kind of interesting term. First of all, it doesn't discriminate either as to single or plural personnel, and it is clearly a category that is in alternation to some other category. Now it's interesting, for one, that it's a category in alternation to some other category, but there are a variety of uses of 'company' which stand in alternation to a variety of categories. It is, in a way, a general alternation category. That is to say, this could be 'family' and that could be 'company;' this could be a variety of other things and that could still be 'company.'

Lecture 4
Tying Rules

Last time I ended in the middle of a consideration of that first use of 'we,' and I made some issues about the kind of term it might be. I'm not going to continue with that now, because I'd rather hold off on considerations which are somewhat deeper than what I want to be doing, which is just going through some of the readily observable features of this segment. And when we've gone through those, we can deal with such matters as the 'we.'

So let's proceed now by first considering some of the ways beyond what we've so far gotten, that the utterances of this segment are tied together. In doing that we will of course – 'of course' because that's the way the data happens to run – be re-observing things that we've observed earlier in the course. So let's get at some of the ways that the parts are tied together – where that they are tied together is a fact, and would be part of the warrant for saying in the first instance that there's a conversation going on, and perhaps even that what I picked out is an isolatable segment of it, i.e., that we have some way of deciding that this is 'a segment of conversation.'

When I earlier introduced some sequencing rules I said about them that they could operate within a sentence, across sentences, and indeed across utterances. And we have a variety of them so operating here. We can stick initially to those that operate across utterances. They tend heavily to operate across consecutive utterances; that is, between two utterances, one of which follows the other.

Now right off is what looks to be an instance of this Verb Followed by Pro-verb Rule:

> *Joe* : I still say though that if you take, if you take uh a big fancy car out on the road and you're hotroddin' around you're you're bound to get, you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted. We– look
>
> *Mel* : Now did you do it right.

In this instance the rule would deal with "are hotroddin'," Mel's "do" being the Pro-verb replacing, standing for, substituting for, referring back to Joe's "are hotroddin'."

There's at least one, and surely more, Noun Followed by Pro-noun:

> *Mel* : Not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon.
>
> *Joe* : Now I agree it looks like a daddy's– It looks like a damn mommy's car.

That is, "Pontiac station wagon" in one utterance, "it" in the next utterance.

The character of these as rules in these cases will have to be examined, and I'll try to say something about that in a while.

One that recurs several times, and that's rather more complicated, we could start out by examining in the sequence:

Henry :   And we also decided you're a chicken shit.
Joe :   I decided that years ago.

The term I'm interested in there is Joe's "that." There are several others like it. In Henry's first remark of the sequence he says "That's the problem with society," and "that" presumably refers back to the long if–then clause of Joe's, "if you take a big fancy car out on the road. . ." etc., etc. And there's one of the same sort, internal to a particular utterance, Mel's "Now did you do it right. That's the challenge."

I stated initially that 'that' is a more complicated problem. That is so because, for one, 'that' can have a variety of other uses, and does, in the very conversation we have here. For example, Joe's "I still say though that if you take. . ." right at the beginning of the segment, is a rather different thing. What that involves is that we have to have some way of locating the class of 'that,' apart from the sheer occurrence of 'that,' which is possibly relevant to this rule. Where, let's say for now that the rule works something like: Predicate ← 'That'.

The question of how we go about locating those 'that's which are relevant to this rule, will involve us in considering the character of all of these rules when they're operating across utterances. And let's do that, briefly, anyway. The occurrence of these rules, being not located within a single utterance, poses for us a problem: What form are these rules supposed to have, insofar as they are somehow regulating or guiding the Members' actions; and what kind of procedures for analysis do they pose?

At least a rough version of the problem might be as follows: The fact that there are these rules, and that they have a clear locus within a single sentence, say, operates to provide a maxim which is what we can call a Second Speaker's Maxim, though 'second speaker' has to be given what may be seen as a special formulation. Somebody who wants to make themselves a second speaker to some utterance can have as a maxim for him that if he wants to tie his utterance to that of a preceding speaker's, he can formulate some part of his utterance as a second part of one of these rules, if he can use some second part which can be tied to some then-made 'first part' of a then-made 'first speaker's' utterance. That is to say, somebody who wants to make themselves a second speaker, can make somebody a first speaker. It can be anywhere in the conversation. He makes some part of what some speaker did, a 'first part' for one of these rules. He doesn't start out, we take it, with a set of marked objects: First Parts for these rules. But by his speech he makes some part of what some speaker did, a 'first part' for one of the rules.

So the analysis starts out with the locations of the second parts of these rules. And it's in that sense that someone formulates himself as a 'second speaker,' i.e., the maxim doesn't govern first speaker's actions. What we've got then, is something like this: There are these rules which may have an unspecified environment of use, which could be a single sentence, some sequence of sentences by a single utterer, or the utterances of several persons. If they're going to be used by some group of speakers, then it's the business of somebody who is formulating himself as a second speaker to invoke them and provide for the relevance of a first item by using something that is clearly a second item. When someone does such a thing we get, quite obviously, a sense in which he ties his utterance to that of some preceding speaker.

Let me indicate that it's perfectly possible to set oneself up as a first speaker by the use of other sorts of rules. For example, if you ask a question, then the fact of a question sets one's position as 'first speaker' to which the rule Q → A, Question Followed by Answer, is locatable by the fact that there's an observable 'first occurrence.' And I think it is the case that there are a variety of ways that persons can formulate themselves as first speakers for even some of these Second Speaker Rules, though that's a rather more subtle problem and we'll deal with it as we come to handle data in which it's present.

And I want to introduce an unspecified caveat to the Second Speaker's Maxim: It is the case that persons can in one way or another move to prevent the use of their utterance as something to which another can tie an utterance, and they can move to encourage it. So while the maxim we set up can operate independently of what the formulated 'first speaker' does, there are things a speaker can do to effect what treatment their utterance may get. That there are, is something that is for at least a certain kind of conversation, quite important.

But for utterances handled by the Second Speaker Rules, we want to start out with the second item and find a way of finding the first. And we have to have some clear way of deciding that we have a second item. Some of them may be quite clear as, at least, possible second items. The various pro-terms might be quite clear, but we take it that 'that' is not clear. How then do we find out whether we have a 'that' which ought to be seen as a possible second item, so as to start the search for a first, so as to see, then, whether that person has used the rules to tie his piece of talk to a preceding piece of talk? What we're considering then, is the sequence that the analysis has to go through, and what is has to include.

Apparently what it has to include is an analysis of the syntax of the sentence. And that's important. It's in the first instance, I think, the syntax of the sentence that tells you whether you have such a 'that' as is a likely second item. The differences of the 'that's are the different syntactic functions that they serve. Those that we're dealing with here as second items are probably easier seen as the objects of the sentences, and those that are not are things like, particularly, conjunctions. Now those sentences in which the relevant 'that's occur, have them in a very clear position. "That's the problem with society." And what's invoked by "that" is the predicate of the preceding

utterance; that is, the problem of society is that if you go out and hotrod, etc., certain things will happen to you.

And for "I decided that years ago," 'I decided years ago' is an adverbial phrase, I suppose; 'that,' the object, replaced with 'I'm a chicken shit.' And I take it that that at least holds for the material that we have. I also take it that you oughtn't to get terribly frightened, since you could easily enough see what the object of the sentence is, as compared to 'that' being used as a conjunction in, for example, "I still say though that if you take . . ."

But the important thing is that to locate those second items we have to go through some crude or not syntactic considerations, and it's not the word's occurrence that does that for us. If we then locate a 'that' that is an object of a sentence, we have the basis for then proceeding to consider whether there is, and what is, that thing to which it's tied. (In the materials we have, they tend to be whole predicates, I guess, of preceding utterances.) and if not whole predicates, then pretty near whole predicates.) Now that's something that we haven't previously considered. That is, we have not previously found situations where syntactical analysis was required before we could do the analysis we needed to do.

There are a variety of other things which are, in the case of this conversation, perfectly simple to see. Such things as the simple use in some second utterance of the same subject or the same subject plus verb or the same verb, as is used in a previous utterance. There are a bunch of such things; for example, the use of 'you' in Joe's "if you take a big fancy car out on the road and you're hotroddin' around you're bound to get caught," followed by Mel's "You wanna try and do it right so you do not get caught." That 'you' is an exceptionally important phenomenon. It's a definite pronoun, and it has no special reference at all. It certainly doesn't mean you, the listener. I'll consider that sort of 'you' when I get finished dealing with these rather surface aspects of the way the conversation is tied.

Verb phrases recur in first and second utterances; there's "picked up" . . ."picked up" in some sequence, 'tear down". . ."tear down " in another,[1] and others.

Now there are some uses of the rules which start out by having the whole

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[1] The reference here is probably to the following:

Joe : and the guy will pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before I before he'll pick me up. Just– just for–
Mel : Not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon.

and

Henry : Hey don't tear him down
Joe : I've been torn down for–
Mel : Ok
Henry : We got company

rule introduced in a single utterance, and then, by virtue of the fact that the rules are repetitively operatable – as we said earlier, you could have N ← P ← P, indefinitely – what we get is: N ← P in one utterance, and then the continuation in the second. So we have, "Joe, face it you're a poor little rich kid," then several lines down there's an elaborate way of relocating that subject, and a continuation of the use of 'you' as the subject thereafter, quite clearly tying that to the first use.

Henry: Joe, face it, You're a poor little rich kid.
            .
            .

Mel: Okay   Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're a
          poor little rich kid we've told you that.
Henry: And we also decided you're a chicken shit.
          .

Mel: Now let's see what else can we decide about you?

I'll consider this one, also, in more detail, because it's not a perfectly simple use.

There's a rather interesting one involved in the following sequence. We get "Bonneville" ← "it," i.e., N ← P, and then "Pontiac station wagon" ← "it." They're talking about the same car, and it's at least plausible that the reference of 'Pontiac station wagon' is to 'it' in the preceding utterance, as its antecedent.

Joe: In that Bonneville of mine? I could take it out with me . . . and the
       guy will pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before I before
       he'll pick me up. Just– just for–
Mel: Not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon.
Joe: Now I agree it looks like a daddy's– It looks like a damn
       mommy's car.

I said it's interesting because there's a tremendous economy in this conversation, and in many such conversations, involving the use of nouns – they're just not much used. And when you get one used, it's doing some work. The compactness of these conversations is handled in part via the tremendous use of these pro-terms, which just make up the bulk of talk. That can be seen at first glance by virtue of the fact that there's only one use of a personal name in the conversation, and that use has a major significance, it marks a big change in topic.

In the case of "Bonneville". . ."it," "Pontiac station wagon". . ."it," the renaming of the car is clearly a recharacterization of the car. I say 'clearly,' in the sense that if you knew it was the same car, then you'd take it that something different is being pointed out about it. The person who originally used the term 'Bonneville' acknowledges that something different has been done (Joe, with his "Now I agree it looks like a . . . damn mommy's car"),

and some people who have seen the conversation and didn't know it was the same car, took it that in fact an attack was being made, without regard to whether 'Bonneville' and 'Pontiac station wagon' were different names of the same object. The fact that that's done by change in name would suggest that whatever generic critique one could make of Russell's notion that names are disguised descriptions, nonetheless in this sort of situation that's the way the names are being used. So that 'Pontiac station wagon' is a transformation of the name of the object being initially referred to, which transforms the character of that object from something which, let's say roughly at this point, could be a thing which you could approximate hotrodding in, to something which you couldn't possibly approximate hotrodding in. Why you couldn't possibly, is something we'll consider eventually.

Let me just note about the range of sequencing rules, that they can be used just as sheer indicators that there's a conversation going on. And one way you can characterize people who can't converse is that, so far as you can tell, you could perfectly well disorder the conversation without having any effect on it. That is, you could juxtapose any of the parts. Given the way these things operate, if we have these rules tying pieces of conversation to other pieces, you can't disorder them. You can't put an utterance that contains the second for some particular first, ahead of it. It matters what sequence they come out in. And people make it their business to make it matter.

There are also some much more interesting, perhaps less obvious, and in any case less overt and 'technical' – in the sense of having to do with the names of these words – ways in which this conversation is tied together. But to get at them I'll have to do a whole big analysis and I want to deal with things that are right on the face of the conversation before we move on, so you can see first how obviously locked together it is. Therefore, I'm going to move to some other surface features of the conversation before dealing with the more elaborate ways it's tied together. In doing that, I'll be doing something which I ought to have done previously, and which may give some sop to people who are interested in personality.[2] And that is, there are some really quite striking ways that, even in this one page, these three guys speak differently. And these are quite obvious and observable things, though some of their technical features may not be obvious. For example, this fellow Joe recurrently uses a pattern like "you're you're bound to get you're bound to get caught." There are three or four such uses. It's not an unheard-of thing. And it's important to see that it's not an unheard-of thing; that it is something that has been observed, and observed as characteristic of something. This is not to say that if it is characteristic of something, then he is one of them. But it is characteristic of the speech of very young children. It's something called 'buildups.' For young children, it may have as its basis the fact that they have a very limited grasp of grammar, and they literally assemble a sentence by putting its parts together, piece by piece. If you look at a book I've mentioned before, *Language in the Crib* by Ruth Weir, she has a discussion of these

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[2] The title of the course was 'Culture and Personality.'

things (pages 81–82), and a bunch of examples. The kid there is, I think, something around two. But any of you who have heard young children talk, will have heard that sort of thing. It's obviously not simply a stutter. And it's extremely characteristic of this fellow, Joe.

Another thing that is sort of striking occurs twice in Mel's speech, and I don't think anywhere else. It's not a unique usage at all, and it's perfectly well examinable as to what it can do. And that is, he uses the syntax of questions without making – for utterance-rule purposes – questions. That is, he builds a syntactical question without intending that at the end of it he would stop talking and somebody would answer. He does that in quite obvious ways by using the reversal pattern of questions: "Now did you do it right," for example, and "Now let's see what else can we decide about you." That is, ". . . can we . . . ," ". . . did you . . ." are such kinds of things. And I'll consider those, also.

The third fellow, Henry, has what looks like an exceptionally idiomatized way of talking. Three of his whole utterances are single pre-constructed sentences, akin to proverbs in a way. That is, they are sentences that he didn't have to construct for this occasion, that can by used by whomsoever, that come on just as that – a sentence. Things like, "That's the problem with society," "face the music," and "we got company."

Lecture 5
Tying rules; Insult sequences

I've been examining how the parts of this segment of conversation are tied together, dealing first with some very small 'pair-ties.' We'll move on to much more elaborate ones as we go along, and then get into what this conversation is about, and how it works with respect to that kind of matter. The kinds of rules I've been offering are by and large not at all constrained by what the conversation happens to be dealing with. Eventually we'll see that there are no untied utterances in the segment. And by that I mean, no utterance for which there is not at least a single tie. We'll find that for some there are far more than a single tie. I haven't worked out a measuring system to compare conversations in this regard, but I take it that that might be doable in any event.

Let me go over some of the rules I've already given. We have, for example, some purely-internal-to-a-sentence rules, like the one for making an independent clause out of what might have been a sentence, and for making your own utterance a dependent clause in that sentence, and for making your own utterance a dependent clause in that sentence. It runs something to the effect of: If some given utterance is ended by a noun, then participialize that noun and use it to begin your own utterance. And of course, besides participializing that noun you have to be otherwise syntactically consistent with the preceding utterance. Just consider: "We were having dinner". . ."dining on roast beef." You can make a whole bunch of them in just that way, although that's not the only way you make dependent clauses.

The second rule concerns prepositional phrases. They consist of a preposition plus a noun phrase. If an utterance ends with a preposition, then if you begin the next with a noun phrase that could be the noun phrase for that preposition, you tie your utterance to it.

A third rule concerns the use of conjunctions. Now the conjunction is rather more complicated because the syntactical consistency is much more important. If an utterance ends with what might be a sentence, if you begin the next with a conjunction and otherwise make it syntactically consistent, then again you can tie the second to the first.

Then there are a variety of rules which, while they could operate within a sentence or within a single utterance composed of several sentences, they can also operate across utterances. Given that for these that I'm going to list, we start out with the second item for the rule and not the first, it might be convenient not to write them as, e.g., N ← P (N followed by P), but as P → N, so that we know that we're starting with P. So there's that one for pronouns and nouns, there's the same sort for pro-verbs and verbs, there's the

one for 'that' (with a special constraint on syntax) and predicates; now there are some more.

Some of the others, once we mention them, will permit us to see a rather clear difference between those things which we identify in the first instance from what turns out to be the second object, and those we identify by noticing the first object. For example, we can look at a question–answer sequence, which is as clear a version as you want of starting out with the first part. In this conversation you get things like: "What school did you go to?" I went to Palisades." and "You've been kicked out of school once." "Yeah." Now for those, it's by virtue of the fact that the first item provides that the next is going to be a second, that those seconds are clearly seconds. They are not otherwise so identifiable. They're not even identifiable as answers to questions. But there's no doubt, I take it, for anybody, that things like "Yeah" in that sequence, are second items. But what we have in these other kinds of rules, is that the first items are not identifiable as 'first items.' It's by virtue of the fact that the second is clearly 'a second to something' that we go back and find a first, as compared to, say, the question–answer sequence where we identify the first. That means, for one, that you get a kind of distribution of compactness in the question–answer sequences. Given the fact of the question providing the relevant sense of the thing that ought to follow it, nothing much has to go into the answer. And a zillion questions could be answered by 'yes' or 'no.'

Now we can find some instances of this question–answer sort of rule in this piece of conversation. There is at least one command and then return-to-command – it could be either acceptance or rejection of the command, but it would be clearly seen as one or the other. For example, 'Joe, face it . . . ," "Yes . . ." (I'm not saying the 'yes' is an acceptance. I'll analyze it eventually. It's a much more careful thing than an acceptance in that case.) It is by virtue of the command being seen as the first item, providing for a relevant second, that the seconds have their character, though some answers are obviously answers – not many.

There's one which you can play conservative or non-conservative on, as to how you write the rule, but let's say: Incomplete Utterance followed by Interrupter Term. I say you can play this conservative because you might not take it that the utterance was clearly incomplete. And you might start out with the fact that it looks like you've got an interrupter term, and work backwards: interrupter term → incomplete utterance.

I take it that that holds in its strong version – that is, incomplete utterance first – for the sequence:

Mel: Now let's see what else can we decide about you?
Henry: Hey don't tear him down

'Hey' is clearly an interrupter term. You might not take it that it's obvious that "Now let's see what else can we decide about you" is an incomplete utterance. To get some feel for that, reconsider the earlier statement that is

syntactically alike to it, "Now did you do it right." And I want to cross out the question mark at the end of "Now let's see what else can we decide about you?" because in my last listening to that piece of conversation I find that I now think that there is no intonation at the end that leads one to feel it's a question, though of course it has that reversal construction of a question, i.e., not "let's see what else we can decide . . ." but "let's see what else can we decide . . ."

There is a class of tying verbs that are used. There are a lot of verbs that may tie, but there are some verbs which, when used, are just tying verbs. Like 'agree.' When somebody says "I agree," they're tying that statement to some other statement of somebody else's. So you could write it as some utterance ← tying verb, but it would probably be done as tying verb → some utterance.

Now there are some things which can occur within a single utterance or could even occur in single sentences, which also can occur across utterances. When they occur across utterances they are clearly serving to tie utterances together. And those are what we could call lister terms. The most obvious lister terms are, of course, things like the ordinal numbers: First, second, third, as we get in the next segment of this conversation, in the series starting with "Well first of all you must be crazy . . ." But there are some used in this second segment to do that kind of work, that are not the ordinal numbers. A series can be explicitly started with a first, $L_1 \rightarrow L_2$. Or you can have a first occurrence of a lister that is making itself follow something else, where the other has not been specifically introduced as the first of a list. In this segment Mel says "Now you're a poor little rich kid, we've told you that." You might say that 'now' is a lister term. It's not clearly one, it has plenty of other uses, and you'd have to make a good argument for it. But it's followed by "And we also decided . . ." which turns it into a 'first' where it could have been just a single.

A lot of other rules can be constructed, but with these you can certainly get some idea that these people were in some way or other talking to each other, and making the fact that they were talking to each other a big part of their business.

Now, what I'm going to be doing is taking small parts of a thing and building out from them, because small parts can be identified and worked on without regard to the larger thing they're part of. And they can work in a variety of larger parts than the one they happen to be working in. I don't do that just as a matter of simplicity, but as I mentioned earlier in the course, the image I have is of this machinery, where you would have some standardized gadget that you can stick in here and there and that can work in a variety of different machines. And you go through the warehouse picking them up to build some given thing you want to build. So these smaller components are first to be identified because they are components perhaps for lots of other tasks than the one they're used in. But then they'll be fitted together into some actual single larger component in this case.

Okay, let's look at this one for a while:

> *Henry*:   Joe, face it, You're a poor little rich kid.
> *Joe*:   Yes Mommy.
> *Henry*:   Face the music

We could start off simply enough by saying that it is a recurring part of, let's say at least, teenager's conversations, that an insult is properly followed by another, or a return to it.

In fact, that little thing itself is the basic component of some very standardized teenagers' games. They are alternation games, they have names, and one of the names is in fact used later on in the conversation. There is a considerable literature which pretty much first emerged into literature in a paper by John Dollard in 1957 called 'On playing the dozens,' which is a Negro kids' game, and it's an insult game. The kids engage sequentially in insulting each other. They tend to do it before some audience, where the audience, by its reaction, decides that the game is over. In that form it's been well written-up in a variety of papers. Dollard's paper is in a book by Roger Abraham on that sort of phenomenon, called *Down in the Jungle* (1964).

The game was apparently not much thought to be one that white high school kids play, but they do. And one of the names in that environment is 'tearing down,' which is what the action eventually gets called in this sequence. It is not, however, to be seen as getting its analysis by some simple historical expansion – which is one way that people have considered it – that is, that it passed from Negro kids to white kids at some time. Because some of its features, like this 'Mommy' bit, are fabulously old.

The 'Mommy' return is extremely classic in such kinds of things. I'll give you a quotation. This guy Eric Partridge, who writes all these things up, has a book called *The Shaggy Dog Story*, and in it he reports what he calls an ancient Greek story.

> A pert youth meeting an old woman driving a herd, called "Good morning mother of asses." "Good morning, my son," she returned.

Apparently that's one of the classic ways that you handle an insult, i.e., if it's an insult for which the most elegant return would be to make my status a consequence of yours. And kinship obviously is the most powerful way of doing that, like "You're an ass." "Thanks Dad." Those kind of things are obviously extremely powerful and by no means new, by no means to be accounted for by the fact that in Detroit the racial barriers are broken down so that Negro kids and white kids are closer to each other – except incidentally.

There are several reasons I'm going through the fact of this game. One is that by treating the first event as possibly the first event in such a game, by doing a second, that's a way of giving a special characterization to the first insult as something that is not serious and is not going to be heard as serious. It also sets up a challenge, which is, Okay you started, I came back, go ahead

if you're willing to. And Henry withdraws. That is, the move that would accept the sequence as a game and continue it, would be for him, since he has a slot, to come back with another insult. But he closes it off with "Face the music." It's quite apparent that what he's done is to withdraw, in that when it rapidly turns out that he has an ally in that thing, it starts up again, as you can easily enough see.

Henry :   Joe, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.
Joe :   Yes Mommy.
Henry :   Face the music
Mel :   Ok   Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're
            a poor little rich kid we've told you that.
Henry :   And we also decided you're a chicken shit.

While we're on this sequence, we might as well note that one of the things we earlier pointed out is also present here. I proposed that if it were the case that we had the form of pronoun–noun relationship where the pronoun actually precedes the noun and is not the second that's discovered first, but is first, then something special is going on. And the 'it' in "Joe, face it" is such a one. One pretty clear thing it's doing is, it keeps that utterance open to then flip out the item that completes the N–P pair.

There's a whole bunch of ways that statements that might be closed by virtue of the fact that they're sentences, are kept open in this first segment. I pointed to some of them already, though I haven't worked out how they work. For example, those special kinds of questions that this fellow Mel uses. Another is that even if the game itself doesn't go on, and one is restricting oneself to an insult-and-retort sequence as one's expectation, then apparently one of the things about the insult–retort sequence (and this is another tradition which is perhaps independent of or pre-existent to this game) is that there's a big crucial thing on having the last word, for some reason or another. And by first producing "Face it" and saving the formula "Face the music," then, whatever the retort is, Henry has the last word, because the formula is tied to his first usage, and he can then fit it in and close the sequence off. So, where you have a formula that you're invoking by splitting its usage, that may be a significant thing to do, and in this case it clearly is. And there's plenty of literature about having the last word. There's a classic thing to look at, an absolutely fabulous book I mentioned before, *The Lore and Language of School Children* by Peter and Iona Opie (Oxford University Press).

Now I want to deal with another little one, one which what I have to say is somewhat beyond my level of believability – which I guess is much more extravagant than other people's – but nonetheless it's possible. And that's the sequence:

Henry :   And we also decided you're a chicken shit.
Joe :   I decided that years ago. Hell with you

The question is, what kind of a return is "I decided that years ago, hell with you." Clearly "hell with you" is of some relevance. It's an indication of courage, or something. Now it's perfectly clear that "I decided that years ago" is not an agreement. It's instead, a rejection. Why should it be a rejection? It looks like a perfectly good agreement, nonetheless it's perfectly clearly not an agreement but a rejection. There is an obvious enough formulation, except it's as I say, beyond my belief that they could be that ingenious, and that is that what he's doing is to set up an antinomy. And he's using the fact that he's setting up an antinomy to undercut the statement. An antinomy is a statement that, if it's true, it's false, and if it's false, it's true. The classical one is "I'm a liar. Everything I say is false." Here, if it takes courage to recognize that you're a coward, then to have recognized that you're a coward took courage, and therefore you couldn't be a coward.

Given such a possibility, I would then try to see, is it the case that people in their ordinary affairs do use antinomies. And I haven't really looked very hard so far, but I found at least one, and it's a classic one, also. It comes from this book, *Style in Language*, edited by Thomas Sebeok, a paper called 'Oral styles of American folk narrators' by this American folklorist, Dorsen, on page 41. He's reporting some story he was told:

> The next supposedly true happening, where Art is asked to tell a lie and says he has no time because so-and-so has just had an accident and he must go to a doctor – which is a lie – is an international folk tale attached to various American yarnspinners

Lecture 6
'You'

I've been talking about this bunch of tying rules. There are a lot more, even of the sort that we've been laying out, apart from any that are more intricate than those, but that's enough for now. The question is, so there they are, why bother talking about them? What is it that they do? To some extent it's terribly simple to see. It's one sort of task for the hearer of some statement to determine what it is that the person who produces some noun is referring to, if he's referring to anything: What's an 'automobile discussion'? What's a 'car'? etc.; it must mean this or that. That's one sort of task. When the tying rules are used, another sort of task is imposed on the hearer: To decide what it is that the tied term – for example, 'it' – refers to, requires finding somewhere in the conversation that the term it ties to occurs.

So in the use of these, there's then a required piece of work for the hearer, which involves collaboration in making out the conversation. Understanding the term implicates the hearer in the conversation – and of course provides that in the very use of such an object the speaker has implicated himself in the course of the conversation. The use of these, then, is not to be seen as simply a way of, for example, avoiding redundancy or making variety or whatever else, but it provides an order of work – and is produced by an order of work – which is at least to some extent different than the work involved in using a name, etc. So that, at least in the first instance, is what the use of these tying rules involves. And that's then, the way in which they make for the sense that the various participants have, that a conversation is taking place; where the participants are implicated, and they are involved in working at all of its parts, as a set of parts.

Now the work that's involved can be sort of minor in that someone may claim, or may in fact not be able to see what it is that some pro-term refers to, i.e., what term it refers to. But it can also be extremely important. It can be the case that some usages provide that if their hearer wants to play dumb, then he's going to have an extremely touchy task to do that. That is, the routine use of these things may operate to provide a great deal of information for the one who uses them; for example, that on some occasion the other does in fact understand what one is talking about, by virtue of the fact that he can continue to put in terms where, quote, nothing explicit has been said – or not much explicit has been said. Eventually I'll give you some instances of usages which are strategically very powerful in the sense of forcing someone to acknowledge that they do in fact understand something, where the fact that they do understand it has tremendous consequences. But for now, I just wanted to raise it. The initial remarks about tying rules would be enough to

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give them some strong warrant. The things I will mention eventually are just elaborate technical developments on them, and they're of some interest but they're not that enormously core.

Let's go back, then, to dealing with bits and pieces. In the first pair of utterances after the introductory sentence of the second segment, we have 'you' used as basically the subject, i.e., ". . . if you take a big fancy car out on the road and you're hotrodding around you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted." "Now did you do it right. That's the challenge. You want to try and do it right so you do not get caught." I want to make some remarks about 'you.'

First let me list some references to the extremely large literature on terms like 'you;' terms such as I, you, he, this, here, now, it, and the like. They've been subject to a lot of study by philosophers and logicians, and if one is interested in conversation, one might well look at that literature to see what's been done on the phenomenon of conversation. Some of the literature is at least historically interesting. There's chapter 7 of Russell's book, *Inquiry into the Meaning of Truth*, and he calls them 'egocentric particulars.' Then there's Nelson Goodman's book, *The Structure of Appearance*, chapter 11. He calls them 'indicator terms.' Then there's Reichenbach's book called *Elements of Symbolic Logic*. He has a long chapter on the analysis of conversational language, which isn't what it says it is; not at all. It's important to see that it's not – and to see that nonetheless it's pretty unique in saying that it is, anyway. That's chapter 7, and he calls them 'reflexive terms.' Then there's Quine, *Word and Object*, section 21. He also calls them 'indicator terms.' Then there's a lot of articles in the philosophical journals. I'm not going to cite them all. Some of them use the names I've given you, but one that's relevant in that it uses its own name is a paper by Bar Hillel in *Mind*, 63 (1954), titled 'On indexical expression.' That's what he calls it. Then there's an old monograph by a linguist named Cullenson, called 'Indicators,' *Language Monographs*, 17 (1937).

The core thing about these terms, and why they're of interest to the logicians, is that they have an extraordinary transiency of reference. So the issue is, if you're dealing with 'the truth or falsity of propositions,' then how are you to interpret a proposition which has the term 'now' in it, or 'he' in it, or 'you' in it, etc. Much of the work has been directed to trying to find a way of rewriting statements or sentences that have those terms in them, so as to provide for the fact that they could be true or false. I won't be considering such issues.

But there's one immediate consequence for my previous discussion. One of the things you ought to see is that if any such terms occur in immediately juxtaposed utterances, that would not be necessarily at all an instance of something that you would want to call a tying-rule case. My proposal that 'If the same subject appears in two consecutive utterances then those utterances are tied,' would not at all obviously be the case if 'you,' and then 'you' appeared. For one, if there are two different speakers, they're not at all referring in any obvious way to the same person. In fact, if you're going to use

these in focusing on the tying operation, what you would want is that whichever term appears in the first utterance, the alternative term appears in the second. You could have an instance of tying if you had 'you' → 'I,' or 'I' → 'you,' where 'you' → 'you' is not at all an obvious such case. So these terms pose a problem for working on the tying operation, but it may be worked out. In any event, the usual 'you' → 'you' problem is not present in the example we'll be considering.

In this case, ". . . if you're hotrodding you're bound to get caught . . . ," "You want to try and do it right so you do not get caught," we have what is a very recurrent use of 'you,' and it's what, if Reichenbach were to talk about it, he would immediately translate as 'one,' 'someone,' or something like that. It is not referring to the person being addressed. It's what we could call, to start off with, an 'indefinite use.' And one of the things we want to ask is, how does it come about that 'you' is used to make that indefinite statement? Why don't they say 'one'? Are they equal?

I think there are more than a couple of things involved, and I'll try to mention most of them that I know of. Let me first discriminate a couple of possible senses of the term 'ambiguity.' One characteristic way it would be used is in an either–or relationship – either you mean this or you mean that, it's not clear which, and they don't have anything much to do with each other. Another usage of the term – and that usage is most considered when you're dealing with poetic language – is this-and-that. For poetic language, one question is, how do you go about building richness into a compact form. One way is to get words which mean this and that, whatever this and that may mean. And the usage of 'you' that we'll be considering is, I think, a case of the latter. 'You' is a very good term for attempting to build ambiguity of the this-and-that sort.

I think the analysis ought to run something like this: What we have to do is to try to construct what a procedure might be for determining what it is that's being referred to when somebody says 'you.' Is there a procedure? If there is one, what does it look like? And what are the consequences of there being one?

Now 'you' in English is, at least in the first instance, systematically ambiguous, in that it does not discriminate between singular and plural usage. And in the ambiguity of 'you,' one has the this-and-that format; that is to say, it is 'you' (you alone) or 'you' (you and others). When a person hears 'you,' they then go through a procedure of deciding what it refers to. And that procedure has a first step, where if the first step seems fully adequate, that ends the procedure, but if it's not, then one goes on. The first step in the procedure is the consideration of the applicability of the singular use, and if it's the case that one comes up with, well maybe that, but certainly not only that, then one moves to the second step and engages in finding, now, some plurality for which the 'you' would be correct. And that plurality could be, for example as I mentioned earlier, some category which, once it's found it would turn out that the singular is a member of. It's also the case that one of the nice things about the non-differentiation and the plural character of 'you' is that

there is no limitation essentially on the size of the population it can be referring to.

The singular 'you' is used as simply a way of dealing with the persons present and being spoken to in an interaction. Plural 'you' is no longer controlled by that fact. It's not at all necessarily the case that it's only referring to the multiplicity of persons present and being spoken to. Indeed, as I mentioned earlier, 'you,' even in its singular case, is regularly a way of referring to that member of 'they' who happens to be present. "You Negroes."

That openness of the plural 'you' means that 'you' can in fact be a way of talking about 'everybody' – and indeed, incidentally, of 'me.' But there's at least a tactical difference between saying 'we' with that intention and 'you' with that intention. The difference is, 'we' has some plural reference, automatically. And it does not have, automatically, a plural reference which includes the person being spoken to. This is in English. In some other languages it's the case that 'we' can only be properly used if it refers to [me and the person I'm talking to]. So you do not say 'we' when you're referring to [me and my wife, and not you]. In English, we do. And 'we' can then – intentionally by the person speaking, or by the decision of the person being spoken to – exclude the person being spoken to. In contrast, if you use 'you,' it at least includes the one you're speaking to, and on their option or on your intention, insofar as those coincide, it can refer to anybody else, or to some category which includes everybody else.

And those differences are extremely carefully focused on by speakers. I have a lot of very subtle usages which turn on those differences; for example, a woman is asked "Why do you want to kill yourself?" and she says "Well, you just want to see if anybody cares." Now that use of 'you' in this case surely refers to her, but refers to her as a member of 'anybody,' and thereby provides that it is only incidentally her reason, but it's anybody's reason, and thereby is not attackable as peculiar. It is offered as proverbially correct.

Those kinds of uses are recurrent, and apparently quite powerful. I have one I just pulled out of the paper the other day, involving an interview between vice-president Humphrey and a Japanese newspaperman, on some relationship between Japan and the United States over control of atomic weapons, I think it was. And Humphrey is asked about America's policy, and whether Japan would have more say. And, although he's talking about what 'we' will do, he formulates his remarks in terms of 'you,' e.g., "You want to give other people a chance," etc. This involves now putting the Japanese who read it in the position of assessing his problem as though it were anyone's problem in such a situation, and it's nothing peculiar to America's position that involves them in being hesitant; anybody in such a situation would be hesitant.

Now, one of the core things about this use of 'you' is that if in the first instance you find that the singular 'you' is inappropriate, you do not move to a sense of it which excludes yourself, but to a sense of it which is much larger but at least includes yourself. It may also, by interpretation, include the

person who has spoken – as you see it, or as they see it, or obviously. But nonetheless, you are also included, which 'one' does not do. And 'we' does not do, and any of the other terms do not do – 'he' doesn't, 'they' doesn't, etc. But 'you' uniquely does. So it isn't the case that 'you' and 'one' are equivalent.[1] And it does seem to be the case that the procedures for determining what it is that 'you' refers to – if the procedure is something like I make it out – is crucial to the special use the 'you' gets and that no other pronoun term gets. That is, 'you' is the term which gets used in specifying a proverb, or a proverbial type of frame.

Returning to this sequence, there are other things involved in the use of 'you.' One of them is another kind of ambiguity. We get this statement of Joe's, "if you go hotrodding you're bound to get caught." If it's some generic type of argument of an if–then sort (though there's no explicit 'then'), it could be delivered as, "if anyone goes hotrodding . . . ," "if a kid goes hotrodding . . . ," etc. What the 'you' does is, beside making it an argument, it borrows the form of a warning. That's the way warnings get delivered. "If you do the following, then this will happen to you." And the relationship, for kids anyway, of those generic if–then types with warnings, is probably something quite ambiguous. They first learn the warning version. They then have to learn to separate the pure argument type. And for some matters, I take it, it must be quite important that one never makes a complete break, and that there are ways of making the assertion not merely an argument, but also a warning, or a piece of advice. And clearly one way that would be done is to use the form of the warning, which involves the use of 'you' in that phrase. More generally, if you count the number of uses of 'you' in these proverbs, and their power – which is tremendous – you have a lot of material.

Now I want to consider the sequence:

Mel: Ok   Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're a poor little rich kid we've told you that.
Henry: And we also decided you're a chicken shit.

When we started out the discussion of this segment, I pointed out right at the beginning that we have here, again, as we have in the first sentence of the segment, a collaborative production of a sentence. In this case there are several ways that the parts are tied together. It's not simply the 'and,' but the subject used in the first utterance is retained in the second, i.e., the 'we' – and that's extremely crucial. And the relation is further established by the 'also,' which provides that it's building on what has just been said.

Simply by virtue of the set of properties we got, we might feel quite confident in saying that what we're getting at this point is the forming-up of

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[1] Several people in the class speak up with difficulties about the references of the terms, including a disagreement with Sacks' proposals about what 'one' does and doesn't do in contrast to 'you.' Sacks' response is that " 'One' doesn't include the self or the other necessarily. [It] doesn't include anybody necessarily."

a second group within the group, which second group consists of as members
the two participants to this sentence. Let's look at it a little more – not that
we're going to find out that it's wrong, but just to see how it works out. Until
that point, we really haven't had such a demonstration of the two-against-one
characteristics of this conversation. When Joe got finished with his first long
speech, the two others spoke essentially at the same time and took different
positions.

> *Joe* :   you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted.
>   We– look
> *Mel* :   Now did you do it right. That's the challenge That's the
>   challenge   You wanna try
> *Henry* :   That's the problem with society. Hahhh
> *Mel* :   and do it right so you do not get caught.
> *Henry* :   That's the

And when we got to that point where Henry starts to attack Joe, he did it a
bit on his own, and closed it off – as I've suggested anyway.

> *Henry* :   Joe, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.
> *Joe* :   Yes Mommy.
> *Henry* :   Face the music

Now Mel comes to the rescue, in a way. He ties his own statement back to
the preceding attack on Joe, with the 'now,' and the reassertion of Henry's
statement.

> *Henry* :   Face the music.
> *Mel* :   Ok   Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're a
>   poor little rich kid we've told you that.

He reasserts the statement as 'we:' "we've told you that." That 'we' can have
a strong and a weak usage. It could be strong if it were the case that what he's
saying is, 'Henry told you that, and he is our representative.' That is, the
single person who spoke is a member of 'we.' That would be a chancy kind
of thing to do, in two ways: One, Joe could say, "No, 'we' didn't tell me that,
he told me that." And two, Henry could say, "No, 'we' didn't tell him that,
I told him that." So he's taking kind of a chance there, to go out on his own
to establish what would be protective for the two of those fellows if it gets
accepted. Given the possible chancyness of it, he does in fact establish it was
weakly correct by virtue of the following: 'We' can equal, besides 'he, as a
representative of us,' also, 'he plus I.' And he has in fact said it just now, and
he saves the "we told you that" until he said it, so it's weakly true at least,
that 'Henry said it and I said it,' and that is 'we.'

Lecture 7
'Hotrodders' as a Revolutionary Category

At the end of last time I was talking about that statement of Mel's and most particularly the use of 'we' in it:

  Mel: Ok   Now you've got that out of your system. Now you're a poor
         little rich kid we've told you that.

In it, at least as I see it, there's two possibilities laid out. One is an offer made by Mel to Henry that the two of us are a group, of which what perhaps either of us say is said representatively for both. Alternatively, there's weaker use of 'we' which makes his statement at least safely true, i.e., where 'we' means in its weak sense, 'you said it before and I said it now', and thereby he needn't be subject to any total rebuff. Now Henry takes him up on the strong use, and accepts the formulation in its strong sense, and in doing so he moves to a whole range of important doings.

   First of all, with his "And we also decided you're a chicken shit," he tacks on something that had initially been proposed by him prior to this eight-minute segment, as something that 'we' did, also. Since he was representative just a moment ago, he was also representative a while ago. In doing that, he also is involved in more sharply posing the fact that there has been a change in topic, as well as a change in the formation of the given group. The change in topic is that Joe is now clearly the topic. And Henry does that by indicating that a list has been started about Joe, with 'also' being this 'lister term.' And in doing so, he provides, then, for Mel what it is that he could do, which is of course to continue with the list. And that is an extremely safe way to proceed, given that in continuing he'll be doing so as a member of this new subgroup within the group, which is in the first instance a strong one, since it contains at least a majority. There has been a first amalgamation within the group, with the three of them collaborating to produce a single sentence. Now there's two against one. The two have joined, and the group has a distinct form. It's not just a bunch of kids sitting around with no particular structure to the group.

   Once we have this majority situation, we get to what could be an extremely crucial point in it, which Henry proceeds to use in as strong a way as he likes, and that is, if there's a majority in the group, then the majority can be representative of the group. If there's a representative of the majority, then the representative of the majority can be the representative of the whole group,

and he who leads the majority is thereby the most powerful man in the group, in a special way: He's not now just the most powerful man among the three but nevertheless subject to attack by either of the other two, but he's the most powerful man within the majority, protected by the other in the majority, who would at least be concerned that their group last, and who might fight out the issue of who's going to be the leader in that group, but be concerned to keep it that at least one of them will be the leader.

What Henry rapidly does is, having got into a position where they're clearly putting down Joe, he takes his first opportunity to now put down Mel.

Mel :   Now you're a poor little rich kid we've told you that.
Henry :   And we also decided you're a chicken shit.
Joe :   I decided that years ago. Hell with you
Mel :   Now let's see what else can we decide about you
Henry :   Hey don't tear him down
Joe :   I've been torn down for–
Mel :   ok
Henry :   We got company
Mel :   oh ok.

Henry takes the opportunity to put down Mel by giving that command, "Hey don't tear him down . . . We got company." It is furthermore much stronger than just putting down Mel, because it also is, in the first instance, at least an attack on the new entrant, Bob, and also on a lot more, which I'll go into. I lead up to this because what I want to do is focus on this term 'company,' having just sketched the shifts that take place very rapidly right here, with Henry accepting the new formation and then moving to take that over, and thereby to take over the group itself.

The category 'company' is, as I briefly mentioned earlier, rather a special one. And we ought ultimately to consider it in combination and contrast with a category like 'hotrodders.' Before dealing with the basic way it's a special kind of category, I ought perhaps to mention some of its import, which can be seen without regard to what I'll be saying. And that is, for them to formulate him as 'company' – and we've seen how you can say 'them' in a serious sense – is obviously for them to propose that whatever has been done by whatever institution that might tell this fellow Bob, or his family, that he has troubles, and whatever way this clinic that they go to might go about selecting personnel, and whatever position the therapist might be supposed to have in controlling the group, nevertheless he does not decide, and all those others do not decide, that Bob is a member. That's for these kids to decide. For them, he's company. And they seem to be able to do that. There is, then, some kind of independence in their determination of who's a member, and if they're controlling the conversation, then that determination on their part is indeed important.

Now, holding that, let's consider what kind of a category this category 'company' is. I suppose about the most grandiose way I could choose – which

is the way I choose – to bring the point home, is to quote something which has become, in its place, extremely famous and extremely fundamental. Though when you first hear it, unless you know about it, it's not very likely that you'll think there's anything very special going on. It's from chapter 14 of Genesis. It goes like this:

A fugitive brought the news to Abraham the Hebrew, who was camping at the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, kinsman of Eshkel and Aner, these being confederates of Abraham.

There's a phrase there, that is, in the history of biblical criticism, one of the most fundamental of all in the bible. That is, 'Abraham the Hebrew.' There's an immense literature on it, and here's in part what its importance is: It is among the very few places in the bible that an Israelite is referred to by the term 'the Hebrew.' That term, 'the Hebrew' is only used by an Israelite for self-identification to a foreigner, or by foreigners about Israelites. And what that's been taken to mean is, that this section of Genesis was a segment taken from some document which had not been written by Jews. And the importance of that is, that it's the fundamental piece of information which provides for the possible historicity of Abraham. That is, if there was a document which was not a part of Israel's traditions, not written by them, in which he occurred as a figure, then that's as strong evidence as they've gotten that it was in fact some person, and not just the name of a tribe, or something else. (The term 'Hebrew,' itself, has other significances; it's a very generic term in the ancient Near East, referring to a class of persons.)

The thing is that here's a category which has become crucial in biblical criticism because what's seen about it is that a member would not use it to refer to himself, except under very special circumstances. It's a category that we might say, roughly, is the possession of some group other than its users. In terms of current large-scale focus, the Muslims have a similar attitude toward the category 'Negro.' And what they want to do, in part, is to legislate the status of 'Negro' into having the same characteristic as 'Hebrew,' so that if you knew somebody said "so-and-so the Negro," you could say about that somebody, "He's not one" – unless it was a conversation in which the user was identifying himself to an outsider.

'Company' is obviously the same kind of category. It's used to refer to some outsider, or it's used by an outsider to refer to himself when he's talking to some member and characterizing himself as an outsider to them. I said it was a category in alternation to some other category. It is also a category that is used, by and large, by those who are using the alternating category to categorize themselves.

We can examine lots of categories to see who is it that owns them. And we can see that that kind of question can be a really important one. We'll see that when we consider what kind of difference there is between a category like 'hotrodders' and one like 'company,' and between, let's say, a category like 'hotrodders' and one like 'teenagers.' We'll also then see some

of the things that people are trying to do when, like the Muslims, they attempt to propose that Negroes shouldn't use 'Negro' as a category, and when, like teenagers, they construct and attempt to use a category like 'hotrodders.'

For them to say that this fellow Bob is 'company' will increasingly be seen as an attack on, not simply the therapist, but in some ways, the ways that the institutions that get all of these guys here are constructed. Because in the first instance this category is one that the kids administer. It's a generic category, available to whoever can bring it off, and that's different than the category 'hotrodders' which is laying around in this conversation. Let's consider that a little bit. And in doing so, we'll be moving more explicitly to a consideration of some of the things involved in the phenomenon of 'an automobile discussion;' what kind of topic that is, and what it is that can be accomplished within it.

Now if we can take it that to some extent 'hotrodders' is a category that is by and large employed by kids to characterize themselves, and whose use, to some considerable extent, they enforce, and whose properties they enforce, and obviously it's, at least to some extent, a category that rebellious persons can use, then at least one of the initial questions we might ask is: Why should it be the case that at least some people who go about doing kinds of rebellion, do it by formulating themselves as some particular type? That is, why do they set up a type? Why don't they try to make themselves observable as 'individuals,' so to speak? That might be an alternative to setting up a type. (Of course 'hotrodder' is by no means the only teenager type that they set up and enforce.)

That kind of a question – Why do they set up a type? – is not necessarily a good question. What we want to see, in formulating the problem they have, is what is it that they seem to see as the things they have to come to terms with. And that seems to be in the first instance, that at least for certain activities which are rather important to them – like driving – it isn't the case that there's any big problem about what category will be used to classify them by whomsoever happens to see them driving around. Now, that is, in principle, a problem, and I've occasionally focused on more-or-less unique solutions to it.[1] And for kids in cars, they apparently take it that there is – and there's probably good reason for that – a rather unique solution. And that is, a kid in a car is 'a kid in a car.' If a kid is driving, he's seen as a teenager driving, and he's seen via the category 'teenager,' compared to the variety of things that he could be categorized as. His problem, then, initially, is that he is in fact going to be typed; where, for one, the category 'teenager' is a category owned by adults. Which is to say that what it is that is known about the incumbents of that category is something that adults take it they know, and know without respect to kids' proposing that it's so, or agreeing that it's so.

The problem has some other aspects, which are perhaps more obviously deep. And that is, it's clear that one of the crucial things to the teenager is the

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[1] See Spring 1966, lecture 7, pp. 325–7.

problem of independence, and one of the core facts about it is that in its given form, adults set up and decide and enforce what it is that it takes for a kid to be independent. And that poses for each kid a task that he has to solve on his own, in confronting an institutionalized setup that's going to handle him one by one. Now the question is, is there some way of setting up solutions to the problem of independence, which kids administrate? So that they decide when you're independent? Where adults will, in the course of time, simply be forced to accept those characterizations, as they'll be forced to use whatever categories the kids invent to characterize themselves? I'll consider the gains of that kind of thing, to some extent. But it clearly would make a considerable shift in the independence problem. For one, it would not be an issue where each kid faces the adult world on his own. To set up a type, then, like Hotrodder, or Surfer, or Beatnik, if it can be successfully done, is then to get for the collection of persons a very large gain. That is, if the 'they' group, whoever it be – call them 'adults' – come to use the type as well, but use it under the extremely important constraint that what it takes to be a member, and what it is that's known about members, is something that the members enforce.

Now a first thing that one wants to be able to do, is to so construct appearances, and to so let out information, that members can take it that when they're seen by whomsoever, they will be seen as a member of the category they want to be seen as a member of. That is, they're not going to be seen as 'teenagers in cars;' they're going to be seen as 'hotrodders' – or 'beatnicks,' or 'surfers,' or whatever else. That, of course, poses a series of tasks. What is it that it takes to get a category like 'hotrodders' across?

There are some things that turn out to be quite obvious solutions to that problem. Everybody drives cars, and 'teenagers driving cars' involves nothing more than looking into the car, whatever car it is, and seeing that there's a teenager there. Now the thing about hotrodders' cars is that you don't have to look into the car. The car itself is so constructed that at any distance you might choose, you see 'a hotrod.' And of course what's crucial to that, in the first instance, is that other people do not play around with the products they get. They take the car and they drive it.

The modification characteristics have some rather usual features for such kinds of categories, and that is, anybody can tell it's a hotrod, but it is members who can tell if it's a good one or a bad one, what rank it has, etc. And in that way of course, there's strong protection against outsiders coming to see how it is that whatever ranking goes on, goes on – except by, in fact, becoming members of a sort. That thereby gives much freer play to the members' deciding and enforcing what counts as a really good hotrod. Now there are, of course, rather classical reversal procedures, i.e., what looks like the worst car to anybody else, is the best car. And those kinds of things are very frequent in any such kind of operation. Presumably it's just focussing on that thing alone, that 'turn the world upside down' in that sense, that makes almost all of, let's say, the Beatnick characteristics. Hotrodders do not stand in that sort of simple opposition; it's not a pure Hegelian operation.

Now if it's the case that what goes into deciding the rank of a hotrod is something that kids decide, then one can at least begin to see how it is that they're able to set up, and what are the kinds of things they would use to set up, machinery for social control over candidate members. That is, one is a member by recognition of others who are members. And thereby, to successfully get membership, you have to do what it is that they provide is the way to become a member. You don't ask your parents for permission, and then treat that as your entry card. Nor is it something you can do without a very considerable commitment. It is not something that you can do on an occasion, in any given apparatus. That is, you can't take your parents' car out for a weekend and go hotrodding. There are a lot of things you can do with it, but that's not one of them. And adults are, by and large, excluded from the use of these things.

That has some rather important kinds of aspects to it. It permits one of the crucial things the kids are concerned to get, and that is, an initial equalization, such that the determination of one's status as a member is not decided by as many relevances given by the socio-economic structure as can be excluded. It really is not any advantage to have, let's say, the fastest stock car to start out with – and in any case, it would not be 'hotrodding' to drive it. And it's very important, of course, that kids do not allow it to be 'hotrodding', and that the way to not allow it is simply not to recognize the moves of someone who, for example, pulls up to you in such a car. That kind of thing is very regularly done for all sorts of other things. Years ago, when sports car drivers used to wave at each other, there were all kinds of rules about what kind of car is a sports car; like a Volkswagon would not be waved at. Volkswagons could go down the road waving at everybody, and get no response. Now what has to be seen is that the response is not anything that is enforced in some way, like if you wave at a Volkswagon somebody comes up to you afterwards, or anything like that. The whole group has to be defended, each one by himself. And in that way, Joe's hypothetical little tale of the other fellow in a Pontiac station wagon is a kind of mutual delusion – if there is such another fellow; that is, they may be able to go through it together, but there is no proper member who would accept either of them. What Joe is proposing, I'll consider eventually because for them it's an extremely important kind of claim he's trying to lay out.

The character, then, of an attempt to set up a category like this is – let's say within Western tradition – a classical attempt at how it is one goes about doing rebellion, at least the first feature of which is that one sets up a category you administer yourself, which others come to use, and come to use in just the unique fashion that they used whatever category they used on you before. Where, initially they used another category on you, uniquely. They didn't say, "He's middle class," and "he's this and that," and "he's such and such;" they said "He's Negro." And the same holds for the teenager. Now of course, that leaves those who don't join, to be so called.

Lecture 8
Invitations; Inexhaustable topics;
Category-bound activities

Given that we have gotten into a position where some aspects of how this group is organized, and how that organization is demonstrated, how they use it, etc., have been considered, we can return to the first part of this segment and dig some more out of it, which we're now in a position to consider, and which can lead us further, also.

> *Joe* :   We were in an automobile discussion
> *Henry* :   discussing the psychological motives for
> *Mel* :   drag racing on the streets.

In our previous discussion of this segment we examined its collaborative aspects. There's much more there than that, and I'll deal with some of those things now.

   We said earlier that that first line could have been a sentence if it was just left as such. And that in not leaving it, Henry moved to use the structure of the sentence to give some indication that these people were organized. That's grossly true, but there are other things about it. For one, if we consider the first sentence as a sentence, then what we want to ask right off is, what is being done by it? Among the things that could be done by it, one obvious thing is the following. Someone has just come in to this group, they've exchanged introductions, now there's this first line. And it's a very familiar first line, and what it is, is, a possible *invitation*. A bunch of people are sitting around and talking, somebody comes in, and they tell him what they're talking about; where they can formulate that in such a way as to provide that it's something that he could be talking about. It's a topic for such as we, without any special classification of who 'you' and 'we' are, just by virtue of the fact that we're all teenagers. And with regard to a consideration of the personnel, you'll find in the rest of the conversation that there are several other places where Joe makes a move like that. For example, after they've worked Bob over, Joe introduces a question that is an invitation: "What school did you go to?," and there may be others like that.

   What I take it they do is shut that invitation off by proposing, in part, that we're talking about that thing which you know about, as any teenager would – but we're not necessarily talking about it in a way that you're informed on. But then there's the addition to it, which is again kind of mundane and ordinary. You can make up sentences like this. Here's one – it's not exactly

in point, though I think it's pretty close. Suppose there's a bunch of girls –
and we don't need to specify the situation – and somebody comes in. One of
them says "We were in a discussion about sex." Then we get "discussing the
physiological side effects of," "using the pill," as a third. The first and third
are something that somebody might well figure that they could, just knowing
that, come into. The second may, however, be something which says, this is
something special and unless you have the special information that you don't
necessarily have, wait before you jump in. It's the modification of the topic
that undercuts the status of the preceding part as 'an invitation.'

Given the kinds of remarks we so far made – and more I will make – as
to the fact that the group is organized, we can get some pretty good idea
about, on the one hand, an invitation should be made right off, and on the
other, why it should be cut off. If the group is organized in a two-to-one setup
(or even one-one-one, as long as it's not three-to-zero), then it would be quite
crucial to the members who this new candidate joins up with, and it could,
of course, be quite crucial to him who he joins up with. And if he simply
jumps into the conversation – where it's how the conversation goes that
provides those affiliations – then some of the kinds of resources that would
permit the sort of decision some of them want him to make, would not be
available.

He doesn't yet know that whatever he says is going to be treated as
something which constitutes an affiliation to one or another side. And if it's
the case that even before this actual segment had got going they knew what
the structure was, and it was two-to-one against Joe, then Joe's best chance is
to get this guy in, sight unseen. He might go with Joe. If so, things are
perhaps equal, and if he doesn't, maybe there's nothing much lost, in that
once the group structure becomes available it's probably not unlikely that, if
he makes his decision on that basis, he's going to go to the two others. And
that's not unlikely, I'd say, not on just the sheer fact that any given person,
if there were a two-to-one situation, would go with the two, but one of the
obvious things about him is that he's scared. He's scared, and that's why he's
here in part, and also, he's scared now. And under that circumstance it's likely
that he'll pick the safest way out; which he does eventually do. That is, the
first remark which can readily enough be seen as taking a position on his own,
is between 3:00 and 3:30, when Joe does one of his not infrequent coughs.
Bob comes on with "Sounds like an old man." That's about as dramatic a
remark as he can make in this. So in the collaborative sentence, then, it's not
the case that it really wouldn't matter who it is that did any of the parts. It
does matter, and the part that each of them chooses to use is not terribly
puzzling.

There are some things about this segment that are worthy of at least further
thought. But let me first make a remark about the segment that follows. The
most extraordinarily interesting thing about it is the way in which the
questions are informative. They say to him, "You must be crazy or you
wouldn't be here." It's a terribly important beginning because it says 'We are
that.' Every question is a piece of information about the character of them;

what it takes to be somebody who's here – at least formulated in terms of what an outsider might say about them.

And it's very important that this question–answer series comes out right. If it doesn't come out right, it's not simply, as an obvious consequence, that he doesn't belong there, but it may well equally be that they don't. Because if he's there, however it was decided, he could belong there. And if he's not crazy, then, maybe this is not a place for such, and if it's true about them, then they don't belong; where there's a notion that the people here ought to have problems they have in common. (I'm not giving any normative formulation to 'problems.' They're called 'problems,' and they would say they are called 'problems' without necessarily buying into that on their own part.) But if it's the case that they go through this procedure of asking a set of questions, and they're right, then they get a very gloomy finding, and that is that the society is right, because these are a list of complaints that are made about them. If, in fact, they locate whomsoever happens to come in here, then there's some sense to the fact that they know what they're doing in putting people in such a place. So the procedure is an extremely important one, however it may come out.

Let's go back to this first segment. They're in an 'automobile discussion.' Now here's a fellow coming into this therapy situation, very likely his first. It could be supposed that he has no idea what it is they would do in there. If they wanted to put him on, they could name any topic they pleased, and he probably would have to figure that that's what they might be doing. When 'automobile discussion' comes out, it could be a very nice thing to hear. "Oh, they talk about whatever it is kids talk about anywhere, and they're not going to be talking about things that are really godawful, or for which I just don't have any information so that I could partake." Except it's much worse than that.

We get the modification which says hold on for a while, see what we're talking about and how we do it. And then we get a sample. And the sample can be seen partly as a kind of ostensive definition of what 'discussing the psychological motives for drag racing' means, and how a topic that you can name in any scene that kids happen to be talking in, gets handled in this scene. In which, we could say grossly, that what might appear to be as safe a topic as you could pick, turns out to be altogether unsafe. And whatever position you take is nonetheless usable to find out what's bugging you. And I suppose as strong a demonstration as needed to show that once you're here there's no place to hide, is to pick as mundane a topic as you could name, and then use that to carry on the intimacies of examination that they do.

When I use the term 'safe' for 'automobile discussion,' I'm not simply saying that. That's how they would quite consciously formulate the matter. At one point in another session they're for some reason or another exchanging fantasies about something they'd like to have. It's about maybe Bob's second session there, and he says he'd like to have a "'64 Triumph Bonneville," and he gets a lecture from Henry as to the fact that that's not the sort of thing to pick; that you don't have to pick anything that sounds as ordinary as that, and if you think that by picking something that sounds safe you get away with

anything, you won't. (Which is not to say that as far as any of them might well understand it, fantasy is about such things.)

I just want to extend the matter a little further, and simply suggest a kind of problem about which I really don't have very much to say, but which is, I think, examinable. Consider things like the topic 'automobile.' One of the things that an outsider, an adult, somebody who is not American, expectably says is, well that could be a topic, I suppose, but it would probably be readily exhaustable; how much is there to say about it? And you could imagine that they could construct such a notion of cars as a topic by considering, for example, that there are a finite set of parts to cars as facts, and that, as you might exhaust the parts if you were assembling it or taking it apart, then you could exhaust the topic. That is to say, you could have an image of eating into a topic as you discussed it.

Now there are lots of topics for any sets of persons, but within cultures there are topics that are intrinsically rich, in the sense that whatever it is that members of that culture tend to talk about – that is, whatever themes they talk about – they can talk about via that thing. For example, an automobile. If one sat down to make a list of what things members of this society can talk about when they're talking about something, then one might find that for kids, automobiles are like that. For example, 'independence.' You could make a list of themes like that, and then see whether or not a conversation is had, where that's the theme that gets focussed about automobiles. If this is so, then you have a rather decent way of saying that there is to some extent an independent culture operating. And that the automobile has now become a focus for kids in the way that whatever else is a focus for the adult culture – if 'adult culture' is a thing to talk about.

Of course it might not be the case that some other culture has a single focus – if cars are a 'single focus.' What I'm trying to say is that one of the things one has to do in examining this phenomenon of automobiles as a topic, is to formulate the character of that object within the set of things which can be discussed, for whatever you're going to formulate it that people are doing. And then of course it would be quite irrelevant to see that adults can't or don't or won't say such things about cars. Cars are now an object similar to parrots for a society in which a parrot is a god. And you wouldn't say, "Well, what can you say about a parrot?" or "What kind of interest could people have in the difference between this parrot and that parrot, or this history of parrots, or whatever else?" You would just not know what they're talking about.

You get, then, a way of seeing the kind of split that would take place when an object is made into a sacred object – and a quite mundane object can be made into a sacred object. Where, for others, it's a purely secular thing: You take it as you get it, and you drive it. And whatever happens to it, so what? You can always get another. And also, of course, you get a way of understanding that persons who deal with this as perhaps sacred have feelings about the miserable way anybody else deals with it. But I don't really know that automobiles are a first-order object. It could be, because most of the

conversations I listened to, I found so terribly boring that it's only recently that I've gotten up enough strength to sit and listen to them again, when they go on for six hours at a shot, talking about carburators.

There's a classic story about Malinowsky going into the field, wanting to find out about geneology. He would talk to the natives about geneology, and he found out that each native would talk for an hour before giving him any geneology, in just bragging about them, and he'd have to go through a whole big thing. Then at one point he remarks that he really became an anthropologist when he could realize that geneologies were irrelevant, and it was the talk, the bragging, etc., which was crucial. And you have to learn to see that happening. I used to sit and listen through these automobile discussions for the points when they would overtly talk about their troubles, and I just don't think that was at all right. It may be its partial distance from somebody like myself that makes this a really good means for examining what a topic like that is, and what you would be talking about when you say it's inexhaustably rich.

Now I want to move to considering the argument that Joe develops, because one of the things we come to see, then, is what kind of category is that category 'poor little rich kid' which is thrown at him when he develops his position. But I can't do that in the time we have left today, so what I'm going to do is something that I could have either taken the whole course to do, or I'll have to do in ten minutes; it's either that complicated or that simple. So I might as well do it this way.

One of the clear problems that I can propose from this conversation is, we could ask: How does it happen that discussions which become arguments end up in name-calling? That's a very standard observation, that it happens. It happens here. Now, how does it happen? There are several things involved in the formulation. We're assuming that the discussion becomes an argument, and we're not asking how does the discussion become an argument. We're saying that once it becomes an argument it can end up in name-calling, and that ends it.

The way we go about handling it involves some very general kinds of observations which only become really interesting when we work them in detail – which we won't get to do.

One of the ways that a problematic occurrence is resolved, is by assigning to the doer of it, some category about which it can be said that the activity done, is 'bound' to that category, i.e., if you knew in the first place that he was a such-and-such, it wouldn't be any problem as to why he did the thing he did. 'They' do such things. Now that fact has consequences in all directions. One of them is, for example, if a problematic occurrence has happened, and one knows a category that's bound to it, i.e., where that category would be said to be the person to do the thing, then you can construct a search procedure for finding who, in fact, did it: Look to the set of people who are so categorized. You could also, apparently, determine that any person who is proposed to have done it, did it or didn't. If he isn't a member of that category, then he wouldn't have done it. And that has all sorts of uses, and

there can be lots of shifts in it. So, for example, the basic character of the argument about Oswald's murder of Kennedy turns on the issue of some people saying, "Of course if he's a Communist he would have done it," and others saying, "The last person who could have done it would be such a one and therefore he couldn't have done it." To which, as I mentioned earlier, his mother had the best solution of all, when she said that he's a human so he could have done it – which is to say that it's not something that is to be found problematic in the way everybody's been posing it.

The fact that some activities are bound to some categories is used, then, in a tremendous variety of ways, and if somebody knows an activity has been done, and there is a category to which it is bound, they can damn well propose that it's been done by such a one who is a member of that category.

What's important, in part, is that it's not the case that deviant activities are especially problematic, but there are categories of persons who do deviant activities and you've got a solution to a deviant activity if you've got a member of a category which is known to do this. I'm not going to deal with the problem of exceptions, although it's dealable with and there are some very nice things about it; I'm just not in a position right now to lay it out. It is the case, though, that exceptions just don't matter. That's easiest to see by seeing that the first Negro and the first ten Negroes you know, can be seen by you to be exceptions to what you know about Negroes. It's not the case that exceptions involve any change in what you know about the category's members. For all the categories that have such kinds of characteristics as that there are a bunch of activities bound to them, exceptions don't matter. It's built in that there are exceptions, and they just don't affect what you know. You know that category does the following, and you know that there are exceptions, and they do not involve you in modifying what you know. I talk about that as: All these categories and the things that are known about them are 'protected against induction.'

The question is, what makes a problematic activity? And an utterance, of course, can be a problematic activity. One of the simplest ways that an utterance can be a problematic activity is, if a set of them has been made by a set of persons and they're not consistent. That is, there's a position 1, a position 2, etc. Now if, let's say, you have two positions that are inconsistent to each other, then it may be the case that you can make one position stand by simply removing the other; like providing it's problematic and explaining it. The other then stands as the only one left.

Now then, one of the ways that one goes about making a problematic position accounted for is, for instance, to assign some category to its sayer. The category is, of course, important, because there can be some categories that are, for example, the categories of persons who are entitled to say such a thing. So that if you say that some scientific assertion is made by a scientist, that would not explain it away, but will provide that it's correct. But for a great many, if you assign a certain sort of category to it, then you can provide that the thing itself can be explained away. And that simple operation has been the

basis for one quite sophisticated sociology. Mannheim proposes that any sociological assertion can be given that formulation. That is, there are a set of categories in the social structure, all of which are competing in that social structure: Upper class, lower class, bourgoisie, worker, whatever you want. Take any sociologist's assertion, and say he says it from one or another of those categories, i.e., assign a sociologist to a category, and you've made his statement subjective.

Lecture 9
Character appears on cue; Good grounds for an action

I'm going to start considering:[1]

> *Joe*: In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out and if I've got a tie and a sweater on and I look clean? ninety nine percent of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car, same color, same year the whole bit, roll up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby tee shirt, and the guy'll pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before I – he'll pick me up.

This is an extraordinarily complicated statement and we'll attack it over a while, I suppose. Let me just begin by noticing a relatively minor thing. When we get this thing beginning with "In that Bonneville of mine" we have what is a relatively rare, but standarized occasion, and that is that we can say right off that 'Bonneville' is going to be the N of some N → P sequence. It looks for sure that that thing is not going to be dropped, and that we'll then get 'it' or something like 'it'. In our discovery of the rule, I said normally we do not start with the N, we start with the P. But in this sort of case, we can pretty well be sure that we're going to have the reverse rule apply. That, of course, involves the fact that we get this kind of prepositional phrase which would follow , e.g., "I could go out . . . in that Bonneville of mine."

Now, generally throughout this statement we see what you might imagine to be a kind of queer way that the whole thing gets assembled, i.e., clause by clause. There's no sentence in it anywhere – though one might consider from "ninety nine percent of the time . . ." on, to be an adequate sentence – but otherwise you get a buildup (I'm not using that in the same sense I used 'buildup' as a technical term previously) in which, at the end of any given clause it's nonetheless the case that we still haven't got a sentence, and we clearly still haven't got the end of an utterance. To what extent he uses clauses (and there are much more elaborate things he does) to preserve the fact that you can't stop him at any point and have heard what he's going to say, that may be one of the things he's engaged in doing here.

(If you're interested, I can mark it for the way he said it: "In that Bonneville of mine." There's a pause. "I could take that thing out" pause

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[1] The fragment is transcribed from the lecture and is not exactly the same as the version in the handout.

"and if I got a tie and sweater on and I took clean" pause "ninety nine percent of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car" pause "same color same year the whole bit" pause "roll up his pipes" pause "and he's in a dirty grubby T-shirt" pause. And then the rest of it runs out to the end. Then he starts up again, but gets cut off.)

One of the things one has to examine about that statement is, how is it that it's nonetheless a quite understandable utterance, i.e., despite its grammatical oddness and despite (if you want to use the word 'despite') some other features it has. For example, the phrase "ninety nine percent of the time" occurs in juxtaposition with "a guy could . . . etc.," except I don't take it we hear it as modifying "a guy could . . ." If you were to put it in sequence, it would be: "ninety nine percent of the time . . . the guy'll pick the guy up," and we nonetheless take that clause and put it where it belongs, when we come to understand it. So there is, then, a considerable freedom in the positioning of the parts of this statement, where that freedom apparently doesn't undercut seeing what it is he's saying.

It's also an enormously condensed statement. And that's one of the things I want to begin to focus on. Let's take as a given, for the moment, the fact that in "the guy'll pick the guy up," the first reference doesn't refer back to the prior "a guy could pull up to me . . . ," though that's a perfectly expectable thing, but that we see perfectly clearly that it doesn't, but that it's a new fellow, and that it's a cop.

Now, if you remember back to the beginning of the course when I considered "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," one of the things I was remarking there was that when a character who has some proper grounds for occurring and some proper thing to do, has its cue, then there's no need to account for how they happened to have come on the scene. "The baby cried;" you don't have to get a characterization of where the mommy was, that she was anywhere around; the mommy does her job.[2] You can notice again here that the cop is not introduced, as, for example, is this other guy who is driving – he pulls up, gets described, then we have this bit. What occurs is good grounds for the cop to do what he ought to do; he's on the scene and he does it. So he's introduced via the action he does, where the grounds for that action are laid out, though how he happens to be there need not be indicated.

And the question of what character doing what action that kind of thing can hold for, is quite non-trivial. To provide for this introduction of the cop (and, for example, that introduction of the mommy) being quite unproblematic, we would have to work out analyses which would involve building the characteristics of a class of actor – in this case, 'cop' – as a staff deputed to do a set of jobs, and describing how they go about doing those jobs – for example, by just driving the highways – and then considering the information about such a class of actors that any member would have, such that it would

[2] This particular consideration was not captured in Sacks' notes for lectures 1 and 2. For a similar consideration, see Spring 1966, lecture 2, p. 254.

in no case be problematic that on a single occasion of the cue occurring, the character occurs. (This is not to say that the sheer fact that there's a norm that says speeders ought to be arrested is sufficient to provide that the fact that he's speeding brings the cop on the scene.) For organized crime it would be quite different. A bank robber would be much puzzled how come when he arrived, the cops were there waiting for him, and he would ask, "How did you know?"

One can presumably consider this sort of phenomenon and perhaps get an idea of what the sense was for, let's say the Greeks, who introduced in the tragedy, the appearance of a god at some point. We might come to see it, not as what we give it the sense of, i.e., as absolutely unwarranted or unexplicable, or just happening, but as something that was somehow institutionally provided for. We would want, of course, also to see, then, what sorts of proper occurrences need an account of how a character who is doing what's expected or proper, comes to be there. We could perhaps dig out the different classes by just examining things like this statement of Joe's, where it's absolutely unproblematic that he doesn't introduce the cop as sitting behind a billboard, or whatever else. The cop is introduced via his action.

And in this case at hand, it's a rather more powerful kind of thing than even that. In "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," we had the specification of what was in fact good grounds for the mommy to do her action; "the baby cried." In this case, that, too, is just left out. It is not the case that rolling up his pipes is what's good grounds for the cop to arrive. It's that rolling up his pipes is the first move in a sequence which the occurrence of that technical term provides as going to happen. The driver pulls up, signals the other, they have a kind of drag race, and the cop catches them in the middle of it. That part is dropped out altogether here; filled in by the hearer.

Now it's very nice to have the hearer fill it in because one of things that that will guarantee is – and this is an important part of this fellow Joe's claim – if you're going to fill it in, you're going to fill it in with what would be legitimate grounds for that arrest to take place, and not with some quirk or some erroneous arrest. Then the question of what can be left out of an account – especially where it's the thing that's left out that provides for the crucial action to happen – is another rather crucial thing to consider. For one, that's the way that the condensation of an account can take place. The work of digging out what's being said is, then, the task of the hearer, and one can leave out what one knows the hearer has to fill in in a specific way. That is, the hearer is not going to say "Rolling up his pipes is nothing to get arrested for," but there is some sequence, of which that is the first move that occurs, and when the actionable move occurs, then the arrest takes place.

In fact, it's not simply the case that a hearer can fill in such a blank. They can do that, but they can do a lot more. Here is a piece of conversation which has the following kind of setup. A fellow is calling a counselling agency in regard to the trouble he's having with his wife. It's quite early in the conversation; a first conversation between two people who don't know each other. 'A' is the staff member, 'B' is the caller.

A: Yeah, then what happened?

B: Okay, in the meantime she says, "Don't ask the child nothing." Well, she stepped between me and the child, and I got up to walk out the door. When she stepped between me and the child, I went to move her out of the way. And then about that time her sister had called the police. I don't know how she – what she –

A: Didn't you smack her one?

B: No.

A: You're not telling me the story, Mr B.

B: Well, you see, when you say smack you mean hit.

A: Yeah, you shoved her. Is that it?

B: Yeah, I shoved her.

Again, it's not like they're old buddies. The secondary characters here are just named categories, i.e., 'her sister.' He doesn't know her sister, doesn't know if she's short-tempered or what, doesn't know how B and his wife get along, or what B is wont to do if his wife does something. Nonetheless it's not simply the case that he has some idea of what it is that would provide for the sister to call for the police, but when he's told it's not so, he takes it that there's a lie going on, and he's in a position to insist and not simply to guess at what it is that transpired. In that sense, then, knowing what are good grounds for the police to come is something that permits him not only to fill in a blank, but also to deny a statement which proposes something else, with no need to specify anything more than 'me and my wife,' 'her sister,' 'the police.' What is in operation here is the pure categories, and their organization, and what's known, given their use. The guy who calls is in no position, apparently, to say "How do you know?," "I'm telling the story," or whatever else. It's not simply then that the guesser feels quite assured in proposing what it is that happened, but the other guy is just as well in a position to see that the guesser had good rights to do that. I take it, then, that one of the things we would not be saying is, it's a matter of style whether one leaves out a sentence that might be put in.

How that can happen is of tremendous importance, and it tells us a great deal about what it is that, among a set of persons who don't know each other, nonetheless can be taken as so about how the world operates, *in its particulars.* That is, on a single occasion. It's a different kind of business than, "If you go hotrodding you're bound to get caught." It's on *this* occasion the cops arrive. How come?

Now, with such a guide, you could begin to see such issues as, what the task would be of a foreigner to understand that thing. Suppose you were to translate this. The issue would not be anything like, do you come up with a word-for-word translation? What you have is do is build in characterizations of the way a set of institutions operate, the way sets of persons know what anybody else knows, and the like. Just to provide for a quite ordinary segment of conversation.

The big question is how we come up with clean ways of formulating what

the kinds of condensation are. You could ask it in a fashionable way: What would it take to have, as the staff member in that last conversation, a computer? What would it have to know, to be able to engage in a little conversation like that? If you could build computers that could gossip, then you would have a formal characterization of what a culture was. And the character of what these condensations are, is not to be supposed as satisfying any unexamined notions of what, let's say, we take to be prototypical kinds of condensed talk, like talk in mathematics. That's in part the problem with Reichenbach's seventh chapter, where he simply will suppose that when persons use terms that have a known logical sense – like 'and' – then that's the sense they have.

Returning to "the guy'll pick the guy up." Earlier I mentioned this notion that some activities are bound to some category. And I take it that when we hear "the guy'll pick the guy up" we use 'pick up' as an activity that 'cops do, to provide that 'the guy' is 'a cop.' And we don't find ourselves in the position of being confounded by the antecedent rule, which would say 'the guy' has to be the fellow introduced as 'a guy,' since 'a' followed by 'the' is a perfect way of indicating that the same person is being referred to.

There's a kind of elegance to the use of 'the guy' there. It is in the first instance a tremendously awkward kind of way to say the thing, "the guy'll pick the guy up." To have it that 'the guy' here is not the person who is introduced as 'a guy' earlier, would seem to be generative of further trouble. But once he's got this ambiguity going, he has an opportunity to reintroduce one of the crucial assertions of the whole segment, and that is, "in the dirty grubby T-shirt." So that grammatical awkwardness provides the occasion for emphasizing what he's trying to emphasize, where, were he to do it in the grammatically proper way, such an occasion would not be available as it is here.

And we can find that 'dirty grubby T-shirt' is something that is emphasized, independent of its being repeated, in the following ways. First of all, the whole statement is hypothetical. Every clause in it is hypothetical. In the whole statement, there is one use of the most standardized way of making a hypothetical statement, that is, the 'if' in '. . . and if I got a tie and a sweater on . . . '' What that single usage seems to involve is, given that there's a whole set of things that are introduced as precedents to someone's getting picked up, how is it that he's going to focus on what he takes to be the crucial differentiating thing for that happening? It seems that he marks that crucial contrast with 'if.' Where, then, we can see as parallel construction, "and if I got" and the subsequent "and he's in;" that is, we get not simply the difference between my being clean and his being dirty, but the parallel construction ('and if,' and then again 'and if,' with the 'if' dropped out – and you don't have to have the 'if' in such a parallel construction) sets those things up as what differentiates.

Furthermore, 'dirty grubby' is an emphatic construction in itself, in a variety of ways. First of all, it's a double adjective; the same thing being said twice, which is kind of characteristic of kids, and characteristic of this fellow,

also. Then, it's not just a doubled adjective, but a doubled one that is soundwise emphatic. 'Dirty grubby,' 'teeny weeny,' things like that.

There are other things involved in this, as well. 'Grubby' happens to be the way that one of the members of this group gets referred to. A way they get at Henry is by characterizing him that way, and apparently he does, indeed, tend to be grubby. On page 5 of the eight-minute segment, he says, just before 6:30, "I'm not grubby" and that brings a laugh. Now, I've been leaving that sort of thing out; that is, the way that in any statement which is not at all specifically referring to somebody in this scene, they are nonetheless doing that. That would have to involve providing much more transcript than the eight-minute segment.

Lecture 10
Clausal construction; Hotrodding as a test

I'm going to continue considering this thing:

> *Joe*: In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out and if I've got a tie and a a sweater on and I look clean? ninety nine percent of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car, same color, same year the whole bit, roll up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby tee shirt, and the guy'll pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before I – he'll pick me up.

I'm not in a very good position to lay out how, in its details, this utterance gets constructed of a bunch of clauses and phrases rather than a set of sentences, or what each of the variations on what we might take to be the normal form for such a set of assertions is doing – if it's doing something. I pointed out some things earlier, and I can point out a couple more.

One of the rather obvious facts is that, given this way of constructing his utterance, the clauses are adding up and it's not the case that at any given point – even at the point where we have that question mark (". . . and I look clean?") – that he's said what he has to say. And that's observable by the hearer. The hearer doesn't have to guess that he has more; it's observable that whatever it is he's done, he's not yet finished with it. There are some quite clear ways that the fact that the utterance is still open at any given point, is done by him. For one, whatever much we might have to say to give an adequate characterization of the semantics of 'if,' it does seem clear that there can be a multiple set of things being done in a statement that contain, at an early point in it, an 'if' clause. It clearly is a marked first occurrence of some sequence in which there will be a second part, the 'then' clause. There may be an overt 'then' clause, or a clause that turns out to be a 'then' clause. Where, then, as long as the 'then' clause hasn't occurred, the utterance remains open, and one can wait to examine any given further clause to see whether that is the 'then' clause, and can close the thing off.

Or, for example, we could ask what would be the difference between saying "I could take that Bonneville of mine out" as compared to what he does, "In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out," where it's reasonable to say that neither would be heard as a complete utterance. Now, given that we can see, when "In that Bonneville of mine" occurs there's going to be a second reference to the car, e.g., 'it,' or as in this case, 'that thing,' then

perhaps what he is doing with this construction is having that second part provide a contrasted reference to the earlier mentioned car. That is, "If you take a big fancy car out" is what he's introduced in his last statement. 'That thing' can then be, perhaps, not only a reference to the Bonneville, but a contrasted reference to the other – where a 'big fancy car' is a hotrod. That is something that could be done with a clause like that, as part of a pair, 'this and that,' 'that thing' as compared to 'the other.' and it would make part of his argument, which is, "If you go out hotrodding with a hotrod you're bound to get caught" and in contrast, "If you take the Bonneville out, you won't." [1]

There are, further, a set of ways that this thing is constructed which are not exactly consistent with what is proposed to be the way that certain connectors, most particularly 'and,' get properly used. A consideration of those can be found in Fries' book *The Structure of English*. His grammar is terribly important because I guess it's the only grammar of English that was constructed by reference to an attempt to handle actual conversation itself. Fries sat down with a bunch of telephone conversations and built his grammar out of that. Quite unique in that way.

One of the things he proposes about 'and' is that the term on either side are from the same form-class. That means, roughly, adjective 'and' adjective, verb 'and' verb, etc. Seymour Chapman then extends Fries' form-class use of 'and' to handle similary constructed clauses. That's in a paper called something like 'English sentence connectors,' in a book edited by Marquand, entitled *Studies in Language and Literature*. Now, what we have in this statement of Joe's, are clausal uses, except that they're kind of queer. Take a sequence like this: '. . . roll up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby T-shirt and the guy'll pick the guy up . . ." The consecutive clauses do not seem to be similar, but they are separated, in a way. That is, there those pauses: "roll up his pipes" pause "and he's in a dirty grubby T-shirt" pause "and the guy'll pick the guy up . . . etc." We could treat those pauses as putting "and he's in a dirty grubby T-shirt" in parentheses, and then we can notice that "roll up his pipes" and "the guy'll pick the guy up" *are* of the same class, and 'and' connects them, i.e., "roll up his pipes . . . and the guy'll pick the guy up." The 'and' preceding "he's in a dirty grubby T-shirt" is connected to "and if I got a tie and a sweater on and I look clean," and there it does the same sort of work. So what we've got is non-consecutive uses of those 'and's, which nonetheless do the same work that they would be doing if they were consecutive – and how he comes about to break these things into this non-consecutive fashion, I can't really say. But what we've got is a series of parallel clauses: "If I got a tie on" and "he's in a dirty grubby T-shirt," "I could take that thing out" and "he could pull up to me," etc. We've seen earlier that this guy uses these parallel constructions very much, e.g., "you're

[1] Some of the class disagree with the proposal that the distinction is between 'hotrod' ('big fancy car') and 'Bonneville.' They take it that, as one of them proposes, although the "Bonneville really isn't a 'big fancy car' (i.e., a 'hotrod'), this kid is trying to pass it off as one." To that, Sacks replies that if they had access to more of the transcript they could see that the distinction holds.

bound to get caught" and "you're bound to get shafted," and a whole series of others like that. What they are, I don't have any idea.

In Joe's first statement, he said "If you take out a hotrod and you go hotrodding you're bound to get caught." Now what he does is to substitute for the hotrod this Bonneville station wagon, and he here reposes the circumstances of getting caught, where both persons are using "the same car," and what differentiates them, and what turns out to be relevant to getting caught, is how they're dressed. So we have a sequence of moves: It's not simply, now, that they're not driving the hotrod, but even driving the Bonneville there is a chance that they'll get caught, and the way that gets reduced is by what he wears.

What I want to do now is try to lay out, to some extent, what some of the conflicts are between the guys in this discussion, and what things they are proposing. I partially considered what the other guys are proposing a couple of days ago. What he's arguing, as I see it, is that your basic aim ought to be to go speeding while minimizing your chance of getting caught. And to minimize your chance of getting caught, there are a set of constraints which are put on how you go about doing it. If you don't use them, you can't win; so he proposes. From the hotrodder's point of view – if you can take the others to be espousing that point of view – such a position misconceives what they're up to. What they want is not a guarantee that they won't get caught. If they had that, they would have lost right then and there. They want a situation in which they can expect to lose, because what that permits is, if they happen to win, the formulation of explanations for having won.

That is to say, if it's the case that not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon, then if you don't get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon, there's no problem which needs an explanation. If, alternatively, most people who go hotrodding get picked up, then on any given occasion when you don't get picked up, there's a problem which can be explained, and which can legitimately be posed as, "How did that happen?" At that point, and into that problem, can be fitted 'skill,' as an explanation.

It's in that regard that why it is that one chooses an activity like hotrodding, that involves violating some legal norm which is an important legal norm, can be fairly clearly seen. What you need in order to get the possibility of the proving of skill, is a situation where, if some given activity has been done, 'A', then either 'B' or 'not-B' are both observable. That is to say, both 'getting caught' and 'not getting caught' are observable things, so that you can say that 'not getting caught' is something that happened, or that 'getting caught' is observably absent.

And of course an enforced legal rule is a rather usable object for this test of skill. So it's not at all the case that if they could be guaranteed that they would not get caught, that's something they would want. It's a misunderstanding to suppose that drag racers are simply playing each against the other. They're play against the cops just as much. And they need the cops, because they need the cops' catching or not catching of them to formulate that they have done

the thing correctly; to even pose the fact that something has happened which they could have done correctly. In order to have a situation where you need an explanation, so as to be able to put in the explanation you'd like to put in, then what you need is some situation where these B or non-B alternatives are both equally observable things. If not many people get picked up, then if you don't get picked up, it's just that not many people get picked up.

Now the confrontation with the police is not simply accounted for in this way, though that's a good part of it. There are some other things, and if, when I'm talking about them, I use a kind of glorified language, let me just say that it's the language the kids use. These kids, and other kids who are routinely engaged in observably deviant activities, regularly formulate the problems in the same way. They start out with the fact that, in just cruising the highways, they are observably deviants. That is to say, they are seen as 'hotrodders in their cars,' and they are seen as persons who either have just finished, or are just about to, or in any case are routinely engaged in, speeding. The rules of the game are that anybody who speeds can be arrested, but they're in a situation where, further, they know that the cops can, if they care to, arrest them at any time. That's not simply because the cops can say that they were speeding, but because their cars, as with anybody else's car pretty much, if stopped and examined by reference to the criminal code, will be found to have one or another technical violations. As they put it, "Last weekend they were arresting people on Hollywood Boulevard for dirty windshields." And they know that anybody other than those who are observably deviant will not get arrested, unless there is such an occasion as speeding. What they can then examine is whether the police will conform to the rules that the police ought to conform to, i.e., treat them as they treat anbody else, or whether they'll succumb to the temptation to violate the rules of the game and make an easy arrest.

And in their observable deviance, then, they have a means of learning whether or not people like the police are worthy of respect – whether *they* conform. And if they don't, then of course they can say, "They don't conform, why should we conform?," etc., etc. In any event, you'll find that they're terribly carefully oriented to the fact that these others do or do not play according to the rules of the game. And the best way they have of testing that is, of course, to put themselves in the situation where they give a deep temptation to the others, to violate. Then if they don't, you can say they're respectable. They get a view, then, of organizations like the police, which others don't have available. And it's a very persistent topic as to whether, and how, the police do or do not behave as they ought to, or whether they just pick you up because they know they can pick you up – since, for one, if anybody sees them pick you up, the others all have an explanation: You must have been hotrodding. (Negro gang kids have exactly this same orientation. They engage in long complex discussions, which are morality discussions of a standard sort, as to how the police behave, and who is worthy of respect.) So these kids have a way of checking out the extent to which that moral order that they're supposed to conform to is followed by those who are its enforcers.

They've got a way to test it, they test it with perfectly good will, if they get arrested for speeding, that's the way it goes.

There's really, then, a tremendous ethical conflict going on between that position and what Joe is proposing – which is something like an adult speeder's view; that is, if you look perfectly square then you're in a position to get away with violations that others would never get away with. And he's proposing, then, to use that cover of his clean appearance, to generate violations while being protected from being caught. For him, then, if he were to do it, he would be gaining lessons in cynicism. It is also the case that what he's proposing is not available to any given kid; that is, he's proposing to use a set of resources that any given kid would not necessarily have. And their concern is to try to set things up so that any given kid would have a chance to participate in just the way that any other would, and, of course, to get a view of how that legal order is operating.

The extent to which either of these alternative strategies get used, and what consequences they have, are matters that I am in no position at all to say. I have little bits of data like this, and not anything much larger than that. But in very different materials one finds the same preoccupation. So it may be that the conflict that's set up here is not really terribly atypical – if that's at all relevant.

Lecture 11
Espousing a rule; Exemplary occurrences

Considering that statement, "If you go out hotrodding you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted," there are some things about it that we ought to note. First of all, the maxim that quite obviously follows from it – that you ought not to do the thing – is itself not asserted. So that what we get is the parts of a syllogism device as the basis for finding that maxim as appropriate. The character of that maxim – that you ought not to do it – is something that we could consider by reference to the fact that it isn't asserted, as well as by reference to some other features of the way it's used.

One thing is, that with a maxim like that one, even supposing that someone proposes it overtly, there are some alternatives as to what's to be made of it. For example, it could be treated as a more or less purely affiliative statement, i.e., something prefaced by 'I believe, and I am a member of those who hold the belief that this is or is not a proper thing to do.' Where, then, an answer might be an assertion that those who hold that belief are members of some group that we don't affiliate to.

It is to be noted that in the variety of maxims that are implied by Joe's two positional statements, they are not explicitly proposed by reference to the fact that he thinks they ought to be followed because they are, e.g., good rules, or whatever else. So the advice he can be offering is the type which both the offerer of, and the one who accepts, can offer or accept without any commitment to those persons who have built them, those persons who enforce them, etc. They're only 'good advice' to anyone who lives in a world which is at least partially governed by the fact that if you do 'A,' 'B' is liable to happen. That is to say, Joe isn't saying that you ought not to do it because it's wrong – where, if he said that, then they could simply claim that he was a traitor among them, or perfectly clearly an adult in child's guise, or something like that. While the technique he's using does not foreclose such a possibility, it is very generally used. That is, the claim that some rule which one does not claim is correct or good or whatever, ought to be followed by reference to whatever it is are taken to be the interests of the persons being so advised. Presumably it's a major technique for social workers dealing with street gangs and that sort of personnel.

In fact, the character of the warning or threat which is asserted via such a technique, is the basis for the kind of phenomenon most technically explored in the works of Thomas Schelling. These are a series of war-game type things, one very classic technique, which has a weak form and then a much stronger

form, goes like this: You can listen on the radio to the announcements of government leaders, and they will often make statements of the following form: "If the US keeps on its present course," say the Russians, "then it's very likely that war is inevitable." Where they're making what looks like a mere prediction, the follow-up of which they have nothing much to do with. They're not proposing you ought not to do it, or that they think what you're doing is bad, or that they will have anything to do with those consequences. It's a natural fact of life. And for that kind of thing to get strengthened, the classic military procedure is, I suppose, the kind of thing that was in the movie, *Dr. Strangelove*, but can be found in places like Schelling, and that is, to set matters up so that the consequences you propose naturally to happen, will happen as an inevitable consequence of some event. So that if, for example, a bomb explodes in a certain place, it will automatically and beyond the control of anybody involved, set off a reprisal which has been electronically geared to this possibility. Governments tend to do that sort of thing, and the US, for example, uses the phenomenon of public opinion in that fashion, when they propose that it's necessary, given public opinion, that this or that military strategy be enforced. It does not matter, apparently, whether the consequences function electronically, or whether it is simply a matter of the fact that certain events will have their emotional consequences for a public − allegedly or in fact. And it's not a matter, either, of whether you − whoever it is who's proposing this thing − are not the one who mobilizes that, and in fact can ignore it.

So statements of this form seem to set up problems, the solution of which consists of making them more and more descriptive in fact. That is, because these are problems, if you can satisfy their conditions, then you've got a powerful maneuver; so you arrange things so as to satisfy their conditions. If you could have a statement to the effect that if the Soviets move their troops in the following way, then, without respect to what you can do, the following will happen, and they can see that it's so, then of course it pays to arrange things so that that maxim now holds.

And relatedly, it is important that if one is attempting to get a set of persons to modify the behavior of some others who would stand in opposition − or who certainly stand in no commitment − to the set of rules you hold, then you want to be able to permit those who are going to espouse those rules to come on as perfectly well understanding the circumstances of those they're talking to, perhaps even affiliating with them, but in any event, not at all committed to the correctness or the moral rightness of the positions they're espousing.

In, I believe it was the 6th century, the Catholic missionaries who went to Catholicize England, wrote to the Pope saying, "These people already have a religion, and it has all sorts of features to it; for example, they have places where they worship, etc. What do we do about it, do we destroy them? After all, they are heathenish places, and how in the world can they be accepted or acknowledged by us." To which the answer came back: "Leave them. In fact, encourage them. What you want to do is fit our terminology and our ways to whatever given ways these people have. We'll be around a lot longer than that

one will, and over time they will have forgotten what the other religion was, and we will nevertheless have maintained whatever power it has over them."

What the constraints are on human nature, is something that we want to discover via an investigation of how it is that they in fact do whatever they do; where what we're trying to do is to see what is it and how is it that some ways they have of doing something works, and what its import might be. Now here we start out with a routine argument of a fairly trivial sort: If you do X, Y is bound to happen. There are reasons why it seems to be a quite powerful one. We can get lots of examples of it. We can find that it's used by persons who hold to rules without regard to whether they're efficacious or not, and they offer the efficacious formulation to those who don't hold the rule at all. For one, that permits the ones it's been offered to, to accept it and to proselytize it without themselves changing their affiliation. If each person who accepted the rule had to espouse it for its moral correctness, then each time someone accepted the rule, he might now be expelled from the group he was in, in the first place. Suppose you convinced a kid that he ought not to hotrod because it's bad. Each kid who was so convinced, might no longer have any access to the hotrodders, who would treat him as a turncoat. What are the circumstances under which somebody espouses a view that's not held by a set of members, and can still talk to them? Just consider the question that's in the air about these guys coming back from North Vietnam now. What are the circumstances under which they could possibly be in a position to say the war ought to be ended?

Now, one of the other things I want to examine for this is, it is perfectly well possible that no matter how you happen to espouse a rule – that is, for its moral correctness or its efficaciousness – you're liable to face the circumstances of being called a member of the group that espouses that thing. and when you're called that, the rule is thereby treated as irrelevant. The way that happens has to do with the kind of things that, in their queer way, philosophers have been much concerned with, at least early in the century. And that is, as they put it, if you assert some moral rule, are you doing anything more than asserting your affiliation?

Pretty much all that is interesting about that is, that it is indeed the case that the way members account for and, often, explain away some asserted rule is by aserting that category for which it is the case that its members hold that rule. They can do that effectively when they propose to be members of something that stands in alternation to it. And it is along such lines that how it happens that arguments end up in name-calling would be laid out. Given a position, a category is assigned in terms of which that position would have been generated – where there are alternative categories. A situation is opened, then, in which those members who have not declared themselves are now warned that the positions they take will involve them in affiliating to one or another of the categories that are now present. For each claim that Joe makes, then each cateogry that's offered as an account for those claims is being proposed to Bob as, do you want to be called one of those? If so, take a stand with this guy. If not, don't say anything, or oppose him.

There are two different ways Joe goes about making his position. One is that statement that has as its obvious inference the maxim 'don't go hotrodding.' The other is through this hypothetical singular occurrence, which it seems he's proposing to be fully generalized. 'If I . . . etc.,' where the 'I' is now merely a person in this thing, where what he says holds for whomsoever. And that generalizability is of course attacked in the return to it which says it's not generalizable i.e., 'Not many people . . . etc.'

We could call that second statement of Joe's either an exemplary occurrence or a hypothetical exemplary occurrence, and wonder whether it matters that it's hypothetical or not. And indeed, it needn't even be clear whether it is hypothetical or not, because he can use the 'if' form for an actual occurrence, simply to show he's going to make an argument from it; where you use the 'if' form in order to make it stronger. That is, the sheer fact it occurred may have no consequences. If you just say, "On a given day the following happened to me," the hearer can say, "So what?" If, however, you say, "If I do the following . . . " then you're making of it a general argument.

Now the phenomenon of 'exemplary occurrence' is fundamental for the following kinds of reasons. It seems to be the case that a large amount of the knowledge that Members hold about how the society works are, as I earlier put it, 'protected against induction.' And what that means is that it isn't automatically modified if events occur which it doesn't characterize. The question is, does that mean that there's no way that it can get modified, and if not, how does it get modified, where the question of how it gets modified can be quite important.

There could be all kinds of models of how it might get modified. One might be, you store up a bunch of exceptions, saving each one, remembering them, and when you get a whole bunch of them, you're forced now to say that what you supposed were so is not so. For example, the first Negro you meet turns out not to be what you know about Negroes. You store that up as information. When you've met ten, and they all turn out to be not what you've been told, you say, "Well I guess that information is incorrect."

Now, things are not done in that fashion. Let me give an account of a particular situation, so as to show what the consequences are, of their not being done in that fashion. One time I was engaged in trying to see how it is that coroners make decisions that somebody did or did not kill themselves. Those things are handled case by case, one at a time. A case comes in – let's suppose it involves a body being found with a pistol wound in some particular area of the head. The area matters, because the coroner can determine that if the wound is in a certain area it could be an accident e.g., the person could have been doing such a thing as checking whether there were bullets in the gun, etc., whereas if the wound is in other places, then the person must have had the intention of killing themselves in that way; that is, they wouldn't have otherwise been holding the gun in such a position as to lead to a wound in that area of the head. They go through the cases, and each one may get decided via one of these rules.

If you said to the guy who was making those decisions, "It's a probabalistic

argument; probably in five cases out of a thousand, it might well be that somebody accidentally had the gun in that position," he'd agree. And now there could be a variety of ways of considering that five-cases-in-a-thousand phenomenon. One would be to take a thousand cases of this sort, save them up, then make your decision on all of them together, the five queerest ones will be called accidents, the other 995, suicide. That's not what's done. What's done is, each case comes up. For each case there's only a five-in-a-thousand chance that it could be not-suicide, so each one is decided to be suicide. Furthermore, when a problematic case comes up, what's said about it is, "There's a very small chance that it could be an accident; it's not very likely, and furthermore we've always found that they are suicides." And the fact that, that they've 'always found' consists of their procedure for deciding that, does not seem to make any given determination problematic. That they've 'always found' is used to, in fact, urge that the next case is like those that we've found. So you don't get the adding up of the troublesome ones, about which can be said, "Well, there are always some that are sort of troublesome but they have always turned out to be suicide." I take that because it's a rather stark example, but consider how people deal with excuses, and a variety of other such phenomena; they do it in the same way.

Now then, the problem is how do these shifts take place in that knowledge that gets used on each case, and for which the fact of exceptions occurring turns out not to be relevant in each case; even though they will be fully recognized as sometimes occurring. To extend the point a bit, consider for example, those things which I'm sure have happened to you, where you know that such things happen, you've heard that they happen, people tell you that they happen – except that when they happen to you, you also know that you could never tell anybody that they, in fact, happened to you. That is, they happen. But they happen to nobody, on no given occasion. And you realize you can't tell anybody about it, except, maybe, to say that it happened to somebody else.

Now the phenomenon of an exemplary occurrence is apparently a kind of way that a large shift can take place. And in the case of suicides, just to continue that along, things could happen as follows: Until now, deaths at railroad crossings, when a car gets hit by a train, are presumed to be accidents. Then somebody says, "We've had a whole bunch of these recently, they've all been decided as usual, but this one looks interesting." They examine that one, and it turns out that it's extremely unlikely that it could have been an accident; the train could perfectly well be seen, and, further, the road was so situated that the car could not have been seen from the train. Suppose also that they do what has been done by people like those in the Harvard School of Public Health; say, take the car apart afterwards. They find that there weren't any brakes at all; the driver had taken the brakes out so as to prevent, even if they'd wanted to change their ways at the last moment, the car possibly stopping. Then, through such a single case, the rule might get changed. Now it's the presumption that if there's a railroad crossing accident of a fairly general sort, it is suicide.

That matter may seem to be not terribly consequential in general, except that there can be a whole set of circumstances where a rather general and important moral rule of one sort or another gets handled in the same fashion. The import of certain kinds of crimes, when they get publicized to some extent, is that persons now begin to talk of the outcome of that trial implicating how it is that the legal system works. So people said about the Chessman case during its course, that if he didn't go to the gas chamber, then everybody would lose respect for our legal system, we would be giving free play to deviants, murderers, whatever else, and that everybody would take it that they could no longer hold the rule that the legal system by-and-large works correctly.

That means, if exemplary occurrences can be formed up out of a single occurrence, and if they can have the consequence of changing some people's knowledge, where furthermore the new piece of knowledge will have exactly the same form as the old – that is, it also will be protected from induction, then matters are extremely tender. You don't get a step-by-step modification of something. It's frozen, it shifts, and it's frozen again. Then the focus on single occurrences is not that they are an exception, or that they slightly modify what you know. It can be an attempt to shift whatever anybody has known previously.

Lecture 12
'Tearing down;' Non-translatable categories

I'm going to finish up our consideration of this segment by dealing with some of its more overall features. We could say sort of roughly that the segment itself has a kind of introduction, which is that one sentence that they all put together, then there's an argument for a bit, then what may be a transitional segment which is that three-utterance interchange, "Face it you're a poor little rich kid," "Yes Mommy," "Face the music," and following that, what they eventually call this 'tearing down.'

Now 'tearing down' is a procedure that can be done on a large variety of occasions and in a large variety of settings, and one of the things we want to ask about it is, Does it have any special place in the therapy situation, for one, and at this point in the therapy situation – whatever point this may be. The way I'm going to approach that is to ask whether that procedure which they call 'tearing down' has any interesting relationship to what it is that at least the patient in a therapy situation takes to be going on, at least some of the time. One reason we could have for asking that sort of question might be, we might feel as I feel that this segment is a kind of sample presented to the 'company' or new candidate, as to what it is that happens here. And we want to see in what way it might be considered to be a sample.

Here is a piece of a conversation which takes place between a staff member of a psychiatric agency and a woman who has, as she takes it, very serious troubles, but who is very hesitant to go back into therapy. There's an attempt to convince her to do that, but she offers a characterization of therapy as she experienced it before. She says,

> A: I stopped at a very bad time, I know I did.
> B: Uh huh
> A: But the job situation got moving and I   I stopped right when I was beginning– well I would have been better if I had no therapy than to stop when I stopped.
> B: Yeah, sounds like it.
> A: Cause I stopped right when I was looking at the whole gory mess.
> B: Uh huh
> A: Before it started, you know, before I started to clean it up a little.
> B: Uh huh
> A: Was like a surgeon getting down to the disease, you know, and all of a sudden he opens you up and there's disease. Wow.

B: Uh huh
A: He knows what it is and quits there. (laughs)
B: Yeah, I suppose that's it.
A: (laughs)
B: That's a good example.

She offers this image, then, of being cut open. And that image of first being torn apart as a first part of a therapy procedure, is one that, at least patients hold often, anyway. What, in part, it consists of is, apparently, taking varieties of things that the patient says about whatever, and either explicitly formulating for them, or in some way leading them to see, that some set of terms characterize their circumstances, where the terms can be more or less technical in one or another way. Like, in the case I just quoted, right at the beginning the doctor says, "Tell me about your problem" and she says, "I'm ashamed to. I don't want you to tell me I'm infantile, because I know that."

That obviously can stand in some fairly nice relationship to what transpires in this segment, and her characterization of what happened to her might stand in some very nice relationship to that 'tearing down' procedure. And many analysts of initiation procedures in general, and the early stages of things like being hospitalized in mental hospitals, going through therapy, etc., talk of them as degredation, mortification, stripping of the personality, and the like; any of which might well be seen as the same thing named by the phrase 'tearing down.' But there's a really deep problem involved. I don't know the best way of presenting the problem involved in sentences that have the form, "Don't tear him down" or "I don't want you calling me infantile," but I'll try a couple of ways. They may not seem initially to be just in point, but hold on to it for a bit.

At the beginning of a book called *Excess and Restraint* by an Australian anthropologist, Ronald Berndt, we find him doing what anthropologists occasionally do, and that is, to formulate what it is that he takes it he was seen as by the natives when he arrived at this place that he went to work in. This is from page ix of the preface:

> We were viewed as returning spirits of the dead who had forgotten the tongue of our fathers and wanted to relearn it.

Grammatically, that's perfectly good English. I want to make the case that it's an asemantic statement. That is, it is not meaningful in English, though it appears to be.

The first part, "We were viewed as," is fine, and there are lots of things that can be stuck into that for which this first part is a frame. And that frame to some extent controls what can be put into the second part, in the sense that there are lots of things that could be used as second parts of sentences, that don't fit here, syntactically or otherwise – for example, that isn't the kind of thing you say about humans.

I suppose it has to be clear that the second part, from "returning spirits"

on, is some kind of translation from another language into English, and, in part, that it *is* a translation is a considerable part of its warrant for being said. Such that, if Berndt stood up at an anthropological convention and said, "I, Ronald Berndt, am a returning spirit from such-and-such," that would be good grounds for them to think he's insane. That is to say, if this were English, it could not be a potentially correct description of what he might be. But there are apparently ways that, if you take words one by one and in some combinations, some combination of them can be produced to look something like a Members' category. Those words could somehow go together, and be recognized as 'a something in some world.'

We have some way of handling such a statement because you can say, "Well, the initial thing is that he's a stranger, and that's some way of characterizing strangers that involves somehow making him some sort of member, and that must be one category that these people either had or devised for handling such persons." But we would take it that, except as a matter of syntax, none of the controls on correct use of that clause 'returning spirits . . . etc.' are found in ordinary English. We would not know when it's been said correctly about someone, what are the consequences of it being said, what you can infer from its being employed, etc., etc. It would be a sentence, then, if it had any distribution in English, which would be reporting what it was that was taking place for these other people. And it isn't a proposed introduction into English, I take it, of some category that we've lacked and now are enriched by having. So, for example, until the term 'schizophrenia' was invented, it could be said that we lacked that category, and that given it, a body of experience, a set of observations, etc., could now be ordered, and 'schizophrenia' now stand as their name – and be used, furthermore, as other disease names might get used. But what kind of experience this term 'returning spirits . . . etc.' orders, and what class it would be a part of is, at least to me, quite obscure. And yet there's a sense in which we do understand, by some mapping, what sort of thing he is talking about. And that, of course, is an extremely interesting kind of fact.

The sentence, then, is an odd one, and the introduced category is not, as we might put it, generative. That is to say, it's not like a Reader's Digest word which, now having learned it, there are lots of places where you can use it. But there may be somehow in there, an exploitation of English syntax in making the translation and building a sentence like that. And that is, in part, I suppose, why anthropologists will frequently not do this, but will say, 'We were viewed as . . .' and give you some phrase in the native language, and then say explicitly, "What we have here is a gloss of something that might mean the following sorts of things in English." But they still use the native term, because then you can't use the term in English; that is it remains a term from that other language.

I introduce this sort of consideration since I want eventually to make the case that one of the core problems for psychoanalysis and other psychother-apies, and the social sciences in general, concerns the relationship between the categories that those disciplines set up and the categories that members of the

society otherwise use. The problem is that somehow members take it that such categories – 'manic depressive,' etc. – are additions to a list of categories that exist already, and can be used in just the same fashion that the old ones are usable. They may be better, but they do not otherwise modify the structure of the class, of which people come to be seen as members. However, the professional constructing these new categories may take it that one major task he has is to somehow build them so they are unusable in the way that the categories he sees them as replacing were usable. That is, the professionals put it as a programmatic task that they would like to have it that the statement "You're a manic depressive," for example, would be nonsense in ordinary English, i.e., unless said by a therapist.

When Freud set out to build a 'scientific psychology' as he put it – and that program of his, to build a scientific psychology, was among the last things he ever got translated into English – one of the tasks he felt he faced in the first instance, was to deal with the fact that everybody considered themselves to be an authority in psychology. He was not locating a domain which persons could take it from the beginning they had no idea what it is you might say about it. But it wasn't, of course, only the case that they had lots of views, which they took to be well warranted, on psychological matters, but those views, and the categories they used, were not morally neutral. That is to say, in part, that any time one of them was asserted as being so about somebody, it was also the case that some assessment of their status was being made – as a good citizen, or whatever else.

Now, in many views of what could be called the philosophy of science, it is taken that technical findings stand in some position of replacement to lay findings. One can often have a picture of the state of lay knowledge which stands in a strong relationship to what scientific knowledge is supposed to look like. That is to say, that it's a set of items about any or every given topic, where what happens is, when a new item is introduced, it can operate to expunge an old item. That goes for correct scientific procedure, and it has been taken to go for what is called lay knowledge, as well – with some delay perhaps, but essentially the same kind of thing can properly take place.

That's a kind of tricky argument if you're dealing with the structure of lay knowledge, although it can be perfectly well satisfactory if you're dealing with the structure of scientific knowledge, in that you can set up by fiat what the structure of scientific knowledge is, and you might get a list of items, and you might, then, at any time, remove an item as a new one comes in that seems inconsistent with it. However, what the structure of lay knowledge is, would obviously be a problem for some discipline. It's not in the first instance known. It clearly has been a subject of some consideration since the Greeks, anyway. And to propose that it's a list of items is to make a rather daring assertion. But it's one that has been made.

As a further problem, there is the fact that it seems if an item is now introduced to the scientific corpus, then the controls on its use can presumably be very well laid out, and whether it is correctly used can be something insisted on and enforced. And furthermore, it can be presumed that if it's

incorrectly used, you will in fact have hell to pay; that is to say, consequences will just show up if you misuse some item. Now it's not clear, in the first instance, what kinds of uses these items do have when we're talking about lay knowledge. It's by no means clear, either, that they're only the same uses, or that 'error' – if we can formulate that – has the same short-run or long-run chance of showing up.

For considerations like the ones I've offered, there is some considerable concern about who would have the right, at all, to use new scientific knowledge, or techniques, or whatever. Because, for one, if it became something that anybody could use, then God only knows what might be done with it. And the simplest way for it to become something that anybody might use, is for it somehow to be seen as a member of the corpus of correct knowledge, undifferentiated as to scientific or lay. Where it's the fact that scientists say so that permits anybody now to assert and use it – where, however, they need make no special change in how they use any category, to use the new one.

One thing Freud was further concerned about was to somehow prevent persons from using his categories in just the fashion they used the ones they had before. And there's very good reason for that, which is that if, say, 'manic depressive' was a replacement for some lay term like 'cranky,' then whatever assessments that were made about somebody said to be 'cranky' could be made about a person said to be 'manic depressive,' and that someone who was said to be manic depressive might hear it as a kind of attack.

Now, I take it that, probably generically, in the first stage of therapy, anyway, that's what's seen as going on. And the term 'infantile,' for example, is treated as being either the same as the lay term 'infantile,' when someone says to an apparent adult, "You're behaving like an infant," or as some sort of technical term which is nonetheless usable as the other term is. And that is something that, for example, let's say a field like astronomy has avoided, and nobody gets very horrified to hear about the generative stars. But it's not been done in such fields as psychiatry. And the fact that it's not been done has been turned into a tremendous attack on psychiatry, by somebody like Thomas Szasz, who will invoke the fact that the categories are used evaluationally elsewhere, to propose that the phenomenon is that of making an evaluation, and that their isn't anything but that sort of knowledge being used.

That is, I suppose, a strong indication of the failure to cut off the incorporation of new information into lay hands. And it would be in that sort of way that one can see how the so-called 'same procedure' can be seen as one that 'you call X and we call Y.' You call it 'diagnosis' and we call it 'tearing down.' And one can see how, then, these patients could be characterized as giving their version of what it is that's going to happen in these sessions. It remains the case that if the discipline retains the notion of items of knowledge as the things it is basically dealing with, then it's going to have to face the problem that the items get taken and used. One thing that can be done, of course, is to attempt to place anything that could be called such an item into such a structure that if you pull the item out, it's senseless.

Lecture 13
'*Everyone has to lie*'

The transcript of lecture 13 is incomplete and full of gaps. What there is of it deals with the phenomenon that Sacks called 'Everyone has to lie.' It became a paper of the same name, and can be found in M. Sanches and B. G. Blount (eds), Sociocultural Dimensions of Language Use (New York; Academic Press, 1975), 57–80. For the materials in lecture form, see Spring 1967, lectures 8 and 9.

Lecture 14
The Navy pilot

The transcript of lecture 14 is full of gaps. In its place are Sacks' notes on the data he considered in lecture 14, a New York Times *article entitled 'A navy pilot calls Vietnam duty peak of career.' The materials are taken from Sacks' Research Notes, vol. 2a (1964–5), 170–99.*

MCD materials[1]

New York Times Sat. May 29, 1965

From a long article:

> A Navy Pilot Calls Vietnam Duty Peak of Career
> by Seth S. King
> Special to the *New York Times*
> ABOARD THE CORAL SEA, in the South China Sea, May 27

> Commander Jack H. Harris, leader of the Attack Squadron 155 aboard the Coral Sea was explaining how a carrier pilot feels about Vietnam: "I certainly don't like getting shot at. But this is the top of my flying career and it's important I should know about it. I really feel I'm fortunate to get the opportunity after 21 years in the Navy of combat experience. I need it to be a real professional."
> . . .
> How did he feel about knowing that even with all the care he took in aiming only at military targets someone was probably being killed by his bombs?
> "I certainly don't like the idea that I might be killing anybody," he replied. "But I don't lose any sleep over it. You have to be impersonal in this business. Over North Vietnam I condition myself to think that I'm a military man being shot at by another military man like myself."

1   First, we may see one crucial matter here; and that is that he takes it that there are alternative ways that he and those he is dealing with (bombing, being fired at by), may be categorically formulated.

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[1] 'MCD' stands for Membership Categorization Device.

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2   Second, that the choice of the categorizations is relevant to the assessments he might make of his activities; now this is so in a strong sense. To wit; that he sees that the formulations have alternative imports, and it is not just the case that the formulations have alternative imports, and that further by some work he is able to choose that formulation which has an import that is consistent with what it is that he is doing, and that permits him to do it without important moral consequences (he is able to continue 'without losing sleep'). This situation of alternatives is then one to be marked as one where he takes it that there is not some exclusively appropriate or required choice of devices.

3   It may be much noted that the choice of the device is not just to be made by reference to what they may make of his actions under some scheme like reference to their consequences or the like, but by reference to how, given the use of the consistency rule to formulate his alter egos, how it provides for the formulation of his actions. The availability then of making his categorization decision in such a way that it routinely provides for a categorization of his opponents, and by virtue of the mutual categorization then an assessment of either's actions is a crucial matter.

4   Notice how it is that categorization can be held in some abeyance or the use of particular devices not be foreclosed while making reference to populations, i.e., the use of 'anybody' and 'someone.'

5   Notice also how the characteristics of the required impersonality are delivered, via the use of 'you' in a usage we have been considering.

6   There are several matters re 'you have to be;' is it the case that if you have to be then you can be; or is it the case that, that you have to be provides the grounds for being.

7   Now the import of the categorization of the others as well as himself, and of the particular device chosen, is in part that an ethic follows, where: what is proper for him is proper for them, or, equally, what is proper for them is proper for him; and also, that the device chosen is not merely one which assigns a category to he and to them, but also it offers a category to them, which they may also use in just the way he uses them, i.e., that with it they may formulate what is happening just in the terms he does, and with the same consequences. If they accept that offer then at least there are no complaints to be offered on their part about the error of his ways, except if he happens to violate the norms that, given the device used, are operative; that is, the device used does not provide that there are no rules for the actions of either.

It is of course to be noted about the given device that it delocalizes the affiliation of the personnel; what is relevant in the first instance is not that we are the military of the US and they of Vietnam, but that we are both military; it is that we are differentially affiliated which provides for who we shoot at; otherwise we are colleagues.

8   One of the things to be noted about 'you have to be impersonal in this business' is that its indexical features, particularly the 'this,' have some special relevance. The statement is perhaps only incidentally correct for the military;

it is correct for other businesses as well. And that feature of it may be quite crucial. For, given the fact that it is true for other businesses as well, that the consequences of impersonality differ may be rather irrelevant; so, businessmen may be impersonal in different ways, or psychiatrists or priests; but if the statement is true for them, and they are in a business for which the sentence is true, they may not be in a position to without recourse to their own circumstances importantly claim that he is doing wrong; for he can answer that the same holds for them with the difference being that their impersonality doesn't directly concern killing. The property of prepared, or general purpose indexical statements may be a rather crucial one; cf. 'That's the problem with society' and others like it.

And we know that persons who are attacked for the peculiar defects of their activities are often seeking to formulate matters such that they can claim that the same sort of defect, if not the details of it, hold elsewhere, for the attacker, and perhaps for matters quite generally. This use of a general purpose indexical statement may be very helpful in such an attempt. And note of course that if one can make such a claim, that it does seem that one prevents the attack from having its intended power; there is something akin to an unclean hands argument. The unclean hands argument is further made powerful by then attaching as a further class beyond its scope the 'ivory tower' or 'bleeding hearts' group as further persons who are in no position to talk, because they've never met a payroll. One needn't then have a single argument to handle every locus of attack; but several can be combined; where the first part gathers a bunch together, and then on behalf of all, one uses the second part (where one proposes that one is defending those who are talking oneself from the first group when one attacks the second.)

It may then be that the use of 'this' with its possible extension being greater than 'military' serves to cut off attacks by anyone who is an incumbent in some business for which the statement is also correct. The use of 'you' in this statement has been examined in the lectures on the first page of the initiation ceremony.

9   One can notice that the relevance of a device with which a consistency rule usage gives: military–military; is of separate importance than 'you have to be impersonal in this business.' For that remark might be made by a professional gunman, and it would not serve as an answer, as an adequate account. Or would it? Or is it relevant?

10   Is there some suggestion such as: If we are both military men, shooting at each other as we ought, then not only is it the case that neither has any position to complain about the proper military doings of the other, but also what we do is in some sense just our business, and having behaved properly, no one else is in position to complain either? Alternatively or in combination there is the issue that having taken care of part of their side by giving them a military man to behave as I do, he being their representative involves them sufficiently; they have no recourse because their side is behaving as ours is.

11   One wants of course to notice that the formulation 'this business' is of interest not only for the 'this' but for the fact that the use of 'business' is itself quite relevant, i.e., the work need not be so formulated.

12   The way that having dealt with the opposing military being referred to the population has been sufficiently handled is via the representativity of certain categories of other categories, i.e., of a team for a city, and of an army for a nation.

13   The remarks about 'this' or that sentence's general purpose character may hold as well for 'it' and the sentence it is contained in, i.e., 'I don't lose any sleep over it.' And the combination may work together to get a general defense which has to be accepted or the attack it succumbs to may be used in too many other places.

14   I take it that it is quite important that the character of the wrongness or possible wrongness of what is being done is not formulated until both the doer and the done to are categorized in some other fashion than 'someone;' though it is apparently the case that the possible wrongness is present once it is established that what is going on, killing, is being done to someone. Thus the someone fact sets up a problem of formulating an account; but given only the someone formulation, the fact that an account can be made is left open, i.e., it is not foreclosed that it can not be made.

Here of course one has to consider the possibility that there are ethics for which it would be sufficient to establish the wrongness if one had found or possibly found no more than that it was a case of someone being killed. Weber on the difference between India and the West.

15   Note also in this regard that 'someone' is sufficient to set up the problem and to deal with it via the categorization and that one need not make a count of how many they are. On the one hand, that is, that one need not know, to make the claim that an account is appropriate, how many in fact; one may suppose that some, or may be assured that some, without knowing how many, and also the account that is constructed is not apparently affected by the size of that some. Though it is the case that if the size is known, that size can be relevant to the need for and the character of an acceptable account.

16   Re earlier remarks; if it were the case that, that you had to be impersonal in this business held only for this business, then it might be that doing this business would be wrong in the first instance, or could be. That it isn't so only for this business is crucial to the usability of the sentence 'in this business.'

17   Re impersonality; it is not simply that in doing the activities this is something one is forced to do, but in the formulation of the account what has been done is that an account has been offered which could be offered by any person involved on either side of the affair; and via that fact the impersonality point gets perhaps a further emphasis; thus having been asked; how do you? (deal with it), there is on the one hand a claim of need for impersonalizing and then an account which is one that is formulated in such terms that it could be offered by anyone involved, i.e., is impersonalized. That is in addition to the

point that the remark 'you have to be impersonal in this business' is a sort of ideal impersonal remark.

18   'Impersonality' as a requirement is of course not an unequivocal object; for it in some circumstances could not serve as part of an excuse, but might be offered as a difficulty, i.e., I wish I could know who it was that I was (killing, saving, etc.) so that I could get special pleasure from that; as, e.g., in certain charities the possible impersonality is handled by one being promised mail from those one feeds, and then some relation is established between feeders and fed of a personal sort. It is not that one has to kill impersonally that it is a difficulty; so that it would be nice if one could kill personally, but that one can't think of killing, or be concerned with that, even if it is in the first instance the case that one does not know who one kills; where one has a possible equivocal that comes on with perfect unequivocality that is of some special import. But maybe no such sense of impersonal is involved; rather, that one has not to consider that one is killing persons.

19   'Over North Vietnam I condition myself;' this pair of phrases is quite similar to; '99 percent of the time a guy could pull up to me;' in both cases the first phrase which modifies some later phrase does not modify the one that consecutively follows it. It clearly could be placed before the phrase it modifies, but it isn't. Clearly enough it can do what it needs anyway, if 'anyway' is relevant; but the positioning freedom is something to be noted if the grounds for the use of the freedom are not yet apparent. (The second quote is to be found in the initiation ceremony data, i.e., group therapy 6 pages.)

20   The clarity of the fact that his account not only holds for him and for any others on his side, but for the ones on the other side is provided for by the fact that what he states is the account that might be offered by one who subscribed to his formulation and who was a Vietnamese military man, i.e., the one speaking formulates, not his bombing as the relevant exemplary actions but his being shot at, i.e., he explicitly is offering an account, i.e., the fact that he is shot at as something he excuses because the other guy is a military man shooting at him, a military man (providing the hope that the other will excuse him as he excuses the other).

21   Query; how can he come to say 'the idea that I might be' as, cf. 'the fact that I am.' One possibility which I want to explore is that there is a kind of transitivity to an indefiniteness feature. Perhaps it is the case that if it is not observably definite that the given actor has killed some particular individual (by which I don't mean someone whose name, e.g., he knows, but that he sees that someone in fact has been made dead) then even though it may be quite clear that the bunch of men have killed a bunch of people – and that they would have failed, for example, if they had not – the non-locatability of flier A killing some person A may permit it being seen as indefinite that he has killed someone; if it is indefinite that A has killed some person, then it may be indefinite that A has killed any person; and if that is so then it may be that he can talk of 'might' and of the idea, as cf. the fact.

Now the point of this is not just with regard to killing, but might have an import in, say, market events, where although it is perfectly clear that the

collection of businessmen have done something that has as its consequence that some collection of others have been injured, the non-locability for each businessman of some person that they have injured may permit indefiniteness to take a transitive relational form, and also to be operative as 'an idea' that one may have to come to terms with; where, that it is an idea that one has to come to terms with, provides a variety of ways that one can use: the ways available for coming to terms with ideas that are unpleasant.

The phenomenon of organizational, institutionalized destruction, cf. Nazi operations, etc. are obviously possibly involved here (Note that one possible, and terribly interesting correlate involves the fact that the 'coming to terms with the idea' can be an immensely painful thing that persons who are 'not directly involved' may feel; there can be, then, a generalizing import to the situation as well; so those involved directly may have the fact of transitivity for indefiniteness and thereby the issue of 'the idea' being a real gain to their circumstances; while those not involved directly can find the idea an immense source of pain. Much current and classical philosophy, theology here.)

In this regard note that it seems that it is the case that to the remark 'There are many things wrong with this,' the following is a good answer: 'Name one,' where, that one cannot be named or is not named is seen to undercut the claim of 'many;' alternatively if one is named then that may have more import than that one has been named; that interchange may also get its character via the transitivity of indefiniteness.

It might be said that having said transitivity we want to be saying that the matter is two directional, i.e., not only if one is indefinite then many. That may be so; have to see.

22   It is of course to be noted that there is not any 'necessary' relation between the possible transitivity relation and that fact that given its operation one must consider the idea, or that one can consider the idea and not the fact. That is partially separate; but it may well also hold that if definite then one must consider the fact; if indefinite then one can consider the idea as cf. the fact (which does not mean the non-relevance of possibility, but: relevance of possibility but non-definiteness of it.) Then, if indefinite, one must consider either (idea, fact) and can consider one of them.

23   We are of course supposing that at least with regard to the combination (idea or fact + might or am) that the choice, whether required or not, of a first, operates to control the choice of a second, and that at least if 'fact' is chosen then 'might' is excluded as a PCD; without however suggesting that if 'idea' is chosen 'am' is excluded. Now we have of course to determine that in fact there are some controls on combination here.

24   The first part; 'I certainly don't like the idea that' is not optional if the position one thereafter takes is to get credit; one can't properly say (with it to have the same reception) either 'I like the idea,' or 'I don't mind the idea' or 'I never thought about it' or leave the space blank – there is a space in the position assertion for that preface; 'I don't lose any sleep over it' is not just incomplete, but it is understood as having 'I don't mind' as its prepart. Thus there is what is literally a formula; 'I certainly don't like the idea that I might

be doing X, but I don't lose any sleep over it;' i.e., + some account which is signalled as coming, by the use of 'but.' In this context the 'but clause' serves to provide that the utterance is still open, and that furthermore something that is proposedly an account of that 'but clause' will be offered. You do X (X is something which without it being said is something problematic, i.e., presumptively wrong); I don't like doing it, but I can, because. This package is a general purpose one and can be used quite widely. In GT, a guy says about his girlfriend, "she's on the girls tumbling team. I mean, she doesn't like it, but she needs the credits" (this may not be exact; the quotes are in the data somewhere).[2] When the formula is present it is for the analyst a strong way of identifying a low valued object, i.e., that thing which is the X in the formula's first part; there is of course also the account part. [*Then*, *handwritten*:] The formula is crucial not only 'because' these are low-valued, but also because they can be done given the formula's use.

25   The first part of the formula, 'I certainly don't like,' acknowledges the fact that the question, 'How do you feel about. . .?' operates on an object which has some feeling about it as its proper one. Thus, the very question involves a tapping into an evaluational schema, and the formulaic return acknowledges not only that, but that the question not only taps in, but indicates that the user is committed to that scheme or recognizes its legitimacy, and that the answerer knows the schema, knows that it generates the question, knows further that there is a proper position to be held, but that having subscribed to the position, a further statement is not foreclosed. And it is that subscription to the position's status that is crucial. Having made it, one can account for the action in an acceptable way. (Note: I am not offering this statement as just about the given piece of data, as ought to be obvious.)

A return such as 'Why do you ask?' would be immensely informative about the subscription the doer of the return has. As perhaps the need to lay out in the question, that some hold that the thing being done is wrong; that is not a stronger, but a weaker formulation than the simple question, 'How do you feel about . . . ?'

26   Notice that the term 'like' is not additive of features, in the phrase 'another military man like myself.' What it is is an affirmation of the consequence of his being a military man (given the fact that I am one). It is an equivalence signalling term, which points out the relevance of the item it follows, i.e., I mention military man because by that I establish the equivalence of this other guy and me, which equivalence is establishable in that case sufficiently by our common locus in that category.

27   It is perhaps the case that the phrase 'another military man like myself' is handleable in part via the remarks on transitivity relation, i.e., if he is a military man, then he is like any other, and being like any other, he is like myself.[3] (It is not directly a class inclusion argument; though the middle is

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[2] Actual quote: "She's in the girls' tumbling team. (pause) I mean she doesn't like it she's just on it because she needs the credits."

[3] Written in: "No: this is a symmetry issue: will consider it in a bit."

he – class – me; given this format it is obvious that me – class – he is just as usable; the use of the former is tactically nice; for it is me who is being shot at in the first instance. Perhaps then forget the transitivity point here.)

28   'Idea' may be not only sequentially related to 'might' but also to *think* in the next sentence.

29   Notice that there is a nice relation between 'how do you feel about' and 'I don't lose any sleep over it.' The latter is of course an idiom answer; but it is not simply a phrase that has happened to have some standard meaning. In our analysis of 'How are you feeling?' we noted that the specification class of categories that are relevant given the choice of an answer from the negative subset has as one of its members (the PSW class) 'sleep.'[4]

Given that locus of 'sleep' and the conditions of its relevance the idiom is not a merely accidental freezing. (The discussion is in the first instance to be found in the Diagnosis of Depression drafts.) The use of the idiom then may provide in the first instance that there is some relevance to the fact, as I have asserted, or as may be supposed that I am in a negative subset on 'feeling' whether I've said so or not.

What has happened is of course a kind of generalization; where the addition of *about* + whatever it precedes, does not affect the structure of the relation between 'feeling' and the consequences of the negative subset. Retaining then the private imagery or relevancies; as in 'Johnson makes me nauseous.' The test of something's consequentiality, by the way, is under some formulations to be made by reference to whether such intimate formulations of consequences, or such intimate consequences are in fact made to initially public matters. If they are, then it's consequential; if not, then not. Cf. Kennedy's death was like something happening to a member of the family; the war in Vietnam is consequential now because it is affecting millions of Americans directly, vis-à-vis their sons, etc. Now what we want to notice is not so much that or whether such assertions are correct or not, but that they are the ways of making the point of 'effect' strongestly. And that is presumably a culturally relative fact. (Though some theorists, Weber, for one, I think, might argue, or did argue that things had in the end to get posed in this format if they were to count practically.)

MCD (1)

We have not considered whether there are any controls on the sequence a population ought to be categorized in, or whether and how that might matter. Now it can be made clear that it could matter; there is the one person problem; and there is the nth person solution;[5] so, even for two persons order of categorizing might matter.

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[4] See Spring 1967, lectures 8 and 9, on the phenomenon "Everyone has to lie." A 'PSW' category is a 'Personal State, Which-Type' category, such as sleep or appetite.

[5] See Spring 1966, lecture 7, pp. 325–7.

What sorts of controls are there on the sequence for doing categorization; it may be noted, though the matter is not directly in point, or clearly so, that it may regularly be the case that while there is some freedom in choosing the first person to introduce someone to, thereafter the order may be quite fixed.

To see right off how it can matter, there are certain categories which are clearly not for a population of only one person, and which are first-categorized categories, i.e., their use involves the person categorized by reference to them being the first one categorized in some group that is larger than or equal to two. For example, the categories, murderer, attacker, rapist. And there are some second categories, i.e., whose use indicates that the person being so categorized was not categorized first, e.g., self-defense murderer . . .

These few facts may have some consequences; first of all the set of categories to be used on some population, i.e., those to be chosen from those that might be chosen, may not be independent of the order in which persons must be categorized, or may be crucial to what order in fact is used. The fact that there is some freedom in sequence of categorizing may be quite useful in expanding the set of categories that can readily be used, or effectively be used. At least this could be true for those devices which contain first-categorized categories and second-categorized categories.

MCD (2)

1   Sequence of categorizing may be relevant for which device as well as for which categories.

2   There are some categories which obviously are 'first categorized persons' categories, e.g., 'winner' (win, place, show). It is not always necessary that for some categories which are in one way or another ordered, that the first of the order be the first categorized, or the first category be applied first, but it is regularly done, e.g., regularly the announcement of scores or other contest outcomes are announced winner first. Cf. here, Malkiel on ordered binomials. For some, however, order of categorizing personnel is crucial to use of categories e.g., attacker–attacked. Of course, first, second . . . Sometimes announcing is done in what is clearly seen as reverse order; though determining is done in proper order; announcing for 'suspense.'

3   The notion 'impersonal' is used as a term which is, it seems, not only one of some collection, perhaps the following: (personal, impersonal), but where the set is evaluationally ordered and has a given sense for the objects it applies to which are also evaluational. To be impersonal is not good; it requires an account.

Furthermore the activity characterized by the term impersonal is not good. The latter fact is quite important, for it informs us on the state of a kind of battle. There are proper referents of 'impersonal' such that subscription to a

moral order involves not only giving an account for what it is one does impersonally, but also that certain things are to be seen as done personally is not to provide that thereby no account is required, but to indicate that one is not, in some important ways, a member. Note too; for some matters there is not an in-out group morality. Killing anyone is wrong, accountable, and may require reference to impersonality, or personality. Not just wrong when done to members.

MCD (3)

Personal (love, hate)
Impersonal – neither, business.

If a killer were personal then he would have to hate; now, to have a way of doing killing without hate requires some formulation for which hate is irrelevant; hence, business.

It is apparently possible to do things to persons for which it is irrelevant either or both that they are persons or that you are one. One does something for which in the first place emotions are involved, on your part. The fact that emotions are involved, i.e., that they are bound to activities, is, in the first instance, crucial enough; that the collection of emotions can be substituted for is another order of fact. It means that one need not, retaining the former, arrange matters so that 'hate' is held. Alternatively it means that modification need not be done so that the boundedness of the activity is modified; that one kills, sometimes out of love (euthanasia, sadism). But that the collection is irrelevant.

Now what is to be seen is that this alternative is not made for some particular activity, but is available for a great many, and not only those for which hate is otherwise appropriately the basis; but those for which love is, too. One wants to see that access of persons to 'impersonality' is restricted; to claim in some instances that one felt nothing when doing a killing is to provide the warrant for determinations of psychopathology.

The fact that such a statement has a wide scope of 'businesses' for which it is applicable and that even for the 'military' it has not been invented by this fellow, or by some one for this war, is a most criterial sort of fact. It is for one the sort of fact one might point to in desiring to warrant the claim that there is not a strong tie between a particular basis for a conflict and the fact of conflict, i.e., for treating ideologies as rationalizations.

If the scope of 'this' provides a set of objects that have some equivalence, that is one thing; but if further there is an equivalence established between the things done in those businesses that is another, quite another.

MCD (4)

The fact that the statement has the 'you' subject which here seems to involve in part that the doings concerned are doings of particular people, though not

necessarily just one of them. Now it sometimes is possible to avoid the moral issues by so arranging things that consequences are not relevantly focused on by any or by most persons involved in their production. The jet pilot may see his particular involvement whereas thousands of others whose actions make his work possible do not.

The relevance of emotions:

1 They are an account by virtue of being a cause; and as such, they can be an adequate cause and not be an adequate account. Both love and hate can fail as adequate accounts while being perfectly adequate causes.
2 They are proper causes in a different way than they are or can be proper accounts.
3 For them to be both, something more is needed than their causal state, and if something more is needed, then that which makes an adequate account can be present even if they are not.

Personal–Impersonal (1)

With regard to the issue of the personal or impersonal character of his feelings and of the need to be impersonal in one's feelings, one quite important basis for this need may be gotten at by considering first the heading to the story, 'Navy Pilot . . .' He is a navy pilot, where that he is one of some bunch is quite relevant to what it is that is to be done with, and the sense of, his answer. For the answer is properly to be seen as representative, and as such it may be relevant that he offers an answer which is not only in fact representative, but is one that others can live with.

Now being engaged in doing that sort of thing, that is, where one's answer as an account of one's action is also and at the same time a thing which can stand as a position of others who do what you do, or pose a problem for them to which they may have to come to terms, involves then a kind of responsibility in posing that question and also a kind of need to be impersonal in making the answer; impersonal in the sense of being on behalf of some unspecified set of others. A personal answer is one that might not commit the others, to which, that they feel that way is to be determined by inquiring of each of them; an answer formulated as a pilot, in that impersonality, may be one that, having that character, can be assumed to be how such as are so situated feel, where it can be assumed that they feel that way, unless someone happens to disaffiliate himself, or to offer how he feels personally, i.e., not as a pilot.

In this regard, one interesting consequence is that how it is that nobody in particular, not any of them in fact, feel, as persons may be presented, each action on behalf of all offer what it is that they take it such as they ought to be feeling. That is some of the kind of problem that is posed by reference to how you feel as a pilot and how you feel personally, where the latter may be treated as how you really feel. It is in perhaps consideration of this sort of matter that one can most readily come to see how it is that small samples can

work out, i.e., that asking one or two gets what one would get were one to ask many, where one asks of them to answer in the guise of their status as a member of a category of which there are both many and each a representative. To get their 'personal' feeling is to get them to formulate matters via quite different structures, e.g. family stuff. Cf. Chessman.

Personal-Impersonal (2)

In our first point we say that he takes it that there is an alternative to 'impersonal.' What is our warrant for such an assertion?

1 I say that he takes it that there are alternatives and that impersonal is not therefore all that is available, not simply by virtue of the assertion that if impersonal is seen as part of a device then there are other devices than the one it is a part of, but because the device of which it is a part or seems to be a part contains at least another category, and that other is an alternative category – that is, personal. Impersonal as a member of the device is clearly an alternative to that other. (That he knows other devices is evident from, e.g., his reference to a 'wife;' where he might refer to himself when flying, or otherwise, as 'husband'.)

> His wife, Sue, lives in San Diego with their two children. "If you are a career Navy man, you have to have a career-type wife and I'm fortunate in having one," the Commander said.

2 It is also the case that he uses 'have to' in a restricted necessity sense, which excludes the use of, but not the presence of alternatives. He does so clearly in another part of his remarks, and may then be doing so in this part. That is, he does so when referring to the professional-type wife, where that is asserted via 'have to have,' and it is added that he is 'fortunate to have one,' indicating that one might have to have and yet not have.

3 Furthermore our proposal that 'personal' is an alternative and that therefore he employs impersonal as an alternative, is warranted by the negative precedent to the impersonal statement, 'I don't lose any sleep over it,' where the term used there is an idiomatic reference to a consequence of personal involvement; one that has its character as idiomatic reference by virtue of the status of 'sleep' as a personal state, and the loss of it as something which is accounted for by personal problems. One indicates that something is not affecting one, or not affecting one personally, by reference to its not having this sort of consequence where, the thing seen as personal, it would properly and expectably have such a consequence – were he to see himself as murdering people he ought to lose sleep over it.

Note: 'being killed by his bombs' (a paraphrase transform of 'being killed by your bombs') is by the pilot transformed explicitly into 'I might be killing anybody;' he does not retain the format as, e.g., 'my bombs might be killing anybody.' While there are ways that that might be

preferable and permit a formulation of matters that could be pleasant, there are strong purposes for which the transformation is crucial and the proper use – the alternative being polite or an offered out which is rejectable or not accepted – and that is, for purposes of scoring his successes, how many planes he's shot down, railroad cars destroyed, and the like. For these uses then 'his bombs' are 'him.' Whether it might be possible to set up a situation where it was he that destroyed the military target and his bombs that killed others is something that might be considered; whether if one chooses to formulate the former one must accept the latter as well by some consistency notion is another issue, related, whose scope of operation needs be considered.

An Answer to a Question (1)

Having offered in the draft paper on 'everyone has to lie' an analysis directed to showing how it is that a statement a member makes might be said to be true, we might consider a kind of parallel analysis; we might engage in attempting to determine, considering the pilot interview excerpt we are focussing on, how it is that his remarks might be said to be an answer to the question he is addressed. What is it that we have to construct so as to provide that he has done an answer, if we can so construct an apparatus? We might consider the matter noticing that narrowly, or for coding purposes anyway, it might not seem that he has given an answer; having been asked how he feels about possibly killing somebody or anybody he replies that he doesn't like it but puts his main, or more extended emphasis on how he feels about being shot at, and how he can excuse his attackers. The latter part of his remarks are clearly relevant to whether he has a complete answer, or a possibly adequate one, and in examining them we might come up with matters relevant to what it is that an answer, or saying that there has been an answer, involves.

An Answer to a Question (2)

In regard to the issue of how his remarks might be an answer, the first thing we might consider is how it is that the utterance it is directed to is a question, and what sort of a question it is.

1 As a question it is clearly one that is highly informed; it is posed by one who has a rather considerable store of knowledge about relevant matters.
2 It is also an overtly sympathetic question; by that we mean to point to the sorts of considerations it imputes to the pilot, considerations which the pilot has not asserted he has, and which the reporter in any event would not know definitively that he has, e.g., that he aims carefully only at military targets. The considerations are of course imputable by reference to what it is the pilot ought to be doing, i.e., the regulations under which he properly

proceeds. Thus we say that there is an informed basis to the question since the regulations that properly govern the pilot are employed in forming the question he has been asked.

3   However there is a way in which it might not be what it is overtly, i.e., sympathetic, for it proceeds, those things aside, nevertheless you are doing killing of persons who might not be considered as military targets aren't you, and how do you deal with that. Whereas had it been less overtly sympathetic, i.e., had asked how do you feel about killing people with your bombs, an answer might have been made that I try very hard not to kill people but to bomb only military targets; then it would be necessary to amend the first question in making another, and the fact that the position was overtly hostile might be used to doubt the seriousness of the question. Its possible sympathetic character is then of equivocal import.

4   The question furthermore is informed in a deeper way; it seems to indicate and is seen as indicating in its very formulation that the fellow being asked does not like this fact that he may be, is, killing people, it is indicating this by setting the possibility up by reference to the care that would in the first instance be taken not to have that consequence more than is necessary, or than chance would require. That is, were it not the case that the questioner took it that the fellow did not like or would not like the killing he needn't have set up the conditions as 'even with all the care he took not to.' The latter phrase does not merely propose the questioner's attitude, but proposes that the questioner knows the basic attitude and its consequences for the answerer, and that he accepts these.

Thus again the sympathetic character of the question is presented. Where that is sympathetic in that the question is taking it that what properly ought to be felt is felt by this fellow, rather than requiring of him that he assert what he properly feels, or that what is proper is something that is a question which we shall see if he knows the answer to. In this way of course there is some informing to the answerer of the sorts of things he might in part deal with in the question; not only what attitude he ought to express, but what he need not say, that information being contained in the question, where both parts will presumably be available to those who encounter the answer, i.e., in the newspaper report; where in that environment the question and answer will together contain the information that the reader will get, i.e., that it is so that he aims carefully at military targets, and that he does so by virtue in part of the fact that he doesn't like to kill people. The question could have proceeded, 'as a professional you really don't mind killing people do you?' or, 'as a professional do you have any attitude at all towards killing people?' and the like. He is not that sort of professional the question suggests, and the answer acknowledges.

An Answer to a Question (3)

It is perhaps overly weak to just suggest that the question may be formulated

in a rather sympathetic way; in such a way as to perhaps suggest or to suppose that there is indeed an adequate answer to a question that might seem to lack one. That is, it is a question which is perhaps not so much torturing the answerer as to how to find an answer to it, it being something he has to grapple with, but the sort of question to which a good answer may not be known by outsiders, the public, and which is asked so as to give them a good answer, or to indicate that the soldiers have indeed dealt with it and answered it.

In a stronger way, then, perhaps it is the case that the very asking of the question, or at least the reporting of its having been asked and answered, is done by virtue of the fact that a good answer's existence is known to the questioner, but it is useful that the answer be something that the ones most closely involved are seen to have; then it gets the character not of just a good answer but of one that is operative fact. (There could be good answers which would not be operative were they not known and used by those who were specially relevant.)

This fact that if a question could be quite embarrassing to have to answer, then someone sympathetic or someone fearful would not ask it were they not in some way assured that a good answer could be made is of course quite an old observation. The reader may be referred to Strauss' discussion early in *On Tyranny*, which I shall insert in any event in a while.[6] The fact, then, that the question is asked at all or reported to have been asked may be quite relevant to guessing the sort of answer that is offered, i.e., that it is something that the asker takes as adequate, and takes the other to take as adequate.

(The following from Thucydides, book one)

For in these early times, as communication by sea became easier, so piracy became a common profession both among the Hellenes and among the Barbarians who lived on the coast and in the islands . . . At this time such a profession, so far from being regarded as disgraceful, was considered quite honourable. It is an attitude that can be illustrated even today by some of the inhabitants of the mainland among whom successful piracy is regarded as something to be proud of; and in the old poets, too, we find that the regular question always asked of those who arrive by sea is "Are you pirates?" It is never assumed either that those who were so questioned would shrink from admitting the fact, or that those who were interested in finding out the fact would reproach them with it.

'But I don't lose any sleep over it'

The item selected and reported on here idiomatically – the sentence is an idiom – is worth some attention:

[6] See pp. 221–2.

1   It is heard and is presumably produced as a representative item. We do not take it that having heard him say that, what we ought to do or what the interviewer ought to do is to probe on further matters from the collection of which 'sleep' is a member – to ask, e.g., has your appetite suffered over it? The item, then, seems to serve as a means of indicating that on the various items of the class of which this one is a member, there are no consequences of the thing that is being considered as one that might have such consequences.

2   The relevance of the representative item is furthermore clear; that he doesn't lose any sleep over it means that it is not having personal consequences of a negative sort for him. He needn't interpret his answer.

It may be noted that the understandability of this import of his not losing sleep doesn't depend on any intimate knowledge of his sleep patterns, of, e.g., whether effects on his sleep are the usual way that troublesome actions of his show up, or whether there is perhaps some better indicator for him – perhaps he never loses sleep over anything, but he breaks out in a rash. The use of the item as representative for him, is effective, then, by virtue of the fact that it is an item which, unless otherwise specified, is representative for anyone, and in the same way, i.e., as a negative indicator.

3   Furthermore, just as it is the case that it is apparently quite understandable to the interviewer what status the item has for this fellow whom he barely knows, so, too, is it the case that the interviewer can take it that the fellow is, unless otherwise specified, an authority on the causes of his losses of sleep. This matter, that he would know why he has lost sleep if he had, is of equal relevance to the preceding ones.

4   The idiom is of some interest in a way similar to the other one he uses – 'you have to be impersonal in this business,' where 'it' seems to have a similar character to 'this;' the idiom is pre-constructed for some class of matters to which it may apply, where it is not just that sleep is representative of the way that personal consequences take effect, but that each of the items of the class that we have personal consequences, may be expected to have their consequence via the representative personal consequences. It is not then the case that some items that have personal consequences have one sort of representative effect, and others others, or even if it is, the representative items can be employed to present the fact of an effect or its lack. One knows, that is, that if an item is one that may have personal consequences, even though one has not done the thing before, what sorts of personal consequences one should look to, to see whether it is having those effects.

This is quite crucial; for it involves, then, the fact that one can be monitoring for the consequences of matters that one has not encountered; and even then, if one does not know what is causing them, one can know that something is wrong, there is some unknown cause, by virtue of the fact that some things are happening which are properly formulated as 'consequences' of some personal trouble. Thus a search procedure may be set up to find the item. And a decision may be made that it is this or that, or not. In this way, the fact that one starts with a limited set of personal consequences, or things

that are properly seen as such, means that the set of things that can cause them need only be known as to its name and need not have each item in the first instance known.

[*Written in:*] I have often talked of items as 'representative members' of classes. With the above you can get a very clear idea of what is involved in that.

The fact that he is an authority on what the sorts of things are which cause him to lose sleep, and in a strong way that he can isolate that thing which on some occasion has caused him to lose sleep is obviously quite a fundamental fact. But it must be considered in another light as well; and that is that interviewer whom it might be said barely knows him, also knows what sort of thing might do this, and is in some position to decide whether the given item would do it. Now those two facts are terribly relevant to each other. If we were to say that the fact that he is an authority, and furthermore ought to be an authority, on what it is that causes him to lose sleep, is a partial answer to the question, or a partial criterion of 'knowing oneself,' then we can see the sort of thing that that maxim meant for the Greeks. Knowing thyself does not mean knowing something very private, it means knowing oneself as a member of a community, knowing, that is, the things that obtain for one, which obtain for persons commonly. Heraclitus' fragments and Socrates' certainly had such an intention; and they did not involve knowing something about one which was distinctive, or special, or private.

The moral order provides one with the things not only which properly affect, control one's behavior, but with the materials in terms of which one can come to know oneself, and in doing so, know anyone else, and in doing so, be accessible to others. Thence, the hopes that may be attached to the phrase, or the program, 'know thyself.'

An excerpt from On Tyranny *can be found in volume 2 of Sacks' Research Notes (pp. 757–8). It does not, however, seem to bear on the issue of sympathetic questions vis-á-vis the availability of a good answer. Rather it in part seems to bear on the issue of 'tearing down', considered in lecture 12 (p. 200):*

On Tyranny by Leo Strauss (New York, 1948), pp. 18–19.

To express this more generally, Simonides knew that Hiero was not a perfect ruler. He decided to teach him how to rule well as a tyrant. More specifically, he considered it advisable to warn him against certain grave mistakes. But, to say nothing of common politeness, no one wishes to rebuke, or to speak against, a tyrant in his presence. Simonides had, then, by the least offensive means to reduce the tyrant to a mood in which the latter would be pleased to listen attentively to, and even to ask for, the poet's advice. He had at the same time, or by the same action, to convince Hiero of his competence to give sound advice to a tyrant.

Before Simonides can teach Hiero how to rule as a tyrant, he has to make him aware, or to remind him, of the difficulties with which he is

beset and which he cannot overcome, of the shortcomings of his rule, and indeed of his whole life. To be made aware by someone else of one's own shortcomings means, for most people, to be humbled by the censor. Simonides has to humble the tyrant; he has to reduce him to a condition of inferiority; or, to describe Simonides' intention in the light of the aim apparently achieved by him, he has to dishearten the tyrant. Moreover, if he intends to use Hiero's recognition of his shortcomings as the starting point for his teaching, he has to induce Hiero expressly to grant all the relevant unpleasant facts about his life. The least he can do, in order to avoid unncessary offense, is to talk, not about Hiero's life, but about a more general, a less offensive, subject. To begin with, we shall assume that when starting a conversation with Hiero about the relative desirability of the life of the tyrant and private life, he is guided by the intention to dishearten the tyrant by a comparison of the life of the tyrant, and therewith of Hiero's own life, with private life.

To reach this immediate aim in the least offensive manner, Simonides has to create a situation in which, not he, but the tyrant himself, explains the shortcomings of his life, or of tyrannical life in general, and a situation in which, moreover, the tyrant does this normally unpleasant work, not only spontaneously, but even gladly. The artifice by means of which Simonides brings about this result consists in his giving to Hiero an opportunity of vindicating his superiority while demonstrating his inferiority. He starts the conversation by presenting himself explicitly as a man who has to learn from Hiero, or who is, in a certain respect, less wise than Hiero, or by assuming the role of the pupil. Thereafter, he makes himself the spokesman of the opinion that tyrannical life is more desirable than private life; i.e., of the crude opinion about tyranny which is characteristic of the unwise, of the multitude, or the vulgar. He thus presents himself tacitly, and therefore all the more effectively, as a man who is absolutely less wise than Hiero. He thus tempts Hiero to assume the role of the teacher. He succeeds in seducing him into refuting the vulgar opinion, and thus into proving that tyrannical life, and hence his own life, is extremely unhappy. Hiero vindicates his superiority by winning his argument, which as far as its content is concerned, would be merely depressing for him: by proving that he is extremely unhappy, he proves that he is wiser than the wise Simonides. Yet his victory is his defeat. By appealing to the tyrant's interest in superiority, or desire for victory, Simonides brings about the tyrant's spontaneous and almost joyful recognition of all the shortcomings of his life and therewith a situation in which the offering of advice is the act, not of an awkward schoolmaster, but of a humane poet. And besides, in the moment that Hiero becomes aware of his having walked straight into the trap which Simonides had so ingeniously and so charmingly set for him, he will be more convinced that ever of Simonides' wisdom.

Appendix A
"The baby cried"
[Notes for lecture 1]

The materials to be discussed: The story fragment "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up." *CTS* p. 35[1]

Plan

1 I will first make some observations about the segment
2 Then I will embark on the building of an apparatus for its analysis:
    a   That will first involve a consideration of what the apparatus ought to do.
    b   Then the apparatus itself
3 Upshot of the constructed apparatus
4 A consideration of the possible fact that the segment is from a 'story:' How is it a 'story;' criteria for identification
5 Some further general considerations.

1 Observations

    a   While this is a piece of talk, we would in the first instance feel assured in saying that there are two sentences here: S1, S2. Let us note that there are also two actions, A1, A2, and we hear the story as providing that S1 reports A1, and S2 reports A2. Thus we hear A2 as following A1. Now this cannot be accounted for simply by the fact that S1 precedes S2:

    a.1   For, for one, S1 is composed of three words, and we do not hear the things those words name as following each other in the same way, though w3 follows w2, which follows w1.

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[1] *CTS* is the book *Children Tell Stories.*

These are the original Sacks materials, with a few changes. For example, the book *Children Tell Stories* is sometimes cited – as *CTS* – but sometimes only the page number is given. There, the notation *CTS* is added. Or, for example, whereas elsewhere corrected errors have been preserved (e.g., Spring 1971, May 21), here only the corrected version is shown. For example, in "Let us note that if there are also two actions, A1, A2, we hear the story as . . ." the "if" is crossed out and an "and" is inserted after "A2." In the edited version it is shown as "Let us note that there are also two actions, A1, A2, and we hear the story as . . ." And references to the literature have been revised.

a.2   Also, it is perfectly obvious that we can find elsewhere two sentences linked as these are, with nothing between, where we would not hear such an action sequence. For example, "The piggie got hit by the choo-choo. He got a little hurt. He broke his neck. He broke his chin." *CTS* p .30.

a.3   Furthermore a connective which particularly does the relating of reported occurrences, 'then' – "This Indian caught this Indian. Then he tumbled" – is not used, and seemingly is not missed.

Thus, it is indeed a problem how the relation between s1, s2 as one of the latter following the former provides information about the relation of a1, a2. How is it done?

When we develop the apparatus for analyzing the sentences some help may be gotten on the question for the particular (sorts of) reported occurrences; here some fairly general considerations.

We said initially there were *two sentences*. The determination that there are two sentences must be made by reference to this fragment as talk, and not via a consideration of the fact that the grammatical marker, a period, stands between them. The child did not dictate, but told, and the child probably doesn't read or write, so the use of the period is not a resource for it. The receiver of the stories might for one be wrong in putting the period where she did, and we shall see that at other points there is good reason to suppose that she is wrong in her transcriptions. But these facts are somewhat secondary to the question of what is it that would give us grounds for saying that something is or is not a sentence. Let us consider the relevance of our observation (a); to wit, that we hear what we have called s1, as a unit in the sense that we do not take it as relevant that it comes out in a sequence of words, i.e., we hear it as a unit and not as a left-to-right string. We hear s2 in the same way; and this is most clear since we do hear the relation between s1, s2 as one of left to right.

If the way the piece is heard is related to the way it is generated, that s1 is generated in some way, then the speaker begins again and generates s2, where the sequential relationship is of relevance between but not within the units. Other considerations are relevant within the units. That, or something like that, could be a criterion for saying there are two units – sentences. We leave aside for the moment the possible importance of the possible fact that there is some strong relation between the production unit and the detection unit. On the latter I refer you to Hockett's paper, 'Grammar for the hearer', in Roman Jakobson (ed.), *Structure of Language and its Mathematical Aspects*, vol. 12, *Proceedings of Symposia in Applied Mathematics* (Providence: American Mathematical Society, 1961), 220–36. We will come back to this sort of convergence problem, though probably not this particular one.

If there are heard, and are generated, two internally structured units, then the possibility of S1 being relevantly followed by S2 would be provided for, though the relevance of that, i.e., as providing a resource for indicating and

detecting the relation between the actions reported in each, would (not)[2] of course be necessary. Note: 'then' could serve to do the job if a single sentence were used; 'and' alone might be quite ambiguous.

a   Caveat or a query on what implication there seems to be, if we hear a sequence of A1, A2 provided for in part by S1, S2 about the temporality of the sequence – how soon after?

b   Both the word 'baby' and the word 'mommy' are adequate ways of referring to persons. A single category can be referentially adequate (economy rule).[3]

c   Quite apart from the particular actions reported, 'baby' and 'mommy' are related categories. They are both categories from the same collection of categories, a collection consisting of such as (mommy, daddy, baby, etcetera). This collection consists of a group of categories where:

One important way the group or collection of categories is employed is to provide a unit which, for the domain of relevance of the collection, locates a set of persons organized by reference to a case of the unit, where the unit is duplicatively operative across the community of culture users, such that the possessive pronouns locate a set of persons ensconced in particular cases.

Not every collection of categories is so organized; teams are, but of the collection race; for that one, if there is some organization of Members, persons, then it is regularly vis-à-vis incumbency in the same category.

The character of the collection's organization is most simply evident in the fact that when we hear the two sentences we take it that ('we,' i.e., members of the community of culture users), when Members hear, they take it that it that it is not some baby and some mommy who are involved, but the baby of the mommy, and the mommy of the baby. Such a relation is not heard in such a sequence as: "The next one who wakes up is the mailman. The next one who wakes up is the doctor. "*CTS* p. 71. Note however, re the passing reference to teams: "They rode on a choo-choo train. They went to a railroad station. The conductor jumped out and said, "All aboard.' And he went in and the conductor was Mr Conductor and the engineer was Mr Engineer and the fireman was Mr Fireman." *CTS* p. 42, cf. further. Cf. p. 71 the three mentioned after 'doctor' are not initially ensconced in a single train, but it may well be that they are heard as related.

c.1   The consistency rule: Note an immediate use of it. 'baby' is not only a category of the collection noted above; it is a category of the collection 'Stage of life' (baby, child, adult, etc.). Given the two sentences it is, however, heard as a member of the collection 'family.'

Perhaps: If a category is a member of alternative collections, it is heard, when used, as a member of that collection which the consistency rule locates – thus the ambiguity problem may be resolvable if at least two categories are used. Cf. p. 71, 'fireman' is an ambiguous occupational term – there is a guy on trains, and a guy who deals with fires. The reference is clear by reference

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[2] The original is unclear.
[3] The words '(economy rule)' are handwritten.

to the preceding categories being train personnel. This is even more apparent in the quotation, p. 4, from p. 45.[4]

c.2   Note then the character of the consistency rule; on the one hand it is used to generate the terms, given a first, and on the other it is used to detect the relation of the generated terms. Cf. remarks in a. above. These parallels shall turn out to be deeply important. A culture is an apparatus for generating *recognizable* actions; if the same procedures are used for generating as for detecting, that is perhaps as simple a solution to the problem of recognizability as is formulatable.

d   For the given actions reported, the particular pair of person references used are peculiarly relevant; that is, even sticking within the collection from which they are chosen, they are particularly relevant. I will consider this fact in the discussion of the apparatus.

e   The use of 'it' for reference to the baby. Why is it that 'it' is used; note that it is used elsewhere in the stories when that reference – to 'baby' – is made. Relevance of boy – 'he,' girl – 'she,' baby –?

Also, and much more importantly, the occurrence of the pronoun 'it' means that at least to some extent the collection – pronouns – is available to the kid. That means right off that two collections are held; they are, we shall propose, quite different sorts of collections.

In modification of the discussion in 'The search for help,' I want to propose that sticking to pn-adequate devices, we ought to divide them into two classes; class two consists of (a) pronouns, and (b) proper names, and class one of the rest. Now if it is the case that insofar as the consistency rule provides that reference once made to a category from a collection, reference to others should be made to them via categories of the same collection and not other collections, then that rule only holds as between categories of class one. That is, class two categories may be used in combination with class one categories. The case at hand evidences this, and many others.

The following quote is from Weir, pp. 73-4. *RH*

> *Pronouns.*Analyses of standard English pronouns vary in their interpretations of the various pronominal forms as variants of a single morpheme, or as separate morphemes. This problem is not at issue here since we are primarily interested in the forms which occur, and in how well they are established. Of the personal pronouns, the form *it* has by far the widest occurrence (over one hundred) and is firmly established in the child's speech pattern. Occasionally it is over-used as a substitute for a plural noun at the expense of *them*. The frequent use of *it* confirms the child's classification of nouns into personalized and non-personalized classes as was pointed out. The non-personalized nouns permit substitution by the pronoun *it* rather frequently, whereas the personalized nouns (including names of persons, favorite toys, and animals) rarely are substituted for by pronouns.

[4] On the original p. 4, a quotation is shown from 'p. 42.' (See p. 225.)

In speaking of himself, the child uses *Anthony* much more frequently than *I*, the use of which is restricted to special situations. The instances where *I* does occur are either instances of complete quotations from adult speech, like *I don't hear you* where the use of *do* in a negative indicative sentence also points to a non-internalized structural pattern; or *I* occurs in the child's attempts at adult speech as apparent from the context surrounding the sentence, e.g., *Door. I'm fixing the door. Door's open*; or *I* appears when the rest of the sentence contains no particularly bothersome structural consideration for the child, as in *I have a blanket like a lipstick* where *blanket like a lipstick* is one of the child's 'set' expressions as it were. However, the pronoun is also consciously practiced as the two consecutive sentences show; *I'm taking the yellow blanket, I gave the yellow blanket*.

Of about the same order of frequency is *you*, also about twenty-five times, and its usage shows similarily to that of *I*. They are also practiced together, for example, in this question–answer interchange: *Where are you going. I am going*. The other personal pronouns occurring are *she*, *her*, *he*, *him*, *me*, *we*, and *them*, all with a frequency ranging from one to fewer than ten occurrences. All these pronouns appear in the correct syntactic slots as compared to standard English, but the category of gender has not yet been learned, similar to the case of possessive adjectives. There is one occurrence of *himself* in the corpus, and we have no additional information on the reflexive paradigm except perhaps for the sentence, *I told me*, conspicuous by the non-use of the reflexive. It is certainly not surprising to find pronominal substitution with the child's class of personalized pronouns so poorly learned in that it involves viewing the speech event not only from the point of view of the addresser and addressee, but also from the point of view of the person or thing being discussed.

f   Having made an observation about 'it,' one about 'the' is apposite; consider the use of 'the mommy.' Quine, most particularly in *Word and Object*, sec. 19, proposes: 'A singular term, e.g., "mama," admits only the singular grammatical form and no article.' intendedly referring to 'our perfected adult usage' (p. 90). Now if it is the case that Quine is correct for adults, it is quite apparent – we can find many more occurrences than just the piece at hand – that children behave differently. Is there some special explanation for this? We would of course, in doing this, have to come to some discussion of his notion of 'singular terms' and 'general terms' and a consideration of the relevance of these formulations. But it may well be so adults do not, and children do, use 'the mommy.' If adults don't, then perhaps children 'construct' the usage – cf. here, Brown's papers in which the 'construction' phenomenon is examined – in Lenneberg, and in Brown and Bellugi.

Possible account; for adults there is a large selection, or a fairly large selection, of devices which provide categories for handling any given person;

this permits perhaps the specialization of certain terms, such that for any given person that term may only get used for some proper person(s). Now children do not have such an armory. The basic device they do use is that 'family' one; they make a big leap with the addition of the pronouns. Now they use the family to do rather more extensive work than others do, and adults assist them in this – referring for example to a large bunch of men and women encountered as 'uncle '/'aunt.' The duplicative character of the family-unit set of categories is quite important for the kids; for one, in combination with the possessive pronouns it permits sorting out to go on while reference to a larger bunch of people via the same unit is made. But it does involve their use of the terms in becoming singular, as categorials; and 'mommy' gets such usages. They say: "There are two mommies and a baby" and other like things, and they do say 'the mommy.' The expansion for men (if 'mommy' is the normal expansion of women who are not my mommy or aunt – they are then 'a mommy' or 'X's mommy') involves the use of the set of occupations to handle 'other men' than daddy and the uncles – the milkman, etc., are 'men.'

It might not then be too misleading to put it that the singular term reference status of 'mama' is an adult luxury.

It might not be amiss either to notice how much is indeed handleable via the family unit.

We shall of course consider the great leap forward gotten when the pronouns are acquired. That anon.

g   In the case at hand the fact that the characters are introduced via the consistency rule's use may be claimed to be a rather trivial consequence of the possible fact that the child possesses the use of only a single class one pn-adequate device. If that were so, then of course the consistency rule would be used.

g.1   Now, however, if the child learns something which for the single device is trivially so, but which is not obviously so, and surely not trivially so when more devices are added to its repertoire, but is nonetheless proper then, too, then that is something not so trivial. So it shall be found.

g.2   Now it is also non-trivial that in using the single device, it is used duplicatively. The child is first given what turns out to be a case of a duplicative unit; and it comes to see and use the categories as duplicative; for this child in the next story we find the same device being used for 'an elephant' though in that one we do get an introduction of something apart from the device, i.e., 'milkman.' The duplication is not obviously the child could come to see, as is done elsewhere, the whole relevant world as one family.

h.   Rather more generally we want to observe what is among the most obvious of features of the fragment; it is recognizably what we may call 'a potentially correct description.' The question of what is involved in a potentially correct description, or in this being a potentially correct description, will be considered in the consideration of the apparatus. Here such matters are to be noted, as: Adequate means of referring to characters, adequate means of referring to characters' actions, adequate pairing of

character references and actions, adequate pairing of the sentences, adequate pairing of character reference terms and pairing of action terms, and of combined pairings.

2 *The apparatus*

a What it should do

1 It should generate, interestingly, this segment.
2 It should permit us to discriminate this segment as a potential description of a proper sequence of occurrences, from some segment which is an improper sequence of occurrences properly described.
3 It should exclude the production of grammatical 'non-potential description.' In this point is something of the largest importance. We are going to aim at building an apparatus which involves building constraints on what an adequate grammar will do, such that what an adequate grammar will do, some of the things it will do, we are going to rule out, and provide for the non-occurrence of.

Our apparatus ought to give us this segment as a potential correct description and as a potential correct description of a proper sequence. We shall want to get potential correct descriptions of improper sequences, by a suitable modification; and we shall want to see whether we need provide for potential incorrect descriptions.

Appendix B
"The baby cried"
[Notes for lecture 2]

Because of some problems with the room plug, lecture two did not get recorded. Furthermore it was not laid out in the notes. In this I will very briefly outline what was done; the next go round it will be recorded.

It was basically concerned with the character of "the baby cried" as a good beginning.

(1) Our first concern was to provide that, if children's rights to talk are restricted, then it is expectable that they will have some special ways of getting to talk, and these ways may involve them in having a proper way of beginning which provides them with rights to continue, and for the correctness of their having begun in the first place.

The hypothesis that they do have restricted rights to talk was established by considering the character of what, for the young ones, say three or so, use as their – not merely prototypical but at some times almost universally used beginning; the line 'You know what?' and equivalents. An analysis was made of the elegance of this line.

(2) With the establishment of the hypothesis that the analysis provided, we moved to consider other ways that they might establish a right to talk; the occurrence of troubles – where, by that we meant occurrences such that if they happen then an adult has some obligation to act, where then the occurrence of talk was directed to indicating that the adult obligation ought to be actualized.

(3) This issue of troubles was then tied to the notion of topic, i.e., things that could be said where the thing was something which was conversationally generative; on this matter, too, 'trouble' was seen to be rich; comparison, for example, of the amount of talk generatable if, to the question 'how are you' the answer is 'fine,' with the answer 'lousy.'

The relevance of a matter being a good topic was made by reference to the issue of a story being 'about' something, and thence hopefully something about which more than a little might be said, i.e., the item offered might be generative. 'Trouble,' not merely a good thing to provide grounds for talk in general in conversation, a first item, but also a first item which is generative and therefore specially attractive for stories.

These are the original Sacks materials, with a few changes. See Appendix A, note to p. 223 for details.

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(4) This led to considerations like: It might be said, given the fact that the children's stories, especially the youngest ones, are so much about troubles that that is what their fantasy lives contain. While this might be so, I want to point out that it is not unique for children's stories, but is a large part of adult conversation, and more particularly it is the base focus of Western literature. The complaint has been made about Western literature, as about children's stories, though the two may not have been tied together, nor the richness of trouble as a topic and the poverty of normality as a topic much observed; here Tolstoy's observation: happy families are all alike; unhappy families are unhappy each in their own way; that quote not exact – first line of *Anna Karenina*. ('Unhappy' for Tolstoy readily seen to be equivalent to acting improperly – see second sentences.)

(5) Extend remarks to notion that only by behaving immorally is one doing anything; the answer to the question, 'What are you doing.' 'Nothing,' as equivalent to something proper. Sowing wild oats as building stories for one's future.

In this sort of line of analysis, then, is shown the good beginning for conversation, and then for stories, of "the baby cried;" also its generativity.

Part III
Spring 1966

Note

The Spring 1966 lectures start off with two lectures which eventually became the paper 'On the analyzability of stories by children.' In J. J. Gumperz and D. Hymes (eds), Directions in Sociolinguistics (New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), 325–45, reprinted in R. Turner (ed.), Ethnomethodology (Harmondsworth; Penguin, 1974).

   Two versions of each of the two lectures are included in this volume. The first of each is the unedited text of the original working transcript, prepared just after each lecture was delivered. The second of each is the unedited text of Sacks' revision. With these two versions of each of the two lectures, can be seen what Sacks took to be a next operation on a lecture. It is infinitely removed from anything an editor might do; not only far more formal, but often a matter of further development of the work at hand.

   The difference between the original and revised versions of the first two lectures, not to mention the difference between those and the published version, point up the fact that the unrevised lectures which make up the bulk of these volumes are at best informal, often rudimentary — the raw beginnings of what they had in all too few cases a chance to become.

Lecture 1

"The baby cried. The mommy picked it up"

The data is the first couple of sentences from a story in the book *Children Tell Stories*, told by a girl two years and nine months old. It's on page 35. I'll read it out to you. It says, "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up."

What I'll be trying to do for the beginning week or so is to give you some idea of the sorts of things I'll be trying to do, in what will be much greater detail, I hope, throughout the rest of the semester, once we get the materials dittoed up that I can give you, and once you get some familiarity with just a few of the ideas we're going to use.

Now let's begin off by just making some observations about those two sentences. And if you feel that what I say right now is the rankest kind of subjectivism, then just hold off your feeling that that's so, to see whether it won't be possible for what I say to be defended and used.

When I hear "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," one of the things I hear is that the mommy who picks the baby up is the mommy of the baby. Now it's not only the case that I hear it that way – and of course there's no genitive there to say 'its mommy picked it up,' 'his mommy,' 'her mommy' – when I hear it that way a kind of interesting thing is that I also feel pretty confident that all of you, at least the natives among you, hear that also. Is it some kind of magic? One of my tasks is going to be to construct an apparatus which will provide for that fact to occur. That is, how it is that we come to hear it in that fashion. Now exactly what else that apparatus will do, we'll see.

There's another thing. I suppose we would say that there are two sentences, and of course the fact that there's a period doesn't guarantee that. The child doesn't know how to write, didn't put in a period. The person who was told this story wrote it down and wrote a period in. But I take it we hear two sentences, and we also hear the following kinds of things. Call this S1, call this S2. This reports an occurrence, O1, this one reports another occurrence, O2. Now we hear the following sorts of things. We hear that O2 follows O1 like S2 follows S1. And not only that. We also hear that O2 occurs because of O1. That is, the explanation for O2 occurring is that O1 did. And what we want out of our apparatus is that it show how we hear that, also.

What we want to do then, speaking kind of roughly right now, is to provide for how it is that something that's done is recognized for what it is,

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Except for the title, this is the unedited text of the original transcript.

where the big thing is that some action is recognized as a something, as a case of some activity. What the something is, we'll give a name to in a bit. In this case where we can at least suppose for the moment that for some actions, anyway, that persons do, they're done in such a way as to be recognized, so that the apparatus that can provide for how they're recognizable can also constitute procedures for generating the occurrence as a recognizable action, or set of them.

Now if I asked you to explain the set of observations I made – which any of you could have made just as well, and therefore they're not proposed as findings of mine, but as we'll see, they only pose the problems that we have to come to terms with – I suppose you might say something like the following. We hear that it's the mommy of the baby because she's the one who ought to pick it up, and if she's the one who ought to pick it up and it was picked up by somebody who could be her, then it's her. And furthermore, of course, the baby ought to have been picked up, given that it's crying – or something like being picked up, soothed in some way. So what was done is just what ought to have been done.

Now let's notice something that is worthy of some thought. What we've been essentially saying so far is that the pair of sentences seem to satisfy what a member might require of some pair of sentences for them to be a description. And they're quite recognizable as at least possible descriptions without, for the particular case, inspecting what they might describe. You can tell that they describe something just by looking at them. They 'sound like a description.' And something can sound like a description. So some form of statement can have the character that it could be a description, and you don't have to look at the circumstances to say, in the first instance, that it could be a description.

What does that mean? One thing it means is that if the apparatus we construct is directed to producing recognizable descriptions, then we, as analysts, needn't come to terms in the first place with what it is that babies and mommies do to each other, to decide that it's a description. We're dealing with the fact that this thing is recognizable as such without one having to look at some circumstances it purports to talk about, or might be said to purport to talk about, and therefore there may be ways of generating 'possible descriptions' such that they are recognizable apart from anybody's inspection of the circumstances they may talk about.

How could that be possible? Let me just add here, when I talk of generating these events and building an apparatus that generates them, the name of that apparatus is, of course, a culture. At least the way I'm going to use it. Now you ought to get some sense right off – and the reason I go through the observations in the way I did is to give you some sense – of the fine power of it. It's not just producing brains that are roughly alike, but they're alike in fine detail. After all, these sentences are not the most important set of events in the world. It's a kind of very minor little thing, and yet the operation of this culture, whatever it will look like, is such that you all hear just what I said you heard, and I don't even know you. That means

we're dealing with something real and powerful. And not just grossly powerful, like it provides for the rate of industrial development, but it provides for little tiny things that God might have overlooked, perhaps.

Now let's then try to begin to get some idea about what it is we want to do. I'm going to introduce a bunch of terms that we need. You needn't write them down very carefully. You needn't write them down at all, perhaps, because most of the terms I'll introduce right now you'll find in the first ten pages of this paper I assigned you.[1]

The first term is 'membership categorization device.' I'll just talk about it most of the time as 'categorization device.' That's the basic thing I'm interested in, 'membership categorization device.' And those things are collections of categories for referring to persons, with some rules of application. So there's a collection of categories and there are rules of application, where these devices can be applied to populations and members apply them to populations to say things about them, like that that's 'a baby.' Typical collections are things like (sex: male/female), (race: white/Negro'), etc.

Now, not any set of categories are a collection. We only talk about a collection when the categories that compose it are categories that members do in fact use together or collect together, as 'male' and 'female' go together. A set could be any bunch of categories.

Now the first thing we can note about this is, 'baby' and 'mommy' are two categories from one collection, the collection you could roughly call 'family,' which consists of 'baby,' 'mommy,' 'daddy,' and a variety of other things. Now there's some rules which I'm going to use a great deal of the time. Let me say in passing, I want you to notice that the term 'collection,' having the character that it is categories-that-go-together, we could propose that some categories go together and be wrong. So it's not simply a construct of my own in the sense that if I'm going to call it a collection, I am going to say whatever it is that goes in there. The terms are constructed so as to best come to terms with what it is that people in fact do, how in fact they handle these things.

Now one very simple thing, though we have to note it, is that any single category from any of these categorization devices is adequate to refer to a person. By which I mean, for one thing, that if a person uses a single category to refer to somebody, then you don't wait for them to continue, when they said 'baby,' to give you more before you could have some idea of what in the world they're talking about. It's perfectly imaginable that you would need to have a string of these things put together so as to get some idea of the fact that it's really a person. We could imagine a world where you had to pick one category, say, from each of three collections, to characterize a person in such a way that anybody could know what you were talking about. But as it happens, one category is enough, and 'baby' and 'mommy' are enough.

Now one basic rule in the use of these things, I'll call the 'consistency rule.'

[1] Probably a draft of 'An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology,' now in D. N. Sudnow (ed.), *Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Macmillan, The Free Press, 1972), 31–74.

It holds that if you are categorizing some population of persons – if a Member is categorizing some population of persons – then if they've used one category from some collection for the first person they're going to categorize, they may – it is legitimate, permissable – to categorize the rest of the population by the use of the same or other categories of the same collection. Now that can be done with some of the devices. Some of the devices are so constructed that they can categorize any population, like 'sex' can categorize any population, however large, with its two categories: Male, female, male, female, female, male, female, etc., etc. Some collections can't do that, and for them, if you don't know what kind of population you have, it may well be that you cannot use any given device to categorize them. We'll get at the properties of these various devices as we go along.

So the consistency rule says right off that if the first term is 'baby,' then further persons may be referred to by such other categories as 'mommy,' 'daddy,' and the like, i.e., it will tell us that if a population is being categorized by persons, then, for one, the categories that they use will not be a random set, but if we have a first, we can lock in on those that they will in fact use for handling the rest. And if you look through the stories you'll find that that's so, and if you listen to people you'll find that that's so.

Now I said 'may.' That's a weak version of the consistency rule. A strong version, which sometimes holds, says 'must.' Where it holds, we'll consider as we get along. That is, it says if some person has been categorized by some category of some collection, then the rest of that population has to be categorized by the same collection of categories.

Now I want to show you how we can now already get some kind of interesting things to see. 'Baby' happens to be an ambiguous term under one way I'm going to formulate 'ambiguous' – and it's not an ambiguous way to formulate it. That is, 'baby' is a term that occurs in at least two different collections. For one, it occurs in the collection which you could call 'stage of life' if you like: 'Baby,' 'child,' 'teenager,' 'adult,' whatever categories are in it, and also it occurs in this collection we call 'family.' Now the fact is that you don't hear it as ambiguous. You don't hear it as being 'a very young child cried, the mommy picked it up.' What you hear is 'The baby of the mommy cried, the mommy of the baby picked it up.' Why? Well, what happens is the consistency rule is not simply a rule that a categorizer uses to categorize populations. It also can apparently be used as a maxim for hearers. Don't forget, we're dealing with recognizability, constantly. And as a maxim for hearers, what it can do is to say the following. If there are two categories used, which can be found to be part of the same collection, hear them as part of the same collection – which is the way you hear them. Now you might, if you like, recognizing that in fact 'baby' is ambiguous in just the way I've said, construct an explanation for yourself of why it is that you don't hear it as 'baby' from the 'stage of life' collection. This ambiguity, of course, can be a matter that you can play with. So a mother will say, 'You may be 40 years old, but you're still my baby.' And it's not a queer usage, to use 'baby' in that way.

Okay. So the consistency rule will then give us, given the first term, the second – or some set of alternatives of which the actual second is one – from a very delimited set. Now let's consider this particular collection, 'family.' It's one of the series of collections which you can think of by the more prototypical name of them, which is 'teams,' which have as one of their central properties that they are what I'm going to call 'duplicatively organized,' by which I mean the following. When they're used on a population, what you do is you take the set of categories of the collection, treat the set of categories as a unit, and put people into cases of that unit, where what you don't get is seven daddies, six babies, three mommies, etc., but you get sets of people who are organized into more or less complete units. So you end up with whole families, families without fathers, families without babies, etc., and not an enumeration of categories of persons. And if you counted that population, you would very likely count it in terms of the number of families, and not the number of mommies, daddies, babies, etc.

Now, when you have a collection that has this duplicative organization to it, then it seems to be the case that if we give a list of terms in which categories are used from such a collection, whichever one it may be, and we give the terms various predicates, i.e., those people are doing various things. The third baseman got up and scratched himself. The second baseman sat down, etc. The engineer looked out the window. The conductor took a ticket. For each of them, by virtue of the duplicational organization and the way it operates on you, you hear, if you can – that is, if there's not some reason why you can't, you always hear them as belonging to the same case of that unit. That is to say, in just the way that you hear 'that baby of the mommy,' if I had a string: The second baseman, third baseman, etc., you hear that as being 'the second baseman on the same team as the third baseman.' And if you look at some of the stories in which the kids will go through a string of titles – like one of them has train jobs – you hear them as the same train. That then gives us at least in part how it is that we hear 'the baby' and 'the mommy of the baby.'

Now notice that it gives us this in a way that does not now at this point depend on our feelings, and that in giving us this it also gives us a whole bunch of things which are not in any obvious way just the same sorts of objects. That is to say, first baseman, second baseman, pitcher, do not have, except in some interesting way, a familial relationship to 'family,' and we can lay out quite objectively what it is that routinely stands as the criterion for deciding that something is duplicatively organized. If it is, then we can say how it is that it's going to be heard, and then of course, how it is that one may speak so as to have it heard that way. For some things, for example, if I say "The doctor got up, the engineer got up," then if I'm going to try to suggest that that engineer who happened to get up was the engineer of the doctor, I have to tell you by using a genitive, for example. So these sets of rules, then, are operating not only to provide for how this thing is *done*, but they're usable in various ways to provide for how it's recognized.

Now one of the things you have to see is that what we're talking about now, at least the results and the phenomena, are not phenomena that you

have to take my word for. It's something that you can see. It's stuff that occurs. When you hear somebody do one of these things, listen to how you hear it. Now the question of whether the account is adequate is another kind of question. That doesn't yet give us how we hear this thing to be a 'description.' More is needed for that.

Let's introduce a term, which I'm going to call 'category-bound activities.' What I mean by that is, there are a great many activities which Members take it are done by some particular category of persons, or several categories of persons, where the categories are categories from these membership categorization devices. Now how we would tell that they're 'bound' is something that I will give you as many different ways as we can use to tell, as I can. But let's consider, let's say, one. I want to propose, as it's obvious enough to you, you wouldn't argue with the issue, that 'cry' is bound to 'baby.' But we could still of course ask, well, how would we decide if that's so?

Now I'm going to propose that it's bound to the other sense of 'baby;' that is to say, 'baby' in 'stage of life,' since in this case 'baby' in 'stage of life' is just as well probably 'baby' for purposes of 'family.' Okay. Now the 'stage of life' categories are positioned: 'baby' . . . 'adult', with whatever in between. Let's see if we can describe a procedure for denigrating somebody, or for praising them, the operation of which consists of the use of the fact that some activities are category-bound. It would seem to be the case that if an activity is category-bound, and it's bound to some category that is in a positioned collection, that given simply the positions and not necessarily the categories themselves – perhaps it could work for any device which has that feature of positions – the way we construct the denigration of somebody is to propose about them that they are doing something that is bound to some category that has a lower position than theirs. And alternatively, the way to praise them is to propose that they're doing some activity which is bound to a higher category than theirs. And alternatively, you can simply say about them 'You're behaving like a . . . ,' whatever the alternative position is. So if an adult cries he can be said to be 'behaving like a baby' as a way of denigrating him; if a baby does something about which babies are expected to cry and he doesn't, then you say 'You're behaving like a big boy.' And we can pull these things out and think of such things as 'nigger work,' for example – whatever positional situations you want – as simply formal means which are tied to positions for paising or degrading – which I introduced only to show that that would be a means of seeing that a particular activity was in fact bound to some category.

Now notice, that very thing will show us also that these collections are real, in that what will be contrasted will be two positions from what we have proposed to be a given collection. If an adult cries, somebody is not going to say "You're acting like a janitor." They'll say, "You're acting like a baby" – or, if it's a male, " . . . like a woman." And again, this can be quite formally analyzed because all you're going to have to do is assign letters and numbers to the positions, and say could we not generate a way of degrading somebody by picking some of the activities bound to one of the categories in this position

and using them as ways of characterizing persons who are recognizably members of another. Try it and see. Though of course you already know it in other ways.

Okay. So 'crying' is bound to 'baby.' The simplest way you make a recognizable description is to take some category and some activity that's bound to it, and put them together. That sounds absolutely trivial. If you take an activity that's not bound to a given category and assert that it happens, or assert it, people are perfectly willing to argue, to say 'No.' 'No,' even in the case that we are just dealing with, a story. It's not believable. If you read literary criticism, people say about novels, "The characters are unbelievable." The whole possibility of, at least 19th-century, early 20th century literature turns on the fact that descriptions are recognizably correct – interesting, exciting, but recognizable apart from having to look at whatever it is that is being characterized – if anything is being characterized – and that by playing with the sets of properties and their relationships, one can in fact construct cogent remarks about something. The fact that it is that kind of formal operation is what would lend credence to the fear that, of course, computers could build novels.

Lecture 1 (R)

(first revised draft, February 20, 1966)

"The baby cried. The mommy picked it up"

In the first three lectures I intend, first, to present and employ several of the more basic concepts and techniques which I shall be employing throughout the rest of this course. Since most of those I shall use at this point may also be found in the paper which is appended to these lectures,[1] these first may be seen as reintroducing and extending the results developed there.

Second, I shall focus on the activity 'doing describing' and the correlative activity 'recognizing a description,' activities which Members may be said to do, and which therefore are phenomena which sociologists and anthropologists must aim to be able to describe. It will initially be by reference to an examination of instances of Members' describings that my attempt to show how sociologists might solve their own problem of constructing descriptions will be developed.

Third, and relatedly, I shall consider the problem of 'correctness' in a manner parallel to the format that will be used to deal with 'describing.' I shall examine a rather abstract statement which Members make and which may be said to be correct, and in formulating how sociologists might proceed to develop its correctness, a sketch of what correct sociological description might look like will be exhibited.

Fourth, the analyses will permit us to redevelop the critique of current social science that was first developed in the appended paper, to indicate again its scope and the constraints it imposes on a sociology or an anthropology that is not to suffer from the equivocality that preceding researches have suffered from.

Proceeding in the fashion I have proposed will require both some exceptional delicacy on my own part and on that of the reader. I proceed in this way not only because it satisfies my own aesthetic but also because it will permit a clear focus on several central, and neglected issues which social science must face, most particularly, the problem of Members' knowledge and the problem of relevance. Let us then begin.

The initial data is the first two sentences from a 'story' offered by a two year and nine months old girl to the author of the book *Children Tell Stories*. It

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[1] Probably a draft of 'an initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology,' now in D. N. Sudnow (ed.), *Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Macmillan, The Free Press, 1972), 31–74.

goes: "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up." I shall first make several observations about these two sentences. Before doing so, however, let me note: If these observations strike you as a ranker sort of subjectivism, then I ask you merely to read through just this first lecture to see whether it is or not the case that the observations are both relevant and defensible.

When I hear, "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," one thing I hear is that the mommy who picks the baby up is the mommy of the baby. That is a first observation. (You will, of course, notice that the second sentence lacks a genitive. It does not read, "Its mommy picked it up," or variants thereof.)

Now it is not only that *I* hear that the mommy is the mommy of the baby, but I feel rather confident that at least many of the natives among you hear that also. That is a second observation.

Is it some kind of magic?

One of my tasks is going to be to construct an apparatus which will provide for the foregoing facts to have occurred; an apparatus, that is, which will show how it is that we come to hear the fragment as we do.

Some more: I take it we hear two sentences. Call the first S1, and the second S2; the first reports an occurrence, O1, and the second reports an occurrence, O2. Now, I take it we hear that as S2 follows S1, so O2 followed O1. That is a third observation. And also: We hear that O2 occurs because of O1; that is, the explanation for O2 occurring is that O1 did. That is a fourth observation.

I want the apparatus to show how we come to hear those facts also.

If I asked you to explain the group of observations which I have made, observations which you could have made just as well – and let me note, they are *not* proposed as sociological findings, but rather do they pose some of the problems which sociology shall have to resolve – you might well say something like the following: We hear that it is the mommy of the baby who picks the baby up, because she's the one who ought to pick it up, and (you might eventually add) if she's the one who ought to pick it up, and it was picked up by somebody who could be her, then it was her, or was probably her.

You might go on: While it is quite clear that not any two consecutive sentences, nor even any consecutive sentences that report occurrences are heard, and properly heard, as reporting that the occurrences have occurred in the order which the sentences have, if the occurrences ought to occur in that order, and if there is no information to the contrary (such as a phrase at the beginning of the second, like 'before that, however') then the order of the sentences indicates the order of the occurrences. And these two sentences do present the order of the occurrences they report in the proper order for such occurrences. If the baby cried it ought to have cried before the mother picked it up, and not after. Hearing it that way the second is explained by the first; hearing them as consecutive[2] or with the second preceding the first, some

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[2] This ought to be 'simultaneous' oughtn't it?

further explanation is needed and none being present we may suppose that it is not needed.

Now let me make a fifth observation: All of the foregoing can be done by many or perhaps any of us without knowing what baby or what mommy it is that might be being talked of.

With this fifth observation it may now be noticed that what we've essentially been saying so far is that the pair of sentences seem to satisfy what a Member might require of some pair of sentences for them to be recognizable as 'a possible description.' They 'sound like a description' and some form of words can, apparently, sound like a description. To recognize that some form of words is a possible description does not require that one must first inspect the circumstances it may be characterizing.

That 'possible descriptions' are recognizable as such, is quite an important fact, for Members, and for sociologists.

The reader ought to be able to think out some of its import for Members; for example, the economies it affords them. It is the latter clause, 'and for sociologists,' that I wish to now attend.

Were it not so both that Members have an activity they do, 'describing,' and that at least some cases of that activity produced, for them, forms of words recognizable as at least possible descriptions without having to do an inspection of the circumstances they might characterize, then it might well be that sociology would necessarily be the last of the sciences to be doable. For, unless sociologists could study such things as these 'recognizable descriptions,' we might only be able to investigate such activities of Members as in one or another way turned on 'their knowledge of the world' when sociologists could employ some established, presumptively correct scientific characterizations of the phenomena Members were presumably dealing with, knowing about.

If, however, Members have a phenomenon, 'possible descriptions' which are recognizable per se, then the sociologist need not in the first instance know how it is that babies and mommies do behave to examine the composition of such possible descriptions as Members produce and recognize. Sociology and anthropology need not await developments in botany or genetics or analyses of the light spectra to gain a secure position from which Members' knowledge, and the activities for which it is relevant, might be investigated.

What the sociologist ought to seek to build is an apparatus which will provide for how it is that any activities, which Members do in such a way as to be recognizable as such to Members, are done, and done recognizably. Such an apparatus may be called 'a culture.' It will of course generate and provide for the recognizability of more than just 'possible descriptions' and in later lectures we shall be engaged in providing for such activities as 'inviting,' 'warning' and so forth, as the data we consider permits and requires.

My reason for having gone through the observations I have so far made was to give you some sense, right off, of the fine power of a culture. It does not merely fill brains in roughly the same way, it fills them so that they are alike in fine detail. The sentences we are considering are after all rather minor,

and yet the operation of the culture, whatever it will look like, is such that you all, or many of you, hear just what I said you heard, and many of us are quite unacquainted with each other. I am, then, dealing with something real and something finely powerful.

We may begin to work at the construction of the apparatus. I'm going to introduce several of the terms we need. The first term is 'membership categorization device' (or just 'categorization device'). By this term I shall intend: Any collection of membership categories, containing at least a category, which may be applied to some population containing at least a Member, so as to provide, by the use of some rules of applications, for the pairing of at least a population Member and a categorization device member. A device is then a collection plus rules of application.

An instance of a categorization device is the one called 'sex:' its collection is the two categories (male, female). It is important to observe that a collection consists of categories 'that go together:' For now, that may merely be seen as a constraint of the following sort; I could say that some set of categories were a collection, and be wrong. I shall present some rules of application very shortly.

Before doing that, however, let me observe that 'baby' and 'mommy' can be seen to be categories from one collection: The collection whose device is called 'family' and which consists of such categories as (baby, mommy, daddy, etc.) where by 'etcetera' we mean that there are others, but not any others, not, for example, 'shortstop'.

Let me introduce a few rules of application. It may be observed that if a Member uses a single category from any membership categorization device then they can be recognized to be doing *adequate reference* to a person. We may put the observation in a negative form: It is not necessary that some multiple of categories from categorization devices be employed for recognition, that a person is being referred to, to be made; a single category will do. (We do not by this mean that more cannot be used, only that for reference to persons to be recognized more need not be used.) With that observation we can formulate a 'reference satisfactoriness' rule, which we call the 'economy rule.' It holds: A single category from any membership categorization device can be referentially adequate.

A second rule I call the 'consistency rule.' It holds; If some population of persons is being categorized and if a category from some device's collection has been used to categorize a first Member of the population, then that category or other categories of the same collection *may* be used to categorize further Members of the population. The former rule was a 'reference satisfactoriness' rule; this latter one is a 'relevance' rule. We shall very carefully consider the import of relevance rules in the ensuing lectures.

The economy rule having provided for the adequate reference of 'baby,' the consistency rule tells us that if the first person has been categorized as 'baby' then further persons may be referred to by other categories of a collection of which it is a member, and thus that such other categories as 'mommy' and 'daddy' are relevant given the use of 'baby.'

While in its currently weak form and alone, the consistency rule may

exclude no category of any device, even in this weak form (the 'may' form – we shall eventually introduce a 'must' form) a corollary of it will prove to be useful. The corollary is a hearer's maxim. It holds: If two or more categories are used to categorize two or more Members to some population, and those categories can be heard as categories from the same collection, hear them that way. Let us call the foregoing 'the consistency rule corollary.' It has the following sort of usefulness. Various membership categorization device categories can be said to be ambiguous. That is, the same categorial word is a term occurring in several distinct devices, and can in each have quite a different reference; they may or may not be combinably usable about a single person. So, for example, 'baby' occurs in the device 'family' and also in the device 'stage of life' whose categories are such as (baby, child, . . .adult). A hearer who can use the consistency rule corollary will regularly not even notice that there might be an ambiguity in the use of some category among a group which it can be used to hear as produced via the consistency rule.

It is of course clear that the two categories 'baby' are sometimes combinably referential and sometimes not. A woman may refer to someone as 'my baby' with no suggestion that she is using the category that occurs in the stage of life device; her baby may well be a full-fledged adult. In the case at hand that problem does not occur, and we shall be able to provide the bases for its not occurring, i.e., the bases for the legitimacy of hearing the single term 'baby' as referring to a person located by reference both to the device 'family' and to the device 'stage of life.'

With this, let us modify the observations of paragraph 2 of page 7[3], as follows: The consistency rule tells us that if a first person has been categorized as 'baby' the further persons may be referred to by categories from either the device 'family' or from the device 'stage of life.' However, if a hearer has a second category which can be heard as consistent with one locus of a first then the first is to be heared as *at least* consistent with the second.

Given the foregoing we may proceed to show how the combined reference of 'baby' is heard for our two sentences, and also how 'the mommy' is heard as 'the mommy of the baby.' We shall deal with the latter task first, and we assume from now on that the consistency rule corollary has yielded at least that 'baby' and 'mommy' are heard as from the device 'family.' We assume that without prejudice to the further fact that 'baby' is also heard as 'baby' from the device 'stage of life.'

The device 'family' is one of a series which you may think of by a prototypical name, 'team.' One central property of such devices is that they are, what I am going to call, 'duplicatively organized.' I mean with that term to point out the following: When such a device is used on a population what is done is to take its categories, treat the set of categories as defining a unit, and place Members of the population into cases of the unit. If a population so treated is counted, one counts not numbers of daddies, numbers of

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[3] Coincides with paragraph 6, p. 246 above.

mommies and numbers of babies, but numbers of families – numbers of 'whole families,' numbers of 'families without fathers,' etc.

A population so treated is partitioned into cases of the unit, cases for which what properly holds is that the various persons partitioned into any case are 'co-incumbents' of that case.

To these ways of dealing with populations categorized by way of devices that are duplicatively organized there are correlative 'hearers maxims.' One that is relevant to our current task holds: If some population has been categorized by use of categories from some device whose collection has the 'duplicative organization' property, and a Member is presented with a categorized population which *can be heard* as co-incumbents of a case of that device's unit, then hear it that way. (We shall consider the underscored phrase shortly.) Now let it be noticed that this rule is of far more general scope than we may seem to need, and in focussing on a property like 'duplicative organization' it permits a determination of an expectation (of sociologists) as to how some categorized population will be heard independently of a determination of how it is heard. It is then formal and predictive, as well of course as quite general.

Now, by the phrase 'can be heard' we mean to rule out predictions of the following sort. Some duplicatively organized devices have proper numbers of incumbents for certain categories of any unit. (At any given time a nation-state may have but one president, a family but one father, a baseball team but one shortstop on the field, etc.) If more incumbents of a category are proposed as present in the population than a unit's case can properly take then the 'can be heard' constraint is not satisfied, and a prediction would not be made.

The foregoing analysis shows us then how it is that we come to hear, given the fact that the device 'family' is duplicatively organized, and the 'can be heard' constraint being satisfied, 'the mommy' to be 'the mommy of the baby.' It does of course much more than that. It permits us to predict, and to understand how we can predict, that a statement such as: "The first baseman looked around. The third baseman scratched himself. . ." will be heard as saying "the first baseman of the team on which the third baseman is also a player. . ." and the converse.

Or, putting the claim more precisely, it shows us how, in part. In part, because for the materials at hand it happens that there are other means for providing that the same hearing be made, means which can operate in combination with the foregoing – otherwise sufficient ones – to further assure the hearings we have observed. This will be done in the next lecture. Let us now undertake our second task, to show how 'the baby' is heard in its combined form, i.e., as the category with that name from both the 'stage of life' device, and from the 'family' device.

Let me introduce a term which I am going to call 'category-bound activities.' While I shall not now give an intendedly careful definition of the term, what I shall do is to indicate what I mean to notice with it and then in a while offer a procedure for determining for some of its proposed cases that

they are indeed cases of it. By the term I intend to notice that many activities are taken by Members to be done by some particular or several particular categories of Members where the categories are categories from membership categorization devices.

Let me notice then, as is obvious to you, that 'cry' is bound to 'baby;' that is, to the category 'baby' which is a member of the collection from the 'stage of life' device. Again, the fact that Members know that this is so only serves, for the sociologist, to pose some problem. What we want is to construct some means by reference to which a class, which proposedly contains at least the activity-category 'cry' and presumably others, may have the inclusion of its candidate-members assessed. We will not be claiming that the procedure is definitive as to exclusion of a candidate-member, but we will claim that it is definitive as to inclusion of a candidate-member.

It may be observed that the members of the 'stage of life' collection are 'positioned' (baby. . .adolescent. . .adult. . .), an observation which, for now, we shall leave unexamined. I want to describe a procedure for praising or degrading Members, the operation of which consists of the use of the fact that some activities are 'category-bound.' If there are such procedures, that will provide one strong sense of the notion 'category-bound activities' and also will provide for any given candidate activity a means of warrantably deciding that it is a member of the class of category-bound activities.

For some positioned-category devices it can be said as between any two categories of such a device that A is either higher or lower than B, and if A is higher than B, and B is higher than C, then A is higher than C.

We have some activity which is a candidate-member of the class 'category-bound activities' and which is proposedly bound to some category C. Then, a member of either A or B who does that activity may be seen to be degrading himself, and may be said to be 'acting like a C.' Alternatively if some candidate-activity is proposedly bound to A, a member of C who does it is subject to being said to be acting like an A where that assertion constitutes 'praising.'

If we, using the 'stage of life' categories, subject 'crying' to such a test we do find that its candidacy as a member of the class 'category-bound activities' is warrantable. In the case of 'crying' the results are even stronger. For, it appears, if a 'baby' is subject to some circumstances which would for such a one warrant crying, and he does not, then his 'not crying' is observable, and may be used to propose that he is 'acting like a big boy' where that assertion is taken to be 'praise.'

The foregoing procedure can obviously enough be used for other devices and other candidate activities. Other procedures may also be used; for example, one way to decide that an activity is category-bound is to see whether, the fact of membership being unknown, it can be 'hinted at' by naming the activity as something one does.

   S : So, you can't watch television. Is there anything you can stay interested in?

C: No, not really.

S: What interests did you have before?

C: I was a hair stylist at one time. I did some fashions now and then. Things like that.

S: Then why aren't you working?

C: Because I don't want to, I guess. Maybe that's why.

S: But do you find that you just can't get yourself going?

C: No. Well, as far as the job goes?

S: Yes.

C: Well, I'll tell you. I'm afraid. I'm afraid to go out and look for a job. That's what I'm afraid of . But more, I think I'm afraid of myself because I don't know. I'm just terribly mixed up.

S: You haven't had any troubles with anyone close to you?

C: Close to me. Well, I've been married three times and I'm– Close, you mean, as far as arguments or something like that?

S: Yes.

C: No, nobody real close. I'm just a very lonely person. I guess I'm very–

S: There's nobody who loves you.

C: Well, I feel that somebody must some place, but I don't know where or who.

S: Have you been having some sexual problems?

C: All my life.

S: Uh huh. Yeah.

C: Naturally. You probably suspect – as far as the hair stylist and – either go one way or the other. There is a straight or homosexual, something like that. I'm telling you, my whole life is just completely mixed up and turned over and it's just smashed and smashed and I'm not kidding.

Having constructed a procedure which can warrant the candidacy of some activity as a member of the class category-bound activities, and which warrants the membership of 'cry' and provides for its being bound to 'baby,' i.e., that category 'baby' which is a member of the 'stage of life' collection, we move on to see how it is that 'the baby' in our sentence is heard in the combined reference we have proposed.

We need, first, another hearer's maxim: If a category-bound activity is asserted to have been done by a member of some category where, if that category is ambiguous (i.e., is a member of at least two different devices) but where at least for one of those devices the asserted activity is category-bound to the given category, then hear that *at least* the category from the device to which it is bound is being asserted to hold.

The foregoing maxim will then provide for hearing "The baby cried" as referring to at least 'baby' from the 'stage of life' device. The results obtained from the use of the consistency rule corollary being independent of that, are combinable with it. The consistency rule corollary gave us at least that 'the

baby' was the category from the device 'family.' The combination gives us both.

If our analysis seems altogether too complicated for the rather simple facts we have been examining, then we invite the reader to consider that our machinery has intendedly been 'overbuilt.' That is to say it may turn out that the elaborateness of our analysis, or its apparent elaborateness, will disappear when one begins to consider the amount of work that the very same machinery can perform.

In the next lecture we shall attempt to show that the two sentences, "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," constitute a possible description.

In the third lecture we will examine the central significance that the various rules, such as the consistency rule and the hearer's maxims, have for social sciences. It is, we now but assert, by reference to these that the equivocality which undercuts almost all previous social science research may be removed.

Lecture 2

"The baby cried. The mommy picked it up"

We're talking about these two sentences, "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up." I want to consider some of the import of the fact that some activities are, as I put it, 'category-bound.' The import I'm going to consider, relevant to the issue of a description, how they're made, is somewhat separate from coming to see some offered statement as a description or a possible description, and concerns how, given some occurrence, one can come to formulate what one takes to be a description of it, because that will in part turn on the fact that some of these activities are category-bound.

Now an initial relevance can't probably that easily be seen by reference to this pair, 'baby' and 'cried,' but it's present there as well, though it can be more easily seen with respect to the next – 'the mommy' and 'picked it up,' and that concerns the issue of what I argue in the paper I've given you, and what you can easily enough see when you consider it, that for any person being characterized by a category from one of these categorization devices, it's always the case that alternative categories could categorize the same person, where 'alternative' means, not from within the same collection, but by a category from a different collection. So that if you use 'sex:' 'male/female,' you could say "the male cried." Now you don't. But let's leave that aside for the moment. Now the fact that activities, or some, are category-bound, provides another relevance rule for choosing categories. The first relevance rule I gave you was this consistency rule which said that if you had a category assigned to a first person, then in categorizing second and third persons you could select categories from the same collection that was used in the first instance to categorize the first. That had a corellate – the hearing maxim I gave you, i.e., that if there are two categories which can be heard as from the same collection, hear them as from the same collection. Now, another relevance rule turns on the following. It turns on this fact that some activities are category-bound. Here's one way it works. Let's consider it, just for the purposes of making the matter intuitively easier to see, by reference to this second sentence. You're standing somewhere and you see two people you don't know. Suppose one is a child. Suppose the second is a female adult. The first cries. The second picks it up. What you see is that the one who picks it up is the mommy of the baby.

Now again you could see in principle – that is, in principle you could apply

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Except for the title, this is the unedited text of the original transcript.

any number of categories to the same person – the fact that picking up crying babies is in the first instance the business of the mommies of them operates to have you see that as not merely 'a' mommy, but that mommy who is the one who is supposed to pick up her baby. Now you can see her as the mommy of that baby without in the first instance knowing that she's either a mommy or, in fact, the mommy of that baby.

Now what's a consequence of that, or what are some consequences of that, that are worthy of noticing? First of all, if it's the case that what we would conventionally call a 'norm,' what members of the society would call a norm or rule of proper behavior, says something like mommies ought to soothe their crying babies, then what seems to be present is not simply that that's a maxim of good behavior for mommies, but that one can use it to see who it is that's doing something which it can characterize. So these sets of norms, then, can operate to provide for how it is that you observe some set of activities, and see them not merely as correctly characterized by you, but as some activity correctly occurring. By 'correctly occurring' I mean, you don't say "Who's that lady who's picking up that baby?," where that could be something very wrong. I'll make that clear in a moment.

It's a rather regular thing that happens which the foregoing can analyze for us. You read it in the papers, it goes like this. A woman is assaulted in a car on Wilshire Boulevard. She says, "All sorts of people passed by. Nobody did a thing." Some of the witnesses are gotten to, and they say "Yeah, sure I saw it, but I figured it was her husband and they were having a family argument," which is something that's okay for a husband and wife to have, and which also provides that it's none of their business to interfere. You see a man standing on the street, say an adult male, and you see him smack a 15-year-old girl. That could be something that you ought to intervene in, except, it would be fairly regular that in the first instance what you see is 'a father chastising his daughter' and not 'a strange man assaulting some strange girl,' where in either case you know neither of them. So what seems to happen is that for activities that are category-bound what one sees when one sees a pair, a triplicate, a single person, doing one of them, is that they are the person who properly does that. Now that's a different sense of 'norms regulating activities' than one might usually use in doing sociology or anthropology, where it would be said by and large that the norms are followed by those persons who do the things – or ought to be. They provide also, then, for how it is that persons who know neither of the people, come to choose what categories they ought to use, or they do naturally use, to see what it is that's going on. And in that sense they provide rules of relevance for selecting categories.

So again, now, if what we had is a scene, somebody who could be a baby crying, somebody who could be a mommy, the mommy of the baby, picking it up, then what you see is that taking place, and we get now another sense in which this pair of sentences can be seen as a description in a way that can also be seen to be 'apart from identifying the circumstances;' that is, apart from investigation. One doesn't ask, one doesn't rely on having to know who

those people are in the first instance. One can see it, and see it as correctly characterized by you via 'the description.' Such a fact is of immense importance because it would be the kind of violations of norms that would not permit that to get done that would be, probably, much more consequential than those violations which would involve mommies not picking up their babies. Were it the case that you had to decide in some way like going up and asking these persons whether they were the proper set of people to be doing whatever it is they're doing, then the world might become much more complicated than it is. And I will call, in principle, such things as people 'passing' under such rules, 'subversion.' When a woman walks away from a supermarket with the baby carriage filled with a baby that's not hers, that's the sort of thing I'm talking about with 'subversion.' It's not seeable.

There are a variety of further things I want to deal with about these sentences. One of them I'll deal with at considerable length in a while, and it concerns now not the characterized events, i.e., the things these may be talking about, but what makes an adequate characterization of these – again, independently of what it is that's taking place – because that has some very important consequences. "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up." That's perfectly okay, and we don't have to know in the first instance where the mommy was when the baby cried, how it happened to come on the scene, or anything else. The baby cried, the mommy picked it up. "The baby cried" not only provides that the mommy ought to, but in some way provides that mommy will be around to do it.

Now we'll say that for some pairs of activities, pairs of actions that are related by norms, that there's at least a rule of adequate description which says 'character appears on cue,' i.e., if the first takes place and it's an adequate grounds for the second taking place, then it's okay to describe the thing without having provided for how it is that that second person happened to come on the scene to do whatever it is they properly do, if one says the first occurs and the second occurs as well. Now that seems like a very literary kind of rule, and you might take it that it holds for the Greek dramas, maybe, but not anywhere else, but that's not true, and it's also important that I just said that there's two actions related by norms. It does not merely involve a situation where the second – the person who does the thing that's second – is bound to do it, given the first, but if the first is, for example a violation, then you can provide that the second occurred. For example, "He was speeding and he got arrested." Perfectly okay. One needn't provide for the fact that the policeman somehow got on the scene.

Now I'll try to squeeze out some consequences of that in a while, but it's a task, so let me just hold off. I only wanted to indicate to you that this kind of thing – two occurrences properly tied together – the character-appears-on-cue rule will make, then, that description adequate.

I've been talking alternatively of this as 'possible description' or 'possibly correct description,' and the technical term I'll tend to use is 'potentially correct description' for things like it. Now that's going to be discriminated from what we could call an 'actually correct description' which would be such

a thing used on some occasion where it's talking about something it characterizes, in contrast to what it is here, perhaps, a story, or what it could also perfectly well be, a lie. The power of good lies is that they could be good descriptions, and what would differentiate the phenomenon 'lies' from 'a story' would be that the one who tells the story makes no claim at all that he's talking about some actual occurrence. A liar is presumably engaged in passing off his potentially correct description as actually correct. That suggests one fairly neat thing. If you're dealing with young children, one of the things you'd like to know about them is, first, when do they have the competence to lie? And what size of the things that they talk about do they have the competence to lie about? Stories are, then, a very useful phenomenon; that is to say, children's stories are very useful for adults, since if a child can tell a story which passes as a description, then you can figure that you better watch out for those things that they do not propose, as such, as stories, but propose as actual descriptions.

Now, in coming to see how this thing might be a story, it is of course perfectly obvious, or it ought to be obvious, that the sheer fact that this lady asked the kid to tell her a story doesn't tell us that that's a story. To suppose that it does is to simply fall into the most characteristic error of social science, which is only to interpret the answers to questions and not the questions. Now what we have to do then is to come to some way of formulating what makes something a story. Then, to see whether that formulation we make holds, i.e., characterizes the object we're considering. It could be either that the child doesn't know what a story is, or it doesn't feel like telling one. Maybe it supposes that it has fool enough audience so that anything it says will be considered its version of a story. Also, of course, we'd like to know does the kid have a good idea of what it is that it takes to make a story? There are a variety of reasons why that could be of interest. First, there are lots of parts of stories, or some parts of stories, that are rather standardized cultural objects, and we would like to know whether the kid has them under control and knows that the way you build one is to use those things.

For example, 'once upon a time.' That's a story-beginning. One thing about some stories anyway is that they have special ways of beginning. That is to say, one can differentiate between a 'start,' which could be anything, and the fact that the first thing that occurs is a 'beginning.' And perhaps the last thing that occurs is an 'ending.' Now if we start off with endings, then we find that in this story, and in some of the others, it does look like the kids know that there ought to be an ending. And again, I mean by 'ending,' something different than, distinctive from, simply stopping, but that we can characterize the thing as an 'ending.' If it is an ending, and it occurred in last position, then we have an ending for the story. If it's something that looks like a beginning and it occurred in the first position, it looks like we have a beginning. We could then say that the ending occurred too soon, as is often said, or that it stopped but there was no end, it had no beginning, etc., etc., all those possibilities where we have an object and a position.

Now what it takes to make an ending, I certainly am not going to

formulate exhaustively. But if you look at, say, the close of this story and others, then it looks like we've got an ending there, and it looks like we have something that was built as an ending. The story ends, "and she went to sleep," i.e., the kid takes an end to something, not just anything either, a most natural ending, i.e., an ending to the day, and uses it to end the story.

Now the problem of beginnings is a rather more complicated one, and we'll try to deal with it a little. The problem with beginnings for kids' talk is a special one because, we might say, first roughly and only as an assumption to see whether it's so – though naively it's obvious – kids have restricted rights to talk. That being the case, by assumption, let's see whether the ways that they go about beginning to talk can be most adequately seen to be solutions to the problem of getting to talk under restricted rights. What we want to do is see whether their beginnings are a more or less nice, methodical solution to a problem which focusses on having to have a good way to begin.

Kids around the age of three – and that's what we're dealing with here – go through a time when they have what may be almost a universal way of beginning any piece of talk they make to adults. They use it just about every time. It has a little bit of variation, but it's a thing like "You know what, Daddy?," "You know something?," things like that. What we want to do is to analyze that, to see how it's a beginning, and to see how, as a beginning, its providing a solution to their having restricted right to talk informs us that our notion that they have restricted right to talk is correct.

I'll introduce, without data at this point because the facts are so simple and obvious that you can check them out easily enough for yourself – you know them anyway – a couple of rules of conversational sequencing, two-party sequencing. Two-party conversations are a special basic phenomenon, and what I say is not intended as applying to three-or-more-party conversations. One basic rule of two-party conversations concerns a pair of objects, questions and answers. It says, if one person asks a question, the other person answers it. I will have to give characterizations of those objects, but I'm not going to do it now. I'll do it when we get to discussing conversation much more seriously.

A second rule, and it's an absolutely fundamental rule because by reference to it the infinite character of a conversation can be found, is, the person who has asked the question can talk again after the other answers, and can ask a question. I call it the 'chaining rule,' and obviously it has as its consequence that a conversation, in principle, its method, has no finite length but is just extendable in this fashion: Q, A, Q, A, Q, A.

Now here's a question: "You know what?" It has, as a question, an extremely curious kind of answer, and the answer is one of those fairly rare but not altogether rare objects which, as an answer, is also a question, i.e., "What." With that as a question, the question–answer rule is turned around. The kid's been asked a question. It's his business to answer. You can characterize, then, the restriction as involving a right to use a first item, which, however, in this case, is the first item that for anybody else is a chainable right; that is, indefinitely extendable. Kids don't use it that way. They use it simply

to set up the other person in the position of questioner. They thereafter do not proceed on their own say-so, or by reference to the chaining rule, but as obliged to talk under the position of an answerer.

Now of course it happens to be that the question they elicit with their question has altogether open form, and what stands as an answer is whatever the kid takes it to be an answer, and thereby provides him with the opportunity to say what it is that he wanted to say in the first place. However, now not on his own say-so, but under obligation. That's very nice. Three-year-old kids are kind of clever. In that case, then, what it looks like is that the kids take it they have a right to begin, to make a first statement, and nothing much more. That being the case we can focus on their beginnings as not just the first thing they happen to say, but as something which can be examined for its status as a 'beginning' to see whether, again, it will be the case that what it is that's put in first position in the story is something that stands as a beginning. "The baby cried" reports a piece of trouble. It's a kind of special item in itself, in that if we can talk of something like 'once upon a time' as a token of a story-beginning, it just happens to be your beginning because that's the way stories begin. In that sense, a token. You give nickels, whatever, because that's what you give, as compared to this thing being a 'beginning' in some special way, by way of its properties.

Then we'll introduce, as a nothing-special term, there's another kind of beginning, which we'll call 'tickets.' Tickets are kind of interesting in that they're beginnings of the following sort.

Q: What was that word?
HS: Tickets.
Q: Tickets?
HS: Yeah. T-i-c-k-e-t. I use it for the following reasons. Suppose two
      people, two adults, don't have rights to talk to each other, in general.
      They are not, under whatever formulation there may be – and I'll try
      to formulate such things eventually – persons who converse with
      each other. There are conditions under which they can talk, or one
      can talk to the other, and that those conditions are the conditions
      being used to begin a piece of talk for them, is something they can
      deliver in the first piece of talk, via a ticket. Which is to say that they
      say something which, having been said, warrants that they've talked
      in the first place. Like, "Your pants are on fire." ((laughter)) It's not
      just an opening, but it's telling you why I'm talking. The occurrence
      of trouble is, then, that sort of object. Persons who have – now, not
      simply children who have generally restricted rights, but for any pair
      of persons who otherwise don't talk to each other, they can use a
      ticket as a beginning. One kind of ticket is the announcement of
      some trouble. That holds for whoever it is you're talking to, and
      that's, then, the sort of object that "the baby cried" is. If the baby
      cried, then "the baby cried" is a perfectly good thing to say, anybody
      can say it, including a child who otherwise shouldn't talk, and

should say it as a first statement. Okay, so we can find out how that's a beginning. If then it's a beginning in general, it can be a beginning of a story.

It has a little bit of side relevance that concerns the following. If you look at all these stories, the overwhelming number of them are, in one way or another, tragic, and we could read directly from them into what we suppose the children's fantasy lives look like and say it's filled with all sorts of horrors. At least a partial alternative, though I certainly don't claim to be saying what their fantasy lives are full of, the character of the stories could be partially accounted for by reference to those things that kids can properly talk of or have as occasions for talking, which are, troubles. But that's neither here nor there.

I don't have time now. I'll continue next time. What I want to do then is further spell out this business of 'characters appear on cue.' Now let me just say what I want to do, and I'll say it because you can pull features out of certain stories which will be in point. I'd like to suggest the following. We may find from a set of stories that kids may take it, young kids anyway, that the occurrence of the trouble that involves them in crying or whatever, is sufficient to bring the assistance, and that danger, then, is a rather different object than you would like it to be for them. I pose a problem which is how do you get them to see, not simply that the fact that they're in trouble doesn't mean that they're going to be pulled out, but that if they want some people around, the simplest way is not to go jump in the river or something like that.

Now if you look at a bunch of the stories and you take it that they're possibly mapable onto what it is that the kid figures is going on, you may get some such idea, and you may try to work out some way of shifting that around – if you don't think there are already too many kids around.

Okay. Continue next time.

Lecture 2 (R)

(first revised draft (February 24, 1966)

"The baby cried. The mommy picked it up"

I am examining the two sentences, "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," and in this second lecture I shall proceed in much the same manner as I did in the first, beginning with some observations and then exploring their import. I shall focus first on the fact that an activity can be category-bound and then on the import of there being a norm which provides for some second activity given the occurrence of a first, considering both of these with regard to the 'correctness,' for Members, of 'possible descriptions.'

Let me leave aside our two sentences and for the moment consider instead some observations on how it is that I see, and take it you see, describable occurrences.

Suppose you are standing somewhere, and you see a person you don't know. The person cries. Now, if I can, I will see that what has happened is that a baby cried. And I take it that you will, if you can, see that too. That's a first pair of observations. Suppose again you are standing somewhere and you see two people you don't know. Suppose further, one cries, and the other picks it up. Now, if I can, I will see that what has happened is that a baby cried, and its mother picked it up. And I take it that you will, if you can, see that too. That's a second pair of observations.

Consider the first pair of observations. The modifying phrases, to deal with them first, refer simply to the possibility that the category 'baby' might be obviously inapplicable to the crier. By reference to the 'stage of life' collection the crier may be seen to be an adult. And that being so, the 'if . . . can' constraint wouldn't be satisfied. But there are certainly other possible correct characterizations of the crying person. For example, without respect to the fact that it was a baby, it could be either 'male' or 'female' and nonetheless I wouldn't, and I take it you wouldn't, seeing the scene, see that 'a male cried' if we could see that 'a baby cried.'

The pair of observations suggest the following 'viewer's maxim:' If a Member sees a category-bound activity being done, then, if one can see it being done by a member of a category to which the activity is bound, see it that way. The viewer's maxim is another 'relevance rule' in that it proposes that for an observer of a category-bound activity, the category to which the activity is bound has a special relevance for formulating an identification of its doer.

Except for the title, this is the unedited text of the original revised draft.

Consider the second pair of observations. As Members, you of course know that there is a norm which might be written as: A mother ought to try to soothe her crying baby. I, and you, not only know that there is such a norm, but, as you may recall, we used it in doing our hearing of "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up." In addition to the fact of duplicative organization, the norm was relevant in bringing us to hear that it was the mommy of the baby who did the picking up. While we would not have heard that it was the mommy of the baby for other pairs of activities in which the two were involved (but not any pair) the fact that the pair were relatable via a norm which assigns the mother of the baby that duty may have operated in combination with the duplicative organization to assure our hearing that it was she who did it.

Leaving aside the hearing of the sentence, we are led to construct another 'viewer's maxim:' If one sees a pair of actions which can be related via the operation of a norm that provides for the second given the first, where the doers can be seen as members of the categories the norm provides as proper for that pair of actions, then (a) see that the doers are such Members, and (b) see the second as done in conformity with the norm.

This second viewer's maxim suggests a rather fundamental observation about norms. In the sociological and anthropological literature, the focus on norms is on the conditions under which, and the extent to which, they govern – or can be seen by social scientists to govern – the relevant actions of those Members whose actions they ought to control. While such matters are of course important, our viewer's maxim suggests other importances of norms, for Members.

Viewers use norms to provide some of the orderliness, and proper orderliness of the activities they observe. Via some norm, two activities may be made observable as a sequentially ordered pair. That is, viewers use norms to explain both the occurrence of some activity given the occurrence of another, and also its sequential position with regard to the other, e.g., that it follows the other, or precedes it. That's a first importance. Second, viewers use norms to provide the relevant membership categories in terms of which they formulate identifications of the doers of those activities for which the norms are appropriate.

Now let me observe, viewers may use norms in each of the preceding ways, and feel confident in their usage without engaging in such an investigation as would serve to warrant the correctness of their usages. This last observation is worth some further thought.

We may, at least initially, put the matter thusly: For viewers, the usability of the viewer's maxims serves to warrant the correctness of their observations. And that is then to say: The usability of the viewer's maxims provides for the recognizability of the correctness of the observations done via those maxims. And that is then to say: 'Correct observations' or, at least, 'possible correct observations,' are 'recognizable.'

(Members feel no need in warranting their observation, in recognizing its correctness, to do such a thing as ask the woman whether she is the mother

of the baby, or ask her whether she picked it up because it was crying. They feel no such need – so long, that is, as the viewer's maxims are usable.) In short: 'Correctness' is recognizable, and there are some exceedingly nice ties between recognizably correct description and recognizably correct observations.

One such tie which is relevant to the tasks we have undertaken is: A string of sentences which may be heard, via the hearer's maxims, as having been produced by use of the viewer's maxims, will be heard as a 'recognizably correct possible description.'

The rest of this lecture will be devoted to two tasks. I shall try to develop some further rewards of the analysis so far assembled, some consequences it throws off, and to show also how it is that the two sentences ("The baby cried. The mommy picked it up") can warrantably be said to be from 'a story.' I start with the latter task.

It ought to be apparent that, that the children whose talk is reported in *Children Tell Stories* were asked to tell a story, is not definitive of their having done so. It is, for one, at least possible that the younger ones among them are not capable of building stories, of building talk that is recognizable as 'a story' or, at least, as 'a possible story.'

It happens to be correct, for Western literature, that if some piece of talk is a possible description it is also, and thereby, a possible story or story-part. It appears, therefore, that having established that the two sentences are a possible description I have also, and thereby, established that they possibly are (at least part of) a story. To stop now would, however, involve ignoring some story-relevant aspect of the given sentences which are both interesting and subjectable to analysis. So, I go on.

Certain characteristics are quite distinctive to stories. For example, there are characteristic endings; 'and they lived happily ever after,' and characteristic beginnings; 'once upon a time.' I shall consider whether the possible story, a fragment of which we have been investigating, can be said (and I mean here, as throughout, 'warrantably said') to close with what is recognizable as 'an ending,' and to start with what is recognizable as 'a beginning.'

In suggesting a difference between 'starts' and 'beginnings,' and between 'closes' and 'endings', I am introducing a distinction which shall, as this course of lectures proceeds, come to have some prominence. The distinction, which is by no means original, may be developed by considering some very simple observations.

1 A piece of talk which regularly is used to do some activity – as "Hello" is used to do 'greetings' – may not invariably be so used, but may do other activities as well – as "Hello" is used to check out whether another with whom one is talking on the phone is still there or has been cut off – where it is, in part its occurrence in 'the middle' and not 'the start' of a conversation which serves to discriminate the use being made of it.

2 Certain activities not only have regular places in some sequence where they do get done, but may, if their means of being done is not found

there, be said, by Members, to not have occurred, to be absent.

For example, the absence of a greeting may be noticed as the following data, from field observations, indicates. The scene involved two adult women, one the mother of two children, ages six and ten. The kids enter, and the following ensues.

Lady: Hi
Boy: Hi
Lady: Hi, Annie
Mother: Annie, didn't you hear someone say hello to you?
Lady: Oh, that's okay, she smiled hello.
Mother: You know you're supposed to greet someone, don't you?
Annie: ((hangs head)) Hello.

3   Certain activities can only be done at certain places in a sequence. For example, a third strike can only be thrown by a pitcher after he has two strikes on a batter.

Observations such as these lead to a distinction between a 'slot' or 'position' and the 'items' which fill it, and to proposing that certain activities are accomplished by a combination of some item and some slot.

The notion of 'position' or 'slot' serves for the sociologist to mark a class of relevance rules. Thus, if it can be said that for some assertable sequence there is a position in which one or more activities properly occur, or occur if they are to get done, then: The observability of either the occurrence or the non-occurrence of those activities may be claimed by reference to having looked to the position and determined whether what occurs in it is a way of doing the activity.

An instance of the class of relevance rules might run: To see whether a conversation included 'greetings,' look to the first utterance of either party and see whether there occurs in it any item which passes as 'a greeting,' items such as (hello, hi, hi there, etc.). The fact that the list contains the term 'etc.' might be deeply troublesome were it not the case that while we are unable to list all the members of the class 'greeting items' we can say that the class is bounded, and that there are some utterables which are not members of it, perhaps, for example, "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously." If that and only that occurred in a first utterance we might feel assured in saying that a greeting did not occur.

Consider just one way that this class of relevance rules are important. First, roughly; they permit the sociologist to non-trivially assert that something was absent. Non-trivial talk of an absence requires that some means be available for showing both the relevance of occurrence of the activity that is proposedly absent, and the locating of where it should be looked for to see that it did not occur. Lacking these, an indefinite set of other activities might equally well be asserted to be absent given some occurrence, and the assertion in question not being discriminable from the (other) members of that indefinite set, it is trivialized.

It does seem that for stories it is correct to say that they can have beginnings, and we can then inspect the items that occur at their start to see whether they can be seen to make 'a beginning.' Given, further, that stories can have endings, we can inspect the items that occur at their close to see whether they can be seen to make 'an ending.'

While my main interest will be with the story's start as a possible proper beginning, let me briefly consider its close: "She went to sleep." With this, the speaker would seem to be not merely closing, but closing by making a proper ending. It so seems by virtue of the fact that such a sentence reports an occurrence, or can be heard as reporting an occurrence which is a proper ending to something for which endings are relevant and standardized, that very regularly used unit of orientation, the day. A day being recognized as ending for some person when they go to sleep, so a story may be recognized as closing with an ending if at its close there is a report of the protagonist's having gone to sleep. This particular sort of ending is of course not at all particular to stories constructed by young children; it, and other endings like it, from 'the last sleep,' death, unto the shutting down of the world, are regular components of far more sophisticated ventures in Western literature.

Let me turn then to the start, to consider whether it can be said to be 'a beginning.' I shall attempt to show that starting to talk to adults is, for small children, a rather special matter. I shall do that by focussing on a most characteristic way that small children, of around the age of the teller of the given story, open their talk to adults, i.e., the use of such items as 'You know what?' I shall offer an analysis of that mode of starting off, which will characterize the problems such a start can be seen to operate as a methodical solution to.

The promised analysis will warrant my assertion that starting to talk is, for small children, a special matter. That having been established, I shall turn to see whether the particular start we have for this story may be seen as another type of solution to the same problem that I will have shown to be relevant.

If I can then show that another solution is employed in our problematic utterance (the sentence "The baby cried"), I will have shown that the story starts with something that is properly a beginning, and that therefore, both start and close are 'proper' beginning and end. Such, in any event, are my intentions.

I begin: First, roughly, and only as an assumption (though naively, the matter is obvious) I assert that kids have restricted rights to talk. That being the case, by assumption, I want to see whether the ways that they go about starting to talk, with adults, can be most adequately seen to be solutions to the problem which focusses on needing to have a good start if one is going to get further than that. Starts which have that character can then be called 'beginnings.'

Now, kids around the age of three go through a period when some of them have an almost universal way of beginning any piece of talk they make to adults. They use things like: "You know what, daddy?" or "You know something, mommy?"

I will introduce a few rules of conversational sequencing. I will do that without presenting data now, but the facts are so obvious that you can check them out easily enough for yourself; you know the rules anyway. The sequencing rules are for two-party conversation; and, since two-party conversation is a special phenomenon, what I say is not intended as applying for three-or-more party conversation.

One basic rule of two-party conversation concerns a pair of objects, questions and answers. It runs: If one party asks a question, when the question is complete, the other party properly speaks, and properly offers an answer to the question, and says no more than that. The rule will need considerable explication, but for now it will do as it stands.

A second rule, and it's quite a fundamental one, because by reference to it the infinite character of a conversation can be seen is: A person who has asked a question can talk again; has, as we may put it, 'a reserved right to talk again,' after the one to whom he has addressed the question speaks. *And*, in using the reserved right, he can ask a question. I call this rule 'the chaining rule' and in combination with the first it provides for the occurrence of an indefinitely long conversation of the form Q, A, Q, A, Q, A, Q, A. . .

Now, the characteristic opener that we are considering is a question (e.g., "You know what?"). Having begun in that way a user who did not have restricted rights to talk would be in a position of generating an indefinite set of further questions as each question was replied to, or as the other otherwise spoke on the completion of some question.

But the question we begin with is a rather curious one, in that it is one of those fairly but not exceptionally rare questions which have as their answer, another question, in this case the proper and recurrent answer is "What?" The use of initial questions of this sort has a variety of consequences. First, if a question which has another question as its proper answer is used and is properly replied to, i.e., is replied to with the proper question, then the chaining rule is turned around, i.e., it is the initial answerer, and not the initial questioner who now has the reserved rights to speak again after the other speaks. The initial questioner has by his question either not assumed that he can use the chaining rule or has chosen not to. (Note that we are not saying that he has not chosen to invoke the chaining rule; he has instead given the choice of invoking it to the initial answerer. There are two different possibilities involved.)

Second, the initial questioner does not only make his second speech by virtue of the chaining rule but he makes it by virtue of the first sequencing rule i.e., by reference to the fact that a person who has been asked a question, properly speaks and properly replies to it. His second speech is then not merely not made as a matter of either the chaining rule or his choice by some other means of making a second speech, but it is something he makes by obligation, given the fact that he has been asked a question, and is therefore obliged to answer.

Third, however, the question he is obliged to answer is 'an open one' in the sense that what it is that an answer would be is something that its asker does

not know, and further, is one that its answerer by the prior sequence does. What an answer is, then, to the second question, is whatever it is the kid takes to be an answer, and he is thereby provided with the opportunity to say whatever it is he wanted to say in the first place. However, now, not on his own say so, but as a matter of obligation.

In that case, then, and the foregoing being a method whereby the production of the question "You know what?" may be explicated, we may take it that kids take it that they have 'restricted rights' which consist of a right to begin, to make a first statement and not much more. Thereafter they proceed only if requested to.

And if that is their situation as they see it, they surely have evolved a nice solution to it.

With the foregoing we can say then that a focus on the way kids begin talk is appropriate, and we can see whether the beginnings of stories – if they are not made of the culturally standardized beginnings (such as 'Once upon a time') – might be seen to be beginnings by virtue of the special situation which kids have vis-à-vis beginning to talk.

We may arrive at the status of "The baby cried" as a proper beginning, in particular as a start that is a beginning by virtue of being a proper opener for one who has restricted rights to talk, by proceeding in the following way. Let us consider another solution to the problem of starting talk under restricted rights. I'll begin by introducing a term, 'ticket.' I can show you what I mean to point to with the term by a hypothetical example. Suppose two adults are co-present and lack rights to talk to each other; for example, they have never been introduced, or whatever. For any such two persons there are conditions under which one can begin to talk to the other. And that those conditions are the conditions used to, in fact, begin talk is something which can be shown via a first piece of talk. Where that is done, we will say that talk is begun with a ticket. That is, the item used to begin talk is an item which, rights not otherwise existing, serves to warrant one having begun to talk. For example, one turns to the other and says, "Your pants are on fire." It is not just any opening, but an opening which tells why it is that one has breached the correct silence, which warrants one having spoken. Tickets, then, are items specially usable as first items in talk by one who has restricted rights to talk to another. And the most prototypical class of tickets are 'announcements of trouble relevant to the other.'

Now it is clear enough (cf. the discussion of norms earlier) that the occurrence of a baby crying is the occurrence of a piece of trouble relevant to some person, e.g., the mother of the baby. One who hears it gains a right to talk, i.e., to announce the fact that it has occurred, and can most efficiently speak via a ticket, i.e., "The baby cried." That being so, we can see then that the opener "The baby cried" is a proper beginning, i.e., it is something which can serve as a beginning for someone whose rights to talk are in the first instance restricted.

With the foregoing we have established that the story we have been examining has both a proper beginning and a proper end, and is thus not only

a story by virtue of being a possible description, but also by virtue of its employing as parts, items which occur in positions that permit one to see that the user knows that stories have such positions, and that there are certain items which, when used in them, are satisfactory incumbents.

Lecture 3
'Everyone has to lie'

There is no transcript of this lecture. Its materials became the paper 'Everyone has to lie,' now in M. Sanches and B. G. Blount (eds), Sociocultural Dimensions of Language Use (New York: Academic Press, 1975), 57–80. For the materials in lecture form, see Spring 1967, lectures 8 and 9.

A note on the Group Therapy Session materials

The bulk of the lectures of Spring 1966 deal with a segment of talk in a group therapy session for teenagers. The segment had been introduced in June 1965 as a final exam, and a series of lectures dealing with the materials was given in Fall 1965. The next presentation, given in Fall 1966, is not included in this volume. In the main, the Fall 1966 lectures were a reorganized repetition of the Spring 1966 lectures. There were some new considerations, expansions, etc., and many of those have been incorporated into the Spring 1966 series.

Whatever introductory discussion Sacks offered was not transcribed in the Spring or Fall 1966 lectures. In its place is a brief introductory note, made up of Sacks' remarks about the June 1965 final exam, and an introduction to the materials when he first presented them in Fall 1965.

Introduction

It seems to me that the core of this 11-minute segment from a group therapy session for teenage kids constitutes an 'initiation ceremony.' As such, among the things in it that are of interest, is the fact that it isn't done via a script. The participants are a therapist, male, about 35, three current patients, male, between 16–18 years, and the new entrant, another teenaged male. One of the kids in the group knew beforehand that somebody new was going to come that day, but that's about it. We are not dealing with a 'scripted' ceremony, nor with one for which the various parts have, even roughly, been previously assigned or previously worked out. And yet there are certainly features in it which the literature on initiation ceremonies proposes to be present in such events.

But our task is not going to be so much to see the extent to which that is so, but to try to come to terms with the conversation itself, as best we can. Now, the quickest way to find ourselves feeling hopeless at the task is to attempt to deal with the whole thing at once. We're going to be picking at it piece by piece. And there are a lot of events in it that are, to the altogether naive eye, quite remarkable. That is, without any analysis and simply by inspection you can find some things that you might take to be worth thinking about. Probably the most striking thing right off, would be that section on page 3 of the handout, where there's a series of questions run off in about 45 seconds, by the given members of the group to the new entrant, in which they ask him things about himself, giving in each of the questions what they take to be the answer. And the questions have some rather extraordinary detail in

them; for example, question ten, "you've been kicked out of school once." It is quite obvious that how these guys have that information, and what they do with it, are issues. And there are, aside from that, a variety of other things involved in this segment that we're going to have to consider in one way or another.

Handout: Group Therapy Session Segment

0:00   *Therapist*:   heh heh

         Roger: Kids don't drive long. They start off when they're si–by the time– when they're sixteen, by the time they're eighteen they're back walk(hh)ing hehh through circumsta(hh)nces hehhehh

         Therapist: beyond their control.

         Roger: Ehhehh yes hehhehh hotrodders // never–

         Al: It's all the cops' fault.

         Roger: Now the Soshes keep driving. Daddy's car and everything you know,

         Therapist: It's the cops' fault.

         Al: Yeah it's not ours we're per– we're // merely

         Roger: It's the insurance companies and the cops.

         Therapist: Yeah,

         Al: Damn right.

         Roger: Kids are completely innocent heh

         Al: We do race but the times we do get tickets are the only

0:30   times when we maybe goin' a long distance, uhh I dunno, I– depends on how many accidents you have, and how many of these tickets you get.

         Roger: I have got a speeding ticket on the average of one every three and a half months. Since I've been driving.

         Al: I haven't– I have never gotten a // ticket.

         Roger: And I deserve it.

         Therapist: ha ha ha

         Roger: I deserve it. Because I always drive about seven miles an hour faster than everybody else. You know? Like everybody's driving thirty five I'm driving about forty two somethin' like that. So this is the conseque(hh)ence I have to pay. 'Cause I can't stand driving that slow.

         Al: I have– I've– I've– all the time // I've been driving I haven't gotten a ticket but I've always– but I've always–

1:00   *Roger*:   Specially when I think I can handle a car at that speed. In traffic.

This is the text of the original Spring 1966 transcript, with an inclusion from retranscribing done in Fall 1966. With this new transcript came a new set of names for the participants: Mel, Joe, and Henry are now Al, Ken, and Roger, respectively.

Al:	I shoulda gotten a ticket // but uh
Therapist:	Uh huh
Ken:	Oh I can think of a million times when I should've gotten a ticket, going on the freeway. I'm always goin' seventy five. I mean I'm just I'm not racing, I'm right along with– or I'm right behind the guy ahead of me and he's just he's goin' as fast as I am and lotta people pass us up like we're sittin' still.
( ):	*Oh* yeh.
Al:	Like Roger.
Ken:	And the cops– the cops don't look at you when you just–
Roger:	But they're stockers.
⌈*Ken*:	If you're in a jeep–
⌊*Roger*:	But you drive a stocker. When a cop sees a hopped up car, he don't care if you're going forty five you must be doin' somethin' wrong, and if he wants to be mean, he can bust you on a thousand things.
Al:	He doesn't have to have a reason, you know you're not s– cops aren't supposed to talk to you unle– s–stop you unless you're doing something suspicious. If you have a hotrod that's enough.
Roger:	He can bust ya on a thousand things non-moving violations if you give him any lip, even if you didn't do anything wrong. They can just go over your car and write you up ticket this long.
Ken:	Sure. Well let him. You know–
Roger:	On Hollywood Boulevard the other night they were giving tickets for dirty windshields.
	((door opens))
Jim:	hh
Therapist:	Hi, Jim // c'mon in.
Jim:	H'warya
Therapist:	Jim, this is uh Al,
Jim:	Hi
Therapist:	Ken,
Jim:	Hi
Ken:	Hi
Therapist:	Roger.
Roger:	Hi
Jim:	Hi
Therapist:	Jim Reed.
( ):	((cough))
Ken:	We were in an automobile discussion
Roger:	discussing the psychological motives for
( ):	hhhhhhh ((not laughter, heavy breathing))

2:30 appears beside the Roger/Al exchange ("doin' somethin' wrong...").
3:00 appears beside *Jim*: hh.

	Al:	drag racing on the street.
3:30	*Ken*:	I still say though that if you take if you take uh a big fancy car out on the road and you're hotroddin' around, you're– you're bound to get you're bound to get caught, and you're bound to get shafted.

(   ):   (//   )

Ken: W'l look– I'm gonna–

Al: Not unless ya do it right. // That's the challenge– that's the challenge you wanna try and do it right so you don't get caught!

Roger: That's the problem with society. Hehheh

  ⌈*Roger*: (Ya gotta–)

  ⌊*Ken*: In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out and if I've got a tie and a– a sweater on and I look clean? ninety nine percent of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car, same color, same year the whole bit, roar

4:00   up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby tee shirt, and the guy'll pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before uh he'll pick me up.

(   ):   hah

Ken: Ju– just for–

Al: But not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon.

Ken: hhhh Now (well) I agree it looks like a Daddy– it looks like a damn // Mommy's car.

Roger: Ken, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.

(   ):   ((cough))

Ken: Yes Mommy// thank you.

Roger: Face the music.

Al: Ok. Now you've got that er outta yer system. Now you're a poor little rich kid we've told you that.

Roger: And we also decided you're a chicken shit.

Al: heh hehhhh

4:30 ⌈*Ken*: I decided that years ago the hell with ya.

   ⌊*Al*: (   )

(   ):   hhh

Al: Now let's see what else can we decide about // you.

Roger: Hey don't tear him down.

Al: We're– Ok.

Ken: I've been // torn down for (   )

Al: (//   )

Roger: We got company heh

Al: (hh) Oh Ok.

Ken: (   ) hhhhh

Al: Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you.

Ken:	Yes, hurry up.
Roger:	Well first of all you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here.
Ken:	heh heh
Jim:	Yeah that's how it goes.
Al:	Secondly, you must be an under-achiever.
Jim:	Yeah,
Roger:	You hate your mom and dad huh
Al:	–third of all. ((tied back))
Jim:	Oh, sometimes.
Al:	Fourth, you like to drive cars fast.
Jim:	Yeah,
Al:	Fifth you like to ta– you like uh wild times,
Jim:	Mm hm,
Ken:	He smokes like // me, see?
Al:	Sixth you like booze,
Jim:	Huh? // Yeah
Al:	Seven you like to smoke
Jim:	Mm hm

5:00

Roger:	And seven you've been arrested for rape and other things.
Al:	Eight you heh
Jim:	No, not that.
⌈ Ken:	hehheh
⌊ Jim:	hehh you're gonna ta(hh)lk
Al:	Eight you– Eight you uhm give lip back to everybody,
Jim:	Yeah,
Al:	Nine, you uhh cut classes,
Jim:	Yeah,
Al:	Ten, you've been kicked outta school once,
Jim:	Yeah,
Al:	Eleven, uhhh
( ):	wshhhh
Al:	hehh hhh hehh
Roger:	We're doin better than he is hahhehhehh Proceed I'm (w'ya) I'm with ya.
⌈Al:	heh heh Your turn.
⌊Ken:	(Oh–)
Roger:	Sure. Are you just agreein' because you feel you want to uh . . .
Jim:	Hm?
Roger:	You just agreeing?
Jim:	What the hell's that

5:30

Al:	It's– // agreeing?
Roger:	Agreeing.
Jim:	Agreen?
Roger:	Yeah.

	[*Al*:	With us. Just going along with us.
	Ken:	Agreein'.
	Jim:	No.
	( ):	(Yeh)
	Roger:	Saying // yes, yes, hehh hehh hehh
	( ):	((cough))
	Several:	((laughter))
	Jim:	Well it's true. Everything he said is true, so . . .
	[*Ken*:	Have you been kicked out of school?
	Al:	You wouldn't be in the group if you didn't.
	Jim:	Yeh
	Ken:	What school did you go to?
	Jim:	I went to Palisades.
	Roger:	Went?
	( ):	Oh oh
	Jim:	Yeah. And then to University from there.
	Roger:	Oh I went to Uni, I graduated there.
	Jim:	You did?
	Roger:	Bitchin' school isn't it.
	Jim:	Kinda groovy
	Roger:	( )
	Al:	What'd you do with the match // ( )
	Roger:	You don't like it do you?
	Ken:	I got it.
	Roger:	Here you go chum.
	Ken:	EVERYBODY'S FASTER THAN ME TODAY!
	Roger:	You got reflexes like a slow turtle.
6:00	*Ken*:	God damn you hehhahh
	Roger:	Remind me later I'll show you a little game about your reflexes.
	Ken:	Hey you got another one of those Santa Fe's?
	Roger:	Nah it's the last one.
	Ken:	Last one?
	[*Roger*:	Pity hehheh
	Al:	heh heh heh
	Roger:	Usually there's a broad in here. // Pretty (tough)
	Ken:	Her name is Louise. She's pretty good, she's real nice. ((cough))
	[( ):	I'd like to ( )
	Al:	There's a lotta her to love, // Hm?
	( ):	There's–
	Jim:	Sound like an old man.
6.30	*Ken*:	Tchhhh hehh This is the old– this is the– the couch society of– what is it?
	[*Al*:	Wanna join our army?
	Ken:	( )

Jim:	Huh?
Al:	Wanna join our army? We're gonna go defeat the king of Greece.[1]
Ken:	We're gonna—
Al:	The Academic Counseling Service army's gonna go—
Roger:	Alright Al, // he's been in here ten minutes.
Ken:	( ) Hey your match is still goin', Al.
Roger:	Al, he's been in here ten minutes let's judge his character.
Al:	Ok. Ready Roger?
Roger:	Ok.
Al:	You're first.
Ken:	You're gonna get killed.
Al:	hhehh
Ken:	Keep your mouth shut and don't say a damn wo(hh)rd
Ken:	heh
Roger:	He's not at all like Ken, (first)
Al:	No
⌜Jim:	Who's Ken?
⌊Roger:	He's more like uh Al and I.
Therapist:	That's Ken. (And that's Al.)

7:00

Roger:	's what you refer to as a hippie hheh He's been in it up to his neck,
Jim:	Yeh
Roger:	coupla times,
Ken:	heh heh
( ):	ough
⌜Ken:	Taste good?
⌊Al:	I— no I bit off the end of it I was chewing on the end of it.
Roger:	uhhm
Ken:	Bitchin!
Roger:	Havin, a big hassle with your folks.
Jim:	Yeah,
Roger:	Right. Daddy wants to keep you down.
Ken:	((cough))
Roger:	Mommy?
Jim:	Hm?
Al:	Good. Mommy you can tell what to do.
Ken:	((cough)) Goddam cancer.
Al:	See I told you. We know everything about this guy a(hh)lready.
Roger:	Ya have any brothers or sisters?
Jim:	No.

[1] Some 30 minutes earlier, Al has said: "We oughta go to someplace like Greece where they have a <u>king</u> y'know, an' challenge 'em with- like the Academic Counseling Center's <u>army</u> y'know, versus <u>their</u> army y'know,"

	Roger:	Daddy sorta sheltered you.
	Jim:	No, not really.
	Roger:	No?
7:30	*Jim*:	Not really.
	Al:	Y'sorta sheltered them.
	Roger:	Ya have a car?
	Jim:	No.
	Ken:	((gasp))
	Al:	Uh oh. One point against // you.
	Roger:	You hadda car?
	Jim:	Nope.
	Roger:	You want a car?
	Jim:	Oh hell yes hehh
	Al:	You've stolen // a car
	Roger:	Daddy doesn't want you to have one.
	Jim:	No, he wants me to have one, my old lady doesn't heh
	Roger:	Oh! Main conflict with mother.
	( ):	whhhhhh
	Jim:	Yeh
	Al:	heheh
	Ken:	hehheh his
	Roger:	Mother is too dominating.
	Jim:	Yeah.
	Ken:	But you been had already fella hehh
	Jim:	Mm hm
	Al:	Ok.
	Roger:	Bring your mother in we'll work on her hahh
	Al:	hehhehhhh
	Jim:	Ok heh
8:00		((pause))
	Al:	What are you thinking, old man?
	( ):	heh heh
	Therapist:	hahahh I'm thinking Jim has certainly had it. Heh
	⌈*Roger*:	Whip out your pad– Now, now, now– whip out your pad and write down what we say. Hehheh Take dictation.
	⊢*Therapist*:	(He hasn't been here) five minutes and you guys–
	⌊*Ken*:	You gotta pardon these guys they're all they're all the uh // social– social outcasts of the world.
	Al:	I'm vicious– I'm vicious, he's vicious–
	Roger:	This one's chicken shit, he's a bastard, I'm a mau mau.
8:30	*Al*:	Ok good. Now we're all settled, what are you.
	Jim:	(Well I–)
	Ken:	You a hood?
	Roger:	This is an abnormal session, // see we're not together without the broad.
	Jim:	Yeah.

Jim:		Yeah.
Al:		See we gotta have the broad here cause she– she unites us.
Ken:		heh heh She– she // unites us yeah
Roger:		She sorta keeps us on the road to some // uh meaning.
Ken:		She keeps us on the road heh table's always ready and heh
Jim:		heh heh
Roger:		Oh well
Ken:		heh heh
Al:		Oh well you know that's the way things go,
Ken:		heheh
Al:		That's the way it l– that's the way things lie down, y'know
Ken:		Hey–
Roger:		He sorta keeps his mouth shut and writes down things whenever you say something important.
Ken:		Yeah.
Al:		And– and then if you ask him to do something // you have to pay him though.
Roger:		He's a good guy, though.
Jim:		Ok.
Al:		Y'know

9:00	*Roger*:	Eventually you'll become sane.
	Ken:	heh Yeah which is–
	Roger:	Or your mother will, which is // not what you think.
	Jim:	Yeah.
	Jim:	I hope so.
	Al:	But uh
	Roger:	You're not // crazy, it's your mother huh
	Al:	It takes about– I've been here for four months you know and it's– it's getting better now I used to think that I was a bird'n used to fly you know but
	Roger:	Yeah he used to walk out on us y'know he thought he was above us.
	Al:	Yeah but now I'm– now I'm below you.
	( ):	hehh
	( ):	heh heh
	Roger:	See I corre– I corre– I corrected that fault. Hehhehh I gave him an inferiority complex.
	Al:	And I got him to shave.
	Roger:	Yeah
	Ken:	ehhehh
	Roger:	I'm not grubby or nothin'
	Jim:	N(hh)o
9.30	*Ken*:	heh Hey this is– this is the Academic Counseling Service it's called the family– family circle.

Roger:	It's not really a– an Academic Counseling Service // it's sort of a drive-in nuthouse. hehh
Al:	Then your father comes in here–
Al:	hehhhhehhahaha Then you rent you– then you rent a counselor. Five dollars an hour and fifty cents a question.
Roger:	Don't consider this one but on the whole you'll enjoy 'em. Fact it's a good way to spend Saturday morning.
Ken:	heh hehh
⌜*Roger:*	If you're stupid.
⌞*Al:*	After Friday night.
⌜*Roger:*	The morning // after the night before.
⊢*Several:*	((laughter))
⌞*Jim:*	Yeh
Several:	((laughter))
Roger:	After a coupla // cups of coffee you're alright.
Jim:	( )
Jim:	Yeah.
Ken:	Couple dozen cups of coffee.
Al:	Chew a cigar now and then, and . . .
Roger:	I don't smoke.
( ):	whhhhh
10:00 *Ken:*	( )
Al:	(He just // started last night.)
Jim:	–just eat it.
Ken:	You gotta believe– you gotta believe it we're the only two in here that smoke other than him.
Roger:	Doesn't Lu smoke?
⌜*Ken:*	No,
⌞*Al:*	No she doesn't smoke. She said she used to.
Roger:	She's a good gi(hh)rl ahhhaha
⌜*Ken:*	She– even–
⌞*Al:*	(She like she eats it)
Ken:	She smokes cigars that's about all,
Jim:	I see.
Al:	They smoke, I chew 'em.
Ken:	He eats it.
Roger:	's well chewing 'em's half the fun (I belie–)
( ):	hehh
( ):	heh
Roger:	Uh oral gratification or something heh
( ):	hehh
Al:	Let's see what else can we tell // him ( )
10:30 *Roger:*	They say that's why bubble gum and that shit's good– uh so popular y'know
Ken:	Why?

Roger:		There's a trend to uh put things in your mouth like thumbs, y'know
( ):		heh
Roger:		No really.
Several:		((laughter))
Roger:		No! Well why do you think babies // suck their thumb and adults chew gum and smoke everybody wants to keep something in their mouth.
Jim:		(Mmhh)
Al:		Well you know // ( )
Roger:		No, I'm not talking about eating or nothing, and I'm not talking about what you're thinking of either
Several:		((laughter))
Roger:		No really I read it in some book y'know
Several:		((laughter))
Al:		((cough)) Oh c'mon // aheh hehh
Roger:		It's really the truth!
Al:		One more // thing
Roger:		Look at 'im. Look at 'im suckin on that pipe all goddam morning hehh
11:00 *Al*:		He sucks on his dentures too! hehh Now listen one– one more thing. There's people watching us now. They got a tape recorder and they record // (everything)
Roger:		(That is the) microphone. Occasionally there's somebody in there judging us. They're baby headshrinkers. They're learning how to be,
Ken:		Don't worry // about 'em they destroy the tapes // afterwards.
Roger:		–what he is.
Al:		He's not quite one. He will be one in two months.
Roger:		'sright.
Al:		He's writing a // (whatchacallit) article.
Roger:		(a paper)
Roger:		(But today–) Yeah. But today we're not being uh viewed. We're just being taped.
Al:		No we're being viewed there's somebody in there cause they lit a cigarette.
Roger:		But he's blind.
Ken:		Hey don't worry about it,
Jim:		How c– how c'd you see him?
( ):		(Well)
11:30 ⌈*Al*:		It's– $\frac{(they)}{(he)}$ can see us, but you can't see–
⌊*Roger*:		That's not a mirror. // When you turn the lights on y'know
Jim:		The see-through kind? // Yeah.

Roger:	Mh. See it's darker in there. // I think.
Jim:	Uh huh
Ken:	Wave at him he's a nice guy.
[*Al*:	Anything else, Roger?
Ken:	They give parties.
Roger:	And if it gets private we can always shut the curtain.
( ):	heh heh
Jim:	heh great.
Al:	Anything else Roger that you think we oughta let him on– in on, or tell him?
Roger:	Nah
Ken:	We're all nuts?
Roger:	Let him slide for a few weeks.
Al:	(hh)Ok.
Roger:	Get the hang of things hehhehh
Al:	Then we'll really go after ya. Then when you know when we get–
Roger:	We'll let you rest with your problems now.
12:00 *Al*:	We've told ya all your problems now you gotta rest with 'em then // we'll then we'll then we'll tell you how to solve them // and you'll pay us off.
Jim:	Yeah.
Roger:	You gotta get warmed up to it
( ):	((cough))
( ):	Yeah.
Roger:	and vice versa.

Lecture 04.a

An introduction sequence

The data that we'll be by and large considering in this lecture can be found in the middle of the second page of the handout.[1]

Roger:	On Hollywood Boulevard the other night they were giving tickets for dirty windshields. ((door opens))
Jim:	hh
Ther:	Hi, Jim // c'mon in.
Jim:	H'warya
Ther:	Jim, this is uh Al,
Jim:	Hi
Ther:	Ken,
Jim:	Hi
Ken:	Hi
Ther:	Roger.
Roger:	Hi
Jim:	Hi
Ther:	Jim Reed.

Now we'll start to pick away at this a little bit. We can start out by noticing that *the sequence in which the introductions are done* is not, itself, a disorderly fact, i.e., it is not a random matter. There is probably only one crucial place in the determination of the sequence in which the introductions will be done, and that crucial place may well be noticed via the "uh" in "Jim, this is uh Al."

You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and the therapist is going to do them,[2] what the import would be of various ways that

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Lectures 04.a and 04.b consist of two lectures given in Fall 1966 (lectures 1 and 2) and again in Spring 1967 (lectures 6 and 7). They deal with matters that are not discussed in the Spring 1966 lectures, but they have been placed where they would belong in the sort of progression through the data that Sacks used for the Spring 1966 lectures. While the discussion contained in lectures 04.a and 04.b is misplaced, it is not altogether anachronistic, since the later Fall 1966 discussion is not the first mention of these matters. There is a brief consideration in Fall 1965, lecture 3, at p. 148

[1] In Spring 1966 a new transcript was produced, and the names Mel, Joe, and Henry were changed to Al, Ken, and Roger, respectively.

[2] The unedited segment runs off differently: "You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and *this fellow Dan* is going to do them. . ." [emphasis

he would go through the three persons he's going to introduce Jim to. Obviously there's more than one way he could proceed through those three persons.

You could ask, for example, if we knew the first that he had done, could we then predict the second and third? And in such a way, now, not that we would be right, but where, if we weren't right then something of interest would be present. That is, either we'd be right, or if we weren't, then we might well be on our way to explaining, not that we were wrong, but that something strange took place. Such a question is possibly relevant, insofar as for the participants to the 'introduction sequence,' while perhaps they couldn't predict who would be introduced first of the three, they could feel assured, given the first, if they hadn't been picked then they would be second or third; for example, be 'prepared' to be second. We're talking, then, of some way of proceeding through what would be seen by them to be a sequence which, while it might have alternative ways of beginning, given a beginning it would then have correct ways of proceeding. And, perhaps not any beginning would be correct.

It's also the case that not only should that sequence go in that order, but it should go to completion. Introductions go in rounds. That is, not only might there be the possibility to predict whether one will be second or third, but one might predict that there would *be* a second and third, given a first. The rule that said 'do an introduction here' would also say 'do a round of introductions here.'

The idea is to see whether there is some oriented-to orderliness in that actual sequence. And in this case it would seem that the ecological distribution in the room presents proper alternative sequences. That is, the seating is arranged in a rough semicircle with the therapist closest to the door, then Al, then Ken, then Roger. When Jim is introduced, he is standing near the door. If the therapist begins with Al, he would expectably proceed to Ken, and then Roger. But not, e.g., Al, Roger, Ken. And if he begins with Roger, he'll go Roger, Ken, Al, but not Roger, Al, Ken. Further, he wouldn't begin with Ken. In that regard, then, it might be that 'Al, Ken, Roger' or 'Roger, Ken, Al' would be equivalent, but all of the other possibilities would be different.

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added]. In contrast to the pronominal changes discussed earlier (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 2, p. 18, n. 1 and Appendix A) as matters of policy, the change from "this fellow Dan" to "the therapist" runs acutely counter to editorial policy. The policy was to preserve just such references, as is, in line with Sacks' deep concern with the issue of category-selection. This lapse from editorial policy occurred in response to an anachronism which cropped up in the editing process. Most roughly, text from a later lecture was introduced into a set of earlier lectures, the earlier lectures having been produced by reference to a transcript designating this speaker 'Therapist,' that designation having been introduced by Sacks in his 1965 transcript. The text in question, however, had been produced by reference to a new transcript designating this speaker 'Dan.' The incongruity was resolved by using the term appropriate to the earlier lecture series and its transcript, i.e., 'the therapist.' For a more elaborate discussion, see Appendix B.

Any one of these alternative possibilities might be informative about the set of persons; e.g., if one wanted to point up the fact that, say, Ken was a distinguished person in one or another way, then one might well begin with him. That is, the sequence is usable to present various kinds of information to the recipient, and to the other parties. But the activity can also be done in such a way that no such information is present, or considered to be present or to be used.

If the series goes 'Al, Ken, Roger' then we might suppose if they were seated in other ways than that, e.g., Ken, Al, Roger, then the introduction would go 'Ken, Al, Roger.' That is, the actual order seems to be partially independent of *who* happens to be seated in each position. Rather, they are seated in positions relative to each other which can be used to produce an observably orderly sequence. If the order 'Al, Ken, Roger' is used, then there is no suggestion, apparently, that Al is the most significant person present, but parties can see that Al's being picked first is a matter due to his having been seated there; they can see that if Al were seated elsewhere, he wouldn't have been first.

Now that's a matter that one wants to be somewhat attuned to. After all, Al *was* picked first, Ken second, Roger third. That they can see that it's not 'Al' who was picked first, but 'the person who is sitting where Al happens to be sitting,' would be of some importance if it could be an issue that some sequence would have another interpretation, e.g., that Al was picked first because he was the most important.

The data, the actual talk, can bear alternative ways of being seen. It is perfectly compatible with a view that provision for who was picked first, second, third, was made by, e.g., the social status of the parties and not by virtue of the ecology of the room, especially if the data were to be used by the parties to it, to find out what, really, their positions are in this group. I take it, however, that with the whole sequence available, one or another of these alternatives is decidable on. That is, for the seating order 'Al, Ken, Roger,' if the introduction went off, 'Al, Roger, Ken,' then Al might well be able to figure that he was picked first not by virtue of his position in the room, but by virtue of something else. That is then to say, that to determine what it is that was operative, requires that several occurrences be seen to be 'a sequence' in the first instance.

One wants also to see that it may well be that adequate decisions could be made as to what the therapist is doing with that sequence, with only that sequence available. That is, on a single occasion and without discussion, it can be available to participants that, e.g., ecological positioning is being used to order the sequence, or that someone is being selected via social status, etc.

I go through this for what could be fairly obvious reasons. One of them is, one might have the idea that the way in which some rule is to be detected is by, say, collecting some 10, 100, 1,000 sequences of introductions and plotting them in various ways, and if you seem to get a very good fit then you figure there is a rule, and if there is not, then there isn't a rule. What we have to find is, if someone can be adequately insulted or adequately commended by

a single introduction, then how that could be done becomes a problem that the data has to be handled to provide for.

Etiquette books give various rules for doing introductions and sequences of introductions, and they seem to suggest that one can bring off 'picking somebody out' or 'not picking somebody out' on a single occasion of doing introductions. Persons can see that they've been properly selected to be 'introduced first,' or, for that matter, that they've been neglected, without having to, e.g., collect several introduction series by the same introducer to see, e.g., how often they came first, how often seventh, etc.

Now, there are also kinds of consistency constraints on what it is that goes into a given sequence. For example, when persons are introduced to each other, and say more than 'hi,' it's not just that you have to make some identification because the last person on the list made some identification, but that the kind of identification they made is criterial for the kind that you make. That is, roughly, you find persons sticking within a single device when some sequence of identifications are being done. If the last person has said where they come from, then you will say where you come from, etc. And that suggests something that we want to watch for – the possible relevance of who goes first on a round, in setting up what it is that will be used. That can matter a great deal, obviously, since some people are 'better' at some things than other things – they have a longer lineage, or they have a better job, or they live in a nicer neighborhood than most other people. And that may matter as to which they want to put into an introduction. Given the way a sequence runs off, whether they get a chance to use their item is another issue. And that consistency constraint holds for names, as well, to some extent. So that the fact of a first name, nickname, etc., being used throughout the sequence can be quite informative, and it can be even more informative if differences are involved, i.e., if the therapist had said "Jim, this is Al, that's Mr Kenneth Goss, and this is Roger."

Given the fact that the kind of name used is a rather important matter and has a series of significances, we can stop to consider briefly a matter that I and one colleague of mine have an enormous fascination with. And that is the sort of thing that could be seen to be going on in the interchange:

Therapist :   Hi, Jim // c'mon in.
Jim :   H'warya

which, from the point Jim starts up, gives us "Hi Jim," followed by "Howarya." Is there anything interesting in "Howarya"?

First of all, "Hi, Jim" is a 'greeting' consisting of a version of 'hello' plus a name. Now "Howarya" is not directly a 'greeting,' but it's a 'greeting substitute.' Greeting substitutes can go where greetings go.[3] And "Howarya" can then go where greetings belong. It can go in first position or second; that is to say, to begin off a conversation which properly begins with a greeting,

[3] See Spring 1967, lecture 8, pp. 554–5.

instead of saying "Hi," you can say "Howarya." In this case, that it is second is of some significance. And that is because routinely a greeting accompanied by a name is followed by a greeting accompanied by a name. "Hi Jim," "Hi Mac."

Now, in certain circumstances, giving or not giving names can be a fairly significant matter. And in this case it could well be a significant matter, in the following way. This guy is a new member of the group. He probably knows the therapist as Dr so-and-so. That is to say, in the prior company in which he's spoken to the therapist, say, with his parents or whatever else, presumably that is the way they've talked. And in any event it may well be an issue as to how it is that he's going to address the therapist: Dr, Mr, last name only, first name only? It's not only an issue of their private relationship, but it's now right at the beginning of his presence among a bunch of other guys. And his choice is something that they see. They presumably have some way of dealing with that name problem. He doesn't know what it is. If he comes on with "Hi, Dr so-and-so" and they call him something more rough and ready, then he may well already have been seen to be a kind of pansy of sorts. That is to say, for somebody who is in a situation where they're watching somebody address another, the kind of address that's used right off is informative for them, about what relationship holds, about what sort this one is, that one is, etc.

Now, for one, with "How are you," the fact that there's no name doesn't make a problem of who it's talking to. It is directed, by virtue of coming in response to the greeting, back to the person that did the first greeting, the 'you' being that person. Furthermore, as a 'standardized item,' 'portable,' an 'idiom,' whatever you like, 'How are you' is complete on its own. It does not lack a name, which would be lacking in that sense if he just said 'Hi' in return. By using "How are you," then, instead of directly a greeting, the issue of a name is avoided.

And it's not merely that he doesn't make a decision on what name to use, but the fact that he isn't making a decision is not apparent in any obvious way. He hasn't simply addressed the fellow "Hi [no name]," i.e., in that sense not making a decision, but he's built something which doesn't need a name. So, that he is avoiding the decision on a name is something that need not be seen, and perhaps can't warrantably be seen. This phenomenon of no-naming people is a big issue, and a range of techniques for doing it are available.

Let's turn to the way that this talk comes off. I've talked about a 'sequence of introductions.' And the question is, is that just the way I'm talking about the fact of three introductions? That is, there were three, I'll call them a sequence. Or is there anything about it that provides that 'sequence' is a more useful way to go about noticing what's going on than saying there were three introductions.

Let's look again at the language here. "Jim, this is Al, Ken, and Roger" says the therapist. In its fashion it's a terribly interesting piece of talk. The first thing you want to notice is, it's one sentence in which room is apparently left for insertions of greetings by the various parties introduced. We don't have

something like, "Jim, this is Al." "Hi." "Hi." "Jim, this is Ken." "Hi." "Hi." "Jim," this is Roger." Instead, the second and third introductions are tied to the first in quite clear ways, leaving aside the mere fact that they happen to be in a sentence. What's involved here is that they're not only involved in a sentence, but that for the second or third to be seen as introductions, attention by the parties who are being addressed in those is necessarily directed to what happened before. So, for the word 'Ken' to be seen as an introduction of Ken to Jim, involves the fact that both Jim and Ken will have been attending "Jim, this is Al," to see 'Ken' as an addition to that.

One of the ways in which that is obviously of use to us, and something that it took me rather a long while to get the importance of – and I can't give it here in full, I only want to suggest it – is that we have a multi-party conversation going on, and a question we could ask is, what's the status in a multi-party conversation of persons who are not addressed by some utterance? While persons who are not addressed directly are not 'overhearers' – in the sense that in a two-party conversation a third person, not addressed, if it turns out that he was attending, then he would be doing something wrong – what are they? Do they have, say, rights to listen in because it's in their presence and they're properly present? Or do they have a *business* to listen in because what's being done to the one being addressed is also in some sense being done to them? Where their participation in the things that are addressed to them will have required that they have attended what has been said to somebody else in between utterances addressed to them.

In that regard, we can imagine in the first place that there is the question of what a 'group therapy session' consists of. Is it, for example, a set of private discussions between two persons, where, when you're not being talked to or you're not talking, you shouldn't really listen because it's somebody else's troubles that are being talked about? One thing that's going on here, then, is an invocation of the fact that in a conversation like this, if you're not talking or being talked to directly, you're not to behave as one who would be conceived as 'overhearing.' But in these conversations you listen to talk which is not addressed to you. And aparently you can be held responsible for that talk, in the sense that it may be assumed that you know what's gone on, which hasn't been between you and somebody else.

So, in this case, for Ken to see what has been done with "Ken," involves him in showing that he saw the first introduction, and saw that the form 'this is. . .' remains available for his name to be attached. And not, for example, that "Ken," is something addressed to him independently of what has been going on that was unaddressed to him, where, then, "Ken," might be a signal for Ken to say "What?" or things like that. The same, of course, goes for Roger. Now Al doesn't say "Hi." I'm not sure whether he did some greeting, e.g., by nodding, waving, etc., or just didn't do a greeting and was treated as having his time passed by the therapist who just went on, rather than, say, waiting Al out. From the rest of the material that we have, I can say that not giving a greeting isn't something that's beyond Al, but I just don't know, and nothing is going to be claimed on that score. In any event, the second and

third names are not, except by virtue of their position as second and third in a sequence which starts with "Jim, this is Al," signals for an exchange of greetings. They're quite equivocal as that.

And in that regard there's another thing that is, in its fashion, quite minor, though in some ways it can turn out to be of larger significance, and that is, the acknowledgements of the introduction are done with the term 'Hi.' What's the character of 'Hi' in that use? That its use does acknowledge the introduction, turns only in part on the fact that 'Hi' can do that; it turns also on the fact that it's 'an introduction' that's taking place. For in the first instance 'Hi' isn't a term which would be said to be, among its predominant uses, that item by which you acknowledge an introduction. It's a 'greeting' by and large. Though again, it's not always only a greeting, in the sense that it's not merely doing a greeting in this case.

What it is that a given term is doing, is something that may well require some analysis of its locus in conversation, to find and to argue. (In the case of 'greetings' it may be very simple, but I'm not sure it's all that simple.) And in that sense, then, the specification of the uses of sets of terms require a formulation of the structure of conversational possibilities. And if that's so, then we wouldn't suppose that the most convenient form for a presentation of the properties of the language would be a dictionary. Rather, perhaps, some form of sequence functions of a conversation, with various items included in them. It would be hard, unless you knew 'Hi' was 'a greeting' to locate what 'a greeting' would be, via a dictionary. Whereas, if you had a sequentially organized thing, if you knew what you needed you could see where to find it. And you might also not be led to focus on the notion that there are a set of alternative meanings for that word. That notion is an artifact of an orientation to a dictionary-like object.

With data like this you can also see something which may be quite general, and if it is of some generality it will be a helpful sort of fact in resolving various puzzles. And that is, for the second introduction to come off as 'an introduction', that there was a first, seen as 'an introduction' by its participants, is sufficient to allow a rather different form to be used. "Ken," is all that's used to signal that the second introductions have taken place. That is to say, the item 'second introduction,' to be seen as having been done in the way it was done, is contingent on there having been an observed 'first introduction.'

If, given something that can come in sequences, a 'first' has been seen and oriented to, then a 'second' can be done observably, without using that form which would be required for a 'first.' That is to say, if the therapist had simply said "Ken," as a first, then what he was doing would not at all be clearly an 'introduction.'

Here is the sort of thing that this phenomenon, if it is more or less general, might clarify. It's taken to be the case that there are various markings for questions, e.g., rising intonation, a special grammar, inversion, etc. It has also been suggested that an enormous number of observable questions have neither 'question intonation' or the grammatical form of questions, and yet

seem to be recognized as questions. How would that be done? One possibility might be, if a 'first question' has been recognized, then things which go after its answer can perhaps be inspected for whether they're 'second questions.' And those can perhaps be made without use of those things which would mark a 'first question.' In the data there are long sequences of things which are treated as questions by the hearers of them, but where, increasingly into a series, you just don't get the markings which would in isolation show that those were 'questions.' Just as you don't get the markings for "Ken," that would show in isolation that it was an 'introduction' though "Jim, this is Al" would be so seeable. And with respect to names in series, it's a regular thing. For example, if you're offering candy, then you can perfectly well use this kind of form: "Would you like a lifesaver Mary?," "Bill?," "Harry?" etc.

So then, first items in '*serializables*' may have special status, and also, that you are making 'a series' can then be done by doing as a second, something which is not independently seeable as such a thing, but is so seeable given the first.

One thing we can come to see is that producing the introductions in the form of a sentence might specifically be done to make available to Jim that 'a group' is being presented. That is, we want to differentiate between Jim being introduced to 'three people' in close order, and Jim being introduced to 'the group,' one by one. In that regard, it seems to follow that sentence-making is to be conceived as a kind of social institution in perfectly conventional ways. I suppose we don't ordinarily think of the use of grammar as a social institution for demonstrating organization. Courses in social organization don't have, I suppose, sections on the way you can build sentences to present a group, where you use the resources of the grammar to do that. But it might not be a bad idea.

It isn't, then, that we have sentence-making on the one hand and social structures on the other, and one can study their relationship by, e.g., studying dialectics. But you can see that if we can propose that an introducer could go, "Jim this is Al," "Jim this is Ken," "Jim this is Roger," then the responses of second and third persons would not show that they were attentive to what had preceded, and furthermore, talking about them as 'second' and 'third' would have no specially strong basis. So the very sentence that's used to make the introductions does it specifically as 'a round of introductions,' involving all the parties in seeing it as 'a round of introductions' in order for them to perform its various parts.

We can also notice that, as in the case at hand, names used in introductions seem to involve the doing of an instruction to the parties concerned, as to what they may call each other. And that makes the matter initially interesting, in that we could then ask, "How does A get off telling B, C, and D what they should call each other?" Where it's perfectly plain – though of course it will have to be dealt with itself – that not anybody has any right to call anybody else any particular name they may choose, of the various alternative ways that names are used. I once asked a class to sit down and write out, over a day, what versions of their name they were called. And they found, first of all,

considerable orderliness to that, but by no means that they were called *a*
name. Nor did they figure that the various persons on their list could
interchangeably use the various names that were used by one or another
person. And not only could X not pick up the name by which Y called you,
but that you could not insist that X do so if you wanted to. And this is apart
from issues of the way in which what name they call you is or is not
informative about what name you should call them.

That the doing of naming here is also the doing of an instruction is most
interesting because it involves two different issues. One of them turns on how
you can go about doing instructions. The other is, is it generic that whenever
persons do 'naming' they're also doing something else? Perhaps, indeed, that
they do 'naming' involves a procedural rule which says, 'When you find that
they're doing "naming," look, then, for something else that they're also
doing.' That would have some considerable consequences.

In that regard, let me just note that we're getting here, not merely an
instruction, e.g., for Jim how to call Ken and for Ken how to call Jim, but
a presentation for all how to call each. Each usage is instruction not only with
regard to its participants, but also in some way to the others, where the use
of names in multiparty conversations is something which is to be considered
differently than the use of names in two-party conversations. That's obvious
in certain ways. Persons modify the names they call each other in two-party
conversation when they are in a multi-party conversation. Furthermore, they
might refer to somebody in multi-party conversation differently than they
might in two-party conversation. Now in doing that they might perhaps be
taking account of the instructional use of names, and also, of course,
controlling the kinds of information that can be gotten about the two parties
concerned. That is, e.g., if you overhear two parties, and they use one or
another name to each other, you can make interesting guesses about their
relationships, and one of the ways they can intend to conceal that sort of thing
is by the kinds of names they use to each other 'in public.'

I want to deal, now with a problem which we can call the 'sufficiency of an
identification' problem, the issue being: Are names sufficient identification, or
is it the case that, given a name, some other identification is thereby made
relevant? And it does seem that names provide for the relevance of other
identifications. In this two-hour group therapy session there's a couple of
places in which names are offered. For example, earlier the entrant's name is
mentioned in a sequence that goes:

Al :   Where's Jim Reed?
Ther :   Jim Reed will be late.
Roger : Who's Jim Reed?
Al :   New guy is coming.

I suppose if names were sufficient identification, an appropriate answer to
"Who's Jim Reed?" would be, 'Jim Reed is Jim Reed, who else could he be?'
Or, if the question had been formed up as 'Who's he?' then the name could

be returned. In this case, the answer is, "New guy is coming." At another place somebody else is mentioned:

Ken: How has Fido across the street been treating you?
Al: Oh you mean Bitch Hazel?
Ken: Yeah heh
Roger: Who's Fido?
Ken: 's Hazel.
Al: Bitch Hazel across the street a waitress.

So, "new guy" and "a waitress." And it is of course routinely the case that in the beginning of first interactions, the exchange of names is accompanied by the exchange of other identificatory items.

Let me make one caveat to the remark that further identifications are appropriate: It is perfectly conceivable that although only names have been used aloud, the very structure of interaction is sufficient to provide that some other identifications obtain and are relevant, so that the exchange of names will have informed those present about both the relevance of some other identification, and the findings on those matters.

This can have to do with, for example, what it is in the first instance that might be known about any one of the people involved, so as to use that to find other things. So, one possibility is that what Jim, the entrant, knows is that the guy who says "Hi Jim, come on in" is 'the therapist,' and that there are also 'patients' present. The fact that he's introduced to the three other guys may be perfectly sufficient to tell him that they are, indeed, 'patients.' And it may be perfectly sufficient to tell them that he is, indeed, 'the new guy.' So it's then perfectly possible that the relevance of other identifications are given to the various personnel present via, say, who greets who and who does introductions, even though none of them are laid out directly. If that were so, then the relevant identifications would vary with any given occasion of greetings and introductions taking place, i.e., you wouldn't say that any time somebody introduces three boys to another, then the one doing the introducing is 'the therapist' and they are 'patients.'

That being the case, we haven't made a trivial remark because it would have to be an issue that all of them decide what the import of that fellow doing the introductions is, i.e., what he doesn't have to say out loud. That then makes the greeting-introduction sequence of possible significance to the issue of other identifications than those explicitly used. And that has one consequence methodologically which is, you couldn't then say 'You're wrong about the appropriateness of further identifications if there are some circumstances where they didn't happen to occur.' You might find a place where they didn't occur, where analysis of that case would show that the structure of the introduction did that work. Though the question of how it did it might be another issue.

One import of that fact, then, is its relevance for the question of what it would take to show that a piece of analysis was wrong. And one thing that

won't do is some totally unanalyzed piece of interaction used to claim that some possible rule, for example, was 'wrong' by virtue of that piece of interaction not doing what the rule states. You must have been making findings about that piece of interaction to propose that it controverts a proposed finding.

Lecture 04.b
An introduction sequence (ctd)

I'll continue picking away at this introduction sequence.

Ther:	Jim this is uh Al,
Jim:	Hi
Ther:	Ken,
Jim:	Hi
Ken:	Hi
Ther:	Roger.
Roger:	Hi
Jim:	Hi
Ther:	Jim Reed.

Among other things, I made an extensive – if not labored – consideration of the fact that we could talk here of a 'round of introductions' having taken place. And I proposed that there was machinery which could be adapted to presenting, specifically, that a '*round*' was being done. That is to say, the way that that sentence, with its connections, comes off.

Now one might find oneself trying to figure out why it should matter much that we could have a notion of a 'round' which specifically, distinctively characterized some phenomenon; why, for example, we couldn't talk of whatever we pleased as a 'round' as long as, say, it might have gone to completion, i.e., there were three people that could have been introduced, and three people were introduced. Or in any event, if a somewhat picky notion of 'round' does characterize something, while that may be of incidental interest, what will it permit us to come up with?

I am prepared to present some consequences of it, but before doing so, I want to mention something that is not an altogether incidental sort of issue.

People often ask, 'Why do you choose the particular data you choose? Is it some problem that you have in mind that caused you to pick out this group therapy session?' And I'm very insistent that I just happened to have it, somebody had found this segment, it became fascinating, and I spent some time at it. Furthermore, it's not that I attack it by virtue of some problem I bring to it.

As we play around with what it turns out that we can get out of a notion of 'round,' one thing to see is that it wouldn't be supposed in the first instance that, had we such a problem, we would have taken this data – with which we come up with a solution for that problem – to consider that problem with in the first place. But it may be, as it seems to be here, that we can be attentive

to the possibility that some first-level analysis of a piece of data can set up another consideration which will turn out to address, say, some theoretical or methodological problems that we know exist in the field. And that is then to say, there may be some real gains in trying to fit what you can hope to do, to anything that happens to come up. I mean that not merely in the sense of 'pick any data and you'll find something,' but 'pick any data without any problems in mind and you may find something.' And how interesting what you may come up with will be, is something you cannot in the first instance say.

Now I adopt what is in a way a counter-strategy to the issue of 'interesting,' and that is that I'm specifically picking utterly uninteresting data. Things which do not have for us any special lay interest. That means that in order to find its interestingness we have to find that whatever it is that's interesting about it is what we can say about it. And we can then develop criteria of interestingness where we're not exploiting kinds of things we 'want to know about' – scandalous topics, gossip, etc. Things like an exchange of greetings are kind of ideal, rather than, say, the discourse of kings or salon conversation, where we know in the case of the latter that it's important and interesting, and it's very hard in the first instance to ignore 'what they say,' which you have to do.

Now, last time I talked about the introductions being brought off as a 'round' in a strong sense, i.e., discriminatively of saying 'three people were introduced here.' Once we have that strong sense of the notion of a 'round' at hand, we can of course note that some sorts of things *can* come off in rounds, others apparently are properly done *only* in rounds. For example, if you have some amount of candy that you might offer, apparently you'd better figure whether you have enough for any person present who might say 'Yes,' if you're going to make any offer at all.

Except that if that's the way things somewhat work, then you can use the phenomenon of a 'round' for some activities. For example, that offers ought to come in rounds provides that you can specifically mistreat people. That is to say, without 'doing anything to them' you can mistreat them by the not doing of that thing which is underway in an observable round. For example, Al, Ken and Roger are present, and if Jim offers some candy, "Would you like some candy Al? . . . Ken?" and then it stops, he is observably 'not offering candy to Roger.' So there are specific things that can be done by virtue of persons' orientation to the fact that some activities are properly done in rounds.

Now, leaving aside the issue of 'mistreatment,' when we consider that sort of thing we can arrive at a decent way of talking about something that social scientists always want to talk about, and it's at least my reasonable guess that they've never been able to talk about it in a strong way. And that is, how do you go about talking about *absences*. Something is absent. Something didn't happen.

In pretty much any extended anthropological or sociological discussion you'll find them talking about something that didn't happen. There's a

tremendously tricky problem about talking about things that haven't happened, and that is, if you're going to say some X hasn't happened, then there's an indefinite list of things that could be said not to have happened at that point. And if that's so, then your case is non-discriminable from the rest of those, and the observation is trivialized. 'Sure he didn't do X, but he didn't do A, B, C, etc., either.' And how do you go about locating, as a significantly sayable thing, that he didn't do, distinctively, X?

The issue of arriving at a discriminative notion of an absence – something that didn't happen – is one that we should like to face. As Members in this society we after all know that people are always saying things like "Mary didn't come" or "He didn't hit me when I said this," etc., but it is only by knowing that you can do such things that you accept such statements as reasonable. If you required that they be defended, they couldn't be.

What we can perhaps do is see whether there are some methodical ways that persons arrive at such noticings. In the first instance, they don't go around saying, e.g., when characterizing who was at a party, 'X was there and Y was there,' and then some list drawn from a telephone book to say who was absent. Or, 'He did X and he did Y', and then some list drawn from a dictionary to say what he didn't do. There are some occasions under which absences are noticed. If we can characterize the bases for them, we can come up with a usable notion of 'absence.' And such a notion could perhaps be generalized beyond the specific occasion that we happened to construct it in relation to.

That is to say, if it's the case that something appropriately goes in a round, and what is observably a 'round' has begun but is not brought to completion, then, that something was 'not done' is noticeable, and the specific thing not done is noticeable; for example, that Roger was not offered a piece of candy, or that Jim was not introduced to Roger. Then we can see how it is that persons can come to talk non-trivially about absences.

Furthermore, it might be the case that what was being done with that thing not happening is also observable. That is to say, it's not merely the case that somebody can apparently say that Roger wasn't offered a piece of candy, but that they can say what was being done with Roger not being offered a piece of candy. There is, in that regard, material which consists of people remarking on it e.g., 'How come you didn't offer me any?' And such things might permit us in some cases to get at what sorts of things come in rounds. So, for example, in our data there's a place where they're telling jokes. Al tells a joke. Ken tells a joke. After a while Roger says "How come I never remember any jokes," i.e., he sees that he 'hasn't told a joke' and remarks on it.

And jokes do come in rounds. Now, jokes and introductions and offers, i.e., things that come in rounds, seem to have a feature in common with something that's partially related to rounds; that stuff I was talking about last time, on firsts and seconds, where we could come up with a decent notion of 'second' independently of saying it happened to be number two, i.e., via modifications in the way that a first thing got done. A first joke – what turns out to be a 'first joke,' we could call it a single joke – may get introduced,

"Hey I heard a joke. Wanna hear it?" Second ones routinely do not get introduced that way, but by "Here's a good one," "Here's another," without that it's going to be a joke being specified. And that, then, is getting done in the same way that, that this is a 'question' is not seen independently of the fact that a series has been started, or that this is a 'second introduction' is not available but by virtue of the fact that there was a first to which this has been fitted. And it may be that non-trivial absence is not restricted to phenomena that come in rounds, but that there are other ways that relevancies are set up such that, that something didn't happen is observable.

Once we come up with how, e.g., properly-rounded actions can permit us to see 'absences' in controllable ways, we might be able to abstract from that other ways that absences are, in parallel to our first cases, also observable. That is to say, what's going on here is that if it's properly-rounded and a round has begun – say, a first and second have been done, and done specifically as rounded events – then a third is relevant and N is relevant until completion has been arrived at. And what we're dealing with, then, is *'contingently relevant events.'*

It may be that you can formulate classes of contingently relevant events independently of rounds, such that: Some prior thing has happened, and has happened in such a way that you know it's been observed as such, i.e., in the case of the 'introduction,' that an item was recognized as an 'introduction' was provided for by the greeting sequence taking place, which turns on an analysis of the 'Jim, this is Al' into an 'introduction.' You might find, then, that wherever you get contingently relevant events becoming relevant, you can find that absences are noticeable. And you can begin, then, to generate a fairly abstract way to provide for distinctively using the notion of 'absences.'

You may then find that a good deal of the sociological literature is not 'wrong' in the sense that it didn't use absences that way, but that it is specifically inexplicit and unknown. That is to say, it probably will often conform to an appropriate use of absences, but it didn't have what is essential, and that is the apparatus that will give us that usage of 'absences' – where it is our business to *analyze* how it is that something gets done, or how something is 'a something,' and not to *employ* it.

Se we move from this nothing 'introduction sequence' to a notion of 'rounds' which handles a lot of things other than introduction sequences, and then to a formulation of 'absences' which is, now, a perfectly conventional, recognizable 'problem.' Everybody who's doing social sciences wants to talk about absences. And, that we extract some stuff on absences provides in the end what's interesting about the introduction sequence. Now we didn't get it by especially saying, 'The next three lines of data I play with, I'm going to try to deal with absences.' And it's not that we couldn't have come up with a decent way of talking about absences on other materials. But it might well be other material which seems as irrelevant in the first instance to that issue, as this stuff did.

Let me now address this 'introduction sequence' with a different sort of question, concerning the fact of its placing, and what may be involved in that.

It is the first piece of talk after the entry of the new member. Now the fact that upon his entry this thing is placed, can lead us to considerations along the following lines. They were, after all, talking about something or other before he entered – automobiles, racing – and when this sequence closes, that topic is again picked up. Can we say something like: Under some conditions there are conversational possibilities which can be called *priority items*, or priority sequences, and they have *superceding relevance* over whatever it is that may be being done, or over some things that may be being done? It does appear that there are some 'priority items,' and they're priority items whose character is not given by the last thing that occurred, in the sense that given a question an answer may be a priority item, given a first greeting the second may be. But these seem to have rights and obligations to be done, perhaps without regard to what it is that has been taking place, under some proper conditions occurring. They don't have, in that sense, a 'place' in the conversation.

What I want here to point to are things like this: Suppose there's a rule that says: For some given person, upon the entry of some other specifiable person, the first ought now to greet them and introduce them to others that they don't know, if they don't know them. Now that's an 'instruction.' There are instructions of that sort written up in, e.g., etiquette books, and you may, in fact, get instructed by someone about such a matter.

There are several interesting things about such instructions. First of all, what are the ways that instructions directed to some determinable person out of a group, are usable or properly to be used by others in controlling their own activities? So that, for example, it may be the business of somebody, upon the entry of Jim, to greet him and introduce him. However, if we had a situation where the instruction had the character that it controls those to whom it's directed, then, for example, these fellows having been talking, they could go on talking. And treat, for example, the fact that the therapist starts to talk to Jim, as an 'interruption.' Now one of the characters of priority items is that when they are properly invoked they are not interrupting what goes on, and what goes on ought to cease. So that, for example, even if the instruction about greeting and introduction isn't directed to some set of people, they, in the first instance, apparently ought to orient to that instruction so as to allow it to get done. For example, to shut up, and perhaps in some ways to participate.

If the character of at least some instructions is of that sort, then the task, say, of sociologically rewriting instruction manuals could get at least an initial posing. That is to say, if you have an instruction manual that has a set of directed instructions, i.e., say, 'A host, upon the entry of invited guests, ought to do the following,' then those instructions are not secrets from other Members, but – crucial to their use – involve others seeing them and going through some analysis in which they treat the instructions as instructions for them also.

Now that doesn't mean that one can just take a set of instructions, where each instruction had a direction (to 'host,' to X, to Y) and now amalgamate all the persons and say, 'These are to whomsoever, everybody ought to notice

them and attend them in one or another way.' But presumably each of them has to be somewhat rewritten for each possible person present. The character of the rewriting involves at core, among other things, some means whereby upon, say, any priority item possibly being relevant, every person present has some way of engaging in a systematic categorization of the various personnel present, of locating among them 'the one who ought to do the priority item,' of doing what will allow that, e.g., being quiet or talking – indeed, of seeing that such an item is present so as to stop in the first place. Where we need some generalized results – unless we're going to get difficulties, i.e., that each person arrives at more or less the same determination of whose business it is to do whatever it is that's to be done.

And there's some curious aspects to the issue of who's business it is. The instructions in etiquette books tend to get written with some specified type of person, given some type of situation, e.g., 'The host at a party ought . . . ' There are presumably lots of occasions in which, say, introductions occur, for which there isn't a 'host at the dinner party.' The question then is, how is it that persons go about picking some class for which the set of integrated rules has been initially written, and replacing the various categories with some available set of categories, and assigning the new categories status with respect to the old, i.e., seeing who is 'like a host' or some such thing. Or treating 'the host' as an example from some other class that has some other form, i.e., 'the person in charge here,' or whatever. Where that person can find himself, and find the others seeing that he is the one, although he isn't 'a host.' Maybe. And all this is to be done in fairly short order.

So these 'priority items' apparently involve, then, some orientation to a set of identifications, where whatever the instructions are, they're usable by other than the one(s) to whom they're directed. And the results of whatever analyses Members go through to find who does this, are apparently not controlled by the fact that the instructions which weren't in the first instance directed to them, didn't in the first instance specify some person who happens to be there. That is, say there's no host here, but people can still find some way of locating that they are – and others see that they are – the one who should do this. And they can organize their activities so as to allow that, and to make it missing if it doesn't occur, and various other things.

Now notice one extremely important aspect of that. In the case of greetings and introductions, the analyses which provide for that set of concerting activities had to be made doable 'even though' – if I may use that phrase – the set of persons present don't all know each other. They are not doing it, in many cases, by virtue of having made some predetermination, or knowing each other's habits. In the case of introductions – and that's one of the interests in introductions – the whole apparatus has to be set up to be usable between persons who haven't met.

Consider the kind of import it has for some set of concerted activities, where it's crucial that they go off concerted, that there's a bunch of analyses that have to be done, which can be relied on, where the people who are generating the activities don't know each other in the first place. It is that such

things go on routinely that is the sort of thing that sociology in the first place picks up and focusses on – or ought to – when it talks about 'a stable set of social affairs' or whatever.

You can have, apparently, stability and orderliness where people don't know each other, and are doing things of an order that you could see easily enough if you tried merely to rewrite the instructions out of Emily Post to handle the five people in this group. And all that can be done 'immediately.' Time and time again. And that is to say, these are *ordered events on single occasions*. It isn't the stability which sociology is considerably interested in, which is gotten via summation of frequencies of occurrence. That isn't its beauty. That isn't what Hobbes, say, might have been interested in. It's that sort of thing that provides why one ought to be fascinated by a thing like this running off in five seconds – if five seconds is what it takes; it may take less. You're really seeing stuff with tremendous power at work.

Then there's this matter of 'priorities,' i.e., the kinds of analyses involved in locating the fact that such a priority event is now appropriate – where, of course, if one locates it and others don't, then the one who locates it may be heard to be merely interrupting, if other things are going on. And it isn't the case that it's simply a rule that says 'If any given person comes into a room, any room, and doesn't know all of the people present, they ought to be introduced to them.' If I'm sitting in my office talking to somebody, someone will frequently come into the room and say something to me, and I don't bother introducing them to the other person present, who may pause, talk after a while, various other things. We don't have a universal rule, which would make everything quite simple, i.e., a rule stating 'Any entry to a room immediately provides that this thing should take place.' Then you'd need no analysis.

It's a curious fact that situations in which something holds for 'everybody' are far simpler than those which don't have that character, but which hold 'for men,' 'for women,' or whatever. Because then people apparently have to locate what set of categories are appropriate, i.e., if someone enters who could be a 'man' or a 'doctor,' or something else, then the Members have to know that the device that contains 'men' is the one to be used. As long as it's not 'everybody' there's an issue of which device to use – and in the case of introductions, it's apparently a variety of different things; somethimes 'age,' sometimes 'sex,' or 'proper being there,' etc.

Again then: I made some remarks about 'instructions' which can have, perhaps, some tremendous generalizability in terms of at least the problem of dealing with instructions in general. One could ask on what basis could such findings have been made? You could imagine that in principle what one would have had to do to come up with them would be to consider a sample of instructions; for example, 'We have to take all the instruction manuals available in some game book, and analyze some common properties of them, see who they're directed to, etc.' Alternatively, it may be that we can come up with findings of some considerable generality by looking at very singular, particular things. By asking what it takes for those things to have come off.

Or, for example, would the sort of things that I've been saying so far be affected by a study which examined 100,000 random greeting sequences, and computed the sequences? Indeed, the point that one wants to notice is that one couldn't have done that, since by and large any such study would already have come to a definitive formulation of who was present, in some set of categories – 'male-female,' 'age,' 'social class,' etc., and those may be precisely the things at issue in this thing coming off. That is, that's what people have to find out in doing them.

Lecture 4
Invitations; Identifications; Category-bound activities

Ther:	Jim, this is uh Al,
Jim:	Hi
Ther:	Ken,
Jim:	Hi
Ken:	Hi
Ther:	Roger.
Roger:	Hi
Jim:	Hi
Ther:	Jim Reed.
( ):	((cough))
Ken::	We were in an automobile discussion
Roger:	discussing the psychological motives for
( ):	hhhhhhh
Al:	drag racing on the street.

The line I'm going to talk about this time is "We were in an automobile discussion." I will by no means have fully characterized it; that will take a long time and I'll keep coming back to it. My considerations here will be another instance of how it is I take it that we go about doing sociology and anthropology.

I want to propose that this utterance, "We were in an automobile discussion," at least were it to occur alone, is possibly to be seen as an *invitation*. I want to lay out the tasks that are involved in showing that that's so, and then to attempt to satisfy them.

We want to be able to build a method which will provide for some utterance as a 'recognizable invitation.' Two tasks – at least – are involved, and these two are closely related. One task is to construct what I'll call a 'partial definition of an invitation.' What makes it partial is that, while it's a way of doing invitations, it is clearly not all the ways. There are other ways, and those would be other partial definitions.

Now, we can have a perfectly good partial definition of an invitation which, however, wouldn't give us this thing as 'an invitation.' The second task, then, is to build a partial definition which provides for this to be a case of the use of that procedure.

That means, for the first task, that I could say, "It looks to me like an invitation, and I bet it looks to you like an invitation," but I wouldn't be able

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to show how that's so. If that's the case, I don't establish my point. For the second task, I could also say, "Here's the way some invitations are done," and we could find cases that would fall under that, but not this one. That, again, wouldn't do what I propose to do. We want to do both: Construct a partial definition of 'invitation,' and one that provides for 'this is a case.'

And in the first place, we want a method that generates this line. We want it, however, to do the job of generating it as a case of an invitation. It's perfectly easy, and perfectly trivial, to construct methods that would generate this. We could use the spelling rules of English. We could say, "Divide the thing in half. First put the first half in, then put the second half in." That would not, however, tell us how whatever we get is recognizable as a particular activity – like 'invitation.' We want, that is, to construct a discriminative procedure for generating invitations.

Further, since invitations stand in alternation to rejection, what we would like is to discriminate between the two. We want the definition to provide for the recognizability of 'invitation' for some cases, and for the recognizability of 'rejection' for some. And if we get a method, then we ought to be able to use it to generate other cases than this one; where, then, the ones that we generate ought to be equally recognizable as invitations or rejections. With that, we have some idea of the tasks involved.

I'm going to focus, basically on the second part, the phrase "an automobile discussion," as crucial for our purposes here. Now, I've introduced the term 'category-bound activities.' I want to propose a relevance rule, and that is: If someone names – as, for example, what they were doing – a category-bound activity, that provides, first, for the relevance of the category to which the activity is bound. Then, by use of the consistency rule, the collection of which the category is a member is made relevant. So that by naming as the thing you were doing, some activity which is category bound, you provide the relevance of some collection of which it's at least the case that some particular activity is bound to a category of that collection.

And an automobile discussion is, I think, a category-bound activity, with 'teenage boys' as the category it's bound to. By naming the activity, one thing that we can say is being done is that an *identification* is being offered, of at least the speaker. That is, that with this formulation he says, "It is relevant that we are teenagers; consider us teenagers."

Essentially what I want to propose is that one way to make invitations is to do the following: If a new person comes into some place where there is some set of persons engaged in, for example, talk, then one of the pre-present persons can make an invitation to the entrant by using a phrase to start off with, like "We were doing," plus the naming of some activity that is something like 'category-bound' to a category which, once made relevant – and it's made relevant by the naming of the activity – can be seen convergently to hold for some part of the pre-present persons and the entrant. Alternatively, one can build a 'rejection' in the following way: Propose "We were doing" plus a category-bound activity, where the activity is bound to some category that characterizes the pre-present persons, but has the entrant

in an alternative category of that collection. For example, a man comes home. His wife is there, talking to a friend of hers. She says, "We're discussing the sewing circle." It's a rejection. He says "Oh excuse me." That is to say, that thing is bound to 'adult females' and he's a male. It provides for them as members, and not for him.

Now, it's perfectly clear that we could find this statement, "We were in an automobile discussion," when there wouldn't be an 'invitation.' For example, you get home, somebody says to you, "What did you do?" and you say, "We were in an automobile discussion." We need, then, a *slot* in conversation wherein items, if they occur there, can be recognized as invitations, if they are in the first place possible invitations. I want to propose that that point in a conversation after greetings have been exchanged, and at least a partial introduction, is a slot for an invitation. For one, that means that one can look to that place to see if something that passes as 'an invitation' has occurred there.

There are, in the 'invitation slot,' alternative but related things that can also go, and it's rather relevant to see that. Among them are things which we could call '*pre-invitation/rejections*' (with this term I intend that the thing can be either pre-invitational or pre-rejectional). The matter of pre-invitation/rejections and their use can be rather consequential, and I'll therefore quote a piece of data and its analysis from one of the extremely few studies of conversation that have yet been done; a book called *The First Five Minutes*, by Pittinger, Hockett, and Danehy. The quotation occurs right at the beginning of this five-minute segment of a psychotherapy session which they are engaged in analyzing.

> *Therapist:*   Will you sit there,

(apparently she sits there)

> *Therapist*:   What brings you here?
> *Patient*:   Everything's wrong. I get so irritable, tense, depressed.
>   Just everything and everybody gets on my nerves.
> *Therapist*:   Yeah.
> *Patient*:   I don't feel like talking.

The key line is "What brings you here?," and this is what they say about it:

> This is T's opening gambit. It would seem about as open-ended and non-directive as it could be made, and in many ways it is, as can be shown by comparing it with other possible openings, but in one respect it tips the scales slightly. Three of the four words in the sentence; 'what,' 'you,' 'here,' are what the grammarian calls 'substitutes' or 'shifters' or 'pronominal forms,' words the denotation of which in a specific context depends almost wholly on that context. Instead of merely 'what,' T

could have said 'what troubles' or 'what problems' or 'what difficulties.' The actual choice is obviously neutral. Instead of 'here,' he might have said 'to a psychiatrist' or 'to this clinic' or the like. The neutral 'here' allows P to define its reference in accordance with their own perceptions of the surroundings.

That's a very casual treatment, and I want to argue that it's all wrong, and the fact that it's wrong operates to prohibit them from seeing how the patient then comes to respond as she does, i.e., to say, "I don't feel like talking." That is, the doctor says, "What brings you here?" The authors say it's a very open beginning. I want to propose that it's a pre-invitational/rejectional remark, and quite obviously so. Things like "what brings you here" regularly occur. You walk up to somebody's office, walk in, say "Can I see you for a moment?," they say "What do you want?" That's not an invitation. You know at that point that now you say something, and they may then use it to decide whether they'll see you or not.

In a first therapy session, the troublesomeness of 'What brings you here' is much larger than the chance of losing whatever it is the interchange was to hold (that is, if the patient takes it that what she says next is going to stand as some sort of grounds under some analysis of it, for the therapist to decide whether he's going to take her or not as a patient, whether he's going to continue beyond this initial diagnostic interview), but, further, what it is that would be good grounds for him to take her is something she may not have any idea about at all. It's not enough that she's in one way or another troubled – that's obvious enough in that she's here. She could present a set of troubles which he could recognize as legitimately complainable about, and something to be cured – but perhaps not by him, or not now, or not in an out-patient status, maybe in a hospital. What it is that he's going to do, then, with an item she presents, is something that she, it's reasonable to suppose, doesn't know. And furthermore, if he turns her down after she's told him something, then she's perhaps given somebody information which they aren't entitled to have. That is, if he's her doctor, then her private troubles are something that's his business. If he's not, they're not. And if whether he's going to be her doctor is conditioned on what he makes of what she says, then, what she can tell him which can also control that she hasn't told him anything terrible if he turns her down, is perhaps a rather problematic set of materials.

Now, she accepts the pre-invitation/rejection by offering what could be good grounds for being accepted, and what she may take to be a sufficient answer. That is, answers to such questions as "What brings you here?" are regularly seen by the doer to be sufficient when finished, and, regularly, patients do, if they figure they can't deliver in an utterance what they take to be sufficient, say things like "Well, it's a long story," to provide that they can then at least go through that 'story' in its particulars. I take it, then that in this case she gives what she figures to be a sufficient answer. And it's rejected. That is to say, the doctor's statement, "Yeah," would then be heard as saying things like "Continue," "What else?," i.e., 'That isn't enough.'

Note what I've proposed about "Yeah" and its possible equivalents, and compare it with what is being proposed as possible alternatives to the opening "What brings you here?" (e.g., "What troubles bring you to this clinic?"). One would like to ask how is it that they go about deciding what the population of possible openings is. Why is it the case that something altogether different from "What brings you here?" is not to be considered as a possible alternative to it? One possible reason might be that, having made no systematic formulation of its properties, they have no way, except in an altogether lay fashion, of providing what are equivalents to it and what are variations on it. And then we get what is a perfectly naively obvious way of talking about variations: Drop one word out, stick another word in.

I want also to note that the status of "What brings you here?" as a pre-invitational/rejectional needn't be dug out of therapy conversations at all. It, and things like it, occur in a great mass of non-therapy situations. One could well have formulated a characterization of them, seeing their status as pre-invitational/rejectional, without ever looking at therapy. And that, of course, is what would provide for the patient, not having been in therapy before, seeing what it is that's being done. What I'm concerned with here is to provide that persons will be detecting what various items are doing, and handling them, via the fact that they've dealt with others.

Returning, now, to this slot in which we've found 'invitations' (and rejections) and 'pre-invitational/rejections,' another thing that goes here are pure 'pre-invitationals.' They are things like, for example, in a phone conversation:

A: Hello
B: Hello
A: What are you doing?
B: Nothing

In that slot, "What are you doing?" seems clearly to be pre-invitational. The fact that it is – and is seen to be – so, gives us some sense to a clarity of a certain term which, if you figured yourself to be a tough-minded sort, you might say was characteristically unclear; that is, "Nothing." Clearly enough he's doing something; talking on the phone, breathing, and the like. It's given the character of the first as pre-invitational that "Nothing" is clear. That is, it accepts the pre-invitational status of the question and now awaits the invitation, whatever it may be. And I'll consider items like "Nothing" in much more detail later.

The fact that there are pre-invitational items alone warrants some consideration. It may turn on things like the following: Rejections are countable things. That is to say, you're supposed to use them so as to decide whether to generate another invitation, and you ought to learn from a rejection whether another invitation ought to be made. On the other hand, someone can take it that if they've engaged in some sufficient amount of

rejections, the inviter will give up. If that's so, then there may be some attempt to use items which are not subject to starting a count, such that what you do is propose that you might make an invitation if an invitation will be well looked upon. If there is some indication to the contrary, you don't make the invitation, and thereby you get no rejection. And thereby, perhaps, you have the right to start over again without having a score.

Now, one thing I want strongly to emphasize is the way that our analysis will give us constraints on what it is that's equivalent, and what are serious alternatives to that which occurred. So, for example, one thing you would want as an alternative would be something that's a case of another class; where the classes stand in alternation. And in that regard, we could construct alternatives to "What brings you here?" which were alternatives by virtue of not being pre-invitation/rejections, but which were pre-invitations, or invitations, or other sorts of things which can also go in that slot.

Lecture 5

Proffering identifications; The Navy pilot; Slots; Paired objects; Adequate complete utterances

I'll continue our consideration of this sentence, "We were in an automobile discussion." One of the things I'll regularly do when I propose that some activity is being done in some fashion, is to provide alternative independent materials which show, I take it, that the proposed activity does get done, and in such a fashion. That is to say, if I sometimes say, for example, that one can make an identification by asserting some membership category as one that one would belong to, then it may not be obvious that such a thing is ever done at all. It may appear that I just made it up as a way of talking about this particular thing I'm trying to talk about.

So, then, for the proposal that one makes identifications by asserting some membership category as one that one would belong to, I want to note that: That membership categories have that character is something which is quite obviously not restricted to this society but is rather widespread. Here is just one of what I suppose could be an endless string of quotations to that effect. This is from a paper called 'Social and psychological aspects of education in Taleland,' *Africa*, 11, 4 (1958), suppl. p. 46, by Meyer Fortis. He writes:

> If one asks a child "who are you?" the answer is invariably "I'm so-and-so's child," or "of so-and-so's family."

The answer to "Who are you?" then, being the naming of some membership categorization device (family) or category (child), etc.

One further thing I proposed, which I want to pause to show can be done, also concerns the phenomenon of an identification. I have used, and I didn't intend it as a casual use, instead of saying that one 'makes an identification,' I've said 'one *proffers* an identification of oneself.' Those are different things, where, for proffering identifications, it's quite irrelevant whether you're correct, for example, but the issue is, again, whether it's relevant that you're correct, or whether some other identification is, or is assumed to be, more relevant than the one you propose.

There are circumstances where what's central about a proffered identification is the following: That there is some population besides yourself to be identified, and that if they accept the identification you proffer about yourself, you may have a very good idea about what identification they use for

themselves, i.e., for one, that what they will use is an identification from the same device; one that is consistent with the one you've used. And in the case at hand, that will be quite crucial.

Here is a rather striking instance of the same thing, in which can clearly be seen the proffering of an identification for oneself and for others, as well. It comes from the *New York Times*, Saturday May 29, 1965. It's an interview with a navy pilot. The headline is: 'A Navy Pilot Calls Vietnam Duty Peak of Career.'

> How did he feel about knowing that with all the care he took in aiming only at military targets, someone was probably being killed by his bombs?
> "I certainly don't like the idea that I might be killing anybody, but I don't lose any sleep over it. You have to be impersonal in this business. Over North Vietnam I condition myself to think that I'm a military man being shot at by another military man like myself."

What he's doing there, for one thing, is offering to those people who are shooting at him, that he will consider them 'military men' if they will consider him a 'military man.' And that if they both do it, then there are well-defined rules for playing that game.

I say "playing that game;" I don't mean it ironically. What I mean is that the most characteristic places in which this proffering of identification within a consistent set of categories is done, is in games. There it is quite striking that if you say "I'll be third base," unless somebody else says "and I'll be. . ." another position, and the others say they'll be the other positions, then you're not that thing. You can't play.

Now, in the case I've just quoted, my remark about the proffering of an identification is rather relevant, in that it happens to be the case – and these guys know it – that the North Vietnamese don't want to use that device which provides for 'military men versus military men.' They want to propose no 'war,' no 'military men;' these guys are criminals. They want, then, to call him a 'criminal,' and treat themselves as 'doing police action,' for example. And there are rather different consequences, of course. For one, things like the Geneva rules don't apply, etc. The situation then is altogether different depending on which is used, and whether the one he proposes for himself – and thereby the one he proposes for them – is accepted.

So, again we can see that something which we can call 'proffering an identification' is done, and is relevant, and therefore it's at least possible that such a thing could be being done in our materials. Whether it is, is another question, of course.

What I want to do now is return to another partially loose end of prior consideration, and consider what I've been talking about as '*slots,*' and from there, move to further considerations of structure. I said that one of the ways that "We were in an automobile discussion" could be recognized as an 'invitation' was by virtue of the fact that it occurred in a slot where such

things properly occur. Then I gave a list of other things which can also occur in the same slot: 'pre-invitations' and 'pre-invitation/rejections.' Now let's consider this notion of a 'slot.' Are there such things?

What's involved, for one, is a notion that there is something we could say to be a natural unit, which you could call a 'conversation.' It's not obvious how we would go about showing that there is such a thing, or how we would go about dealing with the way it's composed. One way is to propose that it has some invariable parts such that they always occur in anything you would want to call a 'conversation,' and when they don't occur, you don't have a 'conversation.' Unfortunately, I don't think there are such things. What's an alternative? An alternative would be, perhaps, that there are *invariably relevant parts* such that if they occur you have a 'conversation,' and if they don't occur, you could say they are 'absent.' That sounds very queer but I'll talk about ways in which we can come to be able to say non-trivially about something, that it didn't occur. I say 'non-trivially' because first of all, you can trivially say, when anything occurs, that an indefinite number of things didn't occur. The question of being able to say that some particular thing is absent, didn't occur, involves having to say that it is expectable that it did; that there's a place for it so that you can look to see where it was missing.

Assuming that we would have a unit, 'the conversation,' there is an object that is 'ahistorically relevant' for conversation (i.e., there is no rule of exclusion, such that it can occur in any given conversation). That is, of course, 'greetings.' One thing that's nice about greetings is that the greeting items, things like "Hello," are not greetings wherever they happen to occur. They are only greetings if they occur in the greeting place. And that's a pretty good way to see that we have a greeting place. And the greeting place is what we could call 'first position.' If the item occurs there, then it's a 'greeting.' We can also look there to see whether it's absent, because we know where to look. Since we have no rule of exclusion for it, we have a right to look to see whether it's in 'first position.' And if it's not, we have a right to say it's 'absent.'

So we do have an item which gives us some basis for saying there's something which we can call a 'conversation.' It not only has some things that belong in it, that in that sense define it, but it also has at least partially, a sequential structure, i.e., there's at least a 'first position' in it which has some item that belongs in it.

Now we want to dig into 'conversation' to see whether it has a deeper sequential structure than that; for example, how far into it there is a general sequential structure, and if not, what other sorts of sequencing rules are there. What I think we'll find eventually is that for conversation generally there's a very shallow sequential structure in the sense of general slots and items, but that there are a great many other sequencing rules which are operative.

Among the other sequencing rules are things of the following sort – what I'll talk of as *'paired objects'* such that if a first member of a pair occurs, then the second ought to be done, and if it's not, that's noticeable. The simplest case of such paired objects is, again, 'greetings.'

In the case of 'greetings' their simplicity resides, for one, in the fact that if A offers a case of the class, then B properly returns with the same case of the class or another case of the class. Now, for some of these paired objects the classes are two different ones, i.e., if A offers a question then B comes back with an answer.

The question–answer pair is not embedded in the overall structure of a conversation, which would mean, e.g., that it could only occur in third position. It can occur in many places, and can run on indefinitely, as I mentioned earlier, by virtue of this 'chaining rule' (that a person who asks the question has a right to talk again after the other talks, and has a right to ask a question). We see immediately that if, after 'greetings' whoever it is that has the chance to talk asks a question, we already have a conversation, not only as a 'natural unit' but we have it as a unit that is in principle infinite in length (under the usual definition of 'infinite' – every conversation is, of course, finite – 'infinite' meaning whatever the length, it could always be an item longer).

Let me just note that I'm making no proposal like 'one utterance, one activity' or anything like that. There are lots of things that can be combined addatively, like "Hi, how are you feeling?," or they can be combined by the same item doing two different jobs – as in the case at hand I'm proposing that 'invitation' and 'identification' are being done in the same item, "We were in an automobile discussion."

By the way, items that have these positions, if for one reason or another haven't been used in their positions, can get used elsewhere, recognizably, when they're begun with things like "by the way." For example, suppose you don't know somebody, such that if you were somehow brought to make their acquaintance you might exchange names in 'first position' with them, as that's where 'introductions' tend to go. However, if you happen to have asked them a question which doesn't involve your presenting yourself as though you're about to get into a conversation or make an acquaintance with them, then if it turns out that you do make an acquaintance with them, get into some conversation, you can at some point say, "By the way, my name is such-and-such." Or, for example, you feel you've made a breach of etiquette: An acquaintance comes up to you, they say "Hi, how are you?" and now you go into a 15-minute conversation in which only you talk and they say "yeah, yeah," and you just talk about your troubles. They finally end the conversation and start to leave, and you might say, "By the way, how are you?" as they're walking away. So the use of 'by the way' is a way of seeing that the items that it is used with have proper positions and this is not in its position, where 'by the way' identifies it as the thing it would be in its proper position.

Now, one of the things we're getting to in this consideration of structure, concerns the following. Two-party conversations are rather different things than what I'll call 'multi-party' conversations ('multi' always meaning 'more than two'). Because two-party conversations have an almost invariable structure, and that is: Two-party conversations go A-B-A-B, etc. This may sound like an immensely trivial observation. The first way to see it as

non-trivial is to see that three-party conversations don't go A-B-C-A-B-C indefinitely, and four-party conversations don't go A-B-C-D-A-B-C-D indefinitely, where you might say it would be trivial, if those others held, that A-B-A-B was asserted. Further, what makes A-B-A-B non-trivial is the fact that I'm not proposing that 'A' is any utterance of the first speaker and 'B' is any utterance of the second speaker, etc., but that we can, in fact, come up with an object which will, at least in part, be operative, which we can call an *'adequate complete utterance,'* which is not necessarily at all a sentence, and which is a proper object in A-B-A-B.

An 'adequate complete utterance' is, roughly, such a thing as can be recognized, when it's done, to be finished so that if the other person ought to speak, they can see when that's done, and speak. The notion that it can be recognized when it's completed, and thereby can be produced to be recognized as complete when done, has some kind of importance.

For one, let's say there's a kind of behavioral definition of a sentence which approaches this; for example, Whorf's. He talks of sentences being some grammatically coherent string, at the end of which there's a pause. Others also talk about the pause as characteristic of an utterance. But this cannot be supported, since a pause is an utterly equivocal object. The question is, is it your pause or my pause? Have you not yet finished and you're pausing, or am I supposed to be talking and therefore I'm pausing? And the way we get at that has to do with the question of whether there was, for example, an 'adequate complete utterance' yet. I am not, however, proposing that it's necessary to stop at the end of an 'adequate complete utterance.'

One relevance of 'adequate complete utterances' is that we could then formulate a conversation which partially went, not A-B, but A-A-B, for example; which, if we had as our formulation that the first person talks until he stops and the other person talks, we could never come up with. And there's very good reason to try to do that, since people regularly operate on things like: "I've already talked enough," "I've finished what I have to say, why aren't you talking?," "and now I'll start up again," etc.

Now the simplest kind of members of the class 'adequate complete utterance' are, again, 'greetings.' "Hello" is an adequate complete utterance. It is also sequentially relevant. At its completion, second speaker should pick an item from the same class, and speak also. And it's recognized when finished. There are other items which serve as adequate complete utterances; for example, questions are regularly that sort of item. When I've asked a question, the pause between my talk and yours is your silence.

That's a rather relevant matter. Suppose you're engaged in questioning a witness in a law court, congressional hearing, or your spouse. And what you want to show is that something you figure they're not going to tell you is something they 'know the answer to.' One way you can go about it is, you ask them a series of very routine questions. When you do that you get a 'normative pause' on their part. "What day is it?," "Saturday," etc., etc. At some point, then, you introduce your question and watch the pause. The size of the pause, and their own response to the fact that they see that they're now

'avoiding,' is sometimes perfectly obvious, e.g., they'll turn red as they see the length of the pause go, and it's perfectly clear to whoever is watching that they're not telling something, if there's something it's been proposed they know. That could only be, of course, if it were the case that one could assign whose the pause was.

Now, questions are not only adequate complete utterances, but they are *'utterance completers'* in the sense that if you're talking along for some length of time, then one of the ways you bring your own utterance to 'completion' and provide that the other ought to talk, is by appending a question. The way to get participation in a monologue is by using your monologue and simply inserting, in various places in it, question intonation, providing only for "uh huh," "yes," etc., without pausing any more than that. For example, at the beginning of this group therapy session we get:

Ken :   Hey– hey check this I went down to Hollywood Automotives?
Al :   Mm hm,
Ken :   And they told me . . . etc.

That way you get a conversation that runs A-B-A-B in which, let's say, all the Bs are 'uh huh's. And nonetheless it's a perfectly normal and legitimate conversation. It isn't the case that any conversation requires such things as 'a balancing of talk.'

Lecture 6
Omni-relevant devices; Cover identifications

By this time it ought to be quite obvious that the correctness of a statement does not of itself provide for its relevance and does not of itself provide for its occurrence. So it would not be adequate to say that "We were in an automobile discussion" was said by virtue of the fact that it is correct. Were that so we could substitute an indefinite set of sentences, and the first remark after the greetings had been exchanged could perfectly well have been, "Ice floats on water."

That may seem merely obvious. But the way it can cut is, if you read transcripts you're likely to read them through. And if somebody says things that you agree with and you figure they're so, you figure there's nothing much to say about it. And if you were doing conventional sociology all you would do with them is put them into a table. Now, it isn't that those things are any less analyzable than anything else. The fact that they are or are not in an automobile discussion in the first place, doesn't resolve for you what your task of seeing how come they said that thing and what they could be doing with it, is. Going over the thing, seeing them saying things that you agree with or things you figure are true, it isn't enough to say "he said it because it's true," or "there's nothing there to study." If he says something outlandish, that's what is seen to be studied. Of course the whole character of an education in sociology, which supposes that what's interesting to explain is 'deviance,' 'failure of integration,' 'role strains' and the like, leads you to such a view.

This time, I want to say some more things relevant to our consideration of "We were in an automobile discussion" as an invitation. I noted that while there is a correct format for two-party conversations. A-B-A-B, I don't know that there's such a format for multi-party conversations. That has a consequence for us, in that whereas for two-party conversations if we know who is speaking now we know who might speak next – and the party would know the same – for multi-party conversations that would not be so.

Consequences of that for the doing of invitations is that at the end of the exchange of greetings, who it is that ought to speak is not given via a formula generic to that type of conversation, i.e., multi-party conversation, or a specific n people in the conversation, or anything like it. Therefore, the behavior of the entrant into the conversation is quite relevant to the occurrence or not of an invitation in that slot. If he wants to see whether he's going to get an invitation or a rejection, then one thing he has to do is not fill that slot with his own talk.

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However, whereas in two-party conversation it could usually be proposed that a speaker is addressing the other party to the conversation, in multi-party conversation a speaker may be addressing all or only some of those other persons present. That fact will have some independent relevance for us as we go along. For now, we can notice that given this fact, then one of the things that's possible in this slot is, even if the entrant remains silent and somebody who is pre-present talks, they might not talk to him. They might address one, or all, of the pre-present persons.

And of course the entrant can, perhaps feeling that he might not get an invitation if he was just to leave things that way, request one. There are a variety of ways of doing that. Or he might talk in a way which does not provide at all for him getting an invitation, and just begin a discussion about anything. He might simply assume that he has perfect rights to participate, and not give them a chance to make it an issue.

Now, questions of what might be seen to govern the determination to give or not give an invitation, are extremely complex. I don't have any very comprehensive ways of providing answers. I'll try to provide a series of considerations which I take it are required by the data.

One thing I've already suggested concerns the matter of getting the entrant to make a desired identification of the pre-present persons. Via an invitation they proffer an identification to him of themselves and offer him one also. And we might say that in exchange for his accepting the identification they proffer for themselves and for him, he gets asked in – where his acceptance of the invitation may be seen to accept the identification.

On the issue of the acceptance of a proffered identification involving also an identification of oneself, we can get at that via a rather general rule about identifications which goes something like this: If a party makes an identification of himself via some category of some categorization device, then the one to whom it is made, properly returns with an identification from the same device (which can be the same category). If somebody comes up to somebody and says, "How do you do, my name is so-and-so, I'm a doctor," the other returns, "My name is so-and-so, I'm an engineer." "I come from New York," "I come from Chicago," etc. In this case, again, they're saying "We're teenagers," i.e., they provide the relevance of the device of which 'teenagers' is a category, and he would find that he is, also.

The relevance of that would be, were it the case that there are clearly alternative identifications, and these alternatives matter. I suggested that alternative identifications can matter, with the case of the navy pilot as one instance. In that case, the device of which (military man/military man) was a category, stood in alternation to a device which contained categories such as (criminal/law enforcers). Here, the device of which 'teenagers' is a category stands in alternation to the device which contains the categories (therapist/ patients). And I'm going to say that that device is an *'omni-relevant device'*.

An 'omni-relevant device' is one that is relevant to a setting via the fact that there are some activities that are known to get done in that setting, that have no special slot in it, i.e., do not follow any given last occurrence, but when

they are appropriate, they have priority. Where, further, it is the business of, say, some single person located via the 'omni-relevant device,' to do that, and the business of others located via that device, to let it get done.

In this case, the new entrant comes in, somebody goes about greeting him and introducing him:

> *Ken* : Sure. Well let him. You know—
> *Roger* : On Hollywood Boulevard the other night they were giving tickets for dirty windshields. ((door opens))
> *Jim* : hh
> *Ther* : Hi, Jim // c'mon in.
> *Jim* : H'warya
> *Ther* : Jim, this is uh Al,

etcetera. Things may be going along, the device isn't being used; at some point something happens which makes it appropriate, and it's used. And when it's used, it's the controlling device, i.e., there is no way of excluding its operation when it is relevant. You could perhaps locate such things; for example, the relevance of (teacher/student) in a seminar where everybody is sitting around talking in a more or less homogenous group, by virtue of who it is that announces break time, or who determines that there's going to be a break or not, somebody else having suggested it. In the case at hand we have this insertion of priority items – greetings and introductions – by this guy, the therapist; and the participating in it by these others, the patients. Later on in the session we get an interchange of the following sort:

> *Ken* : I still can't figure out what the hell I spilled on my shirt.
> *Roger* : Alright I give up what's on your shirt?
> *Ken* : "Kill it!" heheh hhhhehh
> *Al* : That's not loud enough. KILL IT!
> *Roger* : You're gonna bust this tape recorder.
> *Several* : ((light laughter))
> *Ther* : Well, what's new, gentlemen?
> *Al* : That's a hint we must get outta here before he gets mad at us.
> *Roger* : We adjourn to lunch now.

That is, the closing of the session is something which this same fellow who invoked the greeting–introduction sequence, also invokes.

One way that we can see that a device (a set of categories and some ways of using it) is omni-relevant, turns on there being some insertable sequences; for example, the greeting–introduction sequences and the closing sequences, for whose orderly use an orientation to that device is essential. The device is omni-relevant by virtue of the fact that the insertable sequences, while having various kinds of priorities, don't occur at any specified point, i.e., any point located by virtue of, for example, a last occurrence. In regard to this particular

case, that device consisting of the categories (therapist/patients) is omni-relevant for this two-hour conversation; where that is warranted by reference to the fact that the greeting-and-introduction sequence and the closing sequence are controlled by reference to that device. Now, I'm *not* saying that (1) the only device that is omni-relevant here or anywhere is the one with the categories (therapist/patients) – it may well be that there are other devices in this conversation that are omni-relevant, or that (2) the only way to see that something is an omni-relevant device is by reference to these insertable sequences – there are other ways.

Now let me remark on the technique used to see and warrant that (therapist/patients) is an omni-relevant device here. Take a piece of data like this little sequence:

Ther: Well, what's new gentlemen?
Al: That's a hint we must get outta here before he gets mad at us.
Roger: We adjourn to lunch now.

We develop some analysis of it. We probably don't need as interesting a piece of data as that, but it is what occurred in this case. By 'interesting' I mean that the therapist might have 'directly' said something that anybody would recognize as the beginning of a close, i.e., the introduction of a closing sequence. In this case he happens to use something 'cryptic,' i.e., something that had to be analyzed to have that found.

It is by virtue of our seeing that this item gets placed by this fellow, and the others see what it is by virtue of seeing that he's doing it qua therapist, and is doing an intended close, and that they inform this new entrant of its import for them qua patients, that we come to pose our problem. I want to offer for consideration a difference in method from other ways of going about building machinery that analyze something or other.

It is a very conventional way to proceed in the social sciences, to propose that the machinery you use to analyze some data you have, is acceptable if it is not intendedly the analysis of real phenomena. That is, you can have machinery which is a 'valid hypothetical construct,' and it can analyze something for you. So you say, for example, 'I have a bunch of constructed phenomena that analyze some real thing. I am not saying that people do that thing via my constructs; only that the apparatus I have will predict. . .' etc. Now that's not what I am intending to do. I intend that the machinery I use to explain some phenomenon, to characterize how it gets done, is just as real as the thing I started out to explain. So, for example, if I'm going to use some piece of data with respect to the issue of omni-relevance, then that piece of data has to be analyzable itself, and that analysis would have to be correct, to work, etc., quite independently of its use for omni-relevance. That is to say, we could analyze that closing sequence, work out some of its features, before we had any idea that it involves a piece of machinery that would provide for the participants that there was a phenomenon of omni-relevance for the device that it involved.

There are some real importances to that sort of thing, apart from general issues like 'are hypothetical constructs good things, necessary things, lousy things,' etc., which make this procedure attractive to me, anyway. First of all, I take it that I want to be dealing with the real world, in all of the work. But second, what it forces is, if you're going to build a piece of machinery, then, as you build it you find things out about *its* parts as well as that it is a part of something else. So even if it didn't turn out that this was a piece of machinery for omni-relevance, it would be a something; we would have studied it, we might have it available, and we might figure that Members have it available for uses in one or another place. And recurrently it happens that some piece of data is analyzed, and when you're analyzing something else you find that the machinery built and tested to analyze one thing is now important for this other thing. That permits you to tie things together.

It also makes for certain difficulties. One of them being that the rate at which you solve problems is not at all given by the fact that you had some problem you wanted to solve. So, for example, I had the sense a year ago that 'therapist/patient' is an omni-relevant device here. I didn't know how to show that this was so, or even how to find that this was so. There were bits of data that looked like it, but until, as it happened, I was working on these things without any intention of dealing with the issue of omni-relevance, not much was happening. It was when I was working on the priority character of those insertable sequences, and asked, 'how is that priority invoked, and what allows this one or that one to do it?' that it became apparent that it was material which was very much related to the phenomenon of omni-relevance. Now that happens in many cases. It means that you often have to wait for some data to strike you, or to occur in some sequence for you to be able to solve some ongoing problem. Or you may have solutions sitting around to problems that you haven't been able to pose.

But the core point is that when you introduce a piece of machinery, that piece of machinery in the first instance introduced where it, itself, analyzes the things of which it's built, you aren't then, building some elaborate construct which, if it doesn't analyze the things you 'want' it to, you've got nothing. You may have learned an enormous amount, as you've fitted various pieces of machinery together, about what they're doing, about other data, and it turns out that they just don't analyze what you expected them to, but there's no loss there. In any event, one intends in the first instance, that each piece of any given apparatus is saying something about some particular real thing.

We have, now, the notion of an 'omni-relevant device,' with 'therapist/patients' being one in this case. We can note that this device is adequate to this environment, i.e., that each of the persons there before and after the entrant came in, can be categorized by those categories. That it is omni-relevant may not mean that they thereby must invoke it if, e.g., they're going to do an identification. For one, there may be other omni-relevant devices; for another, there may be other appropriate things to do. But the fact that it is omni-relevant may set certain constraints on what other identifications they could use. A question is, what kind of constraints might it set?

The notion I'm going to propose now, in offering *a* constraint, I'll give a term that's rather generally usable for certain kinds of identification, and I think that the way I'm using it captures its natural sense. The question we may be asking when we ask what other kind of device could they use than the one that's omni-relevant, might be asked in a context like this: Suppose there's some identification that could be applied to a set of persons, some of whom don't like that identification for various reasons, but some features of that identification are important for various reasons. What they might want, then, is something we could conventionally call a '*cover.*' Where a 'cover' is an identification which is more palatable, which can hide the problematic one, and which nonetheless allows whatever it is that the problematic one can do, to get done. And there are easily thinkable ways in which, for the kids, the identification 'patient' is not the most delightful one. They may be ashamed of it, etc. And it may be that they want to have, for purposes of the discussion at least, a cover for that.

One thing that may be necessary for a cover is that however it is that the omni-relevant device partitions persons, e.g., (therapist/patients), that that is held constant for the cover device. The notion, then, is '*partitioning constancy.*' Consider the eligibility of the device that consists of 'stage of life' (adults, teenagers, etc.). It could be eligible if those partitioned into one category in therapist–patients were together in adults–teenagers, and those partitioned into the other category also remained together. Then they might introduce themselves as a bunch of people consisting of adult and teenagers, where various things that the ('therapist'/'adult') does and that the ('patients'/ 'teenagers') do among themselves could be perfectly well handled; they would all be in the right boxes together for the purposes of the omni-relevant category (therapist/patients).

Now, if there are devices which, for a given population, have 'partitioning constancy' with an omni-relevant device, then it may well be that those are usable instead of the other, for purposes of identification. And if they are, and the other is still in operation, we would talk of them as a 'cover identification.'

One of the problems in constructing a 'cover' is that it permit you to have a set of activities look like they're perfectly ordinary. For example, suppose a mental patient is going into town with a nurse. What they want is to come off, not as a mental patient and a nurse, but as something else which is not noticeable, perfectly ordinary, acceptable, anybody could be in it, like 'male–female.' Then that would provide a set of constraints on how they might behave. It would mean, for example, that she doesn't lead him around; that's not the position of 'females.'

And it may well be that you can only pick certain devices to be able to do what you want in more or less public settings while preserving certain relevancies – whatever they happen to be – for the things that involve you in doing what you're doing – like, in the case at hand, engaging in therapy. In that regard, you might consider the problems of spies. Spies have to build 'covers' all the time. They have to build covers which provide for them seeing certain people and not others, doing various jobs, buying various things, etc.

They want to pick something that permits them to do what they have to do while not making that thing noticeable.

That the kids, or at least the one who says "We were in an automobile discussion," is building a cover, could be gotten via a consideration in general of their notion of what the entrant might expect them to be doing in a group therapy session. They're proposing it is simply a matter of conversation that perhaps any teenagers could have. Nothing special at all is going on. Whereas the entrant might imagine anything is going on; it's a bunch of kids who may well be more or less 'crazy.' He might not have any good idea what in the world these people are doing, and in fact, it looks like they figure that that's so. About ten minutes after the session has begun, the following interchange takes place:

Al :	What time is it?
Ther :	Ten thirty.
Al :	What happened to Looey. Is she not coming this week?
Ther :	She– no she won't be coming in.
Al :	Where's Jim Reed?
Ther :	Jim Reed will be late.
Roger :	Who's Jim Reed?
Al :	New guy is coming.

They then proceed to do a set of 'joking' greetings and invitations:

Roger :	Aaaghooh! ehah hah hah heh heh
Ken :	Smoke him out!
Al :	heh Hi, Hi,
Roger :	Put cher shoes on! hehhehh
Al :	Hello, Jim, take a whiff. This is <u>my</u> pipe,
Ken :	hehhhehhhehh
Roger :	'ey we got a homey atmosphere in here hehhehh Lay down. heh heh
Al :	ehhah!
Ken :	hehhehh ( )?
Al :	Yeup. Walk in, take your clothes off, and be ready.

Now, that's rather different than "We were in an automobile discussion," and they might take it that Jim would expect something like the above series.

Another consideration is, it's perfectly clear that their 'mental states' are the thing that is providing their relevant presence. Not any teenager is a member. So one thing is, perhaps, the issue of alternative devices as involving some basis for offering an invitation which would, by virtue of this identification tie, do the job of inviting him to use, and see as usable, this 'teenager/adult' device.

We could also consider the following problem. After all, this fellow was processed by the clinic in the first instance; that is to say, he or his parents said

that he ought to go there, they gave him whatever tests and decided that he ought to come in, and the management assigned him to some particular group. And now the question is, do the members of that group, i.e., the patients, have any say whatsoever as to his acceptance, or is it the case that having been selected by the management, that's it. They have no business in the first instance, even suggesting that they have to make an invitation, or they can, or they ought, or in any event that it's relevant, but if it's relevant that they better come out with one right off, and they have no further say-so over his acceptance.

The issue of an invitation, then, can be concerned with whatever challenge they're going to make to the authority of the management, either via the fact that they see that they have rights to make an invitation, or, more importantly as it will turn out, that they don't give one. And they explicitly take it that his membership has to be developed. Management can bring him in, i.e., say 'Come in,' but can't make him a member of the group, i.e., say 'Join in.'

Lecture 7

Cover topics; Collaborative sentences; Tying rules; Relational-pair identifications

I want to begin with a further remark on the matter of an identification being offered which might be a 'cover.' First of all one might notice that when an explicit invitation is offered to this fellow, it isn't "Would you like to join our group?" or ". . .this group?" or ". . .this therapy group?" but it is "Wanna join our army?" Again, it's an alternative category to the one that is relevant to – indeed, controlling of – his presence, at least from their point of view, to some considerable extent.

In line with the issue of a possible 'cover' identification, one might consider this topic that gets proposed, 'an automobile discussion.' It is, for teenage boys, a very special kind of topic; one which is perhaps as ideal a one as could be had if one wanted not simply cover identification but a *'cover topic.'* and that's because of the range of matters which are expectable and in fact discussed at a place such as this, i.e., therapy topics, which can be discussed under the guise of 'an automobile discussion:' Sex, guilt, independence, autonomy, authority, parental relations, the state of society, death, you name it. All can perfectly well be handled as sub-topics of 'an automobile discussion.' And even in our very short segment, more than a few of them are.

The automobile discussion, then, can provide perfectly ordinary, i.e., things-that-teenagers-do, bases for dealing with those matters rather than, for example, their being introduced by virtue of the fact that they are the proper things to be talking about in a therapy session, or they are the things that independently disturb these kids. And it might not be simply incidental that, if the format of 'an automobile discussion' is used, then there's a very nice shift that takes place in the relationship of the two sets of persons present (the adult therapist and the teenage-boy patients), and that is, that on this topic they're the experts and not he. (Though we might say that on each of the sub-topics he ought to be the expert.) And one might explore that also, as further related to this issue of offering the cover, in terms of which anything that gets said could be understood as properly raisable, without noticing that such matters would perhaps have to be dealt with anyway for – as they put it – "the cure" to go on.

When I started considering the line, "We were in an automobile discussion," I said that it is possibly to be seen as an invitation, were it to occur

alone. As it happens, it does not occur alone, and I want now to consider the actual features of its occurrence.

Ken :		We were in an automobile discussion
Roger :		discussing the psychological motives for
(	) :	hhhhhhh
Al :		drag racing on the street.

Really a most remarkable phenomenon. Three people collaborate in the production of a single sentence. Now, *collaborative productions* of a single sentence are to some extent not terribly rare. But those that are not rare are relevant in the way they indicate how special the phenomenon is, otherwise. For example, you're sitting at the table, somebody makes a request: "Pass the salad." Somebody else, say, perhaps, the person who got the request, appends to it some word or phrase that they propose properly completes it: "–please." Another way 'collaborative' utterances get done is, say, one person produces an almost complete sentence and finds himself searching for a last word or a last phrase which he can't find. Another offers it. So, in one of the therapy sessions we get:

Ken :	He looked like he was coming in here for uh. . .
Al :	–kicks.
Louise :	–guidance. heh

Note here that the inserted word is treated as a 'candidate,' and the other person then accepts or rejects the candidate term, and goes on to complete the utterance. (In the case at hand, Ken rejects the terms offered, and continues to search for the phrase, for approximately another full minute, and there are further offerings of candidate phrases and terms.)

And there is, in the segment we have, an example of another, very characteristic two-party production of a sentence. It turns on the idiomatic phrase, 'circumstances beyond one's control:'

Roger :	Kids don't drive long. . .by the time they're eighteen they're back walk(hh)ing hehh through circumsta(hh)nces hehhehh
Ther :	beyond their control.
Roger :	ehhehh Yes hehhehh

But for sentences of the complexity and un-idiomaticness of form of "We were in an automobile discussion. . .etc.," I take it that it's really a striking phenomenon.

Now, one obvious thing that such a production might be seen to do – and it's perhaps as neat a conceivable means as you could have for doing it – is showing the new guy that this is a group. They do together what is among the most prototypical things that a single person would do. And they do it in close coordination; there are no pauses that are much noticeable in that sentence.

I tried to find some literary uses, but it's so powerful it's banal. It would just be corny. I heard a musical version of Edgar Lee Master's *Spoon River Anthology*, where the device was used, and it was used to do just exactly the same task. He was trying to show a pair of happy lovers, and the happy lovers talked this way, e.g., she would begin a sentence and randomly stop in the middle, and he would continue it. And that way they provided a demonstration of Freud's remark that only in love do we feel we are one. And I'm told that in the comic strip Donald Duck, the author puts together three of the character's sentences in that fashion.

We get, then, a kind of extraordinary tie between syntactic possibilities and phenomena like social organization, i.e., that way of not stating, but presenting the fact of organization. There probably isn't any better way of presenting the fact that 'we are a group' than by building a new sentence together; one that's coherent, grammatical, etc., and unplanned. Its production involves, very markedly, a very very close and quick attention to the talk of each other. And in considering this usage we're going to begin to develop some extremely central matters. From it, we get the kernel of what makes something that could be called 'a conversation,' in the sense of how it is put together. And one thing that involves is a long list of things I'm going to call *'tying rules.'* They are a means by which one piece of conversation is tied to another.

If conversation simply consisted of A-B-A-B in alternation, then one might, for example, be perfectly well able to disorder all the parts, as long as the alternation is preserved, and still have a recognizable conversation, or even the same conversation. What these 'tying rules' do is radically restrict that possibility, and provide for very local control over the relationship between utterances.

Now, what happens with "We were in an automobile discussion" is an example of a 'tying rule,' and with that example we will have hundreds of examples constructable:

> *Ken*:   We were in an automobile discussion
> *Roger*:   discussing. . .

One of the things we see that's interesting is that "We were in an automobile discussion" is a perfectly good sentence by itself. When we get "discussing the psychological motives for," what we have is something produced which, by itself is not a sentence. Its user makes his piece of talk a dependent clause and makes the prior piece of talk an independent clause and not a sentence. So he hooks his statement onto the previous one.

This happens to be but one case of one large class of these tying rules; and these are what I'm going to call *'second speaker's rules.'* What I mean by 'second speaker's rules' is that a speaker makes himself a 'second speaker' by something he does, and makes, then, the one who spoke before, a 'first speaker.' He does that by the way he ties his remark to the one that's gone before. So, for the analyst, cases of the second speaker rule are not found via

the fact that one sees some utterance in the first instance as a 'first utterance,' made by a 'first speaker.' You start with something recognizable as 'the second member of a pair,' and then turn backwards to something that is not recognizable as a first member of a pair, unless one has the second to see that there ought to be one. And those are in contrast to first speaker tying rules, e.g., I ask a question. I make myself a first speaker and the other, a second, where the first item is recognizable as 'a first item in some pair.'

What we can see is that the rules for building dependent clauses are 'second speaker' rules. In the case of "We were in an automobile discussion," "discussing. . .", we could say we have a rule which says 'if you want to make yourself a second speaker by building your statement as a dependent clause to a prior sentence, one that could be constructed as an "independent clause," then, if that one ends in a noun, participialize the noun and talk in some syntactically consistent way.' For example, "We were having dinner." "dining on roast beef." Of course you can use whatever else the grammar provides as ways of building dependent clauses.

Now, if we consider this second utterance which ties itself to the first, i.e., "discussing the psychological motives for," one of the things we might want to know about it is, what would be relevant to tying the utterance to the first and not simply beginning a second sentence, e.g., "We were in an automobile discussion" followed by a second sentence, "We were discussing the psychological motives for drag racing on the street." What I have to say is not intended as exclusively or exhaustively an answer to that, and perhaps it isn't even plausible – much less convincing – even as a partial consideration. But there are some good grounds for suggesting that such things as I'm going to propose are sometimes relevant somewhere. They concern the following sorts of things.

I've mentioned this matter of *paired utterances*, like question-answer. They are of course enormously relevant in two-party conversations. They gain a larger relevance in what I've been talking about as 'multi-party' conversations. They gain that larger relevance because in multi-party conversation there isn't a formulaic way of locating who should talk next, i.e., there is no simple expansion of A-B-A-B to, e.g., A-B-C-D-A-B-C-D. What one gets, then, is a heavier reliance on these paired utterances which assign the second person's rights and obligations to talk; for example, if they're addressed a question, then they have an obligation or a right to talk next.

That seems to provide a differentiation in the phenomenon of *interruptions* in two- and multi-party conversations. In two-party conversation, if A is talking along and B starts to talk in the course of it somewhere, then we might say that B is interrupting A. In multi-party conversation, at least where we're dealing with some utterance pair, that doesn't seem to be the case. What seems to be the case is something like the following. Suppose A addresses a question to B, and now C starts talking at the end of that sentence. Then, if B (the proper answerer) starts talking also, regularly it turns out that while it would read off the tape like the proper answerer is interrupting C, it isn't treated that way. C seems to treat himself as having interrupted B (the one

who hadn't yet spoken) and stops. That is: A to B; C starts; B starts; C stops. We get, then, a notion of 'interruption' which is partially independent of who happens to be talking. That is, again, C is talking and B starts to talk. We might figure that B is interrupting. But C is interrupting from the moment he begins.

That means in part, say, that if "We were in an automobile discussion" were an 'adequate complete utterance,' and it were an invitation to this fellow Jim, then it's the business of these other guys, accepting the fact that the invitation has been made, to find a way to do what they need to do before Jim properly speaks – perhaps to accept the invitation. What they do is provide that an adequate complete utterance has not occurred, so that the *slot* for Jim to speak doesn't open here. They then proceed to modify the invitation, which can then be heard as: "Hold on for a while, see what we're talking about, and how we do it." That is, for Jim, "automobile discussion" might be a very nice thing to hear. "Oh, they talk about whatever it is kids talk about anywhere, and they're not going to be talking about things that are really godawful things to talk about." The modification provides that when the slot does open up, he has been told that in fact they talk about things that he might not be able to participate in right off.

Now that sounds like an extravagant orientation to these slots being opened or not, and were I just to have that, I wouldn't believe it, either. Indeed, I wouldn't have come up with it had I not had other, and very strong, indications that there is such an orientation to slots. Here are some of them.

First there has to be a differentiation between those kinds of items that have strong but short control over sequencing, and those that may have strong or weak, but long control. A thing like question–answer is a case of long control. That is, if you ask a question, then it may be open to be answered any time over whatever future as long as it hasn't yet been answered. And it isn't required that it be answered right off, so that you can get other things fitted in between the question and an answer. A simple one is:

A: Did you put out the garbage?
B: Did I put out the garbage?
A: Yes.
B: Yes.

Some things don't have that character; for example, greetings. If I say "Hello," then if you don't answer with "Hello" or something that's a member of the class of 'greetings,' but introduce something else, then you wouldn't at some indefinite point into the conversation offer "Hello" as the return.

Here is one thing that has a short control, but seemingly a rather powerful one. I was studying phone conversations between members of a psychiatric clinic and callers who tended to be suicidal. The conversations began in a very regular way, on the part of the psychiatric clinic. They would say things like, "This is Mr Smith, may I help you?" and things like that. There's a proper return to that, which was regularly offered, and by non-suicidal persons it was

almost universally offered, which is, to "This is Mr Smith may I help you?," "Yes. This is Mr so-and-so."

Now there are a lot of people who don't like to give their names. Especially people who are in one way or another troubled about what they're getting into, etc. You could simply propose that all they have to do is just not give their names; to "This is Mr Smith may I help you?," just say "Yes" for example. But they didn't do that. What they did was to use some more or less elaborate means which served to never have the place where their name belongs occur, such that they never gave their names but their names were never absent, i.e., that slot never occurred.

They used several means which are very generally usable to do a similar task. One of them was, for example:

A: This is Mr Smith, may I help you?
B: I can't hear you.
A: I said my name is Smith.
B: Oh Smith.
A: May I help you?

That is, if you ask a question that indicates that you can't hear what was said, upon the return to that question, which clarifies or repeats what was said, you have the right to repeat that thing to indicate that now you've heard it. And in doing so you fill the place where your name might otherwise occur. That is, this thing having been broken apart, if the other then comes back with the second part of it, "May I help you?" you can answer that, "Yes," and your name is not 'absent.'

Sometimes that got extremely elaborate, so that it would go on for a relatively long time. And while there might be some attempt by the staff to avoid allowing the slot to be closed, the callers normally won out and their name did not occur and was not absent. That they were doing this, seemed quite clear. In any event, it got a kind of verification by virtue of the fact that for people located in this way (and they could be located immediately, right off) if you asked them their name later on, they wouldn't give it.

It's the fact that they go through all this trouble – if you want to call it that – i.e., they don't simply ignore that sequential structure – that suggests to me that some such consideration might be involved here, where "We were in an automobile discussion," with its character as an invitation, is not allowed to close and the slot for the invited person to speak is not allowed to open until after that perhaps drastic modification has been provided.

I want now to take up a matter related to our considerations of an identification, raised by a question somebody asked me. The question was, Am I supposing that determinations of activities are prior to determinations of identification? And it may seem that that's what I've been saying or implying or assuming.

Now first of all, I'm not assuming it. I think it's so for very many cases. If you want to play baseball then the activity provides the relevance of the

collection consisting of (first baseman, second baseman, etc.). And there are a great many activities that provide for the relevance of some device or some collection. It's very important that that be so. And I want to deal with the fact that it's so.

If what we're dealing with is identification via membership categorization device categories, then there is a large problem for persons identifying each other or somebody else, which is: There are always alternatives. If you're going to use categories of a single device, which one do you use? The question is, is there some more or less general solution to that kind of problem? That solution has to be one which is usable by persons who don't know each other, if, for example, they're going to identify themselves to each other, say, at the beginning of a first conversation. They want to convergently select the same device as relevant, so that one doesn't start off by naming his religion when the other is interested in his occupation. And if one can pull out certain ways of getting devices via activities, that helps matters out. If you know the activity, you have the way of categorizing a person. If you're going to have a party, use 'males and females,' etc., etc.

We can try to consider what sorts of general ways we might construct for arriving at devices for categorizing. Suppose we have an nth person to identify, and that nth person is not a first. Then there's a routine solution: If the others have all been categorized by some given device, use the consistency rule to get you a category from the same device. But if you're dealing with a single person, then there doesn't seem to be any unique solution, where a unique solution might be the basis for a convergent solution. That is, if there's a unique device which is appropriate in one way or another, then that might be the way that persons get together independently on identifications. Obviously for some activities there's a unique solution; a device bound to that activity.

Now, here's a piece of data:

A: ((a little girl)) Who's that?
B: ((her mother)) That's Rita. Remember when you went to the party last week and met Una? Well that's Una's mother.

That's not only a very characteristic way that persons are identified by others, but it's a very characteristic way that people go about identifying themselves to each other: "Do you know X?" "Yes." "Well I'm his neighbor."

In considering this piece of data and its character, one can perhaps come up with a rather elegant solution to the problem of doing identifying, where there's no other activity being done than identifying. So you can't find an activity which solves the problem of how to choose a device for you. You're simply doing identifying, and if you've got one person, you've got a problem. A great many devices are available. Now consider the following possibility. We know there's a solution for an nth person. Is it the case that we can get a solution for two persons? Yes. There's a device that can be used to categorize a population of any size and it consists of a set of 'relational pairs;' things like

(father–son, brother–brother, sister–sister, friend–friend, neighbor–neighbor, stranger–stranger. . .etc.). Any two persons can be categorized by it. If that's so, then you have a way of solving the single-person problem, which is: Take the person you have to categorize; treat them as the second person of a pair for which the first is known; find a first. If you can find a first – and in principle you can find a first – you've got a solution. If you can't, then you're no worse off than you were to start with, i.e., you're back with the one-person problem which is not capable of giving a solution in any event.

Note that the device that consists of 'relational pairs' is uniquely applicable to two persons. That is, for any two persons there is a device consisting of 'relational pairs' which will provide for them to be categorized as a pair – and only one such device that could hold for any two persons, i.e., it's a unique device. And the two-person problem being solvable uniquely, may well be at least part of the basis for the tremendous regularity with which it gets used. Where, routinely it's the case – and it's the case in this piece of data – that it isn't a matter of some first person being chosen with whom you have some special intimacy. It's not that you choose only those persons as first of a pair, who really matter. In this case, the kid barely knows Una, and nonetheless the mother apparently takes it – and we regularly take it – that when we've got such a pair, the identification is complete.

Again, we can come to see 'uniqueness' as relevant in that, in the first instance, if an activity does have a unique device tied to it, then the device is regularly used. And also, recognizing that a name is not treated as an adequate identifier, but when *any* category, perhaps, is offered, the identification *is* treated as adequate. If the world works that way, that's extraordinarily lovely.

Lecture 08
Orientation; Being 'phoney;' Hinting

I want now to make a few observations about the possible *orientative*, as well as the possible identificatory characteristics of this line, "We were in an automobile discussion."

On the matter of orientations: In the first instance, it's perfectly plain that one way you can orient people to, say, what was going on, or what it is you do, etc., is by the name of some activity. Now what becomes interesting about an orientation, for one, is the question of its *sufficiency*. If somebody is doing what seems to be an orientation, then they can regularly enough use either a name that does orient the other person, or one that doesn't, both of them being perfectly correct. Suppose you turn to somebody sitting next to you at a dinner party and say, "What do you do?" and they say, "I do assaying with an ultra-centrifuge." And you say, "What's that?" Then they might say, "I'm a lab technician." If, however, it was a group of lab technicians, then it would be quite sufficient to have said, what, specifically, you do, and more relevant than 'lab technician.'

One feature of orientations, then, is the way their sufficiency turns on an initial identification made of the recipient by the one who is doing the orientation – where that identification can be categorial. On the basis of that identification, one would build what one takes to be a 'sufficient orientation.'

The core character of that initial identification of the recipient can easily enough be seen in considering how you make, e.g., 'put down' orientations. Suppose four of you are sitting around the table and a fifth comes in and you say, "We're playing bridge. That's a card game for four people. . ." and you go on and give a detailed description, where you know damn well that "We're playing bridge" is perfectly sufficient. Alternatively, you can construct orientations which you know the other will not understand, and you can do that for a variety of reasons. Say you want to check out whether they'll go along with anything.

The question "What's that?," say, after "I do assaying with an ultra-centrifuge," is a remark that 'the identification you used on me to give the sufficiency for the orientation you made, was wrong.' And it can be wrong in a variety of ways. For example, it could be wrong by virtue of the fact that you properly used some hint that I seem to give off, e.g., that I'm sitting next

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This lecture consists of Fall 1966, lecture 8, with a segment of Fall 1966, lecture 3. Again, it deals with matters not discussed in the spring 1966 lectures, and it has been placed where it 'belongs.' But in fact, these matters make their first appearance in the Fall 1966 lectures.

to you at a dinner of lab technicians, but it turns out I'm only a friend of some lab technician and not one myself.

Again, then: One rather important aspect of doing an orientation is the issue of sufficiency. And then there is the fact that designing the orientative remark with its sufficiency in mind, involves having made some identification of the intended recipient.

Now, for the line "We were in an automobile discussion," it is perfectly possible for such orientative remarks, placed as this one is, to have no identificatory import in regards to those who *make* them. That is, it need not be an identification made via an orientation. They might be things that, for one, 'merely happen to be correct,' i.e., in fact, before this guy came in they were engaged in an automobile discussion. And if the phrase 'an automobile discussion' is sufficient, their saying it simply clues him in to what it was they were doing. And especially when one considers orientatives other than remarks such as this one, there isn't any necessity that they be combined with an identification.

But the issue I'm going to address is, what other matters are involved when the orientatives *are* possibly involved with an identification. Where, putting it roughly, let's say, for example, that one names as what one was doing, something that may serve as an orientation of itself, but the something that one was doing provides a 'hint,' say, as to the sort one is. And this may have some important feedback on what kinds of things you can use to make an orientation where you *don't* want to make an identification.

Now an added issue comes up when an orientation is being used to do an identification. That issue is relevant in seeing what you could use to make, say, an orientative identification, or whether you can use something to make an orientation alone, without it implying that you are also making an identification. The issue is that which we can call 'misleadingness.' And closely related to it is the notion of being 'a phoney.'

One of the first things involved in the phenomenon of doing 'being a phoney' is that you can perfectly well be accused of being phoney without having made any explicit claims to being a member of a category that you're seen to be *not* a member of, though having, indeed, intended to suggest that you were. That one can be seen to be a phoney without having made an explicit identificatory claim, is, of course, independent of, and a complementary consideration on, the ways that one can hint at an identity, or be seen to be hinting at an identity. What one needs to examine, then, are a set of things one hints with, or can be seen to be hinting with.

So, for example, the magazines on somebody's coffee table are routinely seen to be intended to suggest that they are intellectuals, or whatever else. And you can walk out of a house and say that somebody's a phoney by virtue of some lack of fit between what you figured you could infer from various things in their house, and what you've found out about them other than that. It's not merely that you say that there is various inconsistent information being given, or that "At first I thought such-and-such but then it turned out no," but one can assign 'being phoney' to their use of things recognizable as

'hints.' Which is to say, for example, that if they put some magazine on their coffee table, if they have some painting on the wall, if they use some lingo in their conversation, then they're responsible for it being seen as 'identificatory' and, if in some way it's now found to be incorrect, then the assertion 'phoney' is properly makeable.

Now there are some rather important methodological issues involved in the existence of and usability of a notion like 'phoney.' Let me just allude to them. What's involved are problems dealing with such matters as: Consistency between a set of facts that you find; attribution of error; when it is that some problem that gets posed can be considered to be resolved, and a few other things. And what's methodologically involved is this sort of thing: Consider the case of the magazine on the coffee table. A person who comes into the house can look at it, treat it as an intended identification, and that identification is now a claim. If, in due course, there are activities which seem relevant to that claim that turn out to be inconsistent with the initial determination, then there are a variety of things that, at least in principle, could occur. With regard to the notion of 'phoney,' what's involved is that one would not take it that one's first impression was wrong and got corrected, though of course that's a quite legitimate procedure in other circumstances: "At first I thought he was very cold, but then after getting to know him, I found out that he's really a very warm fellow," for example. Rather, one's first impression here – and, very important to the whole thing, without any claim having been explicitly made – is taken as something that they invite or require you to make, by what they've done.

And involved in that, then, is that you are quite legitimately permitted to figure that persons know that some object is a 'hintable with' object. The issue of *not* knowing that something is to be hinted with, although ancillary to our consideration here, has an independently prominent, interesting place, some-what largely in psychiatry. There, a claimed naiveté about hints, which the psychiatrist, in company with 'the rest of society' can hardly believe, or may believe but figure it's amazing, constitute a strong set of symptoms for things like 'latency complaints.'

Latent homosexuality involves doing those things which anybody, homosexual or not, knows to be inviting homosexual contacts, let's say. Where, when it happens, you're surprised. And there are lots of things like that. Girls who get regularly raped. Now I'm not offering an analysis of the psychiatric situation, I'm only providing the structural place that the phenomenon has, i.e., the character of certain things as warranting being seen as 'hinting.' And I'm not saying whether they 'really know,' they 'don't really know,' etc., or why they pick up these 'hintable withs.'

When the thing on the table is seen as a thing with which Members hint and thereby make a claim to membership, the issue is no longer 'is he one of them or not,' i.e., 'this is the first piece of evidence, let's consider the rest,' but this is something that he can be held to, such that if it turns out that he isn't one of them, you're not 'wrong,' the matter isn't 'corrected;' rather, it now gives you a different identification whose charactaristics are that it's based on

the original one having been 'misleading,' i.e., 'a phoney.'

One of the beautiful things about the notion of 'phoney' is that you can be the same category, i.e., a phoney, for a whole range of different possible intended identifications. You could be a phoney hotrodder, a phoney intellectual, a phoney beatnick, etc., where that conclusion is in the first instance a systematic way of processing data, i.e., in which the 'error' is now assigned to the one who gave what is to be treated as a 'hint.' And furthermore, it is taken that they gave the hint intending to have you think that they were a member. And all this, of course, without explicitly determining that they know it's a hint, etc.

What we're seeing, among other things, is that the time at which some piece of information is garnered is criterial to the kind of use it has. That is to say, at that point when an identification might be present, if something is warrantably seen as such, then a claimed identification is findable. It can then be dealt with, with respect to whether it stands up. And if it doesn't, it isn't merely that 'I was wrong about what I thought he was, and now I don't know what he is,' for example, but 'Now I know what he is; a phoney.'

Now what that has as its import for things like "We were in an automobile discussion" is, unless you're prepared to sustain what would be seen as a claim of some identification, then even though it's perfectly true that, for example, you were in an automobile discussion, or you did read that issue of the *Saturday Review*, or *Fortune*, or whatever it may be, then you'd better well put it away, or not refer to it.

And again, the fact of 'correctness' gains a kind of irrelevance. If they 'merely happened' to be engaged in an automobile discussion, but, e.g., that isn't the thing they regularly do, or whatever it is that would be inferred from hearing that they were engaged in an automobile discussion as something that would suggest an identification, were not correct, then they'd better well not say that they were engaged in an automobile discussion. As a possible identification, then, an automobile discussion is 'just one thing that such people do.' Then, unless, e.g., the other things that such people as are identified by it do, are done by you, you will have been seen as being misleading, and thereby, perhaps, also a phoney.

There are other things like: It's not merely the case that you were in an automobile discussion, but that you characteristically do it. And that issue of 'characteristic' with regard to some 'hintable' is itself independently treatable. Suppose you're sitting at home one night, you flick on the TV set, and now you're watching some serial. There is a knock at the door, and the first thing you may do is turn off the TV. You may do that by virtue of the fact that somebody who comes in is going to figure that that's the sort of thing you do, and not that you happened to have turned it on just now, though you may well say, "I just turned it on;" it being a thing which can be characteristic of some people. It's often extremely hard to establish some argument that the thing you were doing is something you did only once. And precisely those things for which it's extremely hard to do it, are those sorts of things which have this identificatory import. That there are a class of such things – and of

course they're not just statements, they're a much larger set of things – which are properly seen as 'claiming identification' not only makes them available for such use, but constrains the various kinds of information, remarks, things you can do otherwise.

I bring up these issues of 'sufficiency' and 'hintables' in order to get focus on what else the various persons who could be seen as being 'talked on behalf of' (i.e., Roger and A1), might see implicated in that statement "We were in an automobile discussion" which they might not want to have happen. And also to get us in a position to deal with what it is they do with that statement. They modify it, that's for sure, and some issues are, then, what the character of this modification is, and what is involved in the fact that they do modify it – what 'are' they, for one? – and how the modification of the statement might operate on the possible identification it might have affected. They don't, in this case, have the chance to pick up the magazine when they notice who's coming in the door, and stick it under the table. The talk is out, and it has to be dealt with.

Lecture 8
'We'; Category-bound activities

I want this time to focus on the word 'we' in 'We were in an automobile discussion." In *The First Five Minutes*, you will recall the authors' analysis of the utterance "What brings you here?:"

> Three of the four words in the sentence; 'what,' 'you,' 'here,' are what the grammarian calls 'substitutes' or 'shifters' or 'pronominal forms,' words the denotation of which in a specific context depends almost wholly on that context.

It's perfectly true that grammarians call them things like 'shifters,' etc. However, it would be rather difficult to support the notion that grammarians say that the denotation shifts in every or many uses, since that's not a question which grammarians address. But it is true that those terms have been subjected to very considerable discussion by philosophers, and I'll mention some of the literature on them.

Nelson Goodman, in *The Structure of Appearance*, calls them 'indicator terms.' Hans Reichenbach, in *Elements of Symbolic Logic*, chapter 7, calls them 'token reflexors.' Russell has a discussion in *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth*, chapter 7. He calls them 'egocentric particulars.' Quine, in his book *Word and Object*, section 21, calls them 'indicators,' also. Bar Hillel, in *Mind*, 63, pages 359-379, calls them 'indexical expressions.' Cullenson, in *Language Monographs*, 17, calls them 'indicators.' They're rather fundamental for logicians because – to use Bar Hillel's observation – although it may well be the case that over 95 percent of all natural sentences contain them, they're very very troublesome, if not impossible, to handle, if what you want to do is build characterizations of the truth or falsity of particular sentences.

The core thing about these terms that have been examined, and why it's of interest to the logician, is that they have an extraordinary transiency of reference. So the issue is, if you're dealing with the truth or falsity of propositions, then how are you to interpret a proposition which has the term 'now' or 'you' or 'it' or 'we' in it? That is the logician's problem. What we have to do is to try to construct what a procedure might be for determining what it is that's being referred to when somebody says 'you,' 'we,' etc. These terms are extremely complicated, and in concerning myself with 'we,' while one point I have to make can be said in a sentence, its consequences wouldn't be seen if I said that sentence, so I'm going to go about making the points I

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want to make in what may seem a rather elaborate fashion. The roughest message you might pick out of what I shall say is that in dealing analytically with conversation, you must at least be cautious in the use of what you've been taught about grammar.

It is perfectly legitimate, in English, for a single speaker to produce instances of the following two sorts of sentences: (1) 'We do X,' and (2) 'I don't do X.' For example, "We are fickle," "I am not fickle." "We cheat," "I don't cheat."

It might seem that if a single speaker can make both those statements we can easily derive a contradiction and thereby establish another way ('another' in that many have been established) in which English can be seen to be 'inconsistent.' They may look, right off, to be contradictory, but it would pay, even if it looks very routine, to work out how they are, or how they might be found to be so. For that will then permit us to examine what it is that we do to find it 'contradictory,' and then to see whether what we do is, itself, independently legitimate.

We would start off by asking, about "We were in an automobile discussion," is it the case that 'we' is a set containing these guys' names, directly? It is perfectly proper to say 'we' referring to some set consisting of a list of members. In the data, Roger at one point says to Al, "We're doing better than he is. Proceed, I'm with you." Where "I" [Roger] and "you" [Al] add up to "we" [Roger, Al]. This use of 'we' is what we could call a 'set name,' and as such, we could have a set with members of the following sort: One member at least would be 'I', and there would be others perhaps on some occasion, 'A' and 'B,' where 'A' and 'B' are now names of names; i.e., you could replace the letters with particular names.

We could proceed in two different ways. One of them is: There are conditions under which if something is true for the set name – or false, for that matter – then the set name can be replaced by the set members. So we would get, then: "We do X;" if that is so, it's so for each of the members, then we get: ["I do X," "A does X," "B does X"]. Now, each of them have to be correct for the other to be correct, so we do have a contradiction between (1) "We do X" and (2) "I don't do X," since the 'I' is contained in the set 'We do X." That means that either (1) is false, or (2) is false, or something's wrong, i.e., if it's the case that the language permits both, then in harboring a contradiction like that, it's inconsistent.

There is, however, a use of 'we' which is quite different, that works in the following way. If you've used any membership categorization device category, i.e., any category like male–female, Negro–white, old–young, first baseman-. . .second baseman. . .catcher, fullback. . .halfback. . .etc., doctor. . .law-yer. . .etc., native–foreigner, any of these, you can on some next occasion wherein you want to refer to the same object, use a pronoun to do it. If you've referred to a category in its plural form, e.g., Negroes, women, then you choose from a plural pronoun, most particularly 'we' or 'they,' and you may pick 'we' or 'they' by reference to whether you are, or propose to be, a member of that category. So you can say, "kids race cars," "we race cars,"

"kids race cars, we don't get caught, however."

Now the question is, what are the conditions for the correctness of a statement that would be asserted with a categorial term as the term which is the subject of the sentence, where any of those can be reasserted with pronouns in that slot? For example, "women are fickle," "we are fickle," "they are fickle."

For one, it is the case about such categories (and formulations of knowledge and facts about them) that the categories or the legitimate plural replacements may be perfectly properly used without the user having any ability whatsoever to replace it with a list of those persons about whom it is true. That is, 'we,' 'they' can refer to a category which has as one of its crucial properties that no intention exists of listing the incumbents, and furthermore they're not listable, i.e., an infinite population. Consider perfectly ordinary uses of 'we' of the following sort. The first quote is from the *New York Times*, an article on Yugoslavia:

> Yet Communist officials appear to be optimistic. "We haven't had good roads since Roman times, so why should we worry if the highway to Belgrade is not finished tomorrow", one said.

The next one is from an article on Israel:

> "Don't forget this is our country," Ben Josef said with a smile, "We have been here much longer than since the thirties. Up there," he gestured toward the hills, "stood one of Solomon's cities."

That is, 'we' can be used to refer to all members of the category that have ever lived and may ever live.

Furthermore, once you've gotten the plural pronoun replacing the categorial term, there is no movement, necessarily, to any set-of-members reference, i.e., reference via a list of particular names. The categorial reference, once established, holds. It can be said: "Americans do X," "We do X," "I do X." It can also perfectly well be said, "Americans do X," "We do X," "I don't do X." No contradiction at all.

If, however, 'we' is being used to refer to a set of persons who are seen as a list, then, if one has 'we do X" or "we did X," and either 'I' or 'you' who are on the list haven't, then one of the two is indeed wrong. And somebody has a good complaint, and can raise it, and they do: "You just said 'we do X,' but you didn't do it, so how can you say that?"

Given the ambiguity of these terms, i.e., how it is that the use of 'we' is derived, there is the basis for making jokes. For example, somebody reports some 'we' statement which, if it were heard as an assertion of a member of a list and not a member of a category, would be nonsense: A little boy announces, "We're playing the Rams today!" You say, "Are you going in as fullback or tackle?"

In any event, for any use of 'we,' one has to have some way of making a

determination as to, is it being used as a replacement for some category, or is it being used as the name of a set consisting of a list of persons? Quite different treatments will occur, depending on which is heard, and the treatments would be quite anomalous unless one comes to have some way of seeing which use it is. And of course there can be overlapping use, where the category may well be one which has a list, and one's name appears on that list. A member of a football team can then say in both senses, "We're playing the Rams today."

I want to turn now to one thing that is special about those categories. Such knowledge as is recognized as correct by virtue of the combination: [a category (whatever it is) plus some thing they do or attribute they have (category bound in that sense)], has a rather important property which I talk of as *'knowledge protected against induction.'* By that I mean, if you have a statement, "Women are fickle," then it is no way to undercut that statement to introduce as a possible contradiction some statement which consists of a name of a person, plus not-fickle, where that person is a member of the category. That is, there's no contradiction between "Women are fickle" and "Mary is not fickle," where, for the latter you can get, if Mary is talking, "I'm not fickle," or if somebody is talking to her, "You're not fickle."

There are some very important consequences of that knowledge, which is in the first instance formulated by one of the membership categorization device categories as correct, being protected against induction. And that it's not merely an assertion of mine that it has that character can be easily enough seen by considering how one understands things like the following. Suppose some positive piece of information is bound to a category you're a member of, e.g., "Jews are rich." If a member of that category is not, then he tends, not to see himself as a living demonstration of the error of that statement, but to take it that there's something the matter with him. And one of the important things about 'knowledge protected against induction' is that members who find for some of it that it doesn't hold for them, have a program laid out, which is to make it true for them. Furthermore, for some such things they may come to feel, again, not that the knowledge is wrong, but that they're 'phonies;' they're not real members. That is, one way persons come to see that they're 'phonies' is by virtue of some piece of knowledge, holding about a category they belong to, does not hold about themself.

As another way to see that there is a corpus of knowledge which is protected against induction in the way I talk about, consider the following. The first one, the first five, the first ten members of some category that you meet, you can perfectly well see as 'exceptions.' You don't say, "See? What we know about Negroes is wrong," but, "I've met many exceptional Negroes," for example. And that holds for each of them. The fact that you see a person as 'an exception' involves, then, a way that you use this knowledge protected against induction.

Note that knowledge protected against induction is not simply important as 'maintaining negative stereotypes,' if you want to think of it that way, but consider, for example, if something is known to be so about an occupational category, or, for that matter, a religious category, then the list of things which

are known to be so about them provide an advertisement for persons who, if they want those things said about them, or want to feel those things as so about themselves, have to arrange their lives so as to become members of this or that category.

Let me try in perhaps a little different way to bring home a few points concerning the character of statements like "Women are fickle," "Jews are rich," etc. which it appears to me many people don't properly appreciate, i.e., understand. I'm sure that many people, especially the more liberated, think that those are stereotyped statements which aren't really true; they are used, and those who use them are unfortunate objects of contempt or subjects for better education.

Holding the notion that they're not true involves hearing them in the first place as candidates for being true under some formulation such as: What they're saying is, 'women' means 'all women;' that's subject to a test; for example, go out and use the device 'male–female;' locate all cases of the second class and determine whether or not they are indeed fickle. If not, then the statement, purporting to be true, is not true, or not true in part. Now unfortunately, the aim of using such a procedure is not, I take it, what is being done with such statements, and it therefore misfires. First of all, you might kill a lot more than you intend, and second, you might miss what you would like to kill. So let me go a little bit over it again.

You would hold such a notion if you had a notion that women were people, i.e., that the category 'women' is the name of some people – when no such thing may have been claimed. The category 'women' is the name of a category, and the issue is, when is it that that category is appropriately possibly assigned to somebody? The fact that it may be correctly assigned is irrelevant to the question of whether on some occasion it *ought* to be assigned, as contrasted with something else, perhaps

The way things work is something like the following. We have our category-bound activities, where, some activity occurring, we have a rule of relevance which says, 'look first to see whether the person who did it is a member of the category to which the activity is bound.' So that if somebody does being fickle, or is observably being rich, you might then have a rule which permits you to select a preferred category for seeing who they are. And of course, using that procedure for finding the category, you may never come across occasions for seeing that it's 'incorrect' in the sense that the first procedure I suggested would end up showing.

Now, one consequence of that procedure's use is, if it turns out that someone is a member of some category, then what you have is an explanation. X is fickle. Why? Use the relevance rule. It turns out that the one who did it is a woman. Then you can say it's fickle because it's a woman, and women are fickle. One importance of these statements, then, is that they make some large class of activities immediately understandable, needing no further explanation. The statements are then to be seen as, heavily, 'explanations.' Where, not only do they provide possible explanations, but, on the occurrence of some activity, they tell you where to look first to see whether you have an

explanation, i.e., look to see whether the person who did it is a member of the class or classes to which the activity is category-bound.

It is the use of such a procedure which is the important thing. You might want to knock out this or that statement, thinking you would do away with the trouble it makes, where what you want to knock out, if you want to do away with the trouble, is the use of the procedure.

And the fact that it is the procedure that's being used, provides for some rather subtle ways of doing things like anti-Negro, anti-semitic, whatever else, activities. For example: There's recently been a campaign of sorts, protesting anti-semitism by the Russian government. And the Russians protest that they're not doing anti-semitism at all. And the issue is, how do they go about doing what they're doing, and why should it be seen as anti-semitism? Now, one of those sorts of statements we've been looking at is, let's say, "Jews are profiteers." The Russians prosecute some fellow for economic crime. One way they could do anti-semitism would be to say, "These fellows that did these economic crimes are Jews, and Jews, of course, do those things. They did it and it's just what we ought to expect." But what they also can do, which serves perfectly well to do that task, if that's what you want, is the following sort of thing. They don't claim to be prosecuting Jews at all. They don't mention that these people are Jews at all. They need only – at least for internal consumption – prosecute some people and then put out in a newspaper article, a list of the names of the persons who were convicted. Then, given the fact that everyone knows that Jews are profiteers, 'Jews' now being relevant to possibly explain who it is that did the economic crimes, one looks to the names to see whether they are Jewish names; since Jewish names are, among Russians, fairly identifiable, no claim at all need be made that these are Jews for everyone who cares to see that they are Jews to see that, and to see that what was done was something that Jews do. One has, then, an explanation of economic crimes which can be seen as living off of anti-semitism; otherwise the information is quite bland and unusable. And for some purposes information is often quite bland and unusable, unless you know how to inspect it in ways that are apparently irrelevant.

Now it happens that the fact that you have such relevance rules which provide explanations if they apply, has further importance since it's regularly the case that where the question is, among competing facts, Which has occurred? the one that has occurred is selected via the fact that it, among competing ones, has an explanation whereas the competing ones don't. And 'having an explanation' can mean that one of those statements applies. In some particular cases, that can be treated as quite illegitimate. So, I have an article from the *New York Times*; there was a big trial in New York where the judge threw out a conviction in an assault and attempted rape case and ordered a new trial for a 21-year-old Negro.

> The justice pointed to the testimony of one of the jurors who said that
> on more than one occasion during the deliberations remarks were made
> regarding the sexual proclivities of Negroes.

Where for some of the jurors the decision that this fellow did it could be warranted by the fact that there was an explanation available if he did it.

That kind of thing is extremely important, for regularly people can be puzzled how such a one who isn't graspable via some bound category could have done something, and it would be felt that he probably didn't, but somebody else did. So that if an activity occurs and the person who did it is not known, then those bounded properties permit one to know what the person who probably did it is going to look like, i.e., some properties of him – and therefore, perhaps, to search for him.

And note that if that were undercut there would be some very very serious problems. For example, if you look at the civil rights discussion and any of the literature relevant to it, you'll find that reports will say things like this: In the last year, in civil-rights-related cases (not legal cases, now) where there have been no convictions, 18 Negroes were murdered, bombed, lynched, whatever. Where, lacking the procedures we're employing, that could hardly be arrived at. All that we would know is that 18 persons had died, and there are a variety of properties which are true about them. The sheer knowing of the fact that this case is the case of a Negro murdered, much less a Negro murdered for civil rights reasons, takes some of these relevance rules as essential to the finding of what the hell is happening. And that you can then look to some white man who is a member of a rightist organization, for example, is not given by the fact that some X died who had certain properties, but that one sees that it was a Negro church burned, or whatever.

And many people who would like, for example, the information about Negroes to be undercut, to be said to be proved to be false by virtue of the fact that it isn't true about all Negroes, would find it very hard, then, to preserve such matters as that in fact Negroes have been murdered in the South, which they ought also to be able to say, and which follows as a part of the same apparatus. One has to be careful to pick one's weapons so that they don't destroy more than one would like.

Now it's also often said, by some of my more literary friends, that when you study things like this you're after all studying only the things that idiots say, or the masses, or something like that. First of all, I take it that when you hear, for example, of a civil rights murder, you perfectly well see that it's a civil rights murder, even if, when you hear somebody talking about Negroes' sexual proclivities you may say, "Well that's not true", and the same for any of the other substitutions. In fact, I take it, no matter how sophisticated you are, you use such procedures. And they're quite important to use. And, as I mentioned earlier, they're important in other ways than dealing with bad information, i.e., it's important to know that lawyers are rich so as to permit somebody who wants to be rich to know what to do with their lives.

In any event, if one likes such little games, one can collect, as I, in moments of harrassment have collected, statements of some of the most eminent of living or dead geniuses, which perfectly well satisfy the analyses we've developed. Because one really ought to see that what we're dealing with is not something that's restricted to the uneducated and that people with a college

education are freed from such prejudices as they are freed from using stereotyped information. Here is just one of the statements I've collected. It's a piece of testimony.

Questioner: Were you acquainted with Fuchs?
Witness: Yes, I knew Fuchs quite well.
Questioner: Did you have any reason to suspect his integrity or dependability or whatever was involved in the subsequent disclosure?
Witness: Not particularly. He was a rather queer person, but then under those conditions queer persons occur. I did not suspect him particularly. He was clearly not an ordinary person.
Questioner: What I'm getting at is whether you had reason to believe he was a Communist.
Witness: I think I did not know about him, no. I did not know about him. That he was a Communist, practically until the whole affair broke.
Questioner 2:   Practically what?
Witness: Until it became known. Until he confessed. Or rather, until he was shown.
Questioner: At the time you learned about it were you surprised?
Witness: Look. I was not surprised in this sense. That he clearly was a peculiar person. So if it turns out about an ordinary run of the mill person that he's a conspirator and spy, you are shocked and surprised. He was a very peculiar persons, with respect to whom I didn't have much experience. Of course I was surprised by the fact that there had been such a thing, that a spy had been so well placed.

That is to say, if you're told something and you know somebody's queer, then anything much they do is understandable. The piece of testimony is from the Oppenheimer hearings and the witness is John Von Neumann; surely someone who goes as among the great giants of our day, intellectually.

If one wants to propose that what I'm saying only holds for 16-year-old kids or people with less than a highschool education who read *Life* and *Time*, then I suppose it's only a misunderstanding. That is, that you are supposing that what I'm saying is that such information as "women are fickle," "queer people do anything," and things like that, have a character which I am not at all proposing that they have. And one also ought to get some idea about what reforms it would take, what you would want to do; which is perhaps, for example, to undercut the relevance rules, to say that if you hear certain activities done, don't look to category X, and things like that. It might pay to examine what else would happen once you changed one of them, and consider whether you would like to change it.

Lecture 9

Lecture 9 consisted of two distinct parts; the first part, pp. 1–8, dealt with matters carried over from lecture 8. The second part, pp. 8–12, started a discussion that was carried over into lecture 10. In this volume the appropriate parts have been absorbed into lectures 8 and 10, and there is no lecture 9.

Lecture 10

Pro-verbs; Performatives; Position markers; Warnings

I'm going to begin to deal with this statement from the data:

> *Ken* : I still say though that if you take if you take uh a big fancy car out
> on the road and you're hotroddin' around you're– you're bound to
> get you're bound to get caught, and you're bound to get shafted.

It's a tremendously complicated thing and I'm not going to give it what it requires. I'll begin off with some little pieces.

One of the questions we could ask concerns what it is that that first bit, "I still say though that . . . " is doing there. Is it to be seen as simply redundant, in the sense that the statement could perfectly well do without it – obviously he's the one saying it? Where one might take it that the statement might have been useful if he were talking about a past event and introducing a quotation of something he happened to have said earlier. Given, however, that it's a present occurrence, what is it that – focussing only on 'I say' for the moment – does, if anything.

I'm going to have to first introduce an unfamiliar term which, however, I haven't invented. The term is 'pro-verb.' Following is the statement in which I found reference to at least the existence of such a thing. It's from an article called 'On the semantic structure of language,' by Uriel Wereich in Joseph Greenberg (ed.), *Universals of Language (1963) page 126.*

> All languages have 'pro-forms' such as 'he' which substitute for other
> forms to avoid their repetition within a unit of discourse considered as
> 'the same.' But pro-forms are on the whole very unevenly distributed
> with respect to the parts of speech. Perhaps all languages have
> pronouns, but few have pro-verbs. English is perhaps unique among
> European languages in having, in 'do,' at least the rudiments of a
> verb-phrase substitute.

That is to say, roughly, that 'do' works something like the same way that more familiar pro-terms, i.e., pronouns, work. For example, in the uses that his notion restricts itself to, one might say, for the pronoun, "John put on his coat and he put on his hat," 'he' substituting for 'John' in the second clause. Alternatively, for 'do' you might say, "Mary baked a cake and so did Jane;"

Includes pp. 8–12 of lecture 9, Spring 1966.

'do' doing similar work, replacing 'baked a cake' as 'he' replaced 'John' in the other.

The term wasn't invented by Weinreich, and I don't know who did, and can't find out easily. It's clear in our data that 'do' works that way. And if you're interested in the historical development of this usage there's an article called 'The auxiliary "do": the establishment and regulation of its use in English' (which ends about the 14th century for this guy), by Alan Ellegard, in *Gothenberg Studies in English*, volume 2 (Stockholm, 1963).

What I want to do is develop what looks to me like another pro-verb. It's not as extended in its use as 'do,' and that is, 'say.' And the question is, first off, what is the class of things for which 'say' serves as a pro-verb? The class of terms that 'say' seems to serve as a pro-term for are at least roughly collected by Austin's notion of *performatives*.' There are two books, and they're books you ought to read. In his *Philosophical Papers*, chapter 10, there's a paper called 'Performative utterances.' Then there is a whole book about these things called *How To Do Things With Words*, J. L. Austin (Harvard University Press, 1962). They are things like, 'I promise,' 'I offer,' 'I bet,' 'I assume,' etc.; various activities that you can do in that form. That is, roughly, where something that you say is a formula for doing some activity; it's done in the saying. You can make a bet by saying 'I bet,' a promise by saying 'I promise.'

And it's extremely important that one restrict oneself to the first-person present form, i.e., one doesn't take all its tense and person possibilities. 'I bet' is altogether different than 'He bets.' 'I bet' can do betting. 'He bets' reports on something somebody is doing. So, 'performatives' are all first-person present. And in that way, 'I say' is very different than 'I said.' 'I said' can be introducing a quotation. Let me now consider what 'I say' can be doing.

What it seems is that for some of those performative verbs, instead of doing the activity with, e.g., 'I claim,' 'I assert,' etc., one can do it with 'I say,' where the hearer will perhaps put in the proper performative verb (if that's the way hearers do things). What one may then have is a weak, or a generic type of way of doing any of these things without specifying the one, though the one is ostensibly clear from the rest of what you're doing. That is, for example in this case, it being a 'discussion,' and one of the ways one participates in a discussion being to 'take a position,' one can say 'I say' when what one is doing is – if you want to paraphrase it – saying in effect, 'My position is,' 'I assert that.'

Now, the difference between 'merely saying' something, and doing what can be done with 'I say' are, among other things, the following. First, you're often making some commitment, in the case of a discussion perhaps, to defending yourself. Or to maintaining that argument. Or to answering questions if it's unclear. Or to living up to it. And, in that it involves a commitment, it may be very important who you're speaking on behalf of; that is, who is it that you're representing. "In the name of the United States I hereby claim this piece of territory." For any such thing it is an important matter who you're on behalf of, because if you're not properly on behalf of

something, then you can't do the thing you're trying to do. If you're not an official who is deputed to doing marriages, for example, you can say "I marry you" all day and you don't do it.

And in our segment, we just previously had a statement of the form 'We were,' i.e., "We were in an automobile discussion." And now 'I' can be, not merely in contrast to that, but the thing is being asserted on 'my' behalf, and that may be all it's asserted on behalf of. So it's when we get the character of 'say.' and what we could call the 'generic performative,' or a 'pro-term for performatives,' that we find that the initial pronoun, or initial affiliation, becomes quite relevant. For one, we might want to know where to go to complain. Who to address if we disagree.

Further, while if he were saying 'I said,' then you might say, 'No, you said something else.' But for 'I say,' if you wanted to point out he was wrong, you wouldn't propose that he doesn't say that; what you would want would be to say that the argument that he's committed to is wrong.

Now it's also the case that 'said' can have this usage. So, for example, regularly with kids, if somebody gives permission to do something, e.g., "Can I watch television?" "Yes," then comes back ten minutes later and says, "Turn the television set off," the kid says, "But you said!" Where they're not simply saying 'I'm reporting a quote of yours,' but 'You did something which involved making a commitment (one of this class which can be referred to by the term "say") and what I'm doing is invoking your commitment.'

So: So far I've been engaged in proposing that with 'I say' what's being done in part is to mark that the fellow who has started off his statement with "I still say though . . . " is making a position in an argument, where the first term, 'I,' has its relevance by virtue of the fact that for the class of actions which 'asserting' or 'making positions' involves, there's a question about on behalf of whom it's done. That question can be handled in various ways, one of them being that after some categorical term is used, like 'we,' it could be claimed, 'What's your entitlement to act on their behalf?' 'I' is a trivial case in this circumstance, since for the taking of a position, one is the best representative of 'I.' So, with 'I,' you solve the problem of asserting on whose behalf, and in using 'I,' have that warrant; whereas for other terms, the issue of representivity can be raised and is regularly raised.

Now we can get to 'still' and 'though.' These are general position markers for some type of activity within which the given activity is done. So if 'I say' is an activity done as part of some argument, or discussion that can become or is becoming an argument, then 'still' and 'though' are 'positional markers' within a discussion or argument. Their character is to be found via the sort of general activity that's being done, i.e., the sort of position they mark can vary with each activity. They needn't be done in combination, and in combination (i.e., as 'still . . . though') they can mark a different position than they do singularly (i.e., than either 'still' does or 'though' does). And they're not the only positional markers, either.

What sort of positional markers they are is something that can be seen as rough, but may well be as exact as one gets, or as one needs. In combination,

'still' and 'though' seem to mark the following. Whatever particular activity is being done within this general activity is at least a third activity of which some prior one was done by the same person. In the case of an argument, then, it's not a second statement. 'Though' alone can be a way of marking a second statement in an argument where the first is made by somebody else. And by 'second,' I don't necessarily mean this is his second utterance. I mean only that there's some prior statement by somebody else, where this one can be the first by the one who's speaking. So, for example, at some point in an argument where some person hasn't yet spoken, their first utterance may be introduced with something like, "You know what *I* think, though." Where, now, 'still' in combination with 'though' seems to serve to inform (if it's relevant to inform, and it's relevant in serious ways in this case) that one of those preceding positions was taken by the speaker and he's going to reaffirm it.

There are a variety of relevancies for using these markers in an argument. In the case at hand of course, we have a new person on the scene who hasn't heard the arguments before, and indeed, doesn't know that the argument is going to begin up again, but they might now go on to talking about anything else. With that beginning clause he's informed that they're back in the argument and that the position being taken by the person who is now going back into the argument is to be seen as something reopening it or continuing it and not starting something new. And it is to be seen as a reaffirmation, but not just a reaffirmation but a reaffirmation in the face of some opposition. And if the argument itself is familiar enough, it could routinely be available to the new entrant, on hearing just this fellow's statement plus his argument, that there were opposing arguments, and what the opposing arguments were.

There are other things involved in the use of these positional markers. One of them is that they involve a way of adding another activity to the given activity of making an argument. If he simply makes his argument again, that's one sort of thing, about which it could be said, e.g., that he's being, whether he knows it or not, stubborn or dense. But by introducing the positional markers which claim 'reaffirmation in the face of opposition,' he's providing for the fact that he does see what he's doing as 'stubbornly maintaining his position.' So, one way one can do being stubborn is the use of that combination of position markers. Of course they could be used wrongly in a variety of ways. For one, there may be no opposition. Intervening arguments may have been intended as supportive, or may be very weak, such that to come on being stubborn can make you look foolish (or it could be cute, e.g., if an infant thrashes around in a wading pool as though they're possibly drowning). But these things do seem to involve, then, a claim of the reaffirmation being a 'stubborn reaffirmation.'

So the phrase 'I still say though' does a whole set of tasks: It reintroduces the discussion as an argument, gives a great deal of information – or can – to the person who wasn't there before, and provides, at least for those who were there, that the position that was taken before is being stubbornly held to.

These positional markers are, then, one way that the character and the

relative where-in-it one is, in some kind of activity like an argument, is persistently affirmed. And indeed, the character of a discussion as 'an argument' is in part maintained via the use of these things.

Let me turn now to the long clause that follows "I still say though that," i.e., the statement, "if you're hotrodding you're bound to get caught," and give it an initial characterization. Roughly, you could consider it for now as a 'warning.' Now warnings are extraordinarily tricky matters. The format one uses for a warning can, with no change in what you say essentially, be used to do as well, alternatively or in combination, any of the following, at least: Threatening, predicting, advising, challenging, daring, promising. We'll have to work at how that can be so, and what the consequences of that are.

If you look at the next statement:

Al: Not unless ya do it right. That's the challenge– that's the challenge you wanna try and do it right so you don't get caught!

you'll see that if I'm correct that this was proposed as a 'warning' it was heard as a 'challenge.' And let's try then to do just that much, i.e., to show how a warning can stand as a challenge. Something like this seems to be involved: One of the ways that a warning is in part successful is if it brings the warned person to recognize that the activity that he's proposing to do, seems to be about to do, might do, is an instance of the class 'dangers.' But if you succeed in doing that, then that alone done, you've partially provided for the failure of the rest of your task – which is perhaps to bring them not to do it – by virtue of the consequences of something being a case of the class 'dangers.' For that class, quite independently of the issue of warnings, has a series of properties are that important.

The character of 'dangers' is, for one, that there are certain memberships that can only be achieved if one does something which is a case of the class 'dangers.' In its narrowest scope, the only way to be a hero is to do something dangerous. There are other membership classes which are larger than 'hero,' for which, while it may not be the only way, it's *a* way to get membership in them; especially if, say, one is close to, but not in, membership, and one has doubts about one's membership and others have doubts about it.

That's set up independently of warnings, but can mesh with warnings; i.e., the way you have something guaranteed as being a member of the class 'dangers' in the first place can be that somebody warns you not to do it. The warner tells you that at least for them as an audience, that activity is dangerous. They may warn you to get you not to do it. But if for you it's an issue that if something is proposed as dangerous then it's an eligible way to do those things which you can accomplish via doing dangerous things, then that provides the warrant for doing it.

Further, I think it is regularly if not always the case about categories for which membership is controlled by doing something dangerous, that they are from devices whose categories are *positioned*. So the category one achieves membership in via doing something dangerous, is the highest in the device;

where 'hero/coward' is an obvious example. Or, for example, 'men/boys' is ordered in just the same way: Doing dangerous things is what differentiates the men from the boys. And the character of 'dangerous things,' as providing access to the higher of positioned categories in any category which is bound to a dangerous thing is, I think, as good a criterion as you want for the fact that they are positioned. That procedure is not specific to this culture at all; it's quite general. Built into many 'native' cultures is just such a test, which consists of some way that membership in some higher-positioned category is proved via having done something which is, by definition, or recognized to be, dangerous. And the same holds here. So that we can see, then, what kind of link there is between offering a warning and having it heard as a challenge.

With that, there are some familiar ideas, which I for one don't readily understand, which I think can become clarified. One is the notion of 'ambivalence.' One can see, for example, how it is that warning somebody is something one can do via a combination of love and hate. Seeking to protect them and/or to drive them to something dangerous.

At this point we can come to see the systematic sociological basis for a notion like 'ambivalence' holding for an activity like 'warning,' given that warning is locked into these other things in a way that is perhaps not separable from them, and these things are quite opposite in their character. If, for example, there is something which, if you want to be a man you have to do, or if you have doubts about whether you are a man you might do to show it, then one can see what the strains are that are involved when a mother says, "For your own good, don't do it." And one can see the extent to which her warnings, which are of course seen by her as purely derived from her love, are ways of preventing maturity, maintaining the dependence, etc., of the object she warns – which, of course, if it refuses the warning, accepts the challenge, becomes a different object: No longer a boy, a man. As such, no longer subjectable to the same warnings. And that's of course a fact about dangerous things; they are differentiated. Things that are dangerous for one, are not for the other.

The motives of warners are, then, presumably always suspect. I don't mean that you have to be suspicious of them. What I mean is that the motives can't be clarified from the fact that someone has done a warning, in some exclusive way, e.g., if they did it then they must love you. Or if they did it then they must hate you. But they both can be present.

Lecture 11
'You'

I'm going to talk about 'you' in this sentence we're examining, but first I want to make a brief remark about another aspect of it, a phenomenon which recurs in the speech of this fellow Ken. There are two of them present here: "If you take if you take uh a big fancy car. . ." and "you're you're bound to get you're bound to get caught. . ."

> Ken :   I still say though that if you take if you take uh a big fancy car out on the road and you're hotroddin' around, you're– you're bound to get you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted.

These things have been located; the term that's been applied to them is 'buildups;' they're very characteristic of rather young children, say, two years old. There is a brief discussion of them in a book called *Language in the Crib* by Ruth Hirsh Weir, pages 81–82. Presumably for young children they occur by virtue of the fact that the ability to build a sentence is quite limited, and you get a steady expansion from some small part to some larger part which is syntactically coherent with it. I suppose that would provide a rather technical way of formulating somebody's infantilism, if one cared to. (The Weir book is fairly new, but it's been enormously well received, and all the data that's used in the analysis she develops, is presented, phonetically transcribed.)

Now the discussion of 'you' that I want to work at involves dealing with, in its general character, a problem to which little attention has yet been paid, though it's quite clear, even for linguistics, that it's probably going to be a very important problem. The only relevant paper I know of for linguistics is 'A grammar for the hearer' by Charles Hockett by in Roman Jakobsen (ed.), *Proceedings of Symposia in Applied Mathematics*, vol. 12, *Language in its Mathematical Aspects*. It's on page 220, I think.

The paper itself is completely theoretical, but it suggests the kind of question I want to address, which is in part: Are there some sequential procedures used to detect which of possible alternative meanings for a word might be intended by its producer; which concerns, then: Is there some sequence in which a sentence is parsed, or come to be understood? Do Members wait until the end, do they stop in the middle, do they try to detect it all over its course? Clearly enough from what we've seen so far, there are plenty of places where people do not wait for the end, since there are some places at least where they interrupt and complete an utterance. To do that is something, presumably at least, approximately similar to the way that in relay

races, when somebody's about to go, he starts running before he gets the stick, and runs along for a while with the other. And one would imagine that the detection of sentences which are completed by some second person involves him in moving along to fit his remark in at some such point, and not waiting until it's completed or until the last word, to fit his own remark in. Something of this sort occurs in one of the therapy sessions where, were the second speaker to wait until completion of the first speaker's utterance, his own remark would not come off. They've been talking for a while about reincarnation:

Ken :   I was– I was on a road on the way to Rozwell New Mexico. An' I was, y'know, plonkin' along at a regular speed,
Roger : An' a grasshopper jumped onto the road who you recognized!

The issue of a possible sequence in which something comes to be understood, arises in part because of the character of 'you.' And I will consider some of the properties of that term now. In English, 'you' is in the first instance systematically ambiguous, in that it does not discriminate between singular and plural reference. And in that ambiguity, one has the 'this-and-that' format – a way of building richness into a compact form. That is, you get words which mean, not 'either-or' (where either you mean this *or* you mean that, and they don't have anything much to do with each other, but it's not clear which you mean on some given utterance) but, whatever meanings the word has, they may be carried. So that 'you' may mean 'you alone;' if it does not, then it means 'you *and* others;' but the ambiguity does not involve deciding whether 'you' *or* 'others' was meant.

Further, 'you' is the proper, normal way to address some other, i.e., in contrast to supposing that it's a substitute for a name, which it isn't. Now that may then serve to set up the following procedural sorts of possibilities. The alternatives are singular and plural, and perhaps there's some sequence in which those alternatives are gone through. For example, perhaps the hearer who hears 'you,' hears first 'me.' And if that doesn't work for some reason, he then goes to the next step which is 'me plus somebody else (or, some others).' That is to say, the second step in the procedure is an expansion, and not, e.g., an exclusion of 'me.'

That openness of 'you' means that 'you' can in fact be a way of talking about 'everybody' – and indeed, incidentally, of 'me.' For 'you' stands as a pronoun for the set of terms: 'everyone,' 'someone,' 'people,' etc. Here is some relevant data:

A: Why do you want to kill yourself?
B: For the same reason everybody does.
A: What is that?
B: Well, you just want to know if someone cares.

J :   I'm curious. I'd like to know what happens after someone dies.
R: You lay in the ground. They have a saying, you're planted.

A: You have a pretty strict conscience, haven't you? A pretty strict sense
     of what's right.
B: Well, everyone does.
A: No, not true. You don't think so, really. A lot of people sort of slip
     through life just doing what's easy.
B: Well, you have to think of other people, too. You have to think of
     their feelings.

I think it's pretty clear in these cases that 'you' stands as a pronoun for
'everyone.'

And then we can see a difference between the plurals 'we'/'they' and the
plural 'you,' which would account for the use of 'you as the pronoun for
'everyone,' perhaps. That is, the expansion from singular to plural 'you'
permits an indefinitely large expansion, whereas either of the other two plural
pronouns excludes the other. 'We' excludes 'they' and 'they' excludes 'we.'
'You' as it expands and eventually meets 'everyone,' excludes no one.

It comes to mean 'me,' indeed, also. And in the data above, it clearly
means, in the first instance, 'me.' But you come at 'me' in an especially strong
way. That is, you come at it by virtue of the fact that the hearer hears first
'you,' himself, and he knows it it's not only that, or maybe he doesn't think
it's even that, but his next step is not, given the way 'you' can be used, an
exclusion step (unless he says it's wrong), but an expansion. If he wants the
things to include 'you,' the speaker, in that expansion, then he gets to see
'you' as standing for 'everyone,' which then includes the speaker.

There are very good reasons for a speaker doing that sort of thing. A first
is, of course, if you're asked some sort of question which you know in the first
instance is one which has the sort of answers that you must defend when
you've given them, and you'd like to have an answer that has a built-in
defense for it, then one of the defenses would be to show that there's nothing
at all problematic about your answer. For "Why do you want to kill
yourself?" almost any reason can then be attached – proposing you're ill, or
whatever else. If you arrive at it via this statement being true for everyone, at
least perhaps everyone who is suicidal, then there's nothing special about you.

What's especially important to see is that if a speaker knows the procedures
the hearer uses to arrive at some way of deciding the reference, and what the
outcomes of those are, then he can of course drop in a term whose use he
knows, so as to get the hearing that he wants.

Now this last point can be dealt with, with related though somewhat
independent materials. In our segment of the group therapy session (third
page of the transcript) we find a very common kind of thing:

Roger: Ken, face it, you're a poor little rich kid.
Ken: Yes, Mommy. Thank you.

One could imagine that to "Yes, Mommy. Thank you" everyone turns
around to find out who's being addressed. Clearly none of them, and certainly

not the person who spoke, is the mommy of this fellow. How is it that the person who is called "Yes, Mommy" knows perfectly well that he's being called "Yes, Mommy"? How would we go about coming to show how that's so – again, in such a way as to see how the doer of that will not be seen as simply making an error. And indeed, if he were seen as making an error that would be interesting because if it were seen that he were making an error, then there would be at least the awareness that the name was not an appropriate one for someone who might expectably be being addressed.

There's a rather simple way of coming to see how that works. First of all, there are places within statements where terms of address can go. And given some of the paired statements (question–answer, for example), if you have a second of some pair, then to whom that second ought to be directed is known in the first instance, i.e., the answer is expectably directed to the one who asked the question.

Assuming for now that "Ken face it you're a poor little rich kid" is an insult, the fellow who did the insult is the one to whom some retort would be addressed. Therefore, whatever term may occur in what's to be heard as a retort, is in the first instance to be heard as addressed to him. And then the issue is, how is it that it characterized him, and *not*, given a term, find who it is that it might address, or if you can't find anybody treat it as an error.

The assessment of it as an insult-return can be made by the recipient; he can then take the given term and know that it's addressed to him, and know that everybody else knows that it's addressed to him, and also know that the person who used it used it knowing that he would hear it as addressing him. Which all can be done by virtue of the fact that the sequence in which that thing will be picked up is available to all of them – as in the case of 'you.'

One of the things that ought to be noted is that some sequence in which a hearer goes about doing the job of hearing is absolutely crucial to coming to see what it is that these people are doing with their statements and with the receipt of their statements.

Now it's also of course the case that 'we' has the same difficulties in its various uses. But there's at least a tactical difference between saying 'we' with the plural intention and 'you' with the plural intention. The difference is, if I say 'we,' that has some plural reference automatically. However, it does not automatically have a plural reference which includes the person being spoken to. It can be exclusive of the recipient. "We were in an automobile discussion" is 'we' in exclusion of the entrant. This possibility provides for a way of saying 'everyone,' which is: If someone who needn't include themselves in some class in which the recipient is a member – or someone else that the recipient is talking of is a member – wants to say in a stronger way than 'you' (which can be misheard as only the recipient) that 'everyone is that way,' they can say 'we.' For example, a woman is talking about her husband, who responded to an appeal of hers in something she thought was a rather hard-hearted way. And the psychiatrist is wanting to suggest that her appeal may have been not

clear enough, where she wants to suggest that her husband's response is evidence that he doesn't care.

> C: Wouldn't you think that if a person found someone that tried to commit suicide they would realize that it was serious.
> S: Sometimes people do, and sometimes they don't. Sometimes they need someone to tell them straight out. We can be very blind to the things around us.

That is, by virtue of the sequence in which 'we' is heard, the inclusion of the speaker is partially gratuitous; is heard as doing something he 'needn't have done.' Where, if you use 'you,' it in the first instance includes the recipient, providing for, in the above case, her hearing 'me,' which may be sufficient reference for the remark tied to it, and so not providing for the further step which would include the speaker. It is on the recipient's option or the speaker's intention – insofar as those coincide – that 'you' can refer to some category which includes 'everybody else.'

Furthermore, it is regularly the case that when I choose 'you,' speaking to a singular person I'm talking to, 'you' is not the singular of the plural 'you,' but the local representative of somebody I would otherwise refer to as 'they.' For example, one might say 'you people,' talking to some person or persons, who, were they absent, you would call them 'they;' e.g., 'You Negroes.' Where the issue of the use of 'they' is given via, say, the fact that for some device, I'm in one category and you're in another. My category, when I refer to it without a name, I call 'we,' and yours I call 'they.' When you're present, I say 'you.' Now in saying 'you,' I have that as an alternative to saying 'we,' in that the two of us present can regularly be referred to as 'we.' So what we get, then, is where I could say 'you,' I could also regularly say 'we,' and when I say 'you' in that circumstance, I will regularly be using 'you' as a local for 'they.'

One way to see that usage being understood, is that if I say to you in conversation, 'you,' you may well come back to me saying 'we,' exclusively of me. That is, "What do you think?" "Well, *we* think. . .,' i.e., you understand that my use of 'you' meant 'you as a member of some category of which I'm not a member.' And you then come back, qua member of that category, as a representative of it, rather than that 'we' now being inclusive of me. It can announce categorial membership being used. Since these uses are perfectly obvious and simple, you would have to suppose that a Member who produces that statement, and one who has to deal with it, also have some apparatus for deciding what's being done with 'we' and what it refers to.

There is a further point I want to make about pronouns, and we can get to it through a quotation I'll read you from *Language in the Crib* by Ruth Weir, pages 73–74:

> Of the personal pronouns the form 'it' has by far the widest occurrence, over 100, and is firmly established in the child's speech pattern.

Occasionally it is over-used as a substitute for a plural noun, at the expense of 'them.' The frequent use of 'it' confirms the child's classification of nouns into personalized and non-personalized classes as was pointed out. The non-personalized nouns permit substitution by the pronoun 'it' rather frequently, whereas the personalized nouns, including names of persons, favorite toys and animals, rarely are substituted for by pronouns.

The point I want to make is that I do not agree with talk of pronouns as 'substitutes for nouns.' In some ways, at least under certain very natural senses of 'substitutes,' that is obviously wrong. And as for others, it's a big issue.

If we treat the corpus of pronouns as they are conventionally treated, including terms like, e.g., 'I' and 'you' as pronouns, then in the usual environment of those terms it's an absurdity to say that they are substitutes for nouns, in the sense that the proper term to use in discourse when one intends to refer to oneself is 'I' or things like it, and not – except under very special circumstances – one's name – which would be seen as being used as a substitute for the pronoun. Now we could say that 'I' doesn't belong among the pronouns in the sense that were I to talk of the blackboard as 'it,' 'it' being a substitute for 'the blackboard,' that 'I' is not such a term. In the rules of conversation terms like 'I' and 'you' are the normal, proper terms and are not substitutes for some other terms.

We could say that pronouns serve as 'reference preservers' in the sense that they tie together some current piece of talk to some past piece of talk, and in some cases, to some future piece of talk. And they do that in a sense that the talk wouldn't be better if it were rewritten with the nouns that they 'substitute for.' It would often be worse. And furthermore, learning to talk involves that you learn how to put the pronouns in. And you can't, I think, sustain talk without them.

Lecture 12

Warnings, challenges, and corrections; Explanations; Complaining–Praising; Games

I want to talk a bit more, now, about *'warnings'* and related matters. One of the things one can perhaps dig out of materials such as the kind we've got (but I take it you'd need a considerable amount to do it) turns on the following sorts of things. The fellow makes a warning, and with it he might perhaps be engaged in threatening the other – if he does such things. And we might look to see what sort of apparatus he invokes in establishing his warning. Warnings can be done in dramatically different ways. I could say, "If you step across this line I'll punch you in the face," and that sort of warning might be seen as rather different than those which go, "If you hit me again I'll tell my father," and whatever further invocation of more or less massed power might be involved in getting up sufficient courage, perhaps, to warn someone. And one would like to see whether there is some systematic difference in the sorts of machinery invoked by various people doing warnings.

So, for example, there are two persons to this hotrodding warning, at least. But the person who hears it as a *challenge* is one who does warnings throughout this session – not in our segment but elsewhere, and he warns this very fellow here. But when he warns him, he warns him as a personal threat: "I will bang you around if you do something." Whereas, again, this fellow makes another warning, this time to the entrant, on the sixth page of the transcript, as the other two are preparing to 'judge the entrant's character.' He says, "You're gonna get killed" to which he adds, "Keep your mouth shut and don't say a damn word." Now again, the warning is not involving himself as the enforcer. And what exactly you might be able to say about people being systematically differentiated by the apparatuses they use to make warnings, I'm not sure, but it may well be that you could. Whatever case one wants to make, of course, needs be made from some data.

In that line of consideration, shifting matters a little bit, you might also consider the terms in which the external world is invoked in some speech. One might go through these materials to see, when people other than these participants, or when social organization, things like that, are referred to, how they are referred to. Is it regularly via warnings? If so, one has some of the

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Starts with the last three pages of the original lecture 11.

sense that might be involved in saying that neurotics or psychotics see the outside world as threatening.

Whether either task is doable, I don't know, and I take it it would involve some larger corpus of materials, since you're making basically a statistical-type argument. But in any event, we oughtn't to stop by saying only that he made a warning and that he made it in a way that one can make warnings, but we ought to note a variety of other possibilities that are involved. For example, that wanting to make a warning, it may be the case that the best warning you can come up with is one which involves no less than the police power. Or, for example, that the ways for this fellow that the external world is relevant is as enforcers.

Some of the things that are present in this sentence I'm going to leave for now, and consider them when we get to this fellow's next speech, that long statement starting off with "In that Bonneville of mine." But let me just offer one for consideration. You might notice that there isn't any explicit indication that a crime was in fact committed. If you go hotrodding, you may surely commit a crime, but you don't only commit crimes, and of course most of the things that you can do while you're hotrodding are legal. But it seems quite obvious that the thing is presented, e.g., with the term 'getting caught,' as indicating that the arrest involved some illegal act.

And furthermore, the adequacy of the account that he gives is not undercut by any of the other participants, by, for example, suggesting that while you may indeed get caught, probably it wouldn't have been because you were doing something illegal. That is to say, the others don't see this fellow's explanation as inadequate. Rather does it seem that if you were doing something illegal and you got arrested, then not only is it the case that you got arrested *because* you were doing something illegal, but nothing much more need be said about the arrest. That can be contrasted to an earlier statement where they consider getting arrested without doing something obviously illegal, and use, to refer to the policeman who does it, that he "wants to be mean." Now that's something which is exceptionally interesting, and really worth giving a lot of thought to. I'll put the matter very generally or abstractly because at this point I can't present it in the kind of detail I would like.

It seems to be the case that types of explanations are ordered into layers, or domains, as one may please to call them. Some of these we would roughly call 'Members' sociological accounts;' others 'Members' psychological accounts,' etc., whatever the others may be. And it seems that there is some kind of substitutability operating within a domain. If a domain is relevant to an account, then there can be a strong version of the economy rule holding. And the strong version means that there can be *an* explanation which is *the* explanation, with no more needed or proper. Such that, for example, if the cop picks you up when you're doing something wrong, he picks you up because you're doing something wrong, and anything else added as an explanation is something that's not right to do. That is to say, it's not right to add such an explanation as, "He did it because it's the end of the month

and they have to keep up with their quota," or ". . .because he was nasty" or
". . .because he didn't like us."

Given the economy rule and given the domains, there may well be
exclusivity between domains, such that if some account from one domain is
relevant, accounts from other domains are excluded. That is, it's not that you
need one account from each, or several from each. If you have one from a
relevant one (or whatever number necessary from a relevant one), then you
may well exclude any from the others.

Those separations or those rules are enforced, and the penalties for violation
of them are very very serious. Let's say, for example, you talk in the following
kind of way and you see the world in the following kind of way:

A: Why would you get fired?
B: Why would I get fired? Because people are bastards. That's the best
    answer I can give you.
A: You mean it's some trouble between someone else and you?
B: No. It's trouble because of the nature of dishonest, corrupt, immoral,
    indecent people. People are interested only in themselves and the hell
    with the rest of the world. In other words unless they can make a
    dollar out of it they won't do a damn thing in the world.

If you talk like that, given questions like, not "Why did you get fired from
this job?" but "Why do you get fired?" then you're going to be heard as
'paranoid.' And that is a rather serious sanction controlling such movements
between layers.

Now the kinds of exclusion between layers, levels, domains can be more or
less supported by various kinds of institutions, such that courts will only hear
certain kinds of explanations as appropriate, and the like. And one can
perhaps lay out that the kinds of attacks that are formulated about Freudian
psychotherapy by Marxists consist of a pointing to the fact that some domain
(the emotions) is used exclusively, which is otherwise used by Members, and
also a very special unit of social organization (the family), and any other
accounts of troubles are excluded. Where what the opposition proposes is that
explanations for things like why X feels lousy, why he can't do various things,
are to be formulated by reference to, for example, his social position, the
structure of society in the sense of its economic structure, and the like. Let me
bring this home to you with among my favorite of all quotations. It's so
striking that I think very few people would propose it, but in principle it's the
sort of thing that everybody does all the time. It's from the *Washington Post*,
a kind of social welfare article:

Elizabeth was a bright, attractive 14-year-old who had grown up in a
house crowded with in-laws, brothers, sisters, nieces and nephews. Her
parents both worked and were rarely at home. Her older brothers and
sisters also worked, leaving the youngsters to manage for themselves.
No one particularly cared whether Elizabeth or any of the other children

got to school, needed anything, or were happy. They were just left there to grow up as best they could.

As a result of these conditions, Elizabeth became pregnant.

Such attempts can be revolutionary, not in the sense that they want to change the structure of the society, but they want to break some of the separations and some of the rules of relevance that decide what an explanation would be. You could perfectly well have major changes in the way an economy is organized without much affecting, perhaps, what it is that persons attend to as explanations for this or that, where they get them from, which of them they take to be exclusive of others, etc.

One of the ways of seeing how persons attend to explanations, etc., is to consider when, for them, is a problem seen. Following is a quotation with a similar cast to the foregoing. A teenage daughter in a family is having some troubles; a social worker went to the family and spoke to them, and is now reporting. At one point she says:

There's no father. Her father's been dead quite a few years and there's an unaccounted for, about three-year-old child in the home. . .

Now none of us take it that the social worker is suggesting the possibility of a virgin birth. An unaccounted for three-year-old child is a child for whom there is, not no father, but no husband.

What makes something 'unaccounted for,' and the kinds of things that would account for it sufficiently, completely, and exclusively, are then matters which we must very carefully try to get at. And I take it that there are very strong ways that those things get regulated.

Now I want to continue in part with the discussion of the 'warning,' moving, however, a little bit further in the conversation. What I'm going to say is extremely simple and obvious, but it will be of some use to see it and be able to use it, because it has some general applications.

Ken :   I still say though that if you take if you take uh a a big fancy car
           out on the road and you're hotroddin' around, you're– you're
           bound to get you're bound to get caught, and you're bound to
           get shafted.
(   ):   (//   )
Ken :   W'l look– I'm gonna–
Al :   Not unless ya do it right. // That's the challenge– that's the
           challenge you wanna try and do it right so you don't get caught!
Roger :   That's the problem with society.

There are two returns to the warning, directly. One is, "That's the problem with society" and the other is, "That's the challenge. You wanna try and do it right so you don't get caught." Now one thing that seems relevant about a warning – perhaps by virtue of the fact that warnings and predictions use

the same form – is whether the proposition it asserts is correct. And from the two statements we have, there are some very simple and very nice ways of seeing that Members accept the correctness of what might be a possibly correct statement. One very obvious one is that they complain about what's asserted. The use of a complaint (e.g., "That's the problem with society") can then be seen to be one way that a statement's correctness is accepted.

I want now to see whether that assertion – that a possibly correct statement is accepted as correct if it's complained of – can be generalized. One way it might be generalized is to consider some class of which 'complaining' is a member, and to see whether, for some class of which it's a member the other members also do accepting of the correctness of a statement, if they're used. One obvious class of which complaining is a member is a 'contrast class' in which another member is 'applauding'/'praising.' I assert that; I'll try to show that it's so because I don't want to rely on the fact that the dictionary says complaining and applauding are antonyms. Further, if all or some members of that set do, in part, the job of showing an acceptance of the correctness of a possibly correct statement, then we have a series of ways in which such an acceptance can be located, and thus, that a statement is seen as correct for Members can be warranted by us, i.e., we can point to the fact that it was complained of or applauded. There are, then, two kinds of related problems. One is to show that "That's the problem with society" is a 'complaint.' and the other is to establish in some way the kind of intimacy that we're proposing holds between complaining and applauding.

In the case at hand, the problem of showing that something is a 'complaint' is not much of a task at all. The character of "That's the problem with society" is not uninteresting, but it's clearly a 'token complaint.' If anything is a 'complaint' this is one, and it's simply recognizable as 'a complaint.' That is, it's a preformulated complaint. By 'preformulated' I mean that that statement, "That's the problem with society," on an occasion in which somebody wants to do complaining, can be used, and can be used about a lot of things that they want to complain about. It isn't restricted to a usage for the particular thing that was complained of here. And we needn't suppose that it was constructed for this particular complaint; it was simply invoked.

That's what we mean, in part, by 'tokens.' They are like money in that sense. If you want to do a certain thing that can be done with this, you do it with it. Now that matter has some very general import, as follows – and the point that I'm going to make is Parson's; at least he makes the observations, and it's a matter that he's attempted to deal with in his inimitable fashion. One of the nice questions that comparative sociologies obviously might want to deal with is: For various types of currencies, what kind of distribution is there across cultures? That is, if you can make a list of things that are doable via tokens in some place, how many of them can you find in any given other place, where those things will tell you a great deal about various kinds of social development. For example, it's obvious that if they have a token money, then that's a tremendously indicative fact about the kind of economy they have. Now there's no reason at all to restrict that notion to money. You

could perhaps find out a great deal by virtue of whether they have, e.g., token complaints, token praises, token etceteras. And also, of course, you'd want to know the domains in which such things can be used in any given society.

Tokens are especially well-formulated parts of a place. They are routinely used, and are designed for routine use. They don't have to be constructed at any given time, and the task of their acceptance does not turn on things like: Do you have credit at this place, or Do they like the item you've built, or Can they recognize that it's the kind of thing that passes? It may be that anybody can invoke them, and when they're invoked, what they're doing is perfectly well observable.

Now then, to the question of the proposed intimacy between complaining and applauding. It turns out that there is an intimacy, and it is extremely nicely used. In certain ways it's utterly crudely obvious, i.e., if you have a clear member of one, then you can regularly make a member of the other by simply negativing it: "He's nice" (praise, applause), "He's not nice" (complaint). That's altogether too obvious and simple and there are some less routine, perhaps much more elegant usages, but that one will provide in part for the alternation of complaining and applauding.

There's a kind of thing which some people do with immense regularity, which, if you ask them, they tend to say they're doing perhaps to soften the blow of a complaint, perhaps to show that they are not just complaining. But for our purposes what it ought to be seen as, at least in part, is 'signalling a complaint.' What they do are things like this – and the following three instances come from within about a minute and a half of conversation between two people talking about a bridge game; produced by the same speaker:

> *B*: Yeah. She said then will you look at your hand. I mean, she's very nice, but to me that's inviting you to gain.

Later on:

> *B*: I like her very much, but she still has that silly chatter about her.

And a bit later:

> *B*: Yeah, see we waste an awful lot, and I know– I think– Really, I love Theresa. I didn't mean that– her food was just outstanding. But I thought we were going to eat at the tables.

Apparently, then, routinely a piece of praise plus 'but' plus something else, tells you that the something else is a 'complaint,' where it isn't obvious, often, that it is a complaint. That is to say, isolated, it wouldn't be a complaint. You wouldn't recognize it as such if all you had was "To me that's inviting you to gain," or "I thought we were going to eat at the tables." (In the latter case, the problem was that this lady didn't want to stop the bridge game to have

a meal, and her complaint involves that while the meal was marvelous, it interfered with the course of the game.)

That thing is really extremely widespread. It seems to work the other way, as well: Possible complaint plus 'but' plus something else, tends to be used, I think, to signal 'praise.' "He really isn't very cute but he took me to dinner," "On first meeting one might think of him as gruff or aloof. However, in a short time his warmth and closeness to his family become apparent."

So I take it we can say that complaining and applauding stand in some strong alternation to each other. And of course under that circumstance, the sheer fact that we know that a 'possible fact,' if responded to by a piece of praise is thereby accepted as correct, is not now a matter independent from that thing about complaints, but is simply a rule formulatable by reference to that class of which complaining, applauding, and the like, are members. They are, among other things, ways of accepting the correctness of a possible fact, and we sociologists can use their use to propose that some possible fact is accepted as correct by Members.

And we can consider variations on the same sort of thing, which can turn on such statements as: "Women are fickle," return: "It isn't their fault." Where, if your concern is to deny the fact, then "It isn't their fault" fails that, in part. Where, then, things like 'excuses' and other such things work at the same sort of task, and we can then get ourselves a rather decent armory for seeing the sort of thing that Members take to be correct, at least on any given occasion some Member takes it to be correct.

Now the matter of the other fellow seeing the statement as proposing a challenge, seems to serve, in part, the same sort of work, but in the case at hand and for cases like it, what seems to be involved is that not all of the possible forms that that statement might be heard as, are accepted as correct. That is, the statement, "If you go hotrodding you're bound to get caught" can of course have a variety of interpretations. For example, just vary 'you' between singular-plural-everyone use. Given that "you're bound to get caught" could get various interpretations by Members, one of the things we want to be able to see is, which ones are they seeing, and which ones are they accepting.

When it's seen as a 'challenge,' it seems that what's involved is that it's seen via 'you' as a rather generalized term, and that "you're bound to" is not for any given case, but something like 'over the long or short run,' 'eventually.' Otherwise, again, if it's guaranteed that on any given try you will get caught, then there's no challenge

There's a certain beauty to seeing a challenge in such a statement. And it sets up some rather regular social problems of sorts. That is, if it's very likely that anyone who does it will get caught, then a game can be built under certain circumstances. Or, even if you don't fully build a 'game,' what you can do is set up circumstances where you can see that you have succeeded, and you can count each success. Where one has these sorts of statements accepted, then, one has machinery which permits you to score, and to tell others, and

they'll see that you scored, i.e., you did it and you didn't get caught. "I did it five times and I didn't get caught." "We did it twice that night and we didn't get caught."

A fairly full-fledged 'game' can be developed when that event that's troublesome (like getting caught) is the result of something that's done by some set of persons who operate under a set of rules that are laid down (the police, for example). And it doesn't matter if a set of rules are intendedly regulating the challenger's behavior, it can be read as regulating the behavior of the catchers. If the challengers then treat those rules as enforceable on the behavior of the catchers, then the catchers are bound by a set of rules that permit them to be players in an indefinite series of games. The thing becomes a game by virtue of somebody setting up another team which is going to treat the rules that intendedly, perhaps, regulate themselves, as regulating the others. They then set up a series of things they're going to do, via which they'll score, which they can compare each other on, etc., and which can work insofar as they can take it that, e.g., the police will abide by the rules of the game. The police sometimes buy this; sometimes it infuriates them. They can perfectly well know what's going on. It's the basis for complaints about having been arrested and convicted, perhaps, for doing something which you weren't in fact located by virtue of having done. You were located only because you were recognizable as an intended player in some game. They didn't let you play. They see you're a hotrodder, and they know, for example, that if they care to they can arrest you on whatever, and find something wrong with your car, and that will then provide for an arrest having been done in the first place. They do that, rather than awaiting that they catch you under the ways that they're 'supposed to' catch people. Where, for them, it isn't the circumstance that everybody is playing the game. If everyone were, matters would be altogether different.

Now this building a game out of such sets of rules which are binding on one set of parties (allegedly, perhaps, the 'wrong' set of parties), which can be publicly known, so that you have a rule book which doesn't tell both sides what each must do, but only tells one side what it must do, and therefore permits a game to be built (or a whole set of them) is, of course, a tremendously regular kind of thing, completely apart from situations with the police. There are problems, of course: No referees. Which is the issue that gets hotrodders into trouble, i.e., the police can violate and you can't complain. And of course the scoring is not exactly similar to the way scoring is done in games, i.e., both teams do not agree at the end of an evening that you scored so many, though the police may well on some occasion say, "You won this time."

And for a good game it's of course necessary in the first instance that there be another team and that they be doing things. No opposition, no game. T. S. Eliot's attack on modern sex in *The Wasteland*, center section, involves the destruction of opposition. The woman doesn't oppose, doesn't do anything, and then it's a quite different kind of phenomenon. You can't prove yourself a man that way. You can't score. Though you could tell your friends you did.

So it isn't, then, incidental where one is going to find systematic attempts at violations of certain sorts of rules. There has to be some very good enforcement procedure going on, where you're going to get sport made. And of course none of them see themselves as professional criminals; they are sportsmen. And it just wouldn't do to violate laws that nobody could see were regularly enforced. That could be an argument for various sorts of things – loose enforcement of the speeding laws, low speeding laws or maybe high ones, at least if certain matters turned out to be relevant, like the death rate among hotrodders is very high and you wanted to cut that down at all costs.

One further thing. On the matter of 'complaints,' there are several other things involved when one uses a complaint to accept a fact. One of them is, again, perfectly obvious and simple: The one who uses a complaint can be heard as making an identification of himself. And that is obviously an enormous control on making complaints. It may be extremely difficult to be able to formulate a complaint about certain matters without having a perfectly standardized identification asserted (e.g., 'traitor'). Under that circumstance, the counting of the amount of complaints versus the amount of applauses has rather serious weaknesses. Clearly enough, you can't do one, perhaps, like complaining, without having a certain identification, or some small group of identifications, placed on you in such a way that you can't readily get it off, and that itself may be relevant to the question of whether you do it or not.

And on the other hand, the way you get such a thing put on you may be either to complain or applaud. As a measure, then, of 'response to the fact' it has some weaknesses which are systematically built right into the very mechanism; that is, those other things that can be done with complaints or applause.

Lecture 13
Button-Button Who's Got the Button

I felt a strong need to take a break from the data which we've been dealing with. What I'll consider today will be the first in a series of interjected lectures, which turn out to be quite relevant to certain matters that are present in these materials. For example, I very roughly suggested the character of hearing the 'warning' as a 'challenge,' as being involved in seeing the possibility of a sport, or a game, in the situation of driving under certain regulations. What I want to do, then, in the series of lectures I will give occasionally, is to develop a formulation of series of the properties of *games*. And I'll try to point out now and again what aspects of the data we are dealing with, that they are important for.

I'm going, now, to consider some aspects of a particular game. By no means anything like all aspects of games, or all relevant aspects of that game. The game is called Button-button who's got the button – an enormously substantial phenomenon, you might imagine.

I'll start off by just going through how the game works, roughly. It's played by kids five to ten, and it works in the following kind of way. There's a set of people sitting in a row on a sidewalk or something like that. There's one person who is called It, and they walk down the row with a button concealed in their hand, and they engage in possibly passing it to each person in the row. Once a cycle is completed, the person who is It having possibly passed it to each person, then various people in one or another way, guess who has it. When the guess is correct, then that play ends and they begin again. There are alternatives that can be done; perhaps the person who guessed correctly is It, alternatively, the person who had the button can be It. They then proceed to do the same thing, and the game goes on in that way.

Now, I take it the game is tremendously interesting for certain sorts of tasks that are involved in it. That those tasks are learned to be accomplished via the game alone, I'm certainly not saying. That the game can be a large help, and that other games and activities like it can be a large help to learning those tasks, I think is so. That those tasks are altogether fundamental to becoming a full-fledged human seems, I think, to be clear.

I'm going to try to provide a characterization of what's involved in playing this game, or playing it well.

The problem for a person who is engaged in trying to decide who has the button – where that person doesn't have the button himself – can be said to be detecting, in what may be a series of alternative ways, from basically the appearance of the other non-It players, which of them has the button. The alternatives are, for example, very carefully watching the moment of possible

transaction and/or looking at them afterwards and seeing if there's some way to see that they do indeed or do not indeed have the button. Now the physical properties of the game are quite relevant, in that a button is not an incidental phenomenon. It is very small and thin, and can then be passed in such a way that when you see that someone has the button, you don't see the button. So we get a notion of observability which involves something like 'seeing that they know they have the button.' And the game, then, is rather different than a game in which, for example, a piece of food might be passed and one could smell who has it, or the object that was being looked for had some visible effect, like the hand was thicker than it might be if it didn't have the button in it; where, then the button itself would be the observable.

But what's core to this game is that one can observe that someone has the button, feel very confident in that, without having any observation of the button itself, and it's simply a failure of the passer or the recipient that it's the button that's seen and not their appearance which gives away that they have the button. So it's not the case, then, that the object is incidental to the characteristics of the game and that it just happens it's played with a button – though of course it is in some sense just incidental that it's played with a button; it could be played with anything that had the same physical properties. But it couldn't be played with anything that had different physical properties. Something that's thicker would not do the job and would pose a very different kind of game.

Now this sense of an observable thing – that one sees an appearance and sees, then, that something has been done – is of course in its fashion, the basic sense of 'observable' social phenomena. Especially for, let's say, moral phenomena. One can see that somebody did something wrong by looking at them. One can see who they are by looking at them, etc. Where it's not anything like the smell or the size of the particular object. And in that sense, the notion of 'observable' is that one sees their thoughts. That is to say, one sees the button by seeing that they know they have the button. If the button could be passed in such a way that they didn't know they had it, the game would be altogether different.

And this phenomenon of seeing other people's thoughts is really an important thing. Exactly how it's properly posed is quite tricky. First of all, it's of course nonsense to say that thoughts are things that can't be seen, unless you want to take some notion of 'thoughts' which Members do not employ, since they certainly do take it that one can see what anybody is thinking. Not in every case, certainly, but you can see what people are thinking, and there are ways of doing it. And you must learn to do it.

The question of whether you learn that others can see what you're thinking and you learn to see what others are thinking, or that you know it in the first instance, is what's problematic. I'll do a parenthetical series of considerations on that now.

One of the classical symptoms in certain kinds of schizophrenia is that the patient takes it that other people can see their thoughts, or know their thoughts – look right into their head. Adults who hear that take that as an

immensely queer symptom. And the problem, at least historically, was posed as: How is it that somebody would come to feel that others would know their thoughts? That's a very obvious way of posing the problem. Somebody says, "Others know my thoughts." How do they come to think that?

One of the early places, in at least the psychoanalytic literature, that that formulation was used, was in a very classic paper by a man named Victor Tausk, called 'On the influencing machine in schizophrenia.' It's been translated and reprinted several places, including *The Psychoanalytic Reader* by Robert Fliess and *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*. It was delivered in about 1917 at one of the meetings of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, and at the end of it there's a discussion. Tausk reports that he has a patient, a 16-year-old girl, and she has a very characteristic phenomenon which he discovers in her. He's talking to her, and she laughs at his questions. He asks her why is she laughing; she says, "What are you asking me questions like that for? You know what my thoughts are." And now he tries to formulate a solution to the problem, posed, as I've said, as 'how could somebody think that others know their thoughts?'

Freud is at the meeting where Tausk delivered this paper, and with what could be seen as a very characteristic aspect of his genius he says, "You posed the problem in completely the wrong way. It's not the case that what we have to explain is how is it that people come to think others know their thoughts. That's not the issue at all. The question is, how is it that normals come to think that others don't know their thoughts? And the character of the schizophrenic as 'regressed' involves the fact that either they never learned that others don't know their thoughts, or, having learned it, they are now back at positions akin to that of a child."

And he formulates the following kind of account (I'm not selling this account, I'm only offering it to loosen the matter up somewhat). He says, "After all, children learn their language from adults, and they must suppose that as they use it, adults know how they're using it, what they're doing with it, and can directly see their doing that sort of thing, i.e., thinking with a language," Now he says, "Well, what will be the sort of thing that would lead to the discovery that people don't generally or in all cases, know what one is thinking?" Then he says, "The first successful lie. What a trauma that must be. Or what a discovery that must be. You're asked a question, you give a lie, and they don't tell you you're wrong."

That's a tremendously interesting set of possible observations. And it makes very equivocal exactly how we're to formulate the state of knowing that others know your thoughts, or knowing others' thoughts. But in any event, it's clear that to some extent people take it that others can know their thoughts, and people take it that they can know others' thoughts, by looking at them.

Now, if we consider the game of Button-button who's got the button, we could imagine that very young kids who are playing it, and who take it that what they have to see, to make a decision, is the button, might discover that they don't have to use the button. That is, they could be spending their time

watching for the button, fail to see the button, and nonetheless see that, gee, they bet they know who has it – by whatever it is that seems to them to give that away. So it's the kind of game that may very well involve something that's in general terribly important, and that is that you can regularly – and children can – start off with quite lousy criteria for making a decision, be correct, and improve by modifying those criteria as you go along.

A very young child, for example, can have very good ideas on who's boys and who's girls, and have very bad ideas on what differentiates those two. Though in any given case they may make quite a good formulation of who it is – a boy or a girl. And that then involves us in a situation where there's a strong separation between the adequacy of one's criteria, and practical efficacy. That's of course, not simply at the basis of the possibility of improvement to some extent, but of, let's say, infantile socialization. And presumably a great many things like science tremendously depend on it. One can make differentiations which turn out to be wrong but have permitted you to locate a phenomenon that remains a phenomenon as you get better at deciding what it is or how it works or what differentiates it from something else.

Now in playing the game, one has to come to see that others can tell from your appearance that you have the button, and now you can make a tremendously important discovery, probably akin to what Freud was talking about as the first lie. And that is: There is something you can do which has an effect on whether they guess you have it when you have it, or guess you have it when you don't; and that if you do those things you get a variation in your name being picked or not. Where what that turns on is quite nice in the game. The core thing is the point of possible transition. One might suppose that if the kid were being altogether naive, then if he gets the button he'll respond dramatically one way or another, e.g., with joy or sorrow, at that split moment when he gets it. What he has to learn is, for one, to be prepared to control a response, depending on what happens – where he doesn't know in the first instance what's going to happen. That is, if he wants to be imagined to have the button when he hasn't been passed it, he has to be prepared to act as if he's got it at the moment of possible transfer. But if he's prepared that response too well, then if he does get the button he'll have given away that he does have it. That means he has to develop a control which is ready to work depending on alternative events – a control which works almost immediately.

The usability of appearance, then, to convey a false impression, is one of the basic tasks in playing the game well. It is, then, in part, a training ground for liars and deceivers. But it is equally well a game which is directed to the detection of liars and deceivers, since the category of player you are is regularly changed and therefore you not only have to learn how to deceive, but how to detect deception.

Furthermore, you have to learn that that which successfully operated once or n times is not guaranteed success, and in fact may well be assured failure, a next time. That is to say, if you joyously respond to the fact that you don't

have the button, and people take it that you have got the button and discover that they're wrong, then any next time they can learn your pattern and use it to see what you're doing. So there's no winning strategy that can be laid out on the basis of any past strategy. And then it's the character of the game as replayed constantly each time, which is rather crucial to training for both deceiving and detecting deceiving. Any successful method for doing either can be self-defeating if it's simply continued.

Now one of the serious things you have to notice about the game, and this holds to a very considerable extent for games in general, is the following: Recall, in the piece of data we're considering, Al says "Now did you do it right that's the challenge you wanna try and do it right so you don't get caught." One of the things we might be engaged in trying to figure out is, well, would it really be a proof that you did it right if you don't get caught, or, for that matter, would it be a proof that you did it wrong if you do get caught. If we took, say, science as our model, then it would be to some extent irrelevant, and certainly not definitive, that you did or did not get caught – for example, that you did or did not make a correct guess. What would differentiate a guess from a prediction would be that you have, and can offer, a good account of how you came to see that the person had the button, i.e., for one, how you came to do it right. Whereas in games, and in games like this one especially, it's asserting the name or getting caught that counts. And one can have the most elaborate or the least elaborate systems of accounts and they're irrelevant. Games operate under a test of practical efficacy.

And that's not a matter of theoretical preference for the players. If you lost, if people have called your name out when you've had the button, you have to suppose that they have some way of knowing it, and you have to modify your activities.

Now you can apparently also proceed play by play, have a notion of success that will serve you, figure that you're learning and improving, without operating in any situation where you could say "What I've learned now is sufficient for never losing." That is, at no point need you propose to test the adequacy of what you've gotten by saying "What I'm going to do is simply maintain the way I've got now of knowing how others look when they have the button, or of having others not know when I have the button, and I'll be right." In the game, that is one way of guaranteeing that you're going to be wrong, since it simply poses the problem for the others to see what pattern you're using and permits them to modify their own activities so as to foil it.

The fact that there is a shift of categories in each play, may be of some large relevance as well. Many games have that property: We bat this half inning, you bat next half inning, etc. And that involves, for one, that in simple games, each position is learned from both sides, so that a very important notion of categories and their characteristics is taught to kids then – if they don't know them beforehand. That notion is: Categories aren't persons. There's no equivalence either of one category – one proper person, or that a person has only one category indefinitely. This is a matter which they might well at some point in their lives not be apprised of and which might, then, involve them

in formulating, for example, activities as tied not to categories but to persons, which would be evidenced by their use of some activity characterized in a way that, for adults, would not be properly formulated. That is to say, where the appropriate category is not used.

You find, for example, in the younger children's stories in *Children Tell Stories*, that they seem to have basically just one membership categorization device – the 'family' – which they use to handle almost anybody in any situation there may be. Now that fact doesn't just happen, because adults allow them to do that. That is, children are trained first to use a single device, and the device is modified from its normal uses so as to permit its use to handle pretty much anybody. That is to say, the 'family' device has certain possibilities which permit its application to almost anybody. Certain categories can only have a single member in them – 'mother' and 'father' – but there are other categories – 'uncle' and 'aunt' – which in principle can have an indefinite number of members, and are taught to children as having that characteristic, so all adult males, or many of them, for some period of time, are Uncle so-and-so without respect to any formulation of kinship as adults would use it, and females are Aunt so-and-so. And in that way, the use of the single device is permitted and encouraged, and it's made into something that can handle almost anybody.

And what we say if that's so is, of course, that they're using the categories of the 'family' device as equivalent to personal names, where 'personal names' are in some way equivalent to, for objects, the name of objects. It's only in special circumstances that a table need be called anything else than a table. Whereas for formulating who's doing something, a set of alternative categories may well be extremely relevant, and one presumably has to come to see that a person can have a whole set of alternative ones. One very simple way is to have a rapid shift in those categories that hold for someone, where it wouldn't be odd at all that someone was It a minute ago and now is no longer It. That can be, now, a prototype of how it is that persons ought to be formulated, rather than that Mommy was Mommy yesterday and now she is no longer – where Mommy becomes stable by virtue of becoming a term of address in a sense, and thereby can retain its character as being used indefinitely perhaps, while one learns that there can be a series of other formulations of the same person, for others and himself, depending on what's going on. We get, then, the various sorts of category instability, where the stability resides in an appropriate category for an appropriate activity and not an appropriate category given some person having had it.

I have some indication that there is in fact a discovery procedure of learning a series of these matters, where they are, in fact, learned over time. For example, it appears that in games like Hide and seek, when young kids are playing, if they win once by hiding somewhere, then the next time they hide in the same place, and they have to be taught by the other players that that's not a guarantee of success, it's a guarantee of failure.

We could take these features and show that there are games in which just what works here, the opposite works there. So, for example, if in Button-

button what's important is to control one's future immediate response to possibly getting the button, then there are games where, if a person does that, that's a good guarantee that they're cheating. What they ought to do is to respond in absolute naiveté so that, for example, in the game Pickup sticks, if the sticks move then your turn is over. And it's not supposed to be the case that the other person has to decide that the sticks moved.

The game is typically played where the other person may be looking, not looking, paying close attention or not, and what they see is that you're watching the sticks very carefully, which is what you're supposed to be doing, and that you obviously react to the movement of the sticks. If they move, your face shows it. And you just drop the sticks; you don't have to wait to be called on it. In fact, in that sort of a game, if you're playing with somebody who you suspect is a cheater, all you have to do is watch the sticks, see if they move, and see if there's any response on the part of the person whose turn it is. If they don't respond, then you can be pretty sure that they are engaged in, systematically or not, cheating.

A few comments: This issue of the relevance of an appearance for attending what's up with somebody, and their capacities to control it and the equivalent capacity to check it out, is one that I can only very generally, very abstractly handle, because how it's ever done is something that first of all I'm not in a position to say. I don't know that it would ever be an issue for Sociology to say, as compared to that being a fact that students of Perception would deal with.

I make the point now, and it can be generalized to a lot of what I've already said, that once we get to an issue of a single device being relevant, then we have nothing to say. I have no idea how it is, and I make no claims to have any idea how it is. Once it's the case that Negro–white is relevant for some person, male–female is relevant for some person, somebody goes about detecting that that person is (   ) I'm not ever going to be saying anything about that matter.

On the orientation to appearances more generally; when I said that it's utterly central to being human, I had in mind the following sort of thing. In our Judeo-Christian mythology, the first event characterized as being human is a response to an awareness of an appearance. That is, the first event after the eating of the apple in Eden is just that event of being aware. The first thing they have. happen is being aware that they're naked. Before that they're not human, and before that they're not oriented to what can be seen by looking at them. So the matter has been tremendously focussed on, at least in such kinds of places.

Lecture 14
Disorderability; Tying rules

What I want to do now is introduce another order of consideration which is relevant to the data we're looking at, and then, directly, to conversation in general, and then indirectly to whatever activities one might want to consider, apart from conversation.

I have now and again made some remarks about sequencing, and one obviously relevant matter about activities, particularly conversation, can at least initially be posed as follows. First, to what extent is it the case that for any given conversation the utterances which compose it are not *disorderable?* And by that I mean only that, whatever it is that one might want to preserve or need to preserve so as to analyze what's going on, can one, for example, take any utterance, wherever it occurs, and place it somewhere else in the sequence for the same conversation? "We were in an automobile discussion" "discussing the psychological motives for" "drag racing on the streets." Does it matter that it goes "We were in an automobile discussion" first, "discussing the psychological motives for" second, and "drag racing on the streets" third? Or could you put it any way you want it for purposes of analysis, and perhaps for purposes of having produced a conversation. Now it's clear enough that there are some parts of a conversation for which it might be the case that it wouldn't matter. Suppose a new topic is introduced in some place in the conversation, and that topic goes on for some way and then closes, and then another begins and closes. It's possible, perhaps, that you could take the second topic discussion and place it before the first, and find that it makes no difference whatsoever. Or it's possible, perhaps, that you could take any utterance out of a conversation and place it any other place, or some other places, while losing nothing. That would be one type of activity. They happen to occur in sequence, but there's no *local control* over when anything happens.

Second, if it's the case that there's at least some partial non-disorderability to the utterances of a conversation, how is it that that non-disorderability is provided for? There are, at least a priori, quite different possibilities. Supposing some non-disorderability for any given conversation, it might be the case that the way that that non-disorderability is provided for is particular to the given conversation. Alternatively, there might be a more or less general set of rules which can be used to provide the non-disorderability of any conversation at all.

For some purposes, obviously, disorderability matters. When we talk about the fact that some statements in a conversation have to be understood 'in context,' one of the things we're pointing to, presumably, is that to treat them without respect to the problem of non-disorderability is to provide

perhaps for misunderstanding, or to make them altogether not understandable. That's a very familiar observation. Here's a quotation, a sentence President Kennedy once said:

Children should bury their fathers.

I suppose one could say, gee, that's a strange thing that fellow said. If one gets what he was doing, what it is that preceded that, one might feel that one was in a position to find out what activity he's doing with that sentence. In this case he happens to be dedicating a memorial to persons who were lost at sea during the Second World War, and he's trying to indicate the pain in such losses. The line I've quoted occurs in the following utterance:

It is, after all, against the law of nature for parents to bury their children. Children should bury their fathers. And when it's necessary for a father or mother to bury a son who may range from 18 to 28, with all of his life before him, it represents a special wrench.

The line itself, however, may not have any formal properties which tell you right off that it's being 'pulled out of some context.' There are others which tell you right off that they're pulled out of some context to which they have to be returned to find what they're about. What sort of line? How about 'Yes.' 'Yes' what? Look to the question above, perhaps, to find.

Now of course there are various consequences to treating properly non-disorderable statements as disorderable. One is, if statements are altogether disorderable, then they are apparently excerptable and quotable. And the issue of quotability has been a rather prominent one in many places. One can think simply of such matters as indicting somebody for some statement they made. But there are much larger considerations involved, and, in part, the difference between Aristotle's techniques of doing philosophy and Plato's turn on the fact that the character of a dialogue as a method of doing philosophy has as one of its central properties that the utterances of the dialogue are not properly to be pulled out and merely, then, treated as what this fellow thinks about a problem that this sentence happens to be about. In part it is that sort of fact that makes for the difficulty of analysis of dialogue, the sort of inaccessability it has, the possibilities of developing a position, and various other things.

Now if we look to conversations to see to what extent any one of them is disorderable, or not, and then ask, how is it that that disorderability or non-disorderability is provided for, we can perhaps come up with some rather general sets of rules whose use does the work of providing for non-disorderability. And if it's the case that we need some such rules and that if we had them they'd give us the non-disorderability, then, for one, we'd have a way of formulating some decent notions of 'context,' seeing that context is something that is oriented to by Members, and is not then simply a matter of, 'Of course it happened to happen at a certain time, so therefore you can't

remove it from when it occurred . . .' etc. In many areas there are significant attempts made to produce utterances which are not context-bound at all for their understanding. Obviously to some extent the whole science of mathematics is directed to that sort of attempt. And of course the very notion of 'truth' has such an intention involved in it, though there is a considerable amount of argument as to whether such a claim can be made.

Let's then just consider a little bit, a few of the ways that non-disorderability can be provided for, and then I'll offer some rather general considerations about it. I'm going basically to be talking about two classes of rules which provide for non-disorderability. I'll use the term I introduced earlier as a general name for these rules, *'tying rules.'* And the two classes I'll call first speaker rules and second speaker rules. Both of them concern pairs of utterances. The basic difference is, for the analyst anyway, that for first speaker rules, one sees, when looking at some utterance, that its user has made himself into a 'first speaker' for some pair, and has provided, then, that a next speaker ought to make himself a 'second speaker' for that pair. One starts with a recognizable 'first member of a pair,' where it may well be that if you don't know that there has been a first member of a pair you can't tell that the second is 'a second member of a pair.'The second members are not recognizable, the first are. The second are only recognizable given the fact you recognize the first and are therefore looking for a second. That is, the rule doesn't govern the first speaker's actions.

For second speaker rules it works the other way. You start with something recognizable as 'the second member of a pair,' and then turn backwards to something that is not recognizable as 'a first member of a pair' unless one has the second to see that there ought to be one. So first speaker rules provide for the proper tying of a next utterance to a current one, and second speaker rules tie some second utterance to something which may not have been produced as an intended 'first utterance' for some pair.

Now the use of these two classes of rules is not mutually exclusive. That is to say, a speaker can do both at once. He can make his utterance a 'first' for some next, while at the same time making it a 'second' utterance of a prior pair. And that's extremely important for the following reason, for example: One of the most obvious first speaker pairs is question–answer, the 'first' item being a 'question.' Now the first item, the question, can also be the 'second utterance of a pair' in the following sort of way. Suppose one person has said "My opinion is X." Then we could have a question which would say something like "Why do you say that?," where that's partially tied to the prior, and provides for another.

The theoretical core interest in those things is that if you can combine the two types, you can get right off, triplets, and an indefinite nesting of a conversation which ties all of its parts together in some extremely complex way, out of very simple pairs of rules. That is, you might well find that some item is the second for some first, and that that first is now tied to some other, and back, so that if you want to put a given one anywhere, you find that you have to put it exactly where it is – and not just following the immediately

prior utterance; it would have to come after the eighteenth utterance in that particular sequence. And all you need for that is, perhaps, two pairs of rules plus their combinability.

Now what are the sorts of rules? One obvious first speaker pair is, of course, question–answer. By using a question, a speaker makes himself a 'first speaker' and provides that somebody ought to be a 'second speaker' for that pair. It's routinely the case that questions are produced in such a fashion as to be recognizable as questions. There are a variety of means whereby that is done, which are, of course, not particular to any question. They are things like question-order in sentences – a different grammatical order than declarative sentence order, intonation pattern, and a series of others. There's a rather lovely book on questions called *Interrogative Structures of American English,* by Dwight Bolinger. It's publication no. 28 of the American Dialect Society (1957). And of course there are routine grammatical discussions of them in almost any grammar.

Let me pause at this point just to make a few remarks on questions; I don't intend this as a comprehensive discussion. It's occasionally or regularly argued that certain criterial features of questions, for example, in intonation, the characteristic rise, are present far less frequently than is regularly supposed. For a discussion on that matter there's an article by Charles Fries in a book called *Essays in Honor of Daniel Jones.* What Fries did was to listen to the television program 'What's My Line,' take all those things which turned out to be treated as questions, and try to write down their intonations, for one. He came up with a finding that only something like only 35 percent of them had the characteristic intonation structure of questions.

Now that doesn't necessarily mean that questions are problematic. One thing it might mean — and this is an extremely rough hypothesis, but my suspicion is that something like it is so – is that what's troublesome about that sort of analysis is that essential to the argument is a notion of the independence of any question from any other question. It seems to me from the tapes that I listen to, that the chaining rule for questions is terribly criterial to the recognition of questions. Such that the first question in a sequence will regularly be independently recognizable as a question by, for example, a very pure grammatical form and/or a characteristic intonation, but that once a sequence of questions is started, then it may well be the case that unless some next utterance by, say, the questioner, has a very clear non-question form, it can be heard as a question by virtue of occurring in a sequence of questions. Under that circumstance, i.e., that the characteristic of a question is to be found by its occurrence in a list that is hearable as being 'a list of questions,' it would be difficult to warrant an argument which counted them as singly independent objects.

Questions are, then, by and large, recognizable as such. And recognizable, then, as first items in a pair. Answers are not. There are extremely few answers which, if you simply have them, you know that you have 'an answer.' I once tried to see whether there were any utterances that could be said, simply by looking at it: 'If that occurs it may always — or overwhelmingly if not

always – be an answer.' And I came up with a kind of a funny result. I don't know whether it's really correct; if it's partially correct it has some interest, because the item that I tended to come up with was one that not only may well be always an answer, but it may also be an item which is almost always offerable as an answer, i.e., can be offered pretty much to any question that's asked. And that is the statement, "I don't know."

What's interesting about that is that it may permit us to partially explicate a rather fundamental historical fact in Western civilization. And that is, that "I don't know" as an answer, has played a unique role in the history of Western civilization. It was, of course, Socrates' phrase. And it served for him as a warrant for fundamental reconsideration of knowledge. It also was the programmatic answer he sought to achieve in any given dialogue, i.e., to get his respondent to offer.

Now, if a dialogue composed of questions and answers is going to be used in an attempt to reopen what it is that is to be allowed as 'knowledge,' it may not be, then, altogether incidental that the item that was used was one which can be offered for any possible piece of knowledge and is, then, general to any issues of knowledge. No other starting point might have that kind of universality to it. I've asked people whether in ancient Greek it's the case that "I don't know" is usable for any question – because it could perfectly well be the case that it's doable in English but not in Greek – and they said Yes. And if that's so, then we could come upon a rather nice basis for, in part, Socrates' use of conversation, and particularly of the dialogue, that wouldn't be independent of this item, "I don't know."

Let me turn to some second speaker rules. I suppose in doing these we could be getting into some kind of trouble with grammarians, but it's a trouble that with mutual decency can be avoided. But they by and large tend to restrict their remarks and analyses to the single sentence as a unit – or the clause, which could be equivalent to the sentence. And while they might propose that the rules they use are similarly restricted – and we'll propose that the rules for use in grammars are not so restricted – we could easily say that they might not be entitled to say that the rules are so restricted, since sentence *sequences* are rarely studied by grammarians, and we won't bother much about the use of the rules in single sentences.

Some of the second speaker rules are very conventional rules of English grammar – of a sort, anyway; though even they have been sometimes queerly treated by grammarians. For example, there's a rule like N ← P. 'N' is noun, 'P' is pronoun. The arrow is going backwards because, while 'N' occurs first in the sequence, we start with 'P' as the thing that tells us we've got a case of the rule, and we then look back to find the 'N' for that 'P.'

Now it seems to me perfectly obvious that that rule {N←P} is not restricted to a use in a single sentence. It can occur in a single sentence, clearly: John put on his hat. 'His' and 'John.' But it can be used across utterances, and across conversations. I'll show a very simple use of it across conversations, to give some idea of its importance across conversations. And with it we get one of the ways that we can even begin to dream of talking about 'non-

disorderability' for a history of conversations between some persons; a matter we would perhaps much like to achieve.

It's kind of a long quotation. It starts out with a mother talking to a little girl.

> The mother asked as if wanting to get things straight: "What are you going to say to Otto?"
>
> Maude said patiently, as if she knew what were expected: "I'm going to ask him if he can come over."
>
> The mother added firmly: "And you're going to say that you can't come over there if he asks you."
>
> Maude nodded acquiescence pleasantly and said: "Ok." She turned and ran quickly into the living room. She climbed onto a chair, stood on the seat, and leaned her tummy against the back of the easy chair. She reached up and took the phone from the top of the piano. She set the phone on top of the chair. Maude waited a moment staring absently at the chair back, then she absently said: "8–5." She looked over at me and asked curiously: "What are you writing about?"
>
> I said to her: "I'm writing now that you took the phone from the piano and said 8–5."
>
> She smiled and looked embarrassed. Suddenly she said: "Otto?" in a very demanding tone of voice. Now her attention seemed to be quite involved in the phone conversation.

It goes on and on. Then we finally get:

> Mrs Pinter called, with a little concern, from the other room: "What did he say?"
>
> Maude called back impatiently: "He hasn't told me yet."

We clearly have here two different conversations between the mother and the child. For one, there are two intervening conversations, one with the observer and one with Otto. (And one could in fact find the same sort of thing where the two conversations take place on different days, for example.) And in this case, we clearly have a use of N ← P (where 'Otto' is 'he') which is occurring between two conversations.

In the 11-page group therapy segment, many uses of this rule can be found which are not within a single utterance. Very largely they tend to be in juxtaposed utterances, but there are some characteristics which provide that they needn't be in juxtaposed utterances. For one, this particular rule has an indefinite extendability to it. That is, given N ← P, you can just continue with P, each P referring back up the sequence, and you can get long strings tied together from the first N; that is: N ← P ← P ← P ← P etc.

Lecture 15
Tying rules; Playing dumb; Correction–invitation device

I'll continue talking about these tying rules. My main interest is not in great long lists of them, because they're kind of dull things to make lists of, but in what they do. I'll consider a few; one can make, I suppose, hundreds more if one likes.

I've been talking about the second speaker rules, and I talked of them via the analyst's tasks, where for second speaker rules one begins with what is sequentially the second item but is recognizably the first that you can find. That's, then, the N ← P rule. Occasionally you can see in some noun usage that what you're going to get is a case of the noun–pronoun rule the other way, i.e., N → P. That would typically be within one single utterance. For an example of that, consider the line, "In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out. . ." When you hear "In that Bonneville of mine" at the beginning of an utterance, you can be rather assured that in due course you're going to get a pronoun for "Bonneville." Now that's grammatically obvious in that what one has is a partial disordering of the standard form of the sentence; the utterance begins with a prepositional phrase where ordinarily, let's say, a sentence might close with it, and given that it begins with it, then when the object that's being referred to will be re-referred to, it will be re-referred to via a pronoun of some sort.

Now there's a function for that sort of thing, which is, for one, that reversals of some of these second speaker rules can be used to preserve the openness of an utterance, i.e., to indicate that at some point where it might be closed, it isn't going to be closed yet. And there are a variety of such uses. Another, for example, involves, not the use early in an utterance of a noun which looks surely like it's going to be replaced at some point by a pronoun so that you at least wait until that happens to find that the utterance is complete, but the early use of a pronoun – where it doesn't appear that it's a case of N ← P, i.e., a pronoun tied backwards. For example, in this statement, "Ken, face it. You're a poor little rich kid," where you have a reversal, starting with the pronoun, and in that way this statement is seen as not complete until what follows occurs.

The problem of preserving utterances as open is a systematically important one, given the fact, for use, that there are a variety of things that can stand – simply by, e.g., grammatical features – as complete utterances. Sentences can be complete utterances, and if one wants to build one and indicate that it's not a complete utterance, then there are ways of indicating,

in perhaps your use of grammar, that you're keeping the utterance open.

Now apart from the noun–pronoun rules of the second speaker form, there's a corresponding one for pro-verbs, which is verb ← pro-verb. For an instance of it, look at that statement "if you're hotrodding around you're bound to get caught," followed by "Not unless you do it right. . .you wanna try and do it right so you don't get caught!" Where 'do' is the pro-verb for 'hotrodding around,' tying the second utterance to the first.

On that use you have to be fairly careful, since 'do' is, besides being a pro-verb, an 'auxiliary,' and one can have a verb phrase with an auxiliary in it like 'do,' and have a second utterance which involves just the use of the auxiliary: "Did you bake a cake?" "I did," where the first 'do' was an auxiliary, and the second is now part of that auxiliary used to do that whole job of re-referring. There are lots of such things, in which a whole verb phrase which includes an auxiliary has a second use in which just the auxiliary is used, and that's another class of tying rules; for example, there's one which goes, "Eventually you'll become sane." Then, "Or your mother will," which is a next utterance tied back to 'will become sane' as the verb phrase. The use of the auxiliary to tie, and not the whole verb phrase, is, again, a very regular kind of thing.

To see that there are an enormous number of such rules, recall that at the beginning of our discussion of this data, I introduced the 'completer' situation, which was my first second speaker rule, i.e., a second speaker beginning his statement in such a way as to make his statement a dependent clause to what he makes an independent clause, but what might have been a sentence; for example, that business of 'discussion–discussing'. And if you take all the ways that dependent clauses can be built to make sentences independent clauses, you have a tremendous list of second speaker tying rules. For example, you can build something that stands as a prepositional phrase to a possible sentence. There's one that goes, "It's a good place to spend Saturday morning," where simultaneously, then, two prepositional phrases are built: "If you're stupid," and "after Friday night" (data handout, just below 9:30). So there are an enormous number of these type of second speaker rules which are formed of rules which have their supposedly typical place within a single sentence or single utterance. They need not at all be so restricted, and you can find them all over the place. There are also, of course, many first speaker rules: question–answer, request–return (acceptance or rejection, whichever it may be), command–return, insult–return, etc. If you go through a conversation, either building rules or just using rules you know, and then try to see how much of it is untied, it's a decent kind of exercise, and in the particular conversation we have, you'll find extraordinarily little that is not a tied utterance in one way or another.

Now there are rather different ways of deciding, perhaps, that you have something which is provided for by each set of rules. One way you might go about deciding that you have a first speaker rule item is kind of useful in that it suggests one consequence of first speaker rules which might not be altogether obvious. And that is, if you're dealing with a multi-party

conversation, then the use of a first speaker rule not only regulates properly the speech of the person who ought to follow it with some second part to that rule, but it also regulates properly, those who are not so told to speak. And one can see that in operation via the 'interruption' notion I offered earlier,[1] which is that if what we take to be a first speaker rule is used, addressed to some second speaker, then if somebody else starts talking before that second speaker does, and the second speaker begins, then one regularly finds that the person who started talking first stops, and allows the second speaker to proceed in conformity with the first speaker rule. Here are a couple of instances. In the first, A, talking to B, says "Hey don't tear him down." C says "I've been torn down for–," B says "Ok," and C just stops when B starts talking. Another one goes, A, talking to B says "And seven you've been arrested for rape and other things. Ha." C starts right after that with "Eight you–," B says "No, not that." C stops, and then starts over, after "No, not that" with "Eight you– Eight you give lip back to everybody."[2] And if that 'interrupter' situation operates, it's one way of seeing that you have one of these first speaker rules that provides for a second speaker to talk, and the sort of things he ought to do.

For the second speaker rules, one way to see if you've got something is to see whether you've got an ordinary grammatical rule operating within a sentence. One of the most prominent of the second speaker rules that you'll find in our data involves uses of 'that,' where 'that' seems to refer back to whole clauses. "If you go hotrodding you're bound to get caught" followed by "That's the problem with society." On this class of phenomena there's very little literature. About the only thing I can offer deals with a very special part of them, and those are things that could be called 'sentence connectors' or 'clause connectors,' which would go immediately in between two clauses, typically where the clauses could be whole sentences. Things like 'and,' 'that,' etc. There's a kind of a review article of sorts called 'English sentence connectors,' by Seymour Chapman in A. Marquart (ed.), *Studies in Language and Literature* (1954), page. 315.

[1] See Spring 1966, lecture 7, pp. 323–4.

[2] It seems that Sacks was working from his original 1965 transcript and not the one attached to the Spring 1966 lectures. Here are those two fragments from the original Sacks transcript:

Mel :   Now let's see what else can we decide about you?
Henry :   Hey don't tear him down
Joe :   I've been torn down for–
Mel :   ok
Henry :   We got company

Henry :   And seven you've been arrested for rape and other things. Ha
Mel :   Eight you–
Bob :   No. not that.
Mel :   Eight you Eight you give lip back to everybody.

Now, as I say, you can build hundreds of them if you like. The question is, what do they do – besides providing for, in part, the non-disorderability of the sequence of utterances? I take it that their fundamental use is that they constitute a relatively formal apparatus for a 'local check' – by which I mean at any given point – on the fact that what it is that's just been said, is understood. Now that's tremendously important. What we have is a machinery that's built in, that holds for any conversation and for anything that might be being talked about, that provides a demonstration and provides for work that will demonstrate, that a speaker understands what a last speaker says. Where such a demonstration does not involve time out from the conversation, i.e., building a meta-conversation like: "We were in an automobile discussion," then, "I take it by an automobile discussion you mean. . .", which is a theoretically possible way that one might have tests of understanding built.

With these things, let me work out some of the ways that the rules get used from the participants' point of view, so that we can see what's involved in their use. Taking a typical situation: In some utterance of A, some noun or some verb is used. In the next utterance, of B, one gets, not the noun or the verb, but, say, a pronoun or pro-verb. Now that involves, for understanding the second utterance, that one look, not, now, to what the term in it refers to in the world, directly, but that one goes back into the conversation to see what object in the conversation it refers to, and then see what *that* refers to. Thus, any second speaker, using one of these rules, first builds his utterance by performing some operation on some term of the preceding speaker, thereby providing that he has some idea about what the preceding speaker is doing; and now for the preceding speaker to understand the second utterance, the preceding speaker has to do the same job that the second speaker did. That is to say, he, himself has to see what that fellow means by 'it,' and find that, 'By "it" he means the thing that I referred to by "automobile discussion" or "hotrodding" or whatever else.' And then he can proceed. So we have a rather elaborate way that the two of them are checking each other out, and doing, in their conversation, ways of talking that require that those operations be done on prior talk.

So each part, then, of a conversation, becomes a piece of collaboration. One isn't getting a situation where, simply, A follows some rule and B follows some rule, but whatever rule A follows, B has now to inspect to see what rule he should follow, and that he followed it is something that A has now to check out to see what he should do, etc., etc.

Certain relatively trivial but kind of nice consequences of the use of this apparatus are that it makes a special task if you want to play dumb about what another person is saying. It can be quite hard to do it in a decent way. Quite hard because, for one, I'd like to see somebody try to systematically *not* use these rules in building their own utterance – let's say just the second speaker rules. Let's say you conform to all the first speaker rules as a second speaker. Just try, as a second speaker, to not use second speaker rules like the pronouns, the pro-verbs, the various things like 'that,' etc., etc. I think it's

extremely difficult to do, and once you use the pro-term, you give away your understanding of what they're talking about, even if you want to play dumb.

For example, we have an extended attempt to 'play dumb' in a conversation that goes something like this. The situation is approximately the following. A guy and a girl are driving around. They go over to somebody's house, a friend of the guy's. He's not home, but they meet the mother. He's away, having some troubles taken care of. They come out of the house. The girl says to the guy, "Tell me about those people." He doesn't want to accept that, so he says, "What do you mean, 'tell you about them'?" But the game is all over by then, since, that he knows what she's talking about is clear enough given that he's performed the operation on 'those people' to 'them,' where the sneaky part of the request was that there wasn't any 'those people' except by virtue of the fact that the mother is seen as a representative of the family, the family being the cause of the trouble, and known as such. What he really would have to say, to play completely dumb successfully, would be, "Who? Tell you about who? What do you mean 'those people'?" But she knew, and he knew, that the trouble was properly explained by the way the family behaves; that they got him into this. And in that case, you can see a single person, 'the mother,' as one of 'them.'

These tying terms provide, then, this constant local control on the fact that somebody understands what somebody else is saying. Each person being able to check it out, each person being forced to do the work constantly of performing operations on the statement of another, and then performing the very operations on his own previous statements, etc., etc.

Now there are lots of other sorts of tying objects. There are just 'tying terms' themselves. There are a list of 'tying verbs' which, when they occur, are then recognizable as second speaker uses. In this conversation, for example, you'll get somebody beginning their statement with "I agree." Then there are 'listers;' for example, in the series of questions, 'first,' 'second,' etc. So there's a great raft of those sorts of things that lock conversation together. Our problem is, at this point I could go through 35 of this rule, but I find it a tremendous drag to do. Let me offer one that is interesting, anyway. It's at least not so completely obvious. I won't give it abstractly, I'll give a perfectly concrete example.

A has a gun and is considering killing herself. B wants to know how come she has the gun, where did she get it. So he says, "Is it yours?" She says "No, it's my husband's." Now that sort of thing – and it's very generally used – I call a '*correction–invitation device*.' And the way it works is, we might imagine that a perfectly okay answer to "Is it yours?" is "No." Routinely for a certain class of questions, what one gets is not just 'no' or 'yes,' but 'no' plus – not simply the right answer, but an answer that stands in a strong relationship to the item used in the question. Where one sets up a special sort of problem by the item one uses in the question. It can be, for example, a request for a good reason why something is held.

For example, later on in that conversation B wants to know why A has the gun. He says "Is he a police officer?," where 'police officer' is now a good

account for somebody having a gun, and is to be replaced by, not simply "No he isn't," or "No he isn't" plus "He's a butcher," but "No he isn't" plus 'why we have the gun.' Where you wouldn't get, then, his occupation, if he isn't somebody other than a police officer who has a right to have a gun, but some other account of why the gun is had.

The item, then, in the 'correction–invitation' thing, is used as a 'possibly good account' for which, if it's not the answer, give me a correct good answer if you have one. Where you suggest what the sort of thing is that would be 'a good answer.' And in those cases, then, the item offered with 'no,' as the answer to the question, is tied, not simply to the item in the question, but it's tied via some much stronger kinds of constraints, such as 'co-class membership' of a sort, with the item in the question.

One other thing about the first speaker rules. Another way of seeing that you have first speaker rules concerns an issue which I mentioned earlier, and that is the special possibility of conversations of a form, not A-B-A-B, but A-A-B, for example, and that you could find those, and the way they tend to be found in the easiest fashion is where some first speaker rule is used, and no use of it by a second speaker is made – he doesn't say anything, for example or in any event he doesn't say what would be a return to that first speaker rule. Then what one gets is a repeat, where the repeat is not simply an extension of A, but A was complete, and now what we've got is A-A. And not simply a 'repeat,' but an indication that no B has occurred and that B ought to have occurred, i.e., that a first speaker rule was used. Trivially: "Hi." No answer. "*Hi.*" We would write that, not as one long A, but given that the first speaker rule items tend to be adequate complete utterances, on their completion we have the B. If we don't get it, and we get A repeated, we have A-A. Those are possible formats for conversation at certain points. And where they are operative, we can say that we have 'a first speaker rule item again,' where we don't have a way of otherwise saying that.

Lecture 16
Possessive pronouns; Possessables and possessistives

I'm going to begin talking about this phrase, "In that Bonneville of mine", first partially focussing on the term 'mine' in it. 'Mine' is of course one term of the so-called class, 'possessive pronouns.' I say so-called because the literal use of the notion that they are possessive pronouns made considerable trouble for more than a few analyses of the problem of possessions. Rather regularly, at least in the past, attemps have been made to formulate the notions of ownership in some tribe by considering the types, and range of use, of possessive pronouns.

A rather classic example, referring to earlier ones as well, can be found in Volume 5 of the *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, pages 169–189, an article by Capell entitled 'The concept of ownership in the languages of Australia and the Pacific'. What we have there is an exploration of, and an attempt to explain, the use of possessive pronouns with respect to ownable objects, and to derive what he calls 'psychological notions' of the differences in conception of what can be owned, how it can be owned, etc., as a way of accounting for the differences in the use of the possessive terms – possessive suffixes, possessive prefixes – for various objects.

That conception has been criticized somewhat justly by Goodenough (I say 'somewhat' not that the criticism is only in part just, but because the concept can be subject to much more serious criticism) in a very famous book entitled *Property, Kin, and Community on Truk*, Yale University Publications in Anthropology, no. 46.

Now Goodenough proposes that you have to determine conceptions of property independently of the possessive pronoun uses. And he offers some criteria for something being a possession which are not directly usable for our purposes, but I'll touch on them in a bit. What we want is to find out what it is that provides for the use of 'mine' – both in this phrase, and for such uses for other objects by other persons. I said "so-called possessive pronouns", and I said that the attention was over-literal to the name, because it's perfectly plain for English, and it's probably perfectly plain for most of the other languages about which such analyses have been done, that possessive pronouns are used routinely in ways which only absurdly can be considered to be 'possessive,' i.e., in the sense that one could say "I own that car." Before, however, we would say that we had a set of homonyms, only incidently

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having the same sound between, say, 'my' in "my car" and 'my' in "my country" or in "my brother", we have to see whether there isn't some important relationship between some of those terms and some of the different uses of them.

We could start by separating out some of the uses. So, for example, there is – in English anyway – a fairly clear 'affiliative' use of the possessive pronouns: When one has a membership categorization device category, to which one can attach a possessive pronoun, then what one is doing is claiming membership, asserting membership, in that category, or in a case of that category. "My family," "my country", and the like.

A second, sometimes related use, seems heavily to involve the set of relational pairs of persons, where if there is some relational pair between A and B, then either A or B can refer to the other by reference to one of the possessive pronouns, particularly 'my.' "My brother", "my doctor", "my patient", "my boss", "my child", etc. And if the warrant of the affiliatives is that one is a member, then the warrant of one of these is that there is such a pair, with incumbents, and that one is in such a pair.

Then of course there is the 'possessional' use of the possessive pronouns, with respect to, obviously, objects of possession. "My car", "my hat". And I'm sticking to 'my' for now, because the use of 'my' and the use of 'your' seem perhaps to be regulated in quite different ways.

What we then arrive at is: It is not the use of a possessive pronoun that tells you that the object it is used with respect to is in some way owned, but it's by independent determination of the character of that object referred to, that a possessional use is heard. That is, it is by virtue of the fact that something is, first, roughly a possession – and not, for example, a membership categorization device category or a relational pair category – that tells you, when a possessive pronoun is being used, that it's being used to note, claim, force, whatever, a possessional relation.

That then poses the task of determining what objects are possessions, recognizably so. And that being the case, we can consider Goodenough's criteria. One tendency of his in constructing criteria for deciding that something is a possession is to consider such things as: What use does the object have? Objects used as food are to be seen as possessions. How is it that the thing is produced? Objects produced by man's labor are possessions. One can have property rights, etc. Criteria like that.

There's no doubt that there's some sense in which those criteria have some real relevance, but there are large problems with those criteria. Our concern is regularly with recognition problems. And what we want are criteria that deal with recognition problems. I want to make a couple of distinctions, because of the character of the term 'possession' which seems necessarily to suggest that the thing is known to be owned by somebody or some group or whatever, and where we take it that it's individual things that are possessions.

I want to distinguish, now, two things. One, I'm going to call '*possessables*.' And that has its usual lay sense, i.e., these are things which you could, if you want, own. The other is a rather central class, which I'll just give a slight

twist-name to, '*possessitives*' – it doesn't have any intuitive meaning. My big concern is with 'possessitives' because they're the things that are crucial to the recognition problem. Consider the following event: Somebody's in a room, they pick up a hat, and they say "Who's hat is this?" How are we going to deal with the fact that they see the hat and, never having seen the hat before perhaps, and not knowing whose it is, and therefore in a sense now knowing that it's anybody's, they know that it's somebody's.

'Possessitives' are a class of classes of objects which, when cases of the class are encountered or talked of, they're recognized to be somebody's possession.

Criteria for membership in the class 'possessitive' can be worked out in fairly nice ways. And the criteria are probably not local to this culture. In a fairly offhand way, Goodenough, in his treatment of possible ways one can come to have possessions, suggests something that the analysis I'll develop could account for. Let me quote his remarks and then we'll take off from there. This is from page 35 of *Property, Kin, and Community on Truk*:

> If a man discovers goods which another has lost, he acquires full title to them, provided the loser is not a person who is known to him (i.e., a member of the same community or kinsman from another island). The discoverer is owner because he brings the goods into existence as property within the community of persons with whom he interacts. If the former owner is known to the finder, however, their relationship to each other is presumed to have been established already with respect to the goods lost. And the finder must return them or be branded a thief. On the other hand, if the loser is a stranger from another island, whose lost canoe, let us say, has drifted over to the finder's island, then the loser must buy it back from the finder just as though he were making a new purchase.

Now there's a kind of nice thing involved there. And it's nice in that it will give us some rather important socialization problems, which we well know to exist. And that is, that we can distinguish between things that can be said to be 'found' – and such things are 'possessables' – and things which, having found them, you find them as things that somebody has lost, i.e., where what you see when you find it that somebody lost it. Again, now, it's an item you've never seen before, necessarily. That is, you will know the class, but it's not by virtue of the fact that you see 'Johnny's hat' that you know that it's the hat that Johnny lost. (Indeed, even under that circumstance it's an interesting issue that, knowing it's Johnny's hat, you know that where you found it, you found it on the occasion of his having lost it, rather than, for example, that he threw it away. That is, you don't have to know that Johnny has put up a notice, 'I lost my hat,' to see that the hat you found is the hat he lost.)

So we're saying right off that 'possessitives' are things which, for example, when found are seen as having been lost, i.e., are seen as having been owned by somebody. That being the case, we can get an initial list of some of them

anyway, by going to Lost and Founds and seeing what gets turned up. Not everything that's found is seen as something that's lost. If you go down to the beach, pick up a stone, you can make it your own, it can become a possession. But I take it that if you turned the stone in at the Lost and Found, they might take it that something strange is involved.

And there are a variety of other properties that 'possessitives' have. Some of them can be used to acquire other property, i.e., they're generative. You claim something by putting a possessitive on it. You put a book on a table in a cafeteria, people take it that somebody's using that table. You can play games by seeing what sorts of objects you can put down there that do not interfere in other people's sitting at that table, and come to a differentiation at boundaries of the two classes.

That then gives us further kinds of considerations; for example, if you have a possessable that's not a 'possessitive,' then you have to be very careful about treating it so as to retain it, whereas if you have a possessitive you can be much more casual about it – drop it in the street, leave it in front of your house – and people will not thereby take it that if they want it they can just pick it up. Or, if they do, then you can well claim that they're thieves. You can leave a car in the street, it may be robbed, but you needn't fear that someone will figure by virtue of the fact that it's sitting on the street that it's available for whomsoever wants it. And with cars, of course, having their locus in the street, there is then the special problem of detecting that they're abandoned. Cars can sit for enormous long times on the street, intending to have been abandoned and not recognized as such. And there are classical stories of people attempting to get rid of an object, finding that it invariably pursued them unless they found an extremely good place to get rid of it, as it was regularly returned. Where, then, there are special places to leave things which permit others to see that they have been abandoned.

So you have a very strong sense of a difference. And that differences makes a nice discrimination in certain occupations. There are two related occupations – begging and scavenging – which involve quite different obligations and quite different activities. Beggars ask for things. For the things they acquire, they have to go through some operation of getting by asking. Scavengers are a much more independent sort. They go to those places where people abandon things, and pick them up. And in doing so they take on no obligation of thanking, or whatever else, the people from whom they acquire the objects.

Again, then, we do not get a list of particular objects making up the 'possessitives.' And there's no need for Members to have encountered that particular object before, nor for them to know whose it is, to know that it's somebody's possession. Though it's conceivable – but I doubt it – that on a very small island everything would be known in that fashion, i.e., one could always say about something one encounters, "That's so-and-so's such-and-such". And it will certainly be the case that a great many possessitives are understood to be possessitives by virtue of how they're produced, or by virtue of their uses. But that's an independent matter that controls, for one, how it

is that Members come to put a class of objects into the class 'possessitives.'

Now, I mentioned that the differentiation between the two classes, 'possessitives' and 'possessables,' gives us some rather important socialization tasks. That is, coming to see 'possessitives' and coming to know how it is that a possessitive can be acquired, free, has got to be learned, that is perfectly plain. And it's quite extraordinary how early that is learned in this society. I can show that by a little piece of data which I'll quote. The data is from a book entitled *One Boy's Day* by Barker and Wright (1951), pages 379–380. What they did was to have a bunch of people, working in half-hour shifts, follow a kid around all day, writing down as much as they could of what he did. They compiled, then, a record of his day. The boy is, I think, seven years old. He's been playing with a crate which is in a lot at which there was a house that burned down, though the lot is still owned by the owner of the house. The family is having dinner, and the father is talking about the crate:

F: What are you going to do with that big crate you have?
S: I'm going to bring it home.
F: You are? Don't you think we have enough crates and that kind of stuff around here?

The son doesn't give an answer. The mother then talks:

M: What are you going to do? Use it for a tent?
S: Yes.
M: Maybe Mr Nelson wanted it. Did you ever think of that?
S: No. He was going to burn it. He doesn't want it.

As you see, not "No I didn't think of that."

F: How do you know? Did you ask him?
S: No.
F: Are you sure?
S: Yes, I'm sure.
M: Was it there where they usually burn things, on that rubbish heap?
S: Yes.
M: How are you going to get it here?
S: I'm going to put it on my wagon and bring it over.

As you can see, the parents know how it is that the thing could be recognized as having been abandoned. Now, there are a lot of things involved; for one, certain intentions are taken to be 'intentions to give it up'. That is, it's not, if Mr Nelson wants to burn the crate, and puts it on the rubbish heap, he can then say "Well, I really wanted to burn it, I didn't want anybody who wanted it to take it." He seemingly has given up some of his rights over it. But the parents take it that the kid could have known how it is that this thing could be intended to be disposed of, i.e., that it was placed on the lot, and that the

kid can inspect the lot to see what things are available for anybody, and acquire them in that manner. But that if he hasn't acquired them in that manner, then he has wrongly acquired them – or wrongly intended to acquire them. And it's not necessary, apparently, to ask what the intention about the object is; if it's properly placed, the intention is available through the positioning.

There are, then, a large class of objects which when seen, or when talked of, are recognized as somebody's, or some unit's, and whose they are need not be known to know that. But we presumably don't need the distinction between 'possessitive' and 'possessable' as a notion, for the issue of how it is that possessional reference, in general, is heard. That is, when either a possessitive or a possessable is used in combination with a possessive pronoun, we can take it that that sense of the object as 'a possession' is what's being referred to. So, for example, when we get a phrase like "that Bonneville of mine", we have no trouble in determining that it is possessional reference that is being made. And of course we can't do that by such a fact as, it's a noun being used with a possessive pronoun. If we use that criterion – noun/ possessive pronoun – we get equally 'that brother of mine', and the like. And those are not the same sorts of things. No possessional reference is indicated.

Now I've gone through some of the ways that the possessive pronouns are used: An 'affiliative' use, in respect to some category of a membership categorization device, a 'relational' use, with respect to some relational pair, or category of relational pairs, and the 'possessional' use. And I've argued that one independently determines that some object is a possessitive or possessable so as to see what use the possessive pronoun has, and if the object being talked of is a possessitive or possessable, then one can hear the possessive pronoun being used possessionally.

But that's only to say that if we have that sort of object being referred to, then some possessive pronoun can be used possessionally – not which one, or how which ones are selected. There are a variety of ways and I want to consider a couple, one of which will give us a relationshp between several of the types of uses of possessive pronouns – most particularly between the usability of them affiliatively and the usability of them possessionally.

And that matter is fairly simple, at least to some extent. If, for some membership categorization device category, one can use a possessive pronoun affiliatively – one can say, for example, "my country", "my family", and the like – then, if there is some object which can be a possession for some class of those membership categories, then one can use at least the first-person plural possessive pronoun for that object, possessively. That is to say, if one can say "my country", one can say about something that's a possession of that country, at least 'ours.' "My country," "our bases;" "my family," "our house." (It isn't the case that one can automatically say 'my' for such an object.)

One can't routinely do that for objects which are seen as possessions of a correlative member of one of the relational pairs. So the fact that you can use a possessive pronoun for some category of a relational pair does not permit

you to use a possessive pronoun possessively with respect to something that is owned by the pair member, or is seen as a possession of the pair member. You wouldn't, for example, say, if it's my doctor's chair' that it's 'mine' or 'ours.'

Now one of the things we can see when we have some unit like 'country' or 'family' for which the object is a possession and we get this rule that permits one to use 'our' for it, is that it's routinely the case that that use of 'our' is one that a lot of people other than oneself can do, i.e., there are a whole range of people who can say about those bases that they are 'our bases'. When we get a use of 'my' for some object, what we have to decide is how that use of 'my' is arrived at, and when we get how that use of 'my' is arrived at, we can have some way of deciding whether there are others who can also use that 'my' about the same object. So, for example, if you hear some guy using 'my car,' and it turns out he is talking about the family car (where he can use that by virtue of the fact that if it's the family car he can at least say 'our' and perhaps 'my'), then it may also be the case that his brother can say, about the same car, 'my car.' So there may be a set of people who can say 'my' just as well.

That has, however, to be worked out for the sorts of objects, and the ways that those sorts of objects are seen as possessed. And the question of what controls the use of 'mine' is, in part, not resolvable by reference to, for example, a search of the legal title. It is, for a class of objects, to some considerable extent a problem of *address*. That is to say, it's a problem of who's being talked to. We get a tremendous instability in what possessive pronoun is used for a given object over the various pairs of persons who may be talking, so that 'the very same car' talked about by A, can to one person be referred to as 'our car,' to another be referred to as 'your car,' and to a third be referred to as 'my car.' That's all perfectly possible – and possible, furthermore, under a situation where no one of those people have title to the car.

It is often the case that the sense in which 'mine' is used, i.e., what other terms would be used in other environments, can be gotten by a hearer from the sort of object referred to by it. That is to say, if I say "my toothbrush," you who hear it can be fairly assured that there isn't any other environment under which somebody else would refer to that toothbrush as 'mine,' or I would refer to it as 'ours' or 'yours,' whereas for other objects you can feel assured sometimes that depending upon who's speaking, there will be environments when they can't say 'mine.' And that fact can be quite crucial. That is to say, if a kid says to another kid "my Bonneville," the other kid may well be able to know that the Bonneville he is talking about as 'mine' he can talk about as 'mine' talking to me, but talking to his parents, for example, he can't. And the relevance of that, roughly at this point is: Insofar as a car can be used to see the independent status of somebody, then if you know that they can't use 'my' for all comers about it, then you can feel that they're not independent for that item. That is, if someone says "that Bonneville of mine," somebody who doesn't know them can see, and say, "It's the car your daddy bought you."

Lecture 17
Pervasive, inexhaustable topics; Emblems

I'm going to continue talking about the phrase, "In that Bonneville of mine." There are a large series of issues, really quite central to this piece of data. I'll start off with a quote from chapter 1 of *The Nuer* by E. E. Evans-Pritchard. In that chapter he makes a whole set of observations parallel to the ones I've been making, and much related to the stuff we've been doing on the phenomenon of an 'automobile discussion' among teenagers. The quote is from pages 18–19.

> We have seen in a brief survey of some Nuer institutions and customs that most of their social behavior directly concerns their cattle. A fuller study of their culture would show everywhere the same dominant interest in cattle; for example, in their folklore. They are always talking about their beasts. I used to sometimes despair that I never discussed anything with the young men but livestock and girls. And even the subject of girls led inevitably to that of cattle. Start on whatever subject I would, and approach it from whatever angle, we would soon be speaking of cows and oxen, heifers and steers, rams and sheep, he-goats and she-goats, calves, and lambs, and kids. I've already indicated that this obsession – for such it seems to the outsider – is due not only to the great economic value of cattle, but also to the fact that they are linked in numerous social relationships. Nuer tend to define all social processes and relationships in terms of cattle. Their social idiom is a bovine idiom.
>
> Consequently, he who lives among Nuer and wishes to understand their social life, must first master a vocabulary referring to cattle, and to the life of the herds. Such complicated discussions as those which take place in negotiations of marriage, in ritual situations, and in legal disputes, can only be followed when one understands the difficult cattle terminology of colours, ages, sexes, and so forth.

Now there's a big problem with these observations. It's one thing to say that every conversation ends up about cattle, and another to show how that's so. And the point about a central conversational phenomenon and its analysis

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This version of lecture 17 begins with a consideration first given at the end of the original Spring 1966, lecture 16 (pp. 16–17) and more fully developed in Fall 1966, lecture 5, from which the bulk of the discussion shown here is taken.

– for example, that it's due to everything being tied relationally to cattle – is obscure in that it supposes that in the end it would be some formulation of social relationships – economics, marriage, etc. – that is fundamental to the culture, so that they provide the sort of inevitable explanation one would come to. That is a very important theoretical issue. And that it is solved by him in this fashion – and by most of sociology and anthropology in a like fashion – is the sort of thing that permits him to say 'it would turn out that . . .' when it hasn't yet been investigated.

That is, one sees that something – like cattle conversation for Nuer – is important, it seems extremely pervasive. And now, before trying to figure out how and why it works as it does, one uses an acceptable explanation as that which the analysis would eventually and inevitably reveal. By 'acceptable explanation' I mean one need only invoke what's known to be such, e.g., 'social relationships,' as the stable machinery generating conversation, etc. And insofar as investigations end at the point when the explanation is in sight but hasn't been developed, then the notion that those things are the ultimate explainers can remain in use, and seem even to be confirmed. Whereas it's at least theoretically conceivable that, having examined the structure and working of these cattle conversations, one consequence might have been a discovery that the supposed explanation didn't do the job. We can't suppose that some end, being in sight that way, would inevitably be arrived at.

Evans-Pritchard does, however, point up that a topic can have a really pervasive character for a culture. Now the issue is not, then, to say that perhaps for kids, automobile discussions are like cattle conversations are for the Nuer. But perhaps there's a phenomenon – *pervasively important conversational topics* – which is present in both. Where what would perhaps be of interest would be that there *wasn't* such a topic.

One thing, which is not quite the same as the kind of point that Evans-Pritchard makes, is that these are topics which can be called 'ultra-rich.' There are different ways in which something can be ultra-rich as a topic. In the case of an automobile discussion, you can come on one of the ways by the following line of reasoning. You could say that a topic is 'limited' if there were, say, a finite set of things that could be said about it, in such a way that, as you were talking about it you were cutting into the amount that could be said, and thereby reducing what could be said some other time, so that at some point the topic is exhausted. By the term 'ultra-rich,' one thing we mean is that the topic is inexhaustable.

Now, saying that it's inexhaustable and finding ways of showing that it's inexhaustable are altogether different things. And in making the remarks I'm going to make now about its inexhaustability, I'm using other data than our 11-page segment, but in fact I'm using limited data, and limited data that I think will serve. We might go about the task of finding 'inexhaustability' along the following lines. Suppose we could say there were a number of finite parts to a car. And there are rather obvious ways in which you could say that, turning on the lists of parts put into a car. Now, if we imagine that, in part, an automobile discussion consisted of talk about the parts, and that, say, for

any given part there was only so much that could be said, then it would be at least arguable that, the parts being finite, the discussion of an automobile is, in that sense, finite.

There are two interesting properties of automobiles for hotrodders, which undercut such a line of reasoning, and provide a way of seeing the inexhaustability, i.e., the infiniteness of an automobile discussion for them – using now, a very conventional notion of 'infinite.' First of all, any part, perhaps, but certainly many parts, of any car whatever shape it's in, say, even right off the assembly line, is replaceable. And the second fact is that any replaced part is replaceable. That means that any car now – looking to the future – being considered, consists of an infinite set of parts, i.e., any part it has, plus its possible replacements. And all that we need, to talk about something being 'infinite', is that for any finite set, another can be added.

And that is quite different than the way adults talk about cars, and the way adults conceive cars. So if I, talking as an adult, were to say that I just replaced the engine or the tires or something else on my car, you might figure that there was something wrong with it. And that having replaced it, it was over. For kids, that's not so. Any part is replaceable without regard to the fact that it's in perfect shape, by virtue of the consideration, e.g., that a better part has become available, or by virtue of the current combination of parts that I have, some part is better than another part that I have, where all that is generative in the sense that the aim is to have 'the best car.' And the notion of that as a 'central motive' is something that we could work out eventually.

With 'having the best car' as a 'central motive', then if any set of cars that you're considering as equivalent, or possibly faster, get modified by having a new part put in, then that part is eligible for consideration in your car. You'll find in kids' conversations about cars, that the issue of indefinite replaceability of any part is routinely present, and it's present without the characteristics that replaceability has for adults. If a kid proposes to put a new engine in a car, the issue is not whether the old one was worn out. It's merely that a 'better one' has become available, or the kid can afford a better one, or someday will be able to afford a better one. In that sense, then, the purchase of any car is only the purchase of an object which is then to be considered in each of its parts, for indefinite replacement. And that is altogether different than the way adults properly conceive the cars that they buy. Where, furthermore, for the kid, each actual replacement is a matter that is discussable, and any definite positive decision is relevant for all participants. So that if A comes up with a good reason for putting 20-inch slicks on his car, I have to consider them for mine.

Furthermore, it's not any population of kids who know each other that constitutes the population for these replacements, considerations, and assessments, but it's perfectly legitimate to propose as a reason for replacement that you heard that somebody did it, or that you read that it's a good thing to do. And in that sense, then, the whole population of hotrodders is a group whose actions are relevant for any member of that population. And under that

formulation of the discussability of parts, with the parts having this infinite character, the topic can be seen to be inexhaustable.

It further appears that Evans-Pritchard's observation that almost any topic among the Nuer is one that eventually can come around to being discussed by reference to cattle is relevant here. Recall my earlier remark that there is a very large range of topics conventionally separated from automobiles that are discussable via automobiles – independence, sex, relations with the cops, how to prove yourself, comparability of persons, the state of the modern world, etc., which made it as ideal a topic as could be had, to serve for the members of this group as a 'cover topic.'[1]

Let me turn now to some issues by reference to, more specifically, the phrase "In that Bonneville of mine." For one, there are questions of the relevancies of alternative names that can be given to the same car. The 'Bonneville' is subsequently talked about as a 'Pontiac station wagon.' Earlier, that sort of car is referred to as a 'Daddy's car:' "Now the Soshes keep driving.[2] Daddy's car and everything" (data handout, first page). And the user of 'Bonneville' recognizes it, furthermore, as looking like "a damn Mommy's car." And now there could be a series of other types of references, each of which may have different sorts of relevancy for a variety of things. One, for example, is whether you can go drag racing in it. The speaker here takes it that you can. His colleagues, as I'll try to dig out later on, are rather insistent that you can't.

There's another set of alternatives which concern, whatever names you might give to this car, its position as a type of car among alternative types of cars: Bonnevilles as contrasted with Chevvies. That kind of car contrasted with hotrods. And that set of alternatives has another class of relevancies. I'll just briefly talk about those, and I'll begin by talking about a class of objects that quite obviously have the properties I want to consider.

There are a bunch of things we can talk about as *'emblems'*. These are things like medals, titles, and the like. They have several important properties. First, if you see one, see somebody wearing one, hear somebody addressed by one, and the like, then you can know the sort of procedure whereby they came to have it. And that you know the sort of procedure whereby they came to have it is crucial to the assessment you make of it. For example, that it's something they should be proud of or embarrassed about – proud of, in the case, say, of a medal; embarrassed about, classically, say, the mark of Cain, the clipping of ex-prisoners' ears, and things like that.

The availability of those procedures whereby they came to get them is, of course, independent of particular information as to how this fellow got that thing. One can know how people get such things, and be assured that not only do people get such things in such a way, but this fellow got that thing in such a way. That knowledge is, to use a phrase I introduced earlier, 'protected against induction.' And that it is, can be seen from the following

[1] See Spring 1966, lecture 7, p. 320.
[2] See fn 1, p. 396.

sort of colloquy: A says, "What did you do to get that medal?" B says, "Nothing." A says, "Oh you're being modest." In order to be seen as 'being modest,' one has to take it that what B replies with is not treatable as possibly undercutting one's knowledge of how it is that those things are acquired.

One wants to note, not simply in passing, that the fact that when one sees emblems, one sees them as having been properly acquired, can make for a little trouble for arguments about things like possessions having their character for Members as 'possessions' by virtue of Members knowing the way that they're acquired. That is to say, one doesn't know that that car is a possession because one knows that it was purchased; one sees it and sees that it is a possession. One sees, as well, that it was properly acquired, and the way that it is properly acquired is by being bought, and one doesn't have to check that out. Indeed, if one does have to check it out, there's trouble.

The fact that emblems are seen as properly acquired poses a series of possibilities which are, in fact, actualized regularly. Two correlative ones are: First, it's an opportunity for somebody to acquire the thing how they may, knowing that it will be seen as having been properly acquired. Having it is proof that you acquired it properly, and gets whatever might be gotten if you did properly acquire it. That clearly enough is a case of *subversively* using its properties. One can buy, and people do buy, medals in pawn shops, titles from mail-order universities, etc.

Now there's a negative aspect to the very same thing, and that is, for those things which, having acquired them, Members know how you acquired them, there have regularly been things that people can't, therefore, acquire. So, for example, it's important to, say, the development of modern capitalism that it became the case that one couldn't tell about somebody who has money, how they acquired it. Until that was so, there were large bodies of people – the aristocracy – who couldn't go into business and get money because it would be available that they were 'in trade' – something bad – if they had money.

The second correlate of this availability of how it is that something is acquired, is that if you want to go into the business of debunking, then, for any object which people know, and sanctionably know, how it is that such a thing is acquired, one need only seek out cases of its subversive acquisition and write them up. That's always of interest, and there is no shortage of books and movies on how it is that people really got Nobel prizes and the like. You can arrive at those sorts of things quite formally – and that provides an absolute set up for, e.g., having computers write scandalous literature.

Now there are lots of possessions that are very similar to emblems in this sense that we've talked about emblems. How is it that they're acquired is regularly available to Members, and they can use their knowledge of how it is acquired to see one as something you should be embarrassed about or proud of. We want to consider the case of cars, but for many other possessions it works in a similar fashion.

A given car, the car you have, is treated as a case of a set of possible cars, and the set of them provides those things from among which the given one was selected. Then, Members apparently know what different selection

procedures will come up with. They can then take the given car, construct or invoke the selection procedure that would come up with it and not some other, and see in a glance that that selection procedure provided for the purchase of this particular car, where the selection procedure may have a variety of further relevancies. We then need to consider, for one, what scope does the set of alternatives have for any given object? That is, what things are seen as possibly alternative to it so that they can be seen, perhaps, as having been rejected? What those alternatives look like, I can't really say. But I would think, for example, if you're wearing a beautiful ring, then somebody may perfectly well see, not that you chose among the set of 'rings,' but you might have chosen among the set of 'jewelry,' for example, and 'necklaces' might well be considered as an alternative that you could have picked.

Now suppose that one criterion for the class – though it's a kind of equivocal one – would be that if you start with some other item than the one in fact selected, you have available as an alternative to that other member, the very one you selected, i.e., you can get back to the one you selected. So that one can see 'cars' and 'jewelry' as not alternatives if, when you're wearing a ring, somebody doesn't feel that they can see that you turned down a car to get the ring. Again, this is without regard to how you in fact did it. You may well have decided to go on a vacation instead of buying a car. That's not the issue. If you go on a vacation, people may well feel that what's relevant is how come you chose to go here and not elsewhere. And of course that's very important for trying to make it in certain groups. If you saved up all your money to go on a vacation somewhere, then you may be able to pass as somebody who chose to go here and not there, rather than somebody who chose to go on a vacation rather than eat a month from now.

Let's get to these known decision processes by reference to kids and cars. In the first instance, whatever problems we might have constructing the alternatives for, say, an adult woman, we don't have for kids, since kids want cars. If a kid has a car we can take it that he wanted a car, where the issue is whether he wanted *this* one. And again, whether he wanted this is not a problem of psychology; that is to say, it's not a question of the sort that we have to find out if he wanted this car by asking him. He can say that he wanted the car, and you still know that he didn't want it. You can decide that he didn't want it without regard to asking him.

So there are, then, the set of cars that are going to be used to decide how *this* car was selected. There are a variety of formulations of car types, and those car types are formulated by reference to different membership categories. That is, there are, for example, 'Mommy's cars' and 'Kids' cars.' And again, the phenomenon of 'Mommy's cars' is protected against induction. It isn't the case that if you think that a Pontiac station wagon is a Mommy's car, then if you see a kid driving one you say, "I guess I'm wrong." You see 'a kid driving a Mommy's car.'

(In that regard, one might consider the set of scientists' sins, i.e., things that, as a scientist, it would be a sin to do. In this case, that you retain a theory over cases that are inconsistent with it, which a scientist doesn't properly do.

One might see whether, and to what extent, scientists' sins are not inventions of scientists, but involve the use of perfectly correct ways of reasoning, and sanctioned ways of reasoning, when one is doing other tasks.)

If a kid's going to get a car, then kids seem to know what sorts of cars a kid 'wants,' i.e., a kid ought to want, it will be insisted he should want, and he'd better want, otherwise he's subject to being seen as not having gotten what he wants, anyway. The others take it that they can see that that car was purchased by Daddy, and that the kid who's driving it only had partial say over what car he got. He would find himself walking around with a constant apology on his lips, i.e. 'I really wanted this.' It's a sort of apology that can be made for whole classes of things, in which your insistence is seen as over-insistence − or wrong, in any event.

Lecture 18
'Hotrodders' as a revolutionary category

Towards the end of the last consideration I was focussing on what kids take it they can see, when they see some combination of a car and a driver; where, as a rather minor point of what I wanted to get to, was that for certain cars, driven by kids, kids take it that they can see that that car was purchased by Daddy, and that the kid who's driving it only had partial say over what car he's going to get. And it's not only that a kid doesn't want a car that's going to be seen as 'a Daddy's car' or 'a Mommy's car,' but that even if a kid *wants* a Bonneville, then one of the things he has to consider is that it's going to be seen as 'a Daddy's car.'

Further, kids give some formulations of kids who drive Daddy's cars; for example, 'Soshe,' which is a term that kids use, by and large in a derogatory manner.[1]

But the problem is that these considerations don't at all get at what's most important about these phenomena. And that's what I want to try to do, though the analysis I'll offer has a much stronger sound than I could defend, at this point anyway. But I'll do it because something like what I'm saying is, I think, involved, and it's really fundamental to see.

We could work at it, in part, by asking a bunch of questions: Why do kids go about making up all these typologies of cars – and the typologies of cars that they have are really enormously elaborate: Daddy's cars and Mommy's cars, gassers, turbines, dragsters, plus all the names of cars – Fords, Chevvies, etc., plus various modifications of those. And they use those typologies to make assessments of other drivers; assessments which are not always nice. Why do they do it? Aren't the terms that are used before they go to work good enough? And what's the matter with them if they aren't? So that's the problem.

One way we can try to get at it is, in part, to try to see what kind of difference there is between the category 'teenager' and the category 'hotrodder.' I want to argue that they're fundamentally different types of categories; that 'hotrodder' is, in a very non-trivial sense, quite a revolutionary kind of category. And I'll just be trying to sketch some of the ways that that's so, and offer others like it.

Because I take it that the issue is really a very deep one, I'll give some

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[1] 'Soshe (pronounced 'sōsh') seems to have been a geographically and temporally local derogative used by at least these teenagers for their more 'socially successful' peers.

suggestions about a type of category by taking a very ancient, and in its way famous, example – though most people don't know the example, so it's of some educational value, anyway. This is a quotation from Genesis 14. It goes like this:

> A fugitive brought the news to Abraham the Hebrew, who was camping at the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, kinsman of Eshkol and Aner, these being confederates of Abraham.

In the history of biblical criticism, that's a most important little section, and its fundamental importance is at least sketched by the following kinds of considerations.

The phrase 'Abraham the Hebrew' is apparently unique in the bible, in that it's pretty much the only place that an Israelite is referred to by the term 'the Hebrew.' That term, 'the Hebrew,' is only used by an Israelite for self-identification to a foreigner, or by foreigners about Israelites. Its importance lies in the fact that, given the usage, 'Abraham the Hebrew,' biblical critics can feel that that section of Genesis was a segment taken from some document which had not been written by the Jews, and thus is some independent information about the historicity of Abraham.

Now categories like 'the Hebrew,' where the character of the category is that it's used by non-members of the category and not by members of the category except when members are identifying themselves to non-members, are rather fundamental kinds of categories.

Parenthetically, it's kind of a marvelous quirk about anthropology that an enormous number of tribal names that anthropologists talk of have this character. That is to say, the tribal names that the anthropologists write about are very very regularly non-recognizable to the members of those tribes and often mean things like 'outsider,' 'stranger' in some language other than the language of the named tribe. And that's because by and large if somebody is told of a tribe by a member of another tribe, they get the name of the tribe in the other tribe's language. So, for example, Elizabeth Colson, in an absolutely marvelous ethnography called *The Makah Indians*, traces such a naming. This is from page 76.

> They received the name Makah in 1855 when they made their treaty with the United States government. The government interpreter was a Klallum who gave the treaty makers the Klallum name for the Cape Flaherty people. This has been the official name for them ever since. Today most people speak of themselves as Makah though some of the older people say they dislike the name because it doesn't belong to them and they don't understand its meaning.

You'll find the same kind of reference at page 12 of Radcliffe-Brown's *The Andaman Islanders*, and it's a very very frequent thing.

Now we can say introductorily that there are certain categories which are

owned by a group other than those to whom they apply. A term like 'the Hebrew' in the ancient Near East was that sort of term. Right now the term 'Negro' is being treated as that sort of term. That is, the attempt of the Muslims is to treat the term 'Negro' as one which, if it is used, would be recognized to be being used by a non-member. And what's involved, roughly, is this: We could say that what dominant groups basically own is how it is that persons perceive reality, and that there's an order of revolution which is an attempt to change how it is that persons see reality. I don't mean that in a casual way, and I'll try to deal with it with respect to the difference between 'teenagers' and 'hotrodders.'

From time to time I mention the claim that psychoanalysis is a 'bourgeois discipline,' and propose ways to see the sense of such a claim. One of the ways one can formulate the sense of that claim turns on the way that psychoanalysis is concerned to defend the fact that adults own reality, against, first, what they call 'neurotics.' And Menninger has a magnificent phrase – he talks of neurotics as 'disloyal to reality.' What neurotics are, from the psychoanalysts' point of view, is children who can pass as adults. (And I think from the psychoanalysts' point of view, a psychotic is a retired child.) And what that involves is, of course, an attempt to refuse to recognize the claims to be dealing with reality on the part of, say, 'children.'

Now the fact is that there are tremendous revisions of history involved in psychoanalysis. One of the most striking is the business of the Oedipus complex. People regularly talk about an Oedipus complex as though what Freud says about the Oedipus plays is perfectly obvious. Whereas if you read them without first starting with Freud's way of looking at them, it seems to me, at least, that it's perfectly obvious that they're just about the exact opposite of what's proposed. They're perfectly clearly about infanticide, not parricide. And the parricide theme is, if anything, a rationalization for an institution of infanticide. After all, Oedipus is to be done away with by an oracle that precedes his birth – one would presume that, if anything, there may be some guilt about that. It's written for adults by adults; when he finally does away with his father he's already an adult; they know what they're doing, he doesn't know he's doing.

There are, of course, real problems that adults have to come to terms with about children, most of which are completely unknown, and fantastic in their character. One is, for example, that there is, in a perfectly good sense, a children's culture, with its artifacts, songs, games, etc., that is unbelievably stable. That is to say, if you look at a book called *The Lore and Language of School Children* by Peter and Iona Opie, there's good evidence that the songs sung by London school children 400 years ago are still sung, purely orally transmitted; transmitted without any officials taking care of them being transmitted; transmitted where the words have passed out of the English language. They are transmitted only by children – adults don't even know them. The same goes for a series of other phenomena.

There's enormous interest to how that gets done and what it might mean and what things like it might mean, for example, for reformulating the

relationship of children and adults. Instead of saying, for example, that adults are bigger and better versions of children, one might well treat them as alumni.

Of course it's very important that children have the kind of view they do, e.g., a notion of dependence, because, for one, presumably if children realize that they're not dependent in important senses – that is to say, the norms regulating the treatment of children are enforced by adults on adults, and whatever children did, adults would have to take care of them because they could be embarrassed, sanctioned, thrown in jail, etc. (and to be sure, all adults could renounce all children, but pretty much no given adult can renounce any given child) – they might come to see the enormous dependency of adults on children; for example, on the response that children give to them, like show them a little affection.

Now none of that stuff is officially recognized. It's not recognized in just the way that Marxists would say that the dependence of our culture on the laborer is not recognized. It's not only not recognized by those on top, it's not recognized by those on the bottom, either. And the kinds of revolutions that then try to take place are attempts to reconstruct how it is that things are seen, where the attempt is, in part, for some group to get to enforce a view of themselves by others, that they administer. And a big difference between the categories 'teenager' and 'hotrodder' is that 'teenager' is a category that adults administer. What's known about those things, 'teenagers,' is enforced by adults. And of course parallel things hold for the Negro.

What I'm suggesting is that a notion of independence is trying to be asserted against the notion of independence now being enforced. The notion of 'independence' that's held for, say, Negroes and children is, in a radical way, asociological: They should become independent one at a time. And by following the ways that are defined by the dominant culture. Be a good boy and grow up, keep clean, get a good job, you can do it, it's your problem. That formulation of independence is enforced by the adults. Can some way be found whereby independence can be internally administered? There are simple and trivial solutions that people sometimes come up with, but they're in that genre. The attempt, say, to buy a state by the Negroes is that kind of an attempt – they'll define what makes for success.

What's needed, in part, is to bring about a change in what it is anybody sees when they see one of these things. And then to be able to control what they know about one when they see one. Where the question of how you could control this is, of course, an extremely complicated one. Kids know that if they're in cars they're going to be seen as 'teenage drivers.' I've talked about this phenomenon before, i.e., a kid in a car is seen as a kid in a car and not something else, whatever he could be seen as. There are a range of categories other than 'teenager' that somebody who's a teenager could be seen as. What are thé occasions under which one or another category would be chosen uniquely? If somebody's in a car, and that somebody could be seen as 'a teenager,' then they're seen as 'a teenager.' Now what can kids do to shift that around, or to begin to modify it? Again, what we want to have is a set of

modifications that are administered by members. And that means, for exam-
ple, that *they* will recognize whether somebody is a member of one or another
category, and what membership takes. And *they* can do the sanctioning.

And the character of the sanctioning does not need to involve at all that
anybody gets together and beats somebody up. But how it is otherwise
enforced is most extraordinary in a way. It used to be the case, maybe it still
is, that sportscar drivers flicked their lights when they passed each other. A
Volkswagon driver might flick his lights at a sportscar driver and be
absolutely ignored. Now it isn't that if a sportscar driver flicked his lights at
a Volkswagon somebody would put a bomb in his car, but it was his business
to defend all other sportscar drivers on each occasion in which somebody who
wasn't properly a member flicked his lights.

That's much related to drag racing in the streets, because although in this
little story that the fellow tells, he pulls up in a Bonneville, another fellow
pulls up in a Bonneville and now they have a drag, while that's conceivable,
if the hotrod culture is properly enforced, then if he does it to anybody else,
they just won't drag with him. They will not accept him as a proper person
to drag with, no matter how fast his car is, or whatever else. It's not a car for
doing drag racing.

Now what they do, in part, are kind of simple things. For one, everybody
by and large, including 'teenagers,' simply take the car they get, and drive it.
When you get the car in one or another way radically modified so that it's not
strictly a Detroit car but something worked over by the kid, and get the
notion 'hotrod' applied to it (with, of course, the possibility of subversion
already present, i.e., that you get a hotrod built by some company specializing
in fixing up cars), then, for one, adults don't drive them – or proper adults
don't drive them – and anybody who sees one needn't wait to see who's
driving it, adult or teenager; they know it's 'a hotrod' and there's 'a
hotrodder' in it. And what is known about 'hotrodders' – what they do with
their cars, how they look, how they otherwise behave – are things that
hotrodders can enforce on each other to satisfy. And since hotrods are used
only by kids (or adults 'disloyal to reality'), and once you have one what
you're going to do with it is play with it, you become tremendously
dependent on others' willingness to recognize that you have one, and what it
status is ('good,' 'the best,' 'rotten'). Once you make yourself a candidate,
then you subject yourself to the controls that the set of members have and
enforce.

Further, one can begin to see the interest of kids in sanctioning kids driving
ordinary cars, since those permit the retention of the 'teenage driver' category,
with all that's known about it. Also, there's a way in which some of those kids
are now doing what we don't even have a category for. That is to say, we
don't have a psychiatric category, like neurotic or psychotic, for something
like 'fink.' What it is, is somebody who's disloyal to a lower group. I don't
know why there's not been a psychiatric category for 'fink' and 'scab' and
things like that; it's kind of an interesting problem. But consider that long
utterance which follows "In that Bonneville of mine:"

> *Ken:* In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out and if I've got a tie and a – a sweater on and I look clean? ninety nine percent of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car, same color, same year the whole bit, roar up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby tee shirt, and the guy'll pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before uh he'll pick me up.

What's being proposed of course is that I could put on the appearance of a nice kid teenage driver who doesn't drag race, and do it, and the cops wouldn't get me. That is, I could look like I'm loyal to them while I'm really being loyal to you. Where of course they take it that that's just talk, that what he is, is being disloyal to them.[1]

Now one of the things we have to see, that sets these sorts of tasks into a framework of their real possibility, is this: We're dealing in the first instance with a category. They're not 'groups.' Most of the categories (women, old people, Negroes, white and the like) are not 'groups' in any sense that you normally talk about groups, and yet what we have is a mass of knowledge known about every category, and any member is seen as a representative of each of those categories, and any person who is a case of a category is seen as a member of the category. And what's known about the category is known about them, and the fate of each is bound up in the fate of the other. So one regularly has systems of social control built up around these categories which are internally enforced by the members, because if a member does something like 'rape a white women,' 'commit economic fraud,' 'race on the street,' etc., then that thing will be seen as 'what a member does,' not what the person with that name does. And the rest of them will have to pay for it. And somehow these categories live with that problem, by and large. They go around telling each other "remember, you're a lady," "remember, you're a

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[1] [This note was added by the transcriber at the time the lecture was transcribed.] Here is another story told by the same kid in another session, at which the other two boys are not present. In this case, the proposal seems to be that he's putting on the appearance of a normal everyday car and its normal everyday driver while he's really loyal to another category perhaps similar to hotrodders, i.e., surfers.

> *Ken:* In Mammoth my Jeep I've got surf stickers all over the back windows you know?
> *Louise:* Mm//hm
> *Ken:* An' up there they <u>hate</u> surf. Surf is the lowe//st thing,
> *Louise:* Oh I <u>know</u> that. heh
> *Ken:* in the world. An' all the adults frown upon it, the kids hate'em, they see me, an' they used to throw <u>rocks</u>//you know?
> *Louise:* ehheh heh!
> *Ken:* An' I was avoiding <u>rocks</u> . So I finally decided this isn't for me y'know, I took razor blades, took all my surf stickers off? So it looked just like a normal everyday Jeep, you know, an' I was drivin' around town, an' nobody throwin' rocks, or anything, it felt so good, y'know?

such and such," and having everybody try to live up to the best image of that thing, rather than, for example, attempting to simply change it, or ignore it, or do whatever else.

And those systems of control are not enforced by any government. There are no officials. Most members never know each other, but they live and die awaiting what will be in the next day's newspaper about what one of them did. I would bet that you could find that in the period between the assassination of the President and the discovery of who did it (not only 'who' – what name, but what he was) that every depressed group in the country sat in mortal fear of the fact that they did it. And they knew that for those that did do it, it would then be a fact of their lives. At best they can argue, by and large, "Well, there are good ones and bad ones among us."

It's been, I think, teenagers who have made a raft of attempts to break that kind of situation. From Beatnicks to whatever else, they've been engaged in setting up independent corporations which everybody is eventually forced to recognize on its own terms. In that regard, then, one can specifically see the tie to drug users, who are in effect saying, "Let them all retain the perceptual structure of reality; we'll make our own." Of course, in the case of kids, the problem of their attempted revolution is really fantastic, since they lose members at an incredible rate. Other sorts of revolutions might have more chance of success insofar as they can retain members.

In any event, what we want to see is that it's not simply the case that the fact that has long been known among anthropologists – that the Eskimos have 17 categories of snow whereas we only have one, means that they are much more interested in snow, or the fact that kids have 57 categories of cars means that they're much more interested in cars. Rather, those additions, and the focus on them, can be ways that more or less fundamental attacks are being launched against a culture which is stable by reference to everybody seeing the world for what it is, without regard to whether it's pleasant or not, whether they come out on top or not, and not seeing that they can do anything about it. And in that regard, the notion that it's merely the fun of driving fast that's involved, which may be part of the basis for setting up places where kids can drag safely, has provided for an enterprise which is doomed, simply by virtue of the fact that that sets up an administration of the phenomenon which is not theirs.

It's in that regard, then, that the important problems of social change, I would take it, anyway, would involve laying out such things as the sets of categories, how they're used, what's known about any member, etc., and beginning to play with shifts in the properties of a category, and shifts in the rules for use.

This lecture was given on March 25, 1966. Several months thereafter, Sacks clipped an article from the *New York Times* onto his copy of the transcript, with a small segment bracketed.

New York Times, Monday, August 8, 1966

Harlem Residents Seek to Dispel Whites' Fear of Area (continued from first page, second part)
"Ten years ago, a Negro didn't want any part of black," a young man said. "He wanted to be as much like the white man as he could be, but now he's realizing that he never will be some kind of white man. We're finding an identity that has eluded us for so many years – as black men."

A surprising number of people in Harlem now use the word black, in preference to Negro, in speaking of their race. Some are turning to African history and African dress to give themselves a more buoyant frame of reference than the melancholy history of black suppression in America.

Lecture 19
Appearance verbs

I'm going in part to deal with "and if I've got a tie and a sweater on and I look clean." I want first to consider the sorts of things that can be involved in "I look clean." Its interest lies, in part, in the fact that it's partially related to a class of apparent paradoxes that there has been a good deal of philosphical literature about. Also, it's interesting in relation to those verbs that name activities, which we talked of using Austin's term, 'performatives,' e.g., "I promise" and the like.

One of the things we noted, and that's important about the activity involved in using performatives, is the marked differences between the activities involved, given differences in the person (I, he, you) attached to the verb. "I promise" is one sort of thing, a way of doing promises. "He promises" and "you promise" are quite different things, and in part the warrant for saying "he promises" and "you promise" turns on the person being referred to having said something like "I promise." So the first person could be doing an activity, whereas a second and third are reports on it, which are warranted by there having been a first-person assertion (and that could have been other things than saying "I promise," which is not the only way to promise).

Now there are a class of verbs which we can call *'appearance verbs'* that work in a kind of reverse fashion from performatives. There is again a split between 'I' and 'you,' 'he,' 'she,' but it's a different sort of split. And perhaps not seeing the split, and not seeing the way uses of 'I' get warranted with the appearance verbs, is a basis for the sorts of apparent paradoxes that have been proposed; things like "I am dreaming." Another is "I talk in my sleep." Things that turn on sleep are very good ones and very usual ones for consideration of how is it that somebody can say that, and if they say that don't we have a paradox of sorts, where if you were dreaming you wouldn't be in a position to say "I am dreaming," etc.

So, recalling, to start out with, that a warrant for the use of 'you' or 'he' plus performative would be somebody's use of 'I' plus a performative, let's then consider these appearance verbs, where what I'm going to propose, in arguing that there's a kind of reversal situation going on, is that a warrant for the use of 'I' plus an appearance verb is the occurrence of somebody's use of 'you' or 'he' plus the appearance verb. Simplest case is, a warrant for saying "I talk in my sleep" is that somebody said to you, "You talk in your sleep." If one can move from 'I' plus appearance verb to get the derivation of it in a 'you' plus appearance verb, then of course there's no paradox.

The paradox turns on the fact that one has a normal class of 'I' plus

something, where it's warranted by the fact that I know it, or I'm the best authority, etc. And one doesn't separate out those which are normally or properly arrived at by somebody telling you it. And the grounds, of course, for not seeing that it has that derivation are, in part, certain sorts of paraphrases that are permissable. Now, the phenomenon of paraphrasing is a fantastically important one. It's learned very very early. In *Children Tell Stories* there's at least one use of it in an under-three-year-old's story. The kid says, "His mommy came home and told him to get out of the street." That statement is recognizable as not merely a quotation, but a paraphrased quotation. Mommy wouldn't say "to get out of the street." And it's of course a kind of interesting thing to see how kids would ever learn to make that sort of paraphrased quotation.

The phenomenon of quotation in general is an extremely tricky problem, especially in languages like English where there are no special ways of invariably marking that what we're doing is a quotation. In some languages there are grammatical markers that say 'a quotation is coming' or 'this is a quotation.' In English what you can do is say "He said" and the quote follows. But you don't have to, and there are considerable number of activities which turn on ambiguously using quotation marks. For one, it's a way of being ironic. For example, how would we decide that in the statement "You must be crazy or you wouldn't be here," he's asserting 'You must be crazy' or he's asserting 'You must be "crazy".' That problem has been one which has had rather vexing kinds of consequences in various historical disciplines. I'll deal with it when I consider some problems in the data, of deciding that we have a quotation. I only mention it now.

Now, given that 'I' can be used directly, it may be tricky to see that it's being used as a paraphrased quotation, i.e., that if one says "I talk in my sleep," what's being said is something like: "John said, 'You talk in your sleep'." "John said I talk in my sleep." "I talk in my sleep." Where, then, the first-person usage is a paraphrased quotation, and the warrant for the assertion in the first person is some assertion in second or third person. Of course this doesn't hold for all appearance verbs. But for those in which what one has is a usage which has the warrants I've laid out, there is clearly nothing paradoxical involved. And it is, of course, to be noted that Members perfectly well know this possibility, and at least on some occasions recognize a case of first-person usage to be a quotation. So, in the group therapy data, in another session one of the kids is saying "I'm crazy" and the therapist says, "You keep saying you're crazy. Have people been telling you that?" Another: A little girl comes home and says to her mother, "I'm beautiful." Her mother might well say, "Who told you that?"

We can then mark as the class of 'appearance verbs,' those for which it's appropriate upon the assertion in the first person for someone to ask "Who told you that," and where it's the case that a warranted use is that someone told you it. For any of those, then, there is in principle no paradoxical character to them. And the kinds of troubles that can occur are simply things like saying it without the proper warrant (i.e., without someone having told

you), or treating other people's assertions at face value when they're just trying to get things out of you or they're just trying to degrade you, or taking it that they think so though they haven't said so, etc.

We also can see that we get another pronoun relationship, this use of 'I' warranted by some use of 'you' or 'he' or 'she,' where again we have a kind of screwing up of the pairings that we started off with as obvious, i.e., I–We, you–you, he–they, etc. We now have 'I' derived from 'you' or 'he.'

And of course we have a kind of obverse to that classical philosophical problem, How do you know others' minds? which is, How do you know your own appearance? And the problem, How do you know your own appearance? turns on the fact that statements about your own apperance are warranted by virtue of somebody else's assertion. Where those assertions are problematic, not merely by virtue of their correctness or not, but by virtue of the set of affiliated activities that can be being done when somebody says, for example, "You look nice." And since such assertions are a basic way of learning about one's own appearance, a consequence of, e.g., 'taking all praise with a grain of salt' is that you get a rather special picture of yourself, since each of the decent characteristics can be heard as 'mere praise,' and the like.

Now in the case of "I look clean," 'clean' is not clearly one of those, since it can be learned, and there are devices for seeing and saying about yourself that you 'look clean,' on your own behalf, or by use of the mirror. The fact that some of the appearance verbs can be decided by oneself and some can't may well pose classification problems, and pose trouble for Members' knowing which ones they can decide and which ones they can't. And the metaphor of a mirror gets, of course, enormously troublesome. Psychiatrically you get a large variety of misunderstandings of proper classifications, which are symptoms. That is, from treating none of the appearance verbs as things you have rights to decide about yourself, to perhaps allowing nobody rights to decide for any of them, i.e., assimilating them all as things like 'clean.' From 'I can't trust myself at all' to 'I can't trust anybody else at all.'

Let's go back now for a bit. We have an enumeration of features: "I've got a tie and a sweater on and I look clean." What controls the enumeration? There are, of course, many places where we get enumeration of features. I take it that in this case it's unanalytically apparent that the enumeration is controlled by a picture being offered which is directed to presenting an appearance type, i.e., "If I look like a nice kid" – a 'nice kid' in contrast to, e.g., a 'hotrodder.'

The 'nice kid' category is not generically stable in that, that for which some persons – adults, cops – would see 'a nice kid,' may well provide for hotrodders that they're seeing a 'Soshe,' a 'square,' whatever else. And one other thing which we will see, which is related to the appearance of the 'nice kid' for the cops or adults in a deep way, is that he doesn't want to be seen only as 'a nice kid,' but he wants to permit being seen as 'a nice kid' by the cops, and an eligible dragster by kids. What he wants, in part, I take it, is to insist on the difference between the appearance of the 'nice kid' for cops, and the appearance that can be seen by a hotrodder, who should not be 'misled'

by his apperance. That ambiguously intended picture could be permitted by a legitimate dragger. It could be refused, by seeing him as in fact a nice kid and not just one who wants to appear so to 'others,' i.e., in fact 'a Soshe.' Or it can be seen as an ambivalence on his part. In this case, perhaps, that's what the term 'poor little rich kid' intends, i.e., somebody who wants to make it both ways, with adults and with the kids.

And you'll notice how in the story here, this little hypothetical anecdote, he gets it both ways. And he sets it up in a nice way. And that is that he's driving along and he doesn't make the move to do a drag, but somebody else does it. Where of course somebody else doing it involves somebody seeing him as acceptable, where that somebody else is, if not acceptable to an unquestionable hotrodder, at least more acceptable than him, i.e., the somebody else is wearing "a dirty grubby T-shirt." Where of course the offering of a signal – roaring up his pipes, which is the signal for a drag – involves the person who does it proposing himself as a candidate dragger for someone who he takes to be another – and not merely another candidate, but one who is entitled to accept the candidacy of the first. He might have said "I pull up to him, roar up my pipes and he accepts," to which they could then say "Yeah, you might do that, but nobody would accept." So it may well be not incidental that he sets it up with the other fellow making the offer. The other fellow would have had to decide that he was one who would be willing or competent.

Q: Are people aware, actually aware that they do this in conversation, such as having the other person offer the invitation by roaring up his pipes? Is it your opinion that he knows what he's doing or is it something that they have learned internally in conversation, and never become aware of it.

HS: Well, what I understand by 'knows' is that he does some such things as require my analysis to put that into him. See, you have a notion of 'a brain' and 'a person' and 'what they know.' And your issue is, 'Well, do they really know this or that? Am I going to get my knowledge corrected here? I know that's so, I know this is not so.' As I said when I began out, and as I intend throughout, the task is to find what it is that has to be built into somebody to make them someone who can do these things. That what they know, they know, quote, consciously or whatever else, is a problem. I don't at this point intend to solve it. I don't know how to solve it. I'm not looking at it. The question is, what kind of a machinery do I have to put in there? Now, a machinery that would say about something that, not only is it there, but it's there as a matter of their awareness, is another piece of apparatus, perhaps. But I have no idea. I don't have any idea of what it is that being conscious of something would affect. I suppose it's a kind of heritage from Socrates that one ought to be conscious of all these things, otherwise you can't really control them, or something like that – which supposes that if you are conscious of them you can control them.

Okay. So at least for our story's purpose, what he does is partially construct an appearance which is still satisfactory as an acceptable partner in doing drag racing. It's also an appearance that he takes it works for the cops, since the cop also observes the scene and doesn't arrest him. Now it's kind of nice to watch

how, given the fact that the whole thing and all of its parts are hypothetical, he sets it up in such a way as to show which of the hypothetical parts are criterial of the outcome. That is, each clause could be prefaced with 'if' just as legitimately as any other. Again, the data:

> *Ken* :   In that Bonneville of mine. I could take that thing out and if I've got a tie and a – a sweater on and I look clean? ninety nine percent of the time a guy could pull up to me in the same car, same color, same year the whole bit, roar up his pipes and he's in a dirty grubby tee shirt, and the guy'll pick the guy up in the dirty grubby tee shirt before uh he'll pick me up.

So, e.g., "I could take that thing out" could be rephrased as 'If I were to . . .' The only place where he does use 'if' is to mark this appearance sentence, "if I've got a tie and a – a sweater on and I look clean," where the appearance difference is parallel to the appearance of the other, and that's supposed to be a criterial matter, as to how one ever gets arrested. So the 'if' seems to signal that thing which is the hypothesis to be tested by whatever happens. And it's nicely set up as a hypothesis – all other things are constant, even though they're all equally hypothetical.

One thing you might note about this very long sentence is, apparently if you build sentences out of phrases and clauses you get a lot more positional freedom into them than when you don't use those sorts of things. What I mean to note is, e.g., here's this phrase, "99 percent of the time." It doesn't modify what follows it. It's not "99 percent of the time a guy could pull up to me . . . etc.," but, when we put the sentence back together again after having heard it, "if I look clean, a guy could come up to me in the same car . . . etc . . . and 99 percent of the time he'll get picked up." It's kind of interesting that we can really rearrange those matters; whereas within the clauses the words may not have that kind of positional freedom.

Now, what about 'look'? I suggested that what the enumeration is directed to do, is to offer the appearance of 'a nice kid,' where what's very important is that it's to be seen as the appearance of a nice kid who is not a nice kid. Not a nice kid, that is, for possible hotrodding, because a nice kid wouldn't do it. Now I have the feeling that the word 'look' there, which, to be sure, is legitimately usable with 'clean,' stands as an alternative to 'am.' In the case of clean, it's generally quite weak to say "I look clean," since if you look clean you most likely are clean, and the difference isn't very important. But in the case at hand, being it and looking like it are importantly different; "I am clean" could then have said of it, "Yeah, you're a nice kid," "You're a Soshe." Sticking in the 'look' there may well mark the fact that he's not really the thing that he's reporting the appearance of, but only looks like it.

Now there are certain questions which are kind of relevant to the theory he seems to be using here. For one, if it's the case that he's possibly doing a drag with somebody else, and a cop sees it, then for the cop, the decision that he *is* doing a drag is, in part, decided by whether he looks like somebody that

would do that. It's not the case, apparently, that if he does something that looks like it, if he's doing something that looks like what the other person is surely doing, then he's doing it. And it is, of course, regularly the case that when some activity is possibly going on, Members decide between whether it is or isn't going on by virtue of some determination as to whether its participants are 'the sort who do it.'

The use of such procedures are quite relevant, for example, to get statistics which show higher crime rates among Negroes, or among lower-class kids. If such a procedure is involved, then results are provided for by the way it is that one looks to find cases. That thing done by 'hotrodder' can be seen as 'dragging,' if it might or might not be. If he doesn't seem to be 'a hotrodder' then it might not be 'dragging.' In which case, you find hotrodders and nice kids having differential arrest rates. And it's not simply that that's available to us, it's apparently available to them.

Lecture 20

Character appears on cue; Good grounds for an action; An explanation is <u>the</u> explanation

I want to focus for awhile on ". . . roar up his pipes and the guy'll pick the guy up . . ." In the first instance, there's no problem about "the guy'll pick the guy up," as to who the guy who picks the guy up is, by virtue of 'picking somebody up' being category bound to 'cop,' permitting, then, a replacement of 'the guy' – which would be a general pro-term for 'male' or whatever – by 'the cop.'

When I was considering "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up," one of the things I was remarking there was that when a character who has some proper grounds for appearing and some proper thing to do, has its cue, then there's no need to account for how they happened to have come on the scene. Given "the baby cried," you don't have to get a characterization of where the mommy was, that she was anywhere around; the mommy does her job.[1] And we can notice that something akin to that *'character appears on cue'* phenomenon is present here. Where the cop was, how he came on the scene, is not indicated and not missing.

In certain circumstances there is a variant of the 'character appears on cue' rule, which is much stronger than the above. And that's what I want to focus on for a while. We can contrast what I want to develop with the phenomenon of "The baby cried. The mommy picked it up" by noticing that not only are there a large amount of other circumstances under which a mommy might pick her baby up besides the baby crying, which are also 'on cue,' but there are also plenty of circumstances where a mommy could pick her baby up without having any such cue from the baby. Mommies are free to pick their babies up, perhaps at will.

Now, for certain characters and certain activities of those characters, we have a circumstance where it's not merely that they can appear on cue, but they properly appear and do their activities *only* on cue. And that fact has a series of very large consequences. First of all, it permits a Member's description to be adequate which reports the occurrence of the character appearing, and his activity, without having to indicate what the cue was,

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[1] See Spring 1966, lecture 2, p. 254. The foregoing part of this paragraph was taken from Fall 1965, Lecture 9, p. 183, as it is a bit richer than the consideration in the original lecture 20.

where it will be heard that there was a cue. So, in the case at hand it isn't that the guy roars up his pipes and that's why he gets arrested, but it is by virtue of roaring up their pipes being a signal to drag that, presumably, then, the drag would take place, that generating a violation – speeding – and the cop then picking him up for that.

In a way, that consequence is secondary to the strong character of this variant of the 'character appears on cue' rule. I'll quote a piece of data and we'll consider the strong inferences that are permitted if a character who properly appears only on cue and does his activities, is said to appear. This is a conversation between a psychiatrist and a person who's calling for help. It's a first conversation, perhaps the fifth interchange into it – no more than that. 'A' is the psychiatrist. 'B' has had a quarrel with his wife, and now he's reporting a scene that took place.

A: Yeah, then what happened?
B: Ok, in the meantime she ((she is the wife of B)) says don't ask the child nothing. Well, she stepped between me and the child and I got up to walk out the door. When she stepped between me and the child I went to move her out of the way. And then about that time, her sister had called the police. I don't know how she – what she–
A: Didn't you smack her one?
B: No.
A: You're not telling me the story, Mr B.
B: Well you see when you say smack you mean hit.
A: Yeah you shoved her, is that it?
B: Yeah I shoved her.

The power of the variant of the 'character appears on cue' rule for this special class of characters and their activities is that one who does not know the person they're talking to, beyond a very brief acquaintance, can tell that the other is lying. That is, when the other proposes both the occurrence of the character's appearing, and no cue. And that is to say, if the characters appear, then there *was* a proper cue. We can see, then, where this strong rule holds by seeing those places where a hearer can say that the reporter is lying.

Now that's quite an extraordinary kind of fact. After all, the teller of this story is the one that presumably knows what happened. And you don't have to know that he's a known liar. That he proposes such a character appeared and there was no cue, is good enough grounds for asserting to him that he lied. And that assertion can work, furthermore. That is to say, he can recognize that you have good grounds for knowing that he lied. He doesn't say, "How in the world would you know?"

It is important to see that, again, it's 'recognition' that we're dealing with – here, recognition of a lie. And it's perfectly conceivable that one could offer as the cue, something which wasn't true, either. So a successful lie under these circumstances would be to propose that some adequate cue, other than the real one in this case, occurred. Where, then, what we want to see is how it is

that the phenomenon of a lie becomes not idiosyncratic as to its recognition.

In part, the importance of the phenomenon can be perfectly obvious by just considering data like this. But it has provided a focus for rather more extended concern. The basic sorts of problems that seem to be focused around it can, at least roughly, be readily enough seen by considering one fundamental myth which turns on this phenomenon. And that is the story of Job.

Recalling the story of Job, one of his problems was essentially as follows: He's a good man, and he's well rewarded for being a good man. Unbeknownst to himself, he's being tested. The test consists, in part, of a destruction of the possible bases for his being a good man, i.e., the rewards – his wealth, his family, etc. And the occurrence of that destruction poses for Job a problem: Why did it occur? That it is a test is unavailable to him. He is quite convinced that it isn't a punishment; convinced because he doesn't figure that he's done anything to warrant that.

Now come his 'friends,' and they're engaged in a series of dialogues, which are, in part, directed to the relationship between morality and rewards in this world. They take it that what it is that would have warranted what had happened to him is that he did something punishable – where what has happened to him is properly to be conceived of as 'punishment', given that unless what has happened to him can be conceived of as 'punishment', it's inexplicable. It has, therefore, to have been what it might have been, so what he ought to do is confess. If he admits his guilt, they propose, he'll be in good shape.

We have, then, this phenomenon: If an explanation is available, then it's *that* explanation that is *the* explanation, and formulates what it is that's happened. Now, it's a very general phenomenon. Let me quote some further data which lays that aspect of things out quite clearly. It's a decision from a labor arbitration case. I choose it only because it's very explicit in its formulation.

> The story of the other discharged employees approaches the bizarre. Twelve of them testified before me. Each of them claims to be a completely innocent bystander, wholly at a loss to understand why he was picked up for discharge. None of them admits being part of the crowd in any of the demonstrations. None of them admits even the normal curiosity of an innocent bystander. Each claims that when the lights went out or the line stopped, he asked his foreman what to do, and upon being told to stay or go home as he pleased, but that his time stopped in any event, he left for home. One of the men, a lively young boxer, asserts that after seeing the crowd and the excitement, he calmly repaired to a warm spot and went to sleep. He did this, he asserts, on two of the three days, being absent on the third, and slept the peaceful sleep of the just, until the excitement completely quieted down. All, it seems, were veritable angels, above and beyond contagion by the excitement in the department.

Now there unquestionably were serious stoppages in Department 84 on November 5th, 6th, and 8th. There were vociferous and angry men milling around and demanding action. Who were the incensed men who did take part? Who were the angry men whom it was difficult to get back to work and who were so incensed that, as the Union claims, they turned against their own committeemen and even assaulted two of them. How indeed were these 14 chosen?

The Union advanced no explanation. There is no suggestion that these men were chosen by lot. And even such a method would normally be expected to catch some of the guilty. And there is no basis whatever in the evidence to suppose that the men were selected because of any personal animosity against them, with the slight possible exception of one man. Nor were the men generally regarded as troublemakers of whom the company would be glad to be rid. The company's explanation is simple, and without any contradiction other than the incredible stories related by the men themselves. The labor relations conciliator, with the help of his assistants, took the names or badge numbers of the most active men in the crowds that demonstrated in his office. This accounts for twelve of the fourteen. Under these circumstances I cannot give credence to the men's protestations of innocence.

Now the notion that it would be the business of a person proposed to be guilty, to explain how he came to be selected as the one proposed to be guilty, is crucial to these formulations – crucial to Job, crucial to the detection of a lie, and, of course, part of the enormous power of this variant of the 'character appears on cue' rule. We have, then, a circumstance where it is not merely the case that, lacking reference to the cue, some cue can be assumed to have been present, but the assertion of 'no cue' is an extremely difficult business to defend – and it's the business of the asserter to try to defend it if he can.

The phenomenon has further relevance for the data that we have. It is that sort of thing which provides for the occurrence of the question, "you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here." And it makes for a series of extremely difficult problems for any given person to handle, e.g., once you're in a mental hospital or a prison, though it may be the case that each Member takes it that they are there wrongly, they also take it that everybody else is there rightly.

Indeed, the very fact of a hearing is extremely troublesome to deal with. The notion that, for example, if possible mental patients were assured hearings beforehand, then that would remove a great deal of injustice, while it may be so that it would remove some injustice, has, if it's going to be argued, to take account of the fact that the mere presentation of them as possible ill persons, possible criminals, is a rather different thing than saying that anybody is possibly ill. 'Anybody' isn't there, and there must have been some reason that this one is there. They need, then, not simply provide that they're perfectly okay, but explain how they got selected – where that explanation is extremely tricky. Because, for one, it has to allow that such procedures as selected them will, by and large, in almost every other case,

select people properly. Were they to argue otherwise, i.e., that every case –
theirs being only an instance – is selected in God only knows what way, then
of course they prove their insanity.

And this is without anybody knowing by having studied how it is that in
fact, in any case, persons are selected. The matter of reforms in these areas is
by no means as simple as is sometimes suggested. Because, for one, a reform
that would involve 'a really true innocence until proven guilty' – in the sense
of no supposition of guilt by virtue of having been selected – would serve to
make activities like those of the police extremely difficult for them to do. And
that is even if such a notion could be maintained, and I don't see how it could,
anyway.

Again, what's involved, in part, is the circumstance under which various
persons other than those who did some observation, have the seer's maxims
available to 'see' what it is that must have been seen by those who did the
observations. Recall when I discussed "The baby cried. The mommy picked
it up," I simply asserted that producers of activities could use seer's and
hearer's maxims. That the seer's maxims are available to producers of actions,
and are crucial to them in producing their activities, can at least in part be
gotten at by locating those things which Members have available to them as
things that can be done subversively – under the very general usage of
'subversion' I offered. And in that regard, then, we get, for example, "If I've
got a tie and a sweater on and I look clean," where what's being proposed is:
'I could put on an appearance for which I can be assured as to how it is that
I will be seen by somebody unknown to me personally, via the fact that he's
a cop, and via the fact that he will use some seer's maxim to see who I am,
where I can use those facts to generate an appearance which has some more
or less guaranteed reading.'

Where ever, then, Members know how to do subversive activities, we can
take it that they have available to them some notion of what seer's maxims
will be used to observe them as problematic phenomena. Where, of course,
their subversive activities are directed to satisfying some constraints on how it
is that persons are to be seen. In that regard, then, subversion is simply a
consequence of seer's maxims, hearer's maxims and the like. If you want a
grandiose version of it, this is so in the sense that a poet is subversive according
to Plato, since he knows how to produce something that sounds real while not
being real. Which is to say, he knows how to produce something which will
be heard as correct though it isn't. Plato claims they're liars because he takes
it that they're not seen as lying. And successful lies satisfy constraints for
producing something that will be heard, according to one of those maxims,
as 'correct description.'

Let's move on a little bit now. The next line is "But not many people get
picked up in a Pontiac station wagon." Notice that there is transformation in
the name of the object being referred to. Earlier 'Bonneville,' now 'Pontiac
station wagon.' It's the same car. The notion that names are used only as
conventions seems unuseful here. Something like a notion that Russell offers
– that names are disguised descriptions – would seem to be much more

appropriate. That names are doing things, and that the use of a different name than another is criterial, seems clearly to be the case.

There's a beautiful example earlier in the session, exactly parallel to this one. The fellow that's talking about his 'Bonneville' is there talking about his Jeep. (In fact, the car that's his in the family, is a Jeep. The Bonneville is his mother's.) And he's saying that he just put a 'Thunderbird' engine in his Jeep, at which point somebody else says, "Why the hell do you want to put a Ford in a Jeep?" So, his 'Thunderbird' becomes a 'Ford,' as his 'Bonneville' becomes a 'Pontiac station wagon.'

Focussing on the statement "But not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon," let me first note that if you took that sentence isolatedly, you could come up with a whole series of possible hearings that would never occur to you dealing with it as we are. For example, I take it it's perfectly obvious that we do not hear the statement as asserting that the Pontiac station wagon is not one of those circus cars with lots of people in it, i.e., that when a Pontiac station wagon gets picked up it's relatively empty, though syntactically that's a perfectly decent reading of "not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon." And if you're dealing with possible syntactic ambiguities, you would have to come to terms with how it is that that would just not occur to you. And the notion of 'the sentence' as subjected to syntactical consideration as a sentence isolated, and that giving you important results, has to be considered when you find how strange, indeed, such a reading would be – though of course there might be some use of that sentence which would have such an intention.

It's clear, then, that we have to deal with the sentence in its position in this argument, in trying to see what it is that's being done with it. Where one of the facts is that what's being done with it is perfectly clear to the hearer of it, who says right off, "Now well I agree it looks like a Daddy – it looks like a damn Mommy's car."

Now there's a point to the statement somewhere, and the question of how to find how that statement does that point is a very large issue. I can't deal with it. But there are some things, anyway, that might be said.

It stands in nice juxtaposition to the earlier pair of statements, where the fact that you're bound to get picked up in a hotrod is treated as posing the challenge. Here, "But not many people get picked up" seems to involve, in part, that if you don't get picked up, then that's not countable as a success. The conditions under which not getting picked up is countable as a success, turn on those conditions which provide that you've got a challenge.

Once we get to that, what seems, then, to be involved is that we have here – as we have throughout – a piece of an argument serving quite adequately to suggest clearly what the argument is. In this case, for one, what's crucial is not simply that not many people get picked up in a Pontiac station wagon, but the relativity of that fact to the drivers of Pontiac station wagons. That is, plenty of people drive Pontiac station wagons; of them, few people get picked up. Where, if few people drove Pontiac station wagons and few got picked up, you could still have a perfectly good challenge, insofar as Pontiac station

wagons were treated as relevant to whether you get picked up. And that is part of the apparent argument, as seen by the respondent to it. Pontiac station wagon is at least a case of a type: Daddy's car, Mommy's car. Where users of that type are treated as having a fate in common, such that certain accounts and only certain accounts are relevant in explicating certain problems. For example, why you didn't get picked up is to be handled via the fact that you were driving one of those cars, and other possible explanations are ruled out.

And again, that argument that the fate turns on the type of car is one which involves the fact that seer's maxims are available even for this hypothetical case. Some such thing as: 'A policeman sees a Daddy's car or Mommy's car, and knowing what he knows about such cars and how they're driven, and knowing that they're a legitimate type for him to use to decide what they might be doing, ignores them.' So that a person in one of them who violates a law has a much lesser chance of getting picked up than a person in some car known as a type driven by systematically violative drivers.

This knowledge being available means that when we deal with arrest records of teenagers, we're not dealing with such things as might be handled via Driver's Education and things like that. They know their fate before it happens, and indeed they're proposing to reject, not merely the chance not to drive fast, but the chance to drive fast under circumstances in which they're not so observable. That is to say, the chance of getting arrested is apparently some strong consideration in doing whatever they do, in the ways that they do it.

Lecture 21

Misidentification; Membership categories; Utterance pairs; Paradoxes

In this lecture I'll be concerned primarily with two technical problems. The first is as follows. Is it the case that for some places, the sequence in which some rules are applied to give us an analysis is important? And what, then, are the proper sequences for applying the rules to give us an activity? And the second concerns the orderliness of relationships between more or less complex activities. Can we find order in their relationship and can we provide for that order?

By 'complex activities' I mean things like doing discussing, which doesn't take place in an utterance but involves at least several. What I'll be concerned with is that in the given segment that we've been considering, there are two complex activities which are named as taking place, by the participants. 'Discussing' is one, and the second is 'tearing down.' One question we want to ask is whether such activities as those occur recurrently in the order they occur in here, and is there some way of showing why they occur in that order, and how one leads to the other? We'll get to that problem in a while. I'll deal with other things as well, besides these two problems.

We can begin to consider the problem of sequences in applying rules by looking first at this line, "Yes Mommy. Thank you." Recall that I've mentioned the problem of what could be called '*misidentification*;' that is to say, that a term like 'Mommy' is used to address and refer to somebody who isn't the mommy of the person so referred to. And when I've mentioned that problem I've said that it has some considerable theoretical importance. One importance it has is something like this: If we took it that the way to determine who it is that's being referred to by some category is to be decided by a '*correspondence criteria*,' i.e., by looking to see who it is that's properly a member of that category, then the problem of misidentification would be extremely troublesome. We might end up simply with saying that either the person who could be correctly referred to by that category is being talked to or of, or, if there seems to be nobody who could be so referred to, then an error is being made. And we might not have a good way of dealing with *intentional misidentification*, which is a way of doing some particular activity, e.g., 'insulting.'

This is a condensation of lectures 21 and 22.

If a correspondence criteria has this sort of inadequacy, that it cannot deal with intentional misidentifications, then we have another way – besides the way I formulated in 'The Search for Help' paper – of coming to see the systematic, general, in-principle inadequacy of the social scientists' use of correspondence criteria for deciding who it is that could be being talked of by the assignment of some category that could be correspondence-correct. That is, another way besides the way I posed there, which turned on two or more devices being available to categorize anyone who might be being talked of.

When we consider the correspondence criteria, and pose for ourselves the problem of assigning a sequence to a set of rules for reproducing the activities being done, we might use the correspondence criteria as one possible first-order rule for dealing with the use of membership categories, that would run something like the following: 'If some person uses a membership category, then look to see whether there is somebody present, properly characterized by that category. If so, treat them as the person categorized.' And there are clearly places in which such a formulation would work. Suppose a child is in a room with his parents and says, "Get me a drink of water, Mommy." Then one could take the term 'Mommy,' see who it is among the other persons present that could be categorized by that, and arrive at one. And there would be a variety of ways of arriving at that one. Then, of course, treat that one as the one being talked to. Such a rule wouldn't work to give us *a* person being categorized in this case, and it wouldn't, I take it, deal with terms which are different from 'Mommy,' like 'stupid,' which could be used to refer to and address somebody in some utterance.

Now the question is, does there seem to be some way that Members go about locating who it is that's being addressed by some term? As I pointed out earlier, and this is of course perfectly apparent – though that it's apparent does not mean it's unimportant – who it is that's being addressed by "Yes, Mommy" is understood by the Members, and they then may well seem to have some way, apart from correspondence correctness, to determine that someone is being referred to by a membership category. How, then, do they do it?

I think that what's relevant for a solution to the problem is that the rules of conversational sequences are the first rules to be used. Then what one wants to see is whether there are some rules of conversational sequencing which, before considering the membership that was used, will tell you who it is that's being addressed by that term. Then the term that was used can be considered as to what activity it might be doing, given that you know who it is that's being talked to or of, with it.

So what we need, then, are the variety of appropriate rules of conversation sequencing. And these can be more or less abstract, or they can be particular to the sorts of things being done. Where their abstractness can just provide for a testing of the rules.

Now, we're at this point where we have:

Roger :   Ken, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.
Ken :   Yes Mommy. Thank you.

And for "Ken, face it..." we can, for example, take it that one rule operating is: A person addressed by some utterance is given the occasion to talk next. Now that's very loose and general, and doesn't tell us what in particular is being done by the thing they're addressed with, or what they might be doing next, or, for that matter, whom they might talk to, if there's anybody in particular that they might talk to. But it is recurrently the case that that is done, i.e., giving a person the floor by addressing them – particularly by addressing them with their name. (You can use it to get the floor yourself, in a variant of that situation I considered for kids, i.e., "You know what, Daddy?" gives the floor to Daddy who gives it back. So in this particular two-hour session we regularly find things like: Somebody says, "Roger," Roger says "Yeah," and the other talks.)

As it happens in conversations in American English, it's regularly the case that the use of a name in address, signals a change in the topic of conversation. I don't know why that's so, but empirically it looks to me like that's done very regularly, and it seems to do that. There isn't any grammatical way to signal a change of topic in English, though there is in other languages. Some American Indians apparently have a grammatical means of signalling that you're going to make a topic change. In this case I take it that we could find that a topic change is being introduced with this utterance, from an 'automobile discussion' to the beginning of 'tearing down,' where Ken is the topic.

So: Ken is addressed, Ken can speak. Secondly, at least one of the things that seems to be done with that line "you're a poor little rich kid" is to offer an insult. Insults come in pairs. To a first, a second may be returned. We can get at that in a fairly decent way, in that, for one, even if we're uncertain as to the fact that the first was an 'insult,' there are a collection of 'second insults,' i.e., locatable returns to insults. And misidentification of kinship terms are, very regularly, just such things. That's a very very ancient convention. Here's a citation. Eric Partridge, in *The Shaggy Dog Story* (1954), page 15, reports as an ancient Greek story (and the same thing has been reported very widely):

> A pert youth, meeting an old woman driving a herd called, "Good morning, mother of asses." Return: "Good morning, my son."

There are, of course, fairly decent formal reasons for using kinship terms in this fashion. If it is that something derogatory is being proposed about a person, then one way of generalizing it, or providing for its source, is to use kinship terms.

Now if we have any first utterance – an insult or something else – that provides for a proper second, and provides also for whom that second should be addressed to, then what we can do is see, first, whether it looks like the

rules are going to be used by virtue of the fact that the person located by the first speaks. If they do, we can look to see whether or not they include a membership term, and if they do, we can take it that they're using it by virtue of the set of rules that provide for their second speech, and to whom it's addressed.

That sort of thing can gives us who is addressed by the terms in a variety of second utterances to the first speaker rules: Questions and answers. Commands and returns. (Commands and returns very frequently have misidentifications in them, e.g., "Get me a drink of water." "Yes, Boss.") And then we're in a position to consider what it is that the particular term is doing – if we haven't got, in the first instance, some good idea of what it is doing.

In short, what you want to do is to treat the rules of conversation sequencing as the first things to apply, before such things as 'consistency' and all the rest are applied. And we can take it that before the second occurs, persons could say who will talk, and who they will talk to. And that, again, gives us a way of seeing how it is that the membership term is not doing that work.

Of course in this case there are a series of ways that the second utterance is tied to the first. That is, both 'yes' and 'thank you' would lead us to suppose it's a tied utterance, even if we simply had the utterance itself and didn't know, for example, that an 'insult' had preceded, and the like. But of course lacking the insult, it could perfectly well be, not a 'second insult,' but, for example, an 'appreciation:' "Look what I brought you home." "Thank you." The character of the whole item, then, what activity it's doing, who is being referred to, can be found, in part, via what the first was, since it can be a second to a whole series of things. And of course the category name used, 'Mommy,' is to be found via both who it's talking back to, and the kind of activity it's a return to, i.e., its character as a 'second insult.'

I said that a 'first insult' can be followed by a 'second.' And now that thing seems to be used regularly in a chained fashion, the second treated as a first for a next, and so on, so that insults can be strung together. The game, Tearing Down, is that sort of game, and there's a literature on it. One place you'll find a discussion, but the name Tearing Down is not used there – it's an earlier study and it doesn't deal with America – is *The Lore and Language of School Children* by Peter and Iona Opie. There's an article entitled 'Ritualized verbal insults in white high school culture,' *Journal of American Folklore*, 78, page 337–344, and they cite an early literature on this.

What I want to do now is move through the various parts of this 'tearing down' procedure. The next line is "Face the music."

> *Roger* : Ken, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.
> *Ken* :   Yes Mommy. // Thank you.
> *Roger* : Face the music.

And that's not a new insult, and as such, it seems that the fellow who delivered the first is withdrawing, i.e., is not going to play a game – or to

continue it, anyway. But someone else picks it up and offers him a teammate in that game, against the other fellow. And he accepts the offer and begins again.

Roger: Ken, face it. You're a poor little rich kid.
Ken: Yes Mommy. // Thank you.
Roger: Face the music.
Al: Okay. Now you've got that er outta yer system. Now you're a poor little rich kid we've told you that.
Roger: And we also decided you're a chicken shit.

The offer of a teammate is done in a rather nice way with "Now you're a poor little rich kid, we've told you that," where "we've told you that" is affiliating himself to that thing which the prior fellow said. And he's thereby, I take it, proposing himself as an ally. The prior fellow accepts that, in what could be seen to be a collaborated utterance, "And we also decided you're a chicken shit." Now, earlier in the session he had said, independently, "You're a chicken shit." Saying it again here, in a collaborated utterance, what he's doing in part is saying, 'You, having latched onto the last thing I said, and having announced it for "us," you might as well latch onto something I earlier said. It's now also for "us".' That is, since they're making a team, they might as well add up their resources.

We get a tremendously interesting line in return: "I decided that years ago the hell with you." The first part of it, "I decided that years ago" could look like an 'agreement' and yet, at least for me, it doesn't come off that way. And furthermore, the second part, "the hell with you," seems to be not consistent with the first part as an 'agreement' (if you needed any reason to doubt that "I decided that years ago" was an 'agreement'). Of course the fact that it's not consistent with an 'agreement' isn't necessarily an unequivocal matter, since they may well have a series of inconsistent statements.

In any event, in dealing with "I decided that years ago the hell with you," which seems to be some kind of denial and not some kind of agreement, what I wanted to see was how could it be a denial, and what kind of critique might it be of the former remark? So the question is, can we establish that it *is* some kind of critique, denial, or whatever? And how does that work?

The way I proceeded was to consider what kind of activity would it be to decide that oneself was a chicken shit. We might say that it would be courageous, i.e., it would take an act of courage to decide that you were a coward. It's facing a rather unpleasant fact, and decisions of that sort about oneself are treatable as acts of courage.

Q: Isn't it an assumption that such a decision is courageous? Such a decision may not necessarily be an act of courage.

HS: I've been interested to explore what could be called the grammar or the technique that persons use to arrive at and do the various things they do. It has never been my aim to give medals to people for doing what they do. And when I say that it's an act of courage to arrive at the statement that

you're a coward, I'm not saying 'This fellow's done something courageous.'
Rather, is it the case that it could be said of somebody who says that they're
a coward, that they've done something courageous? If so, that's all the point
I need. And I take it that you think that that's so, in that you're saying that
it's "not necessarily" the case that that's so.

That's all that I'm trying to propose. What can be said to be the
constructed procedures for arriving at an activity? What activity is involved in
arriving at another activity? In this case we have, deciding that you're
something that's a negative fact about yourself. And one thing about that is,
it can be something courageous. Certainly I have no idea whether this fellow
is a hero, or whether he in fact decided that years ago, or anything else of that
sort. For anybody who was to do such an activity, what makes it recognizable
as whatever it happens to be? That's what we're trying to deal with. And as
I have emphasized throughout, and I shall emphasize again, what I'm dealing
with are *possibilities*. And I'm trying to lay out the relationship between
possibilities. For some possibilities, if we get *a* possibility that we can
establish, that's fine. If one is claiming that it could be another thing, first one
wants to show how it's another possibility. That takes a task of analysis. Then
you may want to resolve the two possibilities, or the ten, or leave them open,
as you please.

Again, that he has done something courageous is something I have no idea
about, and I'm not making any statements about. If it's the case that arriving
at such a conclusion as that you are a coward can be courageous, then we get
a rather interesting situation. And that is, that to say "I decided that years
ago" is to say something *paradoxical*. If it's true that you decided you're a
coward, then you're not a coward.

Paradoxes of that sort – for which another term is 'antinomies' – could be
called 'generative paradoxes' in the sense that the procedure whereby
something is arrived at involves, for it to be arrived at, some other fact to be
present which, if it's true, makes it false. Now the question is, do people in
fact play with paradoxes like that? Is there any evidence for supposing that
they do such a sneaky thing as that? And what gain is there in a case like this,
to make such a paradoxical statement?

The phenomenon of paradoxes has been a matter of very large interest in
such areas as philosophy and logic. The classical paradox is the famous
statement attributed to an ancient Cretan who said, "All Cretans are liars."
If that is true, then it's false, etc. And that paradox has had tremendous
influence in the history of philosophy and the history of logic. For one, it's
been used within logic to formulate a basis for saying that no natural language
can be said to be consistent, and, relatedly, that the notion of truth cannot be
applied to a natural language, and a variety of other consequences which have
had as their import that logicians study the languages that logicians construct,
and propose that you can't logically study natural language.

These inconsistencies which are developable within natural langauges have,
then, had very large import for logic. And as a consequence of their import
for logic, they have had an import for philosophy. There, the problem has

been posed: Can you do philosophy in a natural language if it's the case that the natural language harbors inconsistencies? In such a language you can't, perhaps, then, decide that what you're saying is consistent or true, and therefore philosophy has to be done via the languages that the logicians construct and study. In chapter 1 of any logic book, you can find considerations of antinomies for logicians (for a fairly comprehensive review of the literature on them, see the appendix to chapter 1 of *Foundations of Mathematical Logic* by Haskell Curry. So the question of their import for philosophy has been much argued about. Now, in an article called 'Is everyday language inconsistent?,' *Mind* (1954)), A. Stroll is concerned to argue that while it's theoretically possible to build antinomies in English, and probably in any other natural language, Members never do it, it's a resource that's unexplored, and it's therefore not to bother philosophers, who can do philosophy, meaningfully, in natural languages.

Let me say that you can take it as a good bet that persons will do anything a language permits. What we want to do is to see that, in fact, such antinomies are used, and that they have a perfectly nice basis for being used. First, however, let me give a quotation which depends for its sense on the fact that it's not heard as a paradox, and the work that's done in hearing it involves avoiding the possibility of paradox. This is from *A Black Byzantium* by S.F. Nadel, page 71, note 3.

He's talking about a tribe, the Nupe. The tribe was conquered some while back by another bunch of people called the Falani. Now the Falani have been absorbed by the Nupe, but they remain the ruling group in that place. So anybody who is a Falani is also a Nupe, and of course some Nupes are Falanis.

> The following is a significant anecdote. The Etsu Nupe (Etsu is King) once confided to me his grievance against a certain rather unruly relative of his, whom he believed to have intrigued against him. He added, "All Nupe are bad people, you know."

Where the sense of that depends on the fact that he's treating himself as a Falani for that remark, and not saying it about himself, but about his relative and others. Nadel goes on:

> The said relative, himself of course as much Falani as the Etsu, retaliated by informing that "All Falani are liars."

For that remark, treating the other as a Falani, not himself.

The sense of that one depends on the avoidance of the possibility of its paradoxical character, where that's done via the manipulations of the membership categories. Now I want to quote a clear use of the antinomy, and perhaps we can get at what's being done with the use of the antinomy in general, and what's being done in our case. This is from the *New York Times*, Sunday, December 5, 1965. It's an article on Marc Chagall.

Between 1923 and 1939 many less perceptive critics and art lovers, even in Paris, tended to confuse Chagall and Mané-Katz because of a superficial similarity in their choice of Russian Jewish subjects. One day in the early thirties, one of the Left Bank's most notorious gossips asked Mané-Katz what he thought of Chagall's work. The answer came without hesitation, "He is a great artist." The same busybody then hastened to ask Chagall what he thought of Mané-Katz. "He's a very bad painter," Chagall replied. His opinion was promptly relayed to Mané-Katz who shrugged his shoulders and (perhaps unconsciously paraphrasing an ancient Cretan sophist's example of paradoxical ambiguity) wittily disposed of the whole matter: "Well, all painters are liars."

What's being done with the antimony there, and it's a clear case, is that in undercutting his own earlier statement he undercuts the other's, as well. It's a very nice way, then, of presenting a remark which, if true, is false, and thereby getting at the falsity of another remark, which would fall with it. It does it without being a direct controversion of it; that is, he doesn't argue by saying, "No, I'm a very good painter," but by producing a remark which is false if true, so the falsity of the other is provided.

Then the issue is, not 'why would a sentence be made, of itself, paradoxical?' but, what is it that can otherwise be done with a paradoxical statement, i.e., it can perhaps undercut another troublesome remark. It's perfectly conceivable, I suppose, that the original "All Cretans are liars" had a similar usage, though we don't have its context.

So I take it that with "I decided that years ago" we have a quite elegant return to the charge of cowardice. Of course it carries other possibilities with it – for example, 'It took me courage to decide that I was a coward. What does it take *you* to decide that I'm a coward? Then, the end to it, "the hell with you," is perfectly coherent with the rest, being, possibly, an exemplification of a piece of courage.

I want now to move to the second problem I posed, which was: How do we provide for the transition between a 'discussion' and a 'tearing down'? And how do we provide for the order we find in their relationship, i.e., that discussing comes first and tearing down second?

First of all, I take it that the fact that those two activities occur in a given order – discussing first, tearing down second, is non-trivial, that it is a recurrent order, and indeed, that given the first, the second is often expectable. So it's not simply that when the two occur they occur in that order, but that if the first occurs, Members take it that the second can expectably occur. I take it that that is clear. And let me point to certain problems which persons regularly announce to each other. They can say, for example, "Why can't we ever have a peaceful discussion anymore? Whenever we get into a discussion it ends up in name-calling." Furthermore, when some topic gets started, persons will regularly say, "Let's not start on that, we're liable to get into a fight if we continue."

Now what we can be doing in part is examining what lies at the basis for correctness, if we can see as correct those assertions that they make. But apart from that, what we want to watch for is the kind of components that complex activities have, and the ways that sets of complex activities can be put together. Is that also orderly? If so, how? And is it also perhaps the case that these complex activities are built by putting together in one or another fashion, standardized pieces which can be used to put together other activities, complex or simple? If so, an image I sometimes use, of people assembling activities out of standardized parts, of a culture as a warehouse, can get a fairly apparent sense to it. And that is the technical interest we have in the problem.

We have in the first instance, this phenomenon of the 'discussion,' which can have a 'topic' – in this case, an 'automobile discussion' – and a variety of positions taken on that topic, where as one good criterion for seeing the thing as having been brought to a close, there is this business of arriving at 'an agreement.' There are a bunch of ways that an agreement can get arrived at or not, but those are not what I'm concerned with now. I mention an 'agreement' because I want to differentiate it from the kind of criterion that's used in 'tearing down.' And also, to get at, in part, what provides for a transition between discussion and tearing down.

Now we've got a set of positions offered. We could then have, as one direction that the conversation goes, various attempts to get changes of position, e.g., 'You change yours, I'll change mine,' or 'I'll try to change yours while retaining mine,' etc. But there's one possibility that is regularly used, and that involves, for one, formulation by somebody of an *explanation* of some other person's position. And it may be a certain sort of explanation. We've noted before that many activities are known to be category-bound, and that positions can be category-bound phenomena. If that is the case, then one sense of an explanation of a position is to see that the position is category-bound, and to what category it's bound. Now that kind of an explanation is a fairly special one. It regularly constitutes an undercutting of the position that was taken. That is to say, if you can find that category to which the position is category-bound, you can use it as an explanation of the position, which provides for the undercutting of the position.

And that possibility has had some rather major uses. One very prominent sociology consists of the systematic exploration of that possibility for undercutting all sociologies, including itself, and that is the sociology of Karl Mannheim. What he was engaged in doing was to propose that all sociologies (first he started with conservative sociology) were generated from some position within the social structure, which explains how they came to say what they say, and partially undercuts the objectivity of such positions. It's another case where some particular resource that Members routinely use, has been turned into a more or less major scientific weapon. And it's a weapon that becomes especially powerful when it's the case that those positions that are used as accounts of what it is that was said, are constructed and controlled by the sociologists that use them. That is, then, a much weaker check on whatever kind of correctness there is for category-boundedness than there is

when somebody says, "You say what you said because you're a poor little rich kid," where anybody might well know that 'poor little rich kids' say such things.

So in this case, asserting an explanation of some position via some membership category, which accounts for that position having been taken is, in part, part of the 'discussion.' It works in the discussion by perhaps removing one of the positions from contention, and perhaps then, leaving the other victor – if there's only an other. However, it sets up its own consequences, and that's what I want to deal with, in part.

For one, there's a considerable gain when an explanation via categorization has been asserted, such as "Ken face it, you're a poor little rich kid," and that is, that the criterion for success has changed very considerably. It can remain 'agreement,' but now on the question of whether he's that sort of thing that's been proposed. And that's not for him to decide, but a matter of agreement among the others. What we get, then, is at least a partial narrowing of the population in which agreement is to operate as a criterion of success. And in this case, of course, we get the agreement by the third party.

For a great many positions taken in conversation, and especially – by definition – those taken on 'controversial' topics – where 'controversial' topics are defined in the first instance as those on which any given set of people can be known to differ, and to differ by virtue of those categories they belong to – it may well be the case that it's an intrinsic possibility that at any point those categories can be invoked, and, once invoked, the rest can be invoked.

Lecture 22

There is no lecture 22 in this edition; it has been combined with lecture 21.

Lecture 23
Agreement; What can be done with language?

I've been using, with regard to both the phenomena of 'a discussion' and 'tearing down,' the term *'agreement,'* and I want to say a bit about it. It is used within the conversation itself; one of the fellows says at one point, "Now well I agree." And there are other places where at least it might seem to be a way that an assertion could be made, though it's not. So, for example, after the statement "Ken, face it. You're a poor little rich kid," we get "Now you're a poor little rich kid we've told you that," where "we've told you that" is kind of different, perhaps, than 'I agree with what was previously said.' As I said earlier, "we've told you that" involves, it seems, formulating what was previously said as having been said representatively, and therefore incidentally said by the other guy, but said on behalf of us – even, perhaps, whether he knew it or not. So that's one sort of alternation to doing agreeing. And later on in the conversation, at the end of the sequence of questions applied to the entrant, there's a bit of a discussion about whether he's "just agreeing," or presumably whether what he's saying is what he knows to be the case.

Now the activity of 'agreeing' is one to which some attention has been given – much more than I can, and I only want to open it up as something one might attend. One way that we get to open up such a phenomenon as an activity, is to try to get some idea of it as something invented or discovered, i.e., a resource which may not always have been present. Here is a short citation which kind of suggests that about 'agreement.' It's by the classicist Gilbert Murray, in a book of essays entitled *Greek Studies* (1946), page 175. He says:

> The early Greeks had, so to speak, discovered the logos. They had discovered that often, instead of fighting you could say something, and the thing said would make both sides agree. If people were bewildered or puzzled they could say something and the thing said would make them understand.

Presumably what he's trying to get at there is, for one, that the resources of a language – what it is that could be done with it – are things that get discovered at some point, and when they are discovered, they may be tremendous news. Where the activities that could be done with a language may well be such kinds of things. In that regard, then, one might reconsider an extremely famous formulation. It's by Edward Sapir, in his book called *Language*. This is from page 14.

We're not, in ordinary life, so much concerned with concepts as such, as with concrete particularities and specific relations. When I say, for instance, "I had a good breakfast this morning," it is clear that I am not in the throes of laborious thought; that what I have to transmit is hardly more than a pleasurable memory symbolically rendered in the grooves of habitual expression. Each element in the sentence defines a separate concept or conceptual relation or both combined, but the sentence as a whole has no conceptual significance whatever.

It is somewhat as though a generator capable of generating enough power to run an elevator were operated almost exclusively to feed an electric doorbell. The parallel is more suggestive than it at first sight appears. Language may be looked upon as an instrument capable of running a gamut of psychic uses.

Consider, in the first instance what, for him, is obvious; and that is, that what it is that could be said to be being done by use of language specifically is transparently obvious, stateable by stating the sentence itself ("I had a good breakfast this morning"), and then to be seen to be using very little of what language really could do. What the import might be for researchers, of a statement like Sapir's – small or large – might turn on whether, for example, our understanding of the statement is invoked in the same way he constructed it, or whether it was taken to pose some more or less significant problems.

I'm going to quote another passage that refers to this earlier one, and which does draw some consequences from it. This is from a paper, 'The semantic structure of language' by Uriel Weinreich, in Joseph Greenberg (ed.), *Universals of Language*, pages 117–118.

In a remarkable passage, Sapir likens language to a dynamo capable of powering an elevator but ordinarily operating to feed an electric doorbell. Language is used more often than not in ways that do not draw upon its full semantic capacity. In its 'phatic' functions, when speech is used merely to signify the presence of a sympathetic inter-locutor, it easily becomes 'desemanticized' to a formidable extent. In its various ceremonial functions, language may come to be desemanticized by still another mechanism . . .

The more pressing task for linguistics, it seems to me, is to explain the elevator, not the doorbell; avoiding samples of excessively casual or ceremonial speech, to examine language under conditions of its full-fledged utilization.

Now the last thing that I intend to be doing is legislating for linguistics. But the idea is held that we know, right off, where language is deep and interesting; that we can know that without an analysis of what it is that it might be doing. One wants to see, for one, that the set of ways a statement like "I had a good breakfast this morning" can be talked about; for example, 'phatic,' 'conceptually rich,' 'conceptually poor,' 'non-conceptual,' etc. are all

given as a set of alternatives, again without it, or anything else being studied very much. But a program is laid out. And among the important things about that program are what's not to be studied. And what's not to be studied is proposed, not by virtue of, for example, that today we couldn't study that, but by virtue of presumed results. Those are really quite extraordinary arguments. And if they don't proceed quite strictly from a notion that we can or must know what the aims of a discipline are before we begin, then a good deal of that is involved in such formulations.

Such questions as what language can do, what people can do with language, what the results of an analysis of "I had a good breakfast this morning" would involve, what kind of program it poses for a field, all these things remain absolutely open.

Indeed, *more* remains open, since we might ask, for example, by what right (assuming Sapir to have heard that sentence) could he have proceeded to pose *it* as a singular problem, i.e., to have isolated it from whatever it happened to occur within, and to suppose that it could be analyzed, transparently, in that fashion. For one, at the root of several fields concerned with language and with much other social behavior, is the idea that you can pick out an item, however you want to, and consider that the isolated item contains the properties that it would, must, ought to have, when it otherwise occurs. But one would, for example, imagine that the sentence "I had a good breakfast this morning" was not the first and only sentence uttered in the conversation. Maybe it was the answer to a question. Maybe it came well into a conversation. Is it the case that anything occurring anywhere in any conversation can be isolated without regard to the fact that it occurred in such a place? Is it the case that a language is built to provide that that should take place, and to allow for stability of things like meaning, etc.? What's being done with this thing?

I've gone through this discussion, for one, to notice that it is perhaps not incidental that people have not devoted their life to studying sentences like "The baby cried" or "Hi, how are you." There may be more or less defensible reasons for not studying such sentences. Not doing that, however, has real consequences.

I started out by noticing that what it is that can be done with language, i.e., the resources of a language, are things that get discovered at some point. Such ideas as that we already know where language is deep and interesting, and what it is that it might be doing, might lead us not to see that some things are properly – at least for heuristic purposes – to be seen as inventions at some time. Now in the case of 'agreement,' certain aspects of its use can be said to have been great discoveries. So, for example, one of the things that's said in the history of religion is that one of the great contributions of the Jews to the history of Western religions is the fact that they were the first to formulate their relationship to God as a matter of 'agreement,' where that involved an enormous shift in conceptions of religion.

That matter posed a long bit of historical research into the question of where did they come up with the idea of a covenant binding them and God? To which, about ten years ago, a proposed solution was offered. A fellow

named Mendenhall, a student of the history of religion at Michigan, was working in the Hittite archives. The Hittites were a people who controlled the ancient Near East some 3,000 years ago. And they had massive archives which were discovered toward the end of the 19th century, which people have been working in ever since. And there, Mendenhall found among some of the archives, what turned out to be the Hittite vasselage agreements. That is to say, those agreements which the Hittites made with the various small tribes that they controlled. And what he found was that essentially nine of the Ten Commandments could be found as parts of the normal Hittite vasselage agreements, which ran to the effect that 'We are your only ruler,' etc., just as do the Ten Commandments. That is, of course, only proposing that that's where it came from; how it was transformed is another issue. And more recently it's been criticized somewhat. But the possibility of the political derivation of such a phenomenon is of some interest.

Now, the recognition that one can do the activity 'agreeing' is treated as something that the ancient Greeks discovered, though lots of other peoples would have discovered it as well, presumably independently. And of course the question of independent discovery of this or that resource is a nice one. It's said, for example, that science as we know it is something that *only* the Greeks discovered independently, and everybody else learned it from them. And what activities are discovered by every culture independently, then, gives us some idea of more or less intrinsic properties of, say, a language.

Agreement can be of great interest by virtue of the things that seem to be involved in it. For one, the notion of the comparability of statements – and that, of course, is fundamental to the development of logic, mathematics, and the rest. Now it's not simply the notion of the comparability of sentences, because presumably it was discovered that even sentences which were not exactly alike were 'the same.' That's the sense of making a statement in a sentence. That this comparability could be used for purposes of deciding 'sameness' across persons, across time, without respect, perhaps to some extent, of context, that would be quite an achievement. And it would be a legislated achievement, where presumably at least for theoretical purposes, it is just as viable to say that two statements, even if they're 'exactly the same sentences,' occuring at different times or produced by different people, are different. And then perhaps we can get at what are some of the viable notions of 'sameness' for activities, via a consideration of what it is that can be said to be 'one statement agreeing with another.'

Now, for Members, 'making a statement' is seen to be something different than simply uttering a sentence; that is, it becomes an activity for which language is used, but which could be done in other ways than the particular way it was in fact done, and still be seen as 'the same thing.' You could say it differently and it would still be the same statement. And furthermore, the activity of building it could have been directed to 'producing a statement that is the same as some other statement that some other made.' And it could be recognized as that, which would then involve seeing that a statement had been made that was 'the same' as yours, without regard to the fact that it was made

by somebody else. And that, then, involves some notion of studying actions, and leaving the actor in it as somebody who can be seen to be irrelevant, for some purposes at least.

Again, a notion that statements can be 'the same' though the sentences are different is by no means an obvious one. And of course the essence of the notion of 'ceremony' often is that *exactly* the statement – whatever that might mean – has to be redone or failure will occur, if the statement is powerful. Where, then, memory is the crucial matter, and memory has to be helped by very special techniques – most particularly, the use of poetry as a mnemonic device.

The forms of poetry become the ways that information is captured so as to be reassertable in just the fashion it was first asserted. And that is the basis of Plato's attack on Homer. In the *Republic*, where Plato attempts to reformulate the problem of knowledge for the Greeks, he launches a very concerted attack on Homer, proposing that Homer is the storehouse of knowledge for the Greeks, but it's lousy knowledge. Its effectiveness, however, is given by the fact that it just gets built into everybody's memory via the poetry, and if you're going to have a progressive knowledge, you have to undercut that form. That issue involved in Plato's attack on Homer has been recently dealt with, in some detail, in a book about oral knowledge called *A Preface to Plato* by Eric Havelock (Harvard University Press), which is much worth looking at.

In any event, for those kinds of things it's taken to be that the statements are powerful in some way or another, and if they're followed exactly, then some set of consequences will occur. And for matters that were so frozen, 'agreement' has to be irrelevant, and the notion of 'agreement' might never even emerge – it's simply an issue of repetition.

Now the emergence of a notion of 'agreement' as a possible thing that can be sought and dealt with, is, for purposes of available history, to be marked as an invention of Socrates, I suppose, for what was characteristic of his technique was that he was willing to start with any statement that the person he was talking to held, and then bring him to see that that statement and some other statement that he would make were inconsistent, and therefore that there was something wrong. It seems absolutely obvious to us that if they are inconsistent there is something wrong, but presumably that had to be learned as a complaint. If you took it that what was said yesterday need have no relationship to what was said today, what was said in one context need have no relationship to what was said in another, and in any event that persons were well formed and ethics were consistent – whatever they were, they were consistent – then no such attack as that which Socrates launched, could be made.

Now Nietzsche in his fantastic attack on Socrates – a chapter in, I think, his book on Wagner, called 'An attack on Socrates' – sees just what it is that Socrates is up to, and treats him as destroying the Greek ethic; an ethic which didn't involve people having to know what their views were, they just 'acted' as he puts it, and they didn't have to have answers to questions as to what

their opinions were. And when they had to, the society became sick, and subject to the kind of undermining that Socrates wrought.

This phenomenon of 'inconsistency' that Socrates used, is a criterion which can have a kind of a strong appropriateness for a discussion, but it was transformed into a strong criterion of a total ethic. That is to say, one was to live one's life with a notion of 'consistency' operating for *any* set of activities, where, then, the sets of activities become things that are routinely transferable into statements, and the statements are to be compared, and by comparison of the statements one can decide their consistency. And if that's the use, then one can begin to see what relationship there is between, as he claims, knowledge and virtue. One was bound to be unvirtuous if one did not produce a set of activities which, once transformed into a set of statements, would be found to be consistent. And it's too much to expect that without a statement, i.e., a set of rules, which one used in generating any given activity, one would build consistent activities.

The notion of 'inconsistency' has become enormously powerful, and is now used as an explanation for all sorts of troubles, leaving completely aside the issue of its use in, say, logic. One gets theories of psychopathology which turn specifically on the presence of inconsistency; where, for one, the project of some psychotherapy is the production of consistent activities. And these can get very fine. The Bateson 'double bind' theory of schizophrenia proposes, for one, that the basis of schizophrenia – or that schizophrenia that they study, anyway – is that the pre-patient is subjected to at-the-same-time-inconsistent activites. So that, for example, in a statement that the mother makes that's invitational, she also engages in activities that are rejectional. In an activity she does that's loving, she also does an activity that's hating. This, then, is supposed to generate confusion and the rest, and produce schizophrenia. Where what has to be core to that is the effectiveness of consistency or inconsistency – and that, of course, is a historical invention.

It's a very magical idea, agreement. And it's treated as magical ideas are treated, i.e., wishfully: 'If we could only agree then everything would be alright.' And how it is that, agreeings having been reached, the world is then relaunched on a solid basis is not really enormously clear, but involved in it are those notions that also give rise to the hopes for language reform and what it would do: 'If only we had better communications,' 'If only we used, not a natural language which is heir to all the historical difficulties that it has, but some language constructed by logicians or proto-logicians, then the great range of troubles that we find in our world would disappear.' There's tremendous hopes involved in what it is that language can do, which are partially involved in overcoming what it is that language does.

I suppose pretty much any conflict that we have eventually gets formulated as one that discussion could remove, where it could remove it if discussion could produce agreement. The set of projects that have been generated under such a hope include things like the United Nations, and so on. And we could ask what would be some basis for any such hope being entertained. It could hardly be Socrates' successes, because after all he was forced to take poison in

the end. And if it's such things as the fact that occasionally in a household, if there's a dispute as to when it is that one should go to sleep, or what kind of car one should buy, or the like, discussion can resolve it, you're getting a rather fantastic extension. But then, discussion is something that everybody knows about, and agreeing is something that everybody knows about, and perhaps it is, then, a kind of institution which can appeal by virtue of its familiarity, in the sense that Christ appealed with love as something that everybody ought to know about, and hoped also to change the world.

Now it might appear that the focus I've given to conversation would involve me in saying that the rules of conversation are to be given such an enormous status. I point these things out to indicate that they seem to be given that status without reference to whether they can bear it. There are, then, a whole set of properties of language that have had some success, more or less limited, more or less great, for language, that are used to handle an enormous range of other things, presumably, in part, by virtue of the fact that those other things can be talked of, anyway, and therefore can permit an extension of the talk of them to those things that are talked of.

Methodologically, 'agreeing' is a tremendously troublesome thing to deal with, in that one needs, I guess, not merely a notion of 'same' for those things about which the agreements can be, but a notion of 'same' for the activities of agreeing. And that matter is normally simply supposed away. The formula for its being supposed away are things like social contract theories, conventionality bases of everything – or some things, such practical tests as, 'If it turns out to work then they must agree,' 'they can talk so they must agree,' at least on agreement, anyway. It is supposed away in almost any public opinion survey which would say 'Do you agree on X,' assuming that whatever it is that 'X' is may be problematic, but whatever it is that 'agreement' is would always be treatable as 'the same' for such purposes as counting, anyway. And if it varies, then you could write 'strongly agree' or 'weakly agree,' or whatever else.

Now what other properties are involved in the use of the notion of 'agreement' than those few I've mentioned, I could hardly say, and certainly we have to know. And what things are demonstrably doable for some aim like 'getting knowledge,' 'getting a piece of work done,' 'getting a proposal through,' or whatever else, with all those aims replaced by 'getting some agreement' on them, is another thing that has got to be examined, for the use of that image would be a basis for having technical specialists in 'agreeing' brought into any given problem to help in its resolution. And that, of course, is a good deal of the basis for the omni-presence of lawyers. That's what they're specialists in. The effectiveness of the use of people like that is another question.

There is, in short, no institution, I take it, that has had the hopes laid on it that 'agreement' has, since whenever it was discovered as something that could occur in conversation. Whether it can bear those hopes, and how it could bear those hopes are matters that, I suppose, require some rather direct attention.

Lecture 24

Measurement systems

Roger:	Well first of all you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here.
Ken:	heh heh
Jim:	Yeah that's how it goes.
Al:	Secondly, you must be an under-achiever.
Jim:	Yeah,
Roger:	You hate your mom and dad huh
Al:	—third of all.
Jim:	Oh, somethimes.
Al:	Fourth, you like to drive cars fast.

I'm going to talk about the phenomenon that we can consider via this statement, "you like to drive cars fast," most particularly focussing on "drive cars fast." There is a related discussion on the first page of the data handout.[1]

Now, there is a large issue lying behind an investigation of something like this phenomenon, i.e., talk of how one drives cars. If it is the case that there are *alternative measuring systems* available at any time when some new phenomenon is introduced into a culture, which the culture is measuring, then what is it that serves to control the selection of some measuring device from among the alternatives? And then, relatedly, what are the features we ought to use to compare measurement devices? The case of cars can be a fairly nice

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[1] Following is a simplified version of that segment.

Roger:	I have got a speeding ticket on the average of one every three and a half months. Since I've been driving. And I deserve it.
Ther:	ha ha ha
Roger:	I deserve it. Because I always drive about seven miles an hour faster than everybody else. You know? Like everybody's driving thirty five I'm driving about forty two somethin' like that. So this is the conseque(hh)ence I have to pay. 'Cause I can't stand driving that slow. Specially when I think I can handle a car at that speed. In traffic.
Ther:	Uh huh
Ken:	Oh I can think of a million times when I should've gotten a ticket, going on the freeway. I'm always goin' seventy five. I mean I'm just I'm not racing, I'm right along with— or I'm right behind the guy ahead of me and he's just he's goin' as fast as I am and lotta people pass us up like we're sittin' still.

one because they are relatively new, and when they were introduced there were, obviously, a variety of measurement systems available. Furthermore, built into the car is one possible take-off device for measuring, i.e., the speedometer.

We could pose those problems directly, by virtue of consideration of how it is that measurement devices are used, and what seem to be their different features, rather than, for example, simply supposing that we ought to use the available mathematical considerations for deciding such issues, e.g., that the terms are 'ordinal' versus 'cardinal' or whatever else.

There is, furthermore, an issue which concerns the theory of ethnography involved in consideration of measuring systems. That arises in the following way: What is it that an ethnographer uses as some sort of base – if he's going to use a base – for constructing a formulation of some measuring system used by a tribe? The overwhelming tendency is to use some 'real' – that is, defined as scientifically correct – system, in terms of which one can formulate how it is that the natives go about measuring whatever it is that they're measuring. So, for example, color terms may be mapped onto the 'real' spectrum known by Western science. And one can, in that way, construct formulations of native color systems. It tends to be the case that even those anthropologists who consider themselves most radically oriented to an attempt to describe native systems of categorization – native thought systems – find themselves using their formulation of the real world as a way of getting a hold on what the natives are doing.

Now when one starts with a line like "drive cars fast," one might suppose that one is right off dealing with *a* term from perhaps a set of terms that are in one or another obvious ways, more or less vague. 'Vague' by contrast to, even for the natives, an available clear way of formulating what they're doing. That is to say, one might, in parallel to a consideration of, let's say, color terms, put a speedometer on the blackboard and map onto it the system of terms used, and say, then, that for Americans, or California kids, or whatever, 'fast' means from point one to point two, 'slow' means from point two to point three, etc., where you would say that 'vagueness' arises at certain places. It's not clear whether 50 is 'fast' but it is clear that 90 is 'fast.' It's not clear whether 30 is 'slow,' but it is clear that 15 is 'slow.'

And you could construct a testing procedure, which would have partici- pants telling you which are 'fast' and which are 'slow' positions on the speedometer. And that might be a way for you to decide, for example, not simply that they use a stable set of terms, but whether those terms are psychologically real or not. So, for example, it is proposed as a development in, say, componential analysis, that one can or cannot construct psychological dimensions to the various terms that they analyze, and that one can see whether those terms have a psychological reality via some such test as I've skteched.

There are serious problems with any such conception. The ways that one might procede to get at them would involve a questioning of the notion that one's procedures are in the first instance to hit some base which the natives

must, after all, be coming to terms with. Where essentially their activities are to be seen as 'coming to terms with some phenomenon,' such that one could then explain, for example, the defects of their system, by virtue of other interests that they may have, or by virtue of the simple inadequacy of their conceptual systems – a matter which is obvious enough, they're primitive.

If, however, we seek first to take a set of terms and see how they work, examine some of their virtues, perhaps, then we might be able to work out what are the criteria for usable measurement systems. And then set up a way of comparing alternatives to decide which ones are 'better,' and arrive at some way of seeing how come they selected one or another. One might not, then, arrive at the conclusion which sees a system in which 'fast,' say, is a term, as being more or less defective.

And it's in such a kind of general light that one would come to look at what is otherwise, I suppose, a rather dull remark, "You like to drive cars fast," which might also seem analytically opaque, i.e., what could you do with it?

The set of terms of which it is a member seem to be extremely simple, and the task doesn't much involve the location of them, but consideration of them once you have them. Essentially there seem to be three: 'Fast,' 'slow,' and 'with the traffic.' They have some extraordinary virtuosity of use, which virtuosity seems to be involved in the fact that they *are* used, and those are things which we might just begin to pick off – where, among other things we want to get to eventually, are considerations of what is it that provides for their usability, as an issue. Now that problem is kind of a neat one, and it's one that you might not get at if you started with a speedometer.

For example, if you started with a color spectrum as what had to be come to terms with, you might not easily come to a direct consideration of the special usability of the set of terms that were in fact constructed, and, furthermore, the special considerations that permit their use. For the considerations in the case of the color spectrum would essentially be that the physical world was so constructed, without regard to some given tribe's problems. And, at least in the case of these speed terms, that's not the issue at all.

The core thing about their usability, for one, is that persons can be seen to clump their cars into something that is 'a traffic,' pretty much wherever, whenever, whoever it is that's driving. That exists as a social fact, a thing which drivers do, where it's when that *isn't* usable that you have some trouble seeing how you're driving, i.e., on roads where there are no other cars, or only you and another, perhaps. And by 'a traffic' I don't mean that there are some cars, but there is a set of cars that can be used as 'the traffic,' however it's going; those cars that are clumped. And it is in terms of 'the traffic' that you see you're driving fast or slow.

But it's not the business of anybody to set themselves up as a kind of a culture hero because they make it their business to be 'the traffic' wherever they happen to be, so as to allow others to orient to them. I say that not without some irony, because Robert Merton would have them be a kind of

culture hero; they are the people who make it such that everybody else can do deviant activities. That is, you can imagine those people who are driving in a clump as permitting the measurement system to work, taking on the character that they sacrifice themselves to others' pleasure, etc. Like the middle class would talk about their existence as providing those things which Beatnicks can deviate from; having, then, a kind of heroic status. They sacrifice themselves to permit a set of facts to occur, which permit others then to see how they can have a good time violating them. It's a perfectly legitimate way of thinking of themselves.

Again, the core point being that it's not a law of nature that there is 'a traffic.' Some people go about driving in such a way that permits themselves and others to see that the traffic is going at whatever rate it's going, in terms of which some can go ten miles an hour faster, or whatever. As compared to the fact that it is a law of nature that the spectrum has certain properties.

Let's consider some of the features of this system. First of all, it's not only the case that you can at any given point decide that you're driving fast or slow or with the traffic, but the same sets of terms are used to formulate how you drive in general. Secondly, that set of terms permits you to decide how anybody in your view is driving, on any given occasion: He's driving fast, he's driving slow, he drives like us.

That's one set of things. But what we also want to see is that the comparisons that are set up can be used across whatever driving conditions there are, and whatever speed laws there are, such that two drivers can talk to each other, consider how it is that each drives, where they don't know, for example, where the other is from, what the speed laws are, what the normal conditions of traffic are, etc. "How do you drive?" "I drive fast." "I drive fast, also." Where what the conditions are under which you drive, and what speed you drive at when you're 'driving fast,' are irrelevant.

Now that means, for one, that one tends to see that the fact of 'a traffic' is not simply an incidental occasion for the piece of road on which you now are, or the piece of road over which you've traveled and are likely to travel later, but that wherever people drive, they drive that way, such that, for example, you can move from place to place over time and find yourself in a setting which you can orient to as having those features. The stability of the terms and the conditions under which they're usable, are then such that time, place, speed laws, whatever else, are all irrelevant to their use. Changes in speed laws, changes in the capacity of the car, changes in personnel, new generations, new places – this thing can hold.

We might consider what would be involved were one to have replaced these terms with a set of numbers ("Now I'm driving at 37 miles an hour" or ". . .40 miles an hour") and consider the conditions under which a set of numbers might be usable to do the range of tasks that this system is usable for. For one, perhaps, one would have some rather complicated problems in arriving at a notion of how one drives. Would you do a random sampling over a year? Would you have to throw out your past experience as cars change? As the laws change? Would you try to consider the relevance of the

fact that you regularly drive for some part of your time through school districts? On freeways? How could you talk to another? What kind of information would be required to find out what life is like for him? And there is no intrinsic reason why one shouldn't see a set of positioned terms as 'clean.' Except by virtue of the fact that one takes it that a set of relative numbers defines what would be 'clean,' and that the terms are positioned via the numbers, rather than that they are positioned with respect to each other.

For all we know, with this system, a term once having been arrived at, whatever it is that happens in the future, it will be usable. It might, however, provide for some real difficulties, e.g., for those people who 'always drive fast,' that might get them into trouble insofar as they do regularly orient to the traffic to decide how fast they're going to drive, i.e., faster than it. Then, of course, the traffic can control the kinds of deviations that occur.

In any event, there is a kind of extraordinary adaptability to the use of this system; such matters as having a set of terms which are usable at any time, where the same set of terms is usable to formulate how one characteristically proceeds, and furthermore, can be used to compare how one is driving now with how one characteristically proceeds. To compare, also, oneself with anybody else. And to do that comparison without any concern for the particular speeds, conditions, etc., under which the system is used.

What we want to ask, then, is whether such virtues – if they be virtues – are important to the selection of some system, and the extent to which what's important is that there be some set of persons who make 'the traffic,' and who make it as an unassigned task. In that regard, it's curious that you can regularly tell, as you move up to a clump of cars, for example, that somebody *is* making the traffic as a task. You can tell from the rate at which 'the traffic ahead of you is moving' that, for example, it's being made by a cop sitting in front of it.

Another question is, can a thing like this be used if it's only partially used? That is to say, if not pretty much anybody who learns to drive learns to use it? Where, if for some measurement system it's important that pretty much everybody who does the activity for which it's relevant uses it, that's another set of constraints; a set of constraints which such a system may more easily satisfy than, say, speedometer readings and the kinds of comparisons they set up – unless, of course, it were the case that, for example, there were no variation in speed laws, and that the speed laws were taken to define the point one should arrive at, i.e., if the sign said '40 miles an hour,' then one speeded up until one got to 40 and held it at that.

Now if a system like this is used, and those people who deal with the system – who enforce the laws and deal with accidents and the like – don't really attend to it very carefully, it may have a range of consequences, itself. So that, for example, it may be no solution to the problem of fast drivers and the troubles they get into with others, to raise or lower the speed limits. Furthermore, in a situation where there was any kind of occasional variation in the rate of speed, like an accident, like a road being washed out, like a highway being repaired, there might be tremendous troubles if the given

speed that was posted were treated as the only norm one could orient to. But 'the traffic' can adapt to all such things, and 'fast' or 'slow' drivers can adapt to 'the traffic.'

It is, I suppose, a rather lovely problem for those persons who like to address largely the problem of social order, to ask what would (   ) do with the phenomenon of 'the traffic.' Or what would other theorists do with it? How would they explain it? Would they find it tremendously puzzling, i.e., everybody ought to be driving fast, if fast is something that permits expression of, say, strength, or whatever else?

Again, as I mentioned, it would be via such a system's use that we do get the troubles that we apparently do get; for example, people driving across the country, when they go through Montana where there 'is no traffic,' find themselves in a kind of situation of sensory deprivation, not knowing exactly what to do, how to deal with the occasional car, or the kind of misery one feels when a car one has been using decides to leave the road. That is, the sorts of things that would be more or less irrelevant, were it the case that one had as one's trusty guide a speedometer, and that's it.

Lecture 25 [Incomplete]

'Company' as an alternation category

Al :   Now let's see what else can we decide about // you.
Roger :   Hey don't tear him down.
Al: :   We're – Ok
Ken :   I've been // torn down // for (   )–
Al :   (//   )
Roger :   We got company heh
Al :   (hh)Oh Ok.

I want to talk a bit now about this line "We got company." It's the first assignment of a category to this fellow since he's come, and what we want to consider is the sort of category 'company' is, and what's involved, perhaps, in its use here and now (that is to say, there and then).

The category is an *alternation category* to a whole series of membership categories, each of which has it as an alternation category under some circumstances, i.e., there could be 'family'/'company', etc. But wherever it's used, it is used as a category in alternation to some group. And there are certain things in common in its use, and for those terms that it stands in alternation to. For example, I think it's the case that what it stands in alternation to is regularly something which is territorially constituted. So that if the three boys and this fellow were co-present elsewhere, they might not talk of him as 'company.' And, for example, it is by virtue of somebody arriving at a family's house that they may be seen to be 'company,' whereas in other circumstances his co-presence is not that sort of thing.

Of course for some of the categories that have 'company' as an alternation, the category is usable when the alternation category is not, i.e., a family in some places other than their house is still 'a family.' But this set of persons may not be 'the group' in other places and times. To use that term 'company,' then, can be a way of invoking the fact that at this place and time, they are constituted as something that has proper members.

Now for "We got company" there's a question of who 'we' is. And it can, perhaps, get a fairly decent solution by virtue of the fact that 'company' is used in alternation to it, where we can ask who is it that might not be permitted to say they "got company." I suppose, obviously, the therapist. What *he* "got" is a patient. 'We' then, may refer to the members of the group; i.e., the patients other than this new one. And if it's the case that the therapist might not properly refer to this fellow as 'company,' then the fact that they do so refer to him has some real interest. We can come to ask what

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uses 'company' has for them, and consider the other things that they could refer to this fellow with, and what they might involve.

'Company' is *an* alternation category. What, then, might be, for example, other alternation categories, from which one was selected – this one. And then, furthermore, what is to be said about the fact that any alternation category was chosen, since it's at least plausible that under some circumstances they might not be in a position to use an alternation category, but, given the fact that the therapist has selected a new patient, he might, by that alone, be 'a member of the therapy group,' not only from the point of view of the therapist, but from their own. That being possible, the sheer fact of an alternation category being used gets a clear relevance. [*tape cuts off*]

Lecture 26

Being 'chicken' versus 'giving lip back'

Al: Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you.
Ken: Yes, hurry up.
Roger: Well first of all you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here.
Ken: heh heh
Jim: Yeah that's how it goes.
Al: Secondly, you must be an under-achiever.
Jim: Yeah,
Roger: You hate your mom and dad huh
Al: – third of all.
Jim: Oh, sometimes.
Al: Fourth, you like to drive cars fast.
Jim: Yeah,
Al: Fifth you like to ta – you like uh wild times,
Jim: Mm hm,
Ken: He smokes like // me, see?
Al: Sixth you like booze,
Jim: Huh? // Yeah
Al: Seven you like to smoke
Jim: Mm hm
Roger: And seven you've been arrested for rape and other things.
Al: Eight you heh
Jim: No, not that.
⎡*Ken*:   hehheh
⎢*Jim*:   hehh You're gonna ta(hh)1k
⎣*Al*:   Eight you – Eight you uhm give lip back to everybody
Jim: Yeah,

   I'm going to talk this time about the line, ". . . you give lip back to everybody." Let me give it some context. One of the things I think it's relevant to, and what, in part, I'll be directing my remarks to, is the statement that starts off the sequence of questions (or comments, or remarks, as they may be) in the group therapy session, "Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you." I want eventually to be able to see if we can come up with an analysis which would show how such a statement could be made to anybody. That is to say, that one could be able to say to anybody that

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if you ask enough, and they say enough, then something bad about them will be found.

In constructing a solution to that, I want to be able to do it in what would be the most interesting way. And what I'll be doing, then, is building an analysis which is not anywhere near as general as we need, but which may deal with matters that would be involved in a more general solution.

What would seem to be involved in a general solution is a situation in which there is a dilemma which can be formally arrived at, and where – if there are two choices – either choice can, under one or another formulation, permit the statement 'you've done something bad.' If we can find that there are some general dilemmas which can be formulated as holding for anybody – under some formulation of 'anybody'-dilemmas having this characteristic that either alternative can be seen to be 'something bad,' then we would have a nice way of showing that the statement "Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you" could be shown to be true. The dilemma itself, of course, would have to involve some action-alternative which everyone would face. So we need a dilemma like that, which we don't have right now.

So one of the first tasks is to get us the sort of dilemma that this statement names *a* solution to. And that's what I'll try to talk about now. The first thing we want to notice is the following. We could have a reading on ". . . you give lip back to everybody" which involves, let's say, taking each term one by one, finding what it means, and then seeing whether the statement adds up. So that, for example, taking 'everybody' independently of what's gone before, we could say the statement's absurd, simply by virtue of the fact that we can suppose that he hasn't talked to 'everybody.' The question is, is that the way to find out what 'everybody' refers to?

What I want to propose is that such an idea would involve a possible proper sense for 'everybody' if, for example, we had a statement like "You say 'hello' to everybody," where what's involved in that is that the action you do is the same action – saying "hello" – to whomever you do it. Whereas I think it's the case that whatever it is you might do – say, being insolent – it would only be 'giving lip back' to a special class of people. Then, given the fact that you could only do 'giving lip back' to a special class of people, it might be that you do give it to all of *those* people, on the occasions under which you can. So 'everybody,' then, would have a rather more restricted sense than it could have independently, by virtue of the fact that there are only some people to whom what you're doing could be considered 'giving lip.' And there's a brief characterization of a possibility, earlier in the session, on the second page of the data handout. They're discussing cops, and Roger says:

> *Roger*:   He can bust ya on a thousand things non-moving violations if
>   you give him any lip, even if you didn't do anything wrong. They
>   can just go over your car and write you up ticket this long.

It's in the first instance kind of curious that on a variety of references to this

phenomenon 'giving lip back,' extremely similar sorts of events are pointed to by kids as occasions under which it could occur. And apparently it is something that they all take as a possibility, so that if, to "you give lip back to everybody," he'd said "no" instead of "yes," then, I take it, it wouldn't be heard as saying, for example, that he's never had the occasion to do it, but that having had the occasions, he didn't.

Now the question is, can we formulate some class, of which this fellow is a member, and for which, given the restricted information they have of him, such a situation would involve this kind of possibility, i.e., 'giving lip back,' which will give us the dilemma we need?

We need some kinds of rules and some kinds of categories – very simple ones. Now one of the things we want to notice about that piece of conversation I just quoted is that the interaction under which 'giving lip' might occur has, before 'giving lip' arises as a possibility, a formulation of who it is that's participating – a cop and a kid – where the 'who it is' is given by the thing that's happening. That is to say, this fellow was driving, and was stopped by a policeman, as a possible violator. And one of the things that is regular about that, is that the possibility of 'giving lip back' occurs in situations which have been formulated by reference to some such categories. For example, in interactions between high school teachers and students, in interactions between parent and child. Where we have some first event that takes place, done by other than the kid, which formulates the event as one for, e.g., parent–child, teacher–student, policeman–teenage driver, etc. Those can be things like a request or an order, which provide for the relevance of the categories by virtue of the fact that the request or order ought to be accepted by virtue of the categorial relationship between the parties. 'Do the dishes,' 'Put the cat out,' are things for which the warrant is that a particular category of person told you to do it, and thereby provides the relevance of that category and whatever alternation there is to it. For example, 'pulling you over' is something that 'a cop' does, and thereby provides the relevance of that he's 'a cop' and you're 'a teenage driver.'

So we have some action that they do, that provides the relevance of a pair of categories for the given interaction. Where, for one, that pair of categories, under some formulation, provides that given the first action, the kid ought to do some second action. Given the fact that you've been told "Put out the cat" by someone who stands as 'a parent,' you ought to do it. Given the fact that you've been told "Pull over" by someone who can be seen as 'a cop,' you ought to do it. We have, then, a pair of categories, and a first activity.

There's a general rule which seems to operate for any of the X categories (cop, teacher, parent, etc.) and that alternation category, 'kid' (or whatever variation on 'kid' that we would have; child, student, etc.). We could go about formulating a series of alternatives. One could be, for example, there might be a general rule that said 'Don't be insolent.' Then there might be another general rule, which need not be inconsistent with the first, which would go 'If somebody is nasty to you, then return it.' The latter would deal only with possible second statements. Then it would be the case that if some

person who ought to follow the first rule violates it, you can properly follow the second rule. For anybody.

Now, whether or not there's a general first rule like the one I've proposed, is not terribly criterial for our purposes. What we need is to notice that there is a rule which holds for any of those X categories and the alternative ones that says: As between some pair of people, insults are non-reciprocal. That is to say, whatever they do to you, you don't do it in return. That rule, and the prior second-statement rule I mentioned, can be in conflict. That is, that second rule said, 'If somebody does something like insulting, then you can return it.' And this one says, 'For some people, if they do it, you oughtn't.' Of course they needn't be in conflict in any given situation. Those people to whom you should not return insults might not give them to you in the first place.

As it happens, while the rule that says you can return an insult is quite general, for certain groups, like kids – most particularly kids – it has achieved a special status. It's not simply permissable to do it, but, for one, as I earlier mentioned, there's a game in which that is central (the game called 'tearing down,' also called 'sounding,' also called 'playing the dozens' and a variety of other names). And secondly, the alternatives to a first event that consists of, say, an insult, are both scorable; countable. That is to say, if you do return, you show you're not afraid. If you don't, you show you're chicken. So we have, then, a situation where there's a possible second event, and there are two ways in which it could be dealt with. For kids, to either of those there's a given assessment: One is 'ok,' the other is 'coward.'

The initiating event has, in the case of the data we're considering, been formulated as 'having the car stopped for no good reason.' It has occurred by virtue of the fact that the driver of the car is a member of some kind of alternation category, i.e., 'teenage driver,' 'hotrodder,' or some such thing as that – a matter which, for purposes of stopping a car, is supposed to be irrelevant, but which can be seen by both parties to have been the relevant criteria for the interaction getting started. And which can be seen by the driver of the car, specifically, to have been illegitimate.

And if it's not a situation with cars, then the same formal situation will be picked out by other kids to pose the same problem. Negro kids will pose it by reference to their having done nothing; having been stopped by virtue of the fact that they are Negro, and thereby people who are liable to do something delinquent. Gang members in high schools formulate the matter in just the same way. They focus on some situation in which the teacher tells them to do something, where there's no account available except that it was done by virtue of the fact that they are obvious gang members – and of course that could be obvious in a variety of ways.

Now they each take it that in such a situation, the first act is some sort of illegitimate one, but an illegitimate one of a special sort: It's one that, while being illegitimate, nonetheless can have a guaranteed success for the one who does it. In the case that we started with, there's the fact that the cop can give you non-moving violations. He oughtn't to stop you unless he has good

grounds. If he stops you, he can always find something that would have added up to good grounds. That is to say, it won't show up that he, in fact, didn't have any good grounds. He can give you a ticket, and that stands as an account.

I've mentioned that methodology before, i.e., that *an* account can stand as *the* account. It's terribly powerful, and to see the character of its power one need only to notice the following: Even though they attack it, the series of questions they produce is really in its fashion, another case of the same thing. That is to say, they ask him a series of questions which could add up to how it is that such a one as he might have gotten to such a place as here. If they find grounds, then they take it that those *are* the grounds.

Let me just give a citation while I have it in mind. There's a paper by Carl Werthman, 'Delinquents in schools, a test for the legitimacy of authority,' *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* (1964), pages 39–60. In there can be found a whole bunch of parallel cases; enormous amounts of data in that paper. There's more data in that 20 pages, than in just about all the publications on juvenile delinquency put together.

So: These various people in authority do something to that person who they formulate as 'a kid,' something which is illegitimate. And it is specifically illegitimate in the sense of picking up some aspect of the categorized state of that person (the 'kid') which is supposedly irrelevant, and using that as the occasion for doing that thing – stopping him, telling him to do something, etc.

The matter is a little bit nicer than that, in that kids take it that cops, teachers, etc., engage in an act like that with the specific aim of putting the kid into a position that has no good solution. That is to say, they don't just happen to pick up a kid because they feel like picking up a kid, knowing it's illegitimate, but they pick up a kid knowing it's illegitimate, and knowing the kid sees it as illegitimate, and knowing that the sort of kid they pick up is put into a position of having to make some determination of what it is he's going to do. That is, either be submissive or 'give lip.'

And one possible reason that they do this is, given the fact that the alternatives are assessable by other kids – if the kid 'gives lip' then he's done something that other kids say is fine, if not, then he's done something that makes him a coward – then, when these things are done in public, they provide, e.g., the cops with a chance to show some tough guy to be not so much. Where, for the kid, the alternative is if he does 'give lip' he's going to get arrested, although he'll stand well with his buddies, and if he doesn't, he might not get arrested, but he's been shown up in public.

In schools, the thing is used – from the kids' point of view – as a way of getting them out of school. Teachers know that the kids systematically will respond by 'giving lip back' – the gang members, that is, who are in any event a pain to the teacher. They'll force the situation. And what the kid does provides an occasion for having him kicked out of school. Now it's beautifully generative in its fashion, in that if you have a bunch of kids in the same gang, then you need only get one of them who's willing to stand up to the teacher,

for all of them to eventually get kicked out. That one stands up, he gets kicked out, each of the others have their turns and have to show they're equivalent, or else. It's not, then, for one, a chance matter that kids get kicked out of school in Negro slums at the rate that they do.

Just to run through it again, then: What we have to have is a mechanism of the following sort, for it to have a kind of guaranteed working. You need somebody who's not merely 'just a kid,' but who stands in some observable status as a special kid – 'hotrodder,' 'gang member,' various other such things. And you need somebody who stands as a member of one of several special categories by reference to that kid – 'cop,' 'teacher,' 'parent,' etc. Then you need an occasion when some activity can be done by somebody who can, by that activity, formulate themselves as in one of these special categories towards that kid. That activity will be some 'first action,' done by reference to the special status of the kid, where that special status is specifically irrelevant to doing the first action properly; that is to say, e.g., he shouldn't be stopped because of that status. That is the first move. And it ought to be done in public, where 'in public' means that at least some members are present of the same category that this kid is in, so that he has relevant that category's set of rules and its consequences.

Those rules would be relevant in any event, under a situation of an insult – it doesn't have to be that a cop does such a thing. If any kid walks by a bunch of such kids and makes a remark to them, then these things should be operative. But if any kid does it, he can perfectly well be given back the insult without any such systematic situation operating as does when an adult does it – and particularly an adult in one or another authority status.

Now in part we have a question of why is it expectable that anybody in such special categories would have that happen to them? Well, in the first instance, as we discussed a while back, those categories are set up specifically by the members with such an aim in mind. That is, they are set up *as* an affront to authority, in order to set up a game, and to announce the fact that we are hotrodders playing the game, against you who are supposedly controlled by the fact that you can't consider that when you decide whether we're speeding or not – where it's part of our business to be specially noticeable.

Under those sorts of circumstances, a question like 'you give lip back to everybody' in this sequence, can provide as one of its further questions that you've been kicked out of school. The alternative answers are tremendously criterial as to what sort of kid he is, if the alternative answers are to be believed. And note the kind of curious fact that only one of them would be non-believed, and that is 'yes.' If he said 'no,' he's presumably not lying. If he says 'yes,' he may be lying. (That gives us a situation which may be similar to saying to the question "How are you feeling?" "Fine." Said to some class of persons, it may be a lie.) If it is the case that only 'yes' would be heard as a lie, then, that there is a norm for kids to 'give lip back' under such circumstances gets a rather nice way of being seen. That is to say, one takes it that one would only lie to another kid in the direction that involves

conformity with the norms that hold between kids, and not the other way around.

Now I just want to notice one thing, and it's extremely tough to give a decent formulation of. The term 'bad' can gain a lot of its power with reference to dilemmas like this, by virtue of the fact that it can have two ways of being heard. One is 'bad,' and one is "bad," in quotes. Where "bad" in quotes means 'bad' by reference to adult considerations, and 'bad' means by reference to our considerations. Now that could be just in general, where a quotative use of such terms might refer to that use of it which would be made by some category that stands in alternation to ours. And the non-quotative use could stand by reference to our use. So if you do one thing you're 'bad,' and if you do the other thing you're "bad." What we want to find are some activities which hold for anybody, not formulated by reference to, say, 'kids' or 'hotrodders,' in which that systematic situation for 'bad' holds for some action that they can expectably all face.

Lecture 27

A mis-hearing ("a green?"); A taboo on hearing

Roger:	Are you just agreein' because you feel you want to uh . . .
Jim:	Hm?
Roger:	You just agreeing?
Jim:	What the hell's that
Al:	It's // Agreeing?
Roger:	Agreeing.
Jim:	Agreen?
Roger:	Yeah.
⌈*Al*:	With us. Just going along with us.
⌊*Ken*:	Agreein'.
Jim:	No.

What I want to consider now is a little of what may be involved in the troubles that are present in this segment. Let's assume for the moment that Jim's failure in the first instance is a mis-hearing, or the inability to hear what he's being asked. We can do that initially by virtue of the fact that, for one, *they* take it that that's what the trouble is, and also that he uses a way of marking his trouble which has that use in the first place; that is, the question "Hm?" which is a way of saying 'What did you say?'

Then we can ask why should he mis-hear that or not hear what it is that's being asked? I suppose one could say, well, maybe it just wasn't clear. To that, there are a variety of returns. One of them is that it was heard by somebody other than the one who said it i.e., "agreeing" is volunteered by another than the one who asked the initial question. And when the item is repeated a series of times, he still doesn't get it. So even if it wasn't clear in the first instance that "agreeing" was said, he might have picked it up after a bit, but he doesn't. We want to ask why he doesn't, and what sort of question it is, that it involves such a response to it.

What that involves us in asking is, how is it that to some extent the fellow who's being questioned is attending the questions that he's being asked? Is he simply dealing with them as singular events – one question, whatever it is, another question, whatever it is? Or is it the case, perhaps, that there's some relevance to the fact that he got a series of questions, and perhaps also that the series is introduced by what could be seen as a rather general problem that's being investigated by them (i.e., "Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you"), and further, that the series of questions can be seen – with that pre-first question and perhaps even in part independently of

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it – to have common features. So that the entry of another question to that list would be understood by reference to what sort of features had been present in items on that list. That is, he's able to detect a common property to the set of questions, which he can use to monitor a next – to decide that it's one of them, and which it is. And that would involve that in some sense the numbers ("First of all," "Secondly," etc.) are not incidental, but that there is a series with a number attached to each, and that has some significance for deciding what it is that would be said with one of those numbers, or as part of the series.

He may, then, be coming to use some way of seeing a next item by virtue of the previous ones. And what that might give him is something like the following: 'Are you a [something]?' Where what follows 'Are you a' is some membership categorization category that it turns out he doesn't know. Something similar, for example, to what's later asked, "Are you a hood?" He's been getting questions that run, 'Are you like a such-and-such,' 'Are you one who got kicked out of school,' 'Do you give lip back,' etc. 'Are you an underachiever.'

Then, his problem for 'Are you a [something]?' is finding what that thing is. He may hear something that's incomplete, in the sense that he hears 'Are you a green . . .'? where that might be 'a green what?' Or he may hear that 'a green' is something that they know of and use, which he doesn't know of. Some technical term of sorts, some 'in' term of sorts – where it would be that sort of thing by virtue of the prior set of items. He would apparently take it that the questions have a kind of linear extension in which it's perfectly reasonable to use what has been developed in them to see what the next would look like, where that in fact controls what he hears, so as to hear, indeed, a puzzle, when he could hear something perfectly clear.

That matter could be one that has rather large theoretical interest, in dealing with the detection of speech and its understanding. Insofar as the issue has been investigated in any interesting way, it turns on questions of the way puns are built, and such things as hearing or not the correct word where a possible homonym is used. One of the nice places, I suppose, to investigate the problem, concerns obscenities, and there's an extremely lovely article by E. R. Leach, 'Animal categories and verbal abuse,' in Lenneberg (ed.), *New Directions in the Study of Language*. Among the things that's pointed out is that one can, in routine talk, use a set of words which are more or less unprintable epithets, and they're not heard that way at all.

Now the tabooing of the hearing of obscene homonyms is an extraordinarily interesting thing. To see how interesting it is, you need only consider occasions when one has opened up the situation of obscenity, and then tried to avoid the hearing of almost anything that could be heard as obscene as *not* obscene. That's the way you get a chaining of humor, in that once obscenity has been done it takes rather a while to return to a non-hearing of the obscene possibility of the words used.

If you consider that sort of thing, then one could begin to see the possibility with 'a green.' And that is, that it would just not occur to him to listen to the

object; perfectly plain on the tape for example, and perfectly plain after there's been three or four repetitions of it, as being a single word and not two words, one of which is 'a' and the other of which is some noun that he doesn't know; a membership noun of some sort. And given the fact that the context – that is, the set of questions – are usable, we have, then, some very nice evidence that those set of questions are used to monitor a next.

Now that next question involved a shift in the kinds of questions that have been asked, and not at all an incidental shift. For one, it's related nicely to what his own procedures apparently are for listening to those questions, in that it's a kind of complement to them. What's involved is, he's been using their questions to formulate a way of seeing what a next question would be, i.e., he's seen some pattern in the set of questions, and hasn't, apparently, attended to the possible observing of a pattern in his set of answers.

I say that the shift is not incidental because being prepared for such kinds of shifts, attending to them not only so as to hear what they are, but in the first place attending to them in the production of a set of statements which can be subjected to that, is one of the fundamental things that takes place, and has to get learned, to be able to do this sort of therapy. I'll say a little bit about that.

One of the things that tends to be assumed by new patients to therapy – and even, for that matter, relatively wise patients from certain sorts of therapy – is that the situation is extremely similar to, for example, classical medical institutions, and what is involved is the following: There is some trouble in the outside world, you come in and talk about it, and you might get some advice or an understanding of what it is that your trouble is, out there.

In some of the American reformulations of classical psychotherapy associated with Harry Stack Sullivan and 'the Washington school,' the so-called 'interactionists,' psychotherapy involves, in part, the notion that what takes place in therapy is not merely just as relevant, but is also a part of the world which can be examined itself for finding what the troubles are. Where, for one, it would then be argued that discussions about the outside world, your troubles in youth, etc., are not a way of getting a good understanding of why you come to have the troubles, what they are, etc., but a way of dealing with your current problems in an easier fashion than to confront them directly, here and now. If it's older and outside, it might be easier to deal with. So what you have, then, is a situation in which any given interchange can form what is treated as the topic for the next: 'Why did you say that?,' where that clarification that can go on will permit an understanding of what it is that your troubles are.

It's a kind of shift, then, where one gets a piece of talk directed to the 'why' of a prior piece, where the 'why' is altogether local: 'Why did you say that *now?*' And sets of motives are employed which have nothing especially to do with the particular matters under consideration, except that the same issues might be found to be operative in behaviors there, as well as here. In that event, of course, the way in which one would have to be on guard – if one

wants to be on guard – is enormously heightened. For one, the fact of an attention to the ordering of the way you proceed within the session, and the use of that to formulate diagnoses, sets tremendous constraints on trying to hide in that room. Where, especially, there's not to be any constraint on the order of things introduced as explanations with regard to the things they apparently explain. That is to say, something that might seem to be perfectly trivial, nothing, never getting noticed, like, for example, the fact that somebody gets up and goes to the bathroom, is treated as an orientation to the group; something for which a full complement of motives can be assigned, and an explanation can be sought, and it can be watched for its future occurrence, and the rest. And that's what's done quite routinely.

What you have, then, is that they make this place into what they talk about as 'a regular society,' and what that involves is that any motive that motivates people, any known reasons that people have for doing whatever they do, however large they are, are now to be treated as usable with respect to any activity that they happen to do here, however otherwise minor it might be. So there are, then, a set of rules of relevance that are completely swept away, which have to do with, for example, the fit between some action and some reason for it. That you went to the bathroom because at that moment you had to go to the bathroom, would be a routinely usable explanation which is just about irrelevant here. He has to learn about those shifts, and learn what are the sorts of things that can be offered, and he would be expected to deal with, as accounts of whatever it is he's been doing *here*. In that regard, then, if he took the prior set of questions as a diagnosis, and his answers as permitting a diagnosis, then he's altogether misconceived what's going to take place.

But there are a series of ways that this question, "Are you just agreeing?" is much alike to prior questions. One of the beauties of that list of questions is that while it can come off as being surprizingly knowing about this fellow they haven't met, there's an obvious answer to how they know that, which is tremendously relevant to him, and that is, that they're telling him about themselves. What they're doing in that set of questions, then, is presenting information as to how it is that someone comes here, which of course characterizes from their point of view, how *they* come here. Then those questions are more or less true statements about themselves, as they see it.

In that regard, then, we could ask about, and he might eventually think of, the issue especially nicely tied with the question "Are you just agreeing?," which is, why should it be supposed that he would have so produced his answers? Why *that* reason for his answering as he did, but by virtue of the fact that they know that that's the way *they* did it. And then it comes to have a series of possibly nice properties. For one, you could ask, Well, why would they ask a question like that? since if in fact he was doing that, he isn't going to say it. It's a question that forces a 'no' answer, whether the answer is 'yes' or 'no.' There's a fairly decent answer to that: It could be a warning. Which is: 'If what you've been doing is just playing along with us, you'd better well

realize we could expect that that's what you're doing, and know that that's what you're doing, so you're not going to get away with it.'

That might be quite a frightening warning, and such matters are regularly enormously frightening. That is, one is put into a position where whatever one says is not going to be taken for what one says. What I mean by that is, the character of questions and answers as 'tied,' is most neatly found by virtue of the following: If you want to quote an answer to a question, you can perfectly well take the question and the answer and combine them in a factual statement which would go, 'He said he was kicked out of school once' or 'He's been kicked out of school once,' where there's a question and he says 'Yes.' That is, one doesn't quote 'Yes.' One takes it that he *said* whatever it is the question asked for.

Now, that's being changed around here. For one, it can be read as, simply, 'For some reason or other, to a question in which we gave him a possible answer, he agreed with the answer – and who cares whether what he said is true.' He's here, he's sick, and whatever it is that it was is irrelevant. The only question is, what does he do here? So you get a suspension of that kind of quotative use of answers, except to point to the fact that 'You said the following, and why did you say it?' That could be fearsome, because one might never know what they're seeing in some answer that looks perfectly plain, and for which you could offer all kinds of warrants if it came down to it – that is, e.g., you could bring in your expulsion certificate. The ways, then, in which one is going to be viewed, are possibly frightening because what you have as your best resource for deciding what they might find out, is what awful things you know about yourself.

But then, it isn't exactly as if a warning of that sort is offered by the therapist. It's rather softer than that. He's being told about a thing that they know about by virtue of the fact that they tried to do it also. And again, then, it's like the prior set of questions. That is to say, it can be seen as intendedly informative of how it is that they behave or behaved.

And these remarks can be tied back to my earlier point about taboos on hearing, in that the shift that took place is, apart from the fact that it introduces a rule about therapy, an altogether illegitimate thing to do, otherwise. And one of the ways you deal with an altogether illegitimate thing to do, is to not hear at all that it was done. If you could hear your mother saying some extraordinarily obscene remark, one way that you deal with it is to hear that she's saying something perfectly clean. In this case, he couldn't find what 'clean,' connected, statement was being made, and couldn't hear that sequencing violation. One doesn't, for comparative strangers, inquire into their motives for dealing with one.

I used the term 'strangers' at that point, not altogether incidentally. There's a rather exquisite place in Freud's article on first therapy sessions. Now, Freud is a tremendous stylist as a writer. And in that article he's talking about the question of when interpretations should be offered. And he wants to insist that they should not be offered too early. The way he makes his point, stylistically, is, elsewhere he always talks about 'doctor' and 'patient.' At this point he says

something like, 'You shouldn't tell something very deep to a stranger.' And in the next sentence he goes back to talking about 'patient.'

In any event, I take it that the locus of this mis-hearing is quite formulatable and probably very recurrent. And then, that the character of the boys' activities as doing diagnosis, is to be found in that sort of shift, and not especially in the set of questions that have otherwise been offered – as though one could compile an interview chart with a set of answers that would explain how come he's here.

Lecture 28
Intelligibility; Causally efficacious categories

What I'm going to talk about this time starts from a consideration of some pieces of the group therapy data. I want to notice the following sort of things; During the asking of the questions that I've been talking about, Ken says "He smokes like me, see?" and later on he repeats a version of that, "You gotta believe it we're the only two in here that smoke other than him" ("him" being the therapist).[1] And there are other things which I think are alike to that, such as, for example, at the beginning of the discussion of Jim's character, Roger says "He's not at all like Ken. He's more like Al and I." Another thing I want to be attending to is the statement, "This is an abnormal session, see, we're not together without the broad,"[2] and things like it.

   In the first place, I began to look at those because I thought them kind of odd statements. I thought that the first sort were odd because, for one, I wondered why, supposing that smoking is relevant to be talked of, he didn't just say "He smokes," or, were it the case that smoking were relevant and it were relevant comparatively, he didn't say "He smokes like Gene Autrey" or "like lots of people do," or a variety of other things. It's after all the case that smoking is not an enormously rare activity. And in that regard, the formulation in the second version of that statement, with its additional "other than him" was something that I wanted to wonder about. Why "other than him"? Why not "He and I and you are the only ones that smoke here"? And then, why "only"? There's only two other people left now – and furthermore, they're *all* smoking at the time.

   I found the second statement odd because it would seem like the most prototypical of rationalizations, in that I suppose we would take it that the most perfectly obvious reason that this is an "abnormal session" is that he's here, and not that she's not here. What's "abnormal" about it is that they have a possible new member to deal with.

   Now if those kinds of thoughts get us into a noticing of these statements, they need not control where we go with them. And there are, I believe, some extremely large issues involved in the occurrence of such statements, and that's what I want to point to in what I say.

   A first question that we can pose by reference to statements like "He

[1] Data handout, p. 278, just after 10:00
[2] Data handout, p. 276, just after 8:30

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smokes like me" or "He's not at all like Ken, he's more like Al and I" is this: Given the fact that it seems that the names of persons are being used here to some large extent by reference to their incumbency in the categories 'patient' or 'therapist,' we might ask, are there categorization devices – any whatever or more than a few – whose categories can be used to formulate comparisons? And we'll have to consider what consequences that could have, were it so.

With regard to "This is an abnormal session, see, we're not together without the broad," we could ask: Is it in principle possible that any device, or a large number of devices, contain a set of categories which are, as we may put it, *'causally efficacious'*? That is to say, categories which can be used to formulate explanations of things.

And if that's so, that for either of those issues – comparison and causal efficaciousness – there are more than one, more than a few, maybe a large number of devices which can perhaps handle the very same event, then we get a grip on certain important problems. For one, we come to see another way that the operation of relevance rules which provide for the use of *a* device, perhaps *a* device exclusively, is fundamental to maintaining what in its way is a very queer fact; that is, the in-principle intelligibility of events for Members.

Now this matter of intelligibility is most extraordinary, and I will go on to suggest how the exclusive relevance of a device can guarantee in-principle intelligibility. But I want to pause to consider how interesting a fact that is. It seems that it might be on the one hand a kind of cultural universal – I don't know of an ethnography that reports of a culture that has Members claiming that they really have no idea of how pretty much anything works for them in their world. And this kind of universality seems to permit a formulation of problems of knowledge, even of science, according to a famous metaphor used by Otto Neurath, who was a philosopher-scientist a while ago; something like, 'In rebuilding science' (and in rebuilding knowledge I suppose the same would hold) 'we're like persons on a boat who have to rebuild it plank by plank while staying afloat.' Now that sounds as though you could sink. But what may be more important than that possibility is the fact that intelligibility is retained over all changes in whatever it is that's known. And what might be involved in that is the fact that there's some form to intelligibility, which any particular shift in knowledge doesn't modify.

If, say, for some culture, for some given problem a particular membership device is relevant for deciding causality, then the fact of a solution is guaranteed in principle for almost any culture in which that is found. That is so by virtue of the fact that the incumbents of a set of categories are finite, known, and countable. And the task, then, of coming up with an account, an explanation, causal attribution, is one of going to a finite list. That some natives have such a procedure is then, for them, a way of guaranteeing results. And in more than a few cultures where, for example, as anthropologists put it, death is not purely a natural, but also a moral phenomenon, always having persons who cause it, when somebody dies there is a procedure of going through a list to find out 'Who?' And in that way one could see what, in part,

might be involved in not giving up the notion that what we call the purely natural world, controlled by whatever it's controlled by, is to be seen as causally handleable in just the way any moral events are causally handleable.

This fact of intelligibility can be gotten at in another way. One could imagine that the birth of science would take place by somebody proposing something as the truth, which persons simply didn't know about before – a fact they hadn't noticed, or whatever. And yet it happens to be the case, for the more or less well-attested beginnings, that pretty much each of the fragments of early Greek science begins in essentially the same way. And that is with an assertion that 'Everybody thinks they understand the world but they're all in error.' Now that's kind of queer. If, however, it can be taken to be so – that that's the way beginnings take place – then you might well find it useful to suppose 'intelligibility,' and ask, 'What are the ways that intelligibility is done?' If, for example, person categories are always involved in intelligibility – at least for some considerable while – there might be some possibility of a general attack on that problem by reference to the question, 'What is it about person categories in general that makes for their use to provide intelligibilty?' As I mentioned earlier, one issue involved in that may well be the fact that for almost every culture except very modern ones, everybody is known in the first instance, and one is dealing, then, with a finite list which you need only go through to arrive at a solution.

Now the problem of relevance rules for given devices in a place where there are a lot of devices can, I suppose, be extremely illuminating. For example, in this therapy session, when this new entrant is told "He's not at all like Ken. He's more like Al and I," the fact that that could be done for him could be enormous news, in that it's at least possible that on that occurrence, or when it's been done a series of times more, he might come to think something like, 'Gee, maybe I can be like Al and he. I always thought I was like my Uncle Harry, who's a bum. That's what they always told me.' That is, he might have been led to suppose that it's his fate to have, as possible persons to be compared with, some perhaps not extremely limited number of persons, but persons formulated from very particular sets of alternatives.

Persons take that to be the case in our world, very much. And social scientists do, too. So, for example, it's considered a large important development that some Negroes get into high positions, so as to provide for others to see the possibility that they, too, can make it – where occupational movement is taken as something for which comparisons are to be made within such a category. As compared to, for example, a very current illustration of that: Almost every article on the promotion of Bill Russell to coach of the Celtics talked about 'the first Negro . . . etc.' The *Los Angeles Times*' sports columnist, who's a great humorist, talked about everything else *but*. That he was the first person over 6'10" ever to be made coach of any professional team, the first person who owned a plantation in Africa to be . . . etc., where the humor in it turns on the fact of the obvious and exclusive relevance of his race to that position, and to accounting for it and formulating it.

The possibility of 'other models' is not much treated, but if it were the case that one could simply propose that Negroes could consider, for formulating their chances, what Jews have accomplished, then there might be an enormous increase in their feelings of chances of success – in certain areas, anyway, i.e., other than rabbi.

The problem is, of course, psychiatrically very important, since routinely patients will take it that their fates are provided for by what has happened in their family. Now how you go about opening those relevancies up is something about which I have no idea. But, that they *are* openable up is guaranteed by the fact that any such set of categories do the same work. That is to say, you could perfectly well say "He smokes like me," i.e., he smokes like me-another-patient-here, where that device will bear that use – a comparison for smoking. And of course, "you smoke like your older brother," etc. It's a question of what it is that a given device can't bear for comparison, and, for that matter, for causal efficaciousness. It may well be extremely limited. And it may, in any event be, insofar as it's limited by reasonableness, only conventional in the usual sense of 'conventional.' All of it involves employing those notions of intelligibility that are enforced. And the enforcement of relevance rules has at least as one of its imports that the finiteness of a problem is retained, since so soon as any and all devices will do, there aren't, perhaps, certain procedures to employ. And the search procedures seem overwhelmingly to be tied to the use of single devices.

In considering these issues of intelligibility, one has to take almost all social sciences to be part of the same operation, since, again, almost all of it involves using one or another of the devices as a way of formulating its account. And there you may get conflicts about devices: Voting is either tied to income or religion, possibly in some way to both. But it is those social structures that they take it that Members know about and use, etc., etc. So that it's in that sense, working within what is in-principle intelligible, where the issue is only 'Which?,' that constitutes the basic way that the social sciences proceed. That is, in a way that is not, in principle, different from a way an Azande decides who it is that is causing him trouble, or killed his brother.[3]

In that regard, then, the fear of the boat sinking may involve retaining the character of the problem, which had one seeing oneself replacing a plank with another plank, and not, for example, mixing your metaphors while afloat, and seeing what that does.

Now, when we return to our data, the set of remarks like "He smokes like me," "he's more like Al and I," can be seen as introducing this fellow to the viability of the new environment. It's an adequate environment for comparing, attributing causes, etc. And the question of its adequacy may have nothing to do with its size, but only, for example, with the fact that its device is complete, i.e., that it provides for the fact that whomsoever comes in, is formulatable as a member of one or another of whatever categories it contains.

[3] For a consideration of the Azande decision-making procedure, see Fall 1964– Spring 1965, lecture 5, pp. 34–5.

If that is so, then we can see what the considerable importance is of the fact that his being there be understandable to them, such that they seek to find it out, and to see that he has been dropped into this environment by some reproducible procedure. To 'be in here' and 'belong in here' are equivalent for them. And that may set one constraint on the use of some device, i.e., that it provide for a recognizably intelligible environment; that everyone who is here belongs here.

Then there are issues like the fact that when an anthropologist goes somewhere, what they want to do with him is to make him one or another form of Member, which is among the most routinely reported occurrences within the literature. Strangers are objects of fear.

Lecture 29

Place references; Weak and safe compliments

Ken :   Did Louise call or anything this morning?
Ther : Why, did you expect her to call?
Ken :   No. I was just kind of hoping that she might be able to figure out some way of coming to the meetings. She did seem like she wanted to come back.
Ther : Do you miss her?
Ken :   Oh, in some ways, yes. It was nice having the opposite sex in the room, ya know, having a chick in the room.
Roger : ((sarcastically)) Wasn't it nice?
Ken :   In some ways it was   I really can't say why, but it was.

I'll be considering this piece of data, in connection with a statement, "Usually there's a broad in here," which occurs on the fifth page of the data handout, at the very bottom. What I wanted to point out about it I'll hold off for a little, while I notice some other things in it which are kind of interesting and I think could get some attention.

For one, it's part of a fairly general use that we find the term 'here,' and it is quite interesting in its way. In the first instance, one might take it to be strictly a place term. But it's quite regularly used in a much more powerful way than that. Consider, for example, "you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here," and there are a bunch of others in the data handout.[1]

Now it's clear enough that it is not just doing place reference. Consider as an alternative, for example, "Usually there's a table here." Where that might be read to be saying something like, 'Pretty much any time you might come, you would find a table in this room.' I take it no such sense would be given to "Usually there's a broad in here." And of course, furthermore, I take it that 'a broad' means the same one, but that 'here' means at least 'here and now,' 'here when we're here.' So it captures time, also, to some extent. And it does more than that. It seems, in the case of "Usually there's a broad in here" that

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[1] Oddly enough, just the use that Sacks is discussing here may be occurring in this stretch of talk. The transcription shown is Sacks' (from a session that occurs a few weeks after the one which has so far been considered). And it shows, "It was nice having the opposite sex in the room, ya know, having a chick *in the room*." A later version shows, "It's– it was uh nice having– having the opposite sex in– in the room, you know, havin' a chick *in here*" (emphasis added).

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there is furthermore involved that she is one who belongs to the group: 'Here, now, with us, as one of us.'

There's another place, which isn't in the data handout, where this fellow, Ken, is talking about the military school he goes to. He's an officer there, and he's talking about how well he gets along with the people under him, and how he's very popular, etc. At which point one of the others says to him, "What are you doing in here?"

In "you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here," just the same sort of use is involved. Again, it would seem to be concerned with 'here when we're here' and 'here as one of us.' Where, for example, that statement would not be made to the therapist or to any other visitor, but 'here' may be bearing some activity use, or membership use, or both, as well as what is, I suppose, in its way quite incidental, and that is the place term.

I haven't talked about place terms at all, but there is some extent of use of place terms where the activity being done at that place is, for one or another reasons, not mentioned. So, for example, people will say "I'm going to the bathroom," where the place reference serves to indicate in one or another way, and not name, the activity or class of activities that are to be done, that are done there. The same is done with, for example, the phrase 'going to bed,' invitationally and in other ways. And it's not, in those cases a matter of, for example, an unclarity involved, i.e., it does not involve it being unclear to some extent, what's being done at that place, though the name of the activity is not used. And there are other occasions in which place reference is used where, that one is going to that place is among the more incidental things involved; what is important is what it is one is going to do there. And it is, of course, the case that regularly one can say one is going to the place when one is doing the activity or reporting that another does the activity, and you don't have to do it in that place, or know that the other is doing it in that place. That is, if you say somebody 'goes to bed with' somebody, you don't know, perhaps, that what you're reporting they do, they do in bed. Sometimes you can use a substitute activity, "She sleeps with him," where 'sleeping' would be among the more indefinite things that you're reporting, and may not even be known to you to be the case. Now what's involved in those, I don't know; why those places are picked out, I don't know, but it's something that one might give some attention to.

Earlier I mentioned that the therapist–patient collection of categories seemed to have a kind of omni-relevance to them, and one of the things I wanted to watch for were the ways that that collection might be used in the session, without other special introduction, to provide the sense of the interaction. And I take it that, for example, "you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here" has part of its sense in that way, i.e., 'you must be crazy or you wouldn't be here as a patient.' Where the sense of it would have to involve some way in which those categories were seen as available without other specification of them. And what we get to is a way that various of the statements are contexted, somewhat without the relevance of what has happened before, but by virtue of the sort of activity that goes on 'here,' and

the sort of people they are by reference to being 'here.'

So that, for example, the terms 'usually' and 'here' do what they do, and do it very clearly, without any need to reintroduce 'patient–therapist' and the variety of other things involved, such that 'usually' can be seen to talk to the fact of 'when we meet.' That is to say, 'She's here at most sessions.' 'Usually' refers, then, to the sessions, and is some way of reporting on comparative presence. But it has quite a different sense than it would if we had simply the statement which was tied to 'here' as a place, like "Usually there's a table here," where you might imagine that any time you came in, you would find that table, unless it was moved. It has nothing to do with what we do here, or that one has to arrive around the time of our sessions to find it. It might be very clearly the case that 'usually' and 'here' would have that use if we had a membership term directly referred to, i.e., "Usually there's a psychiatrist here" would, perhaps, serve quite clearly to give 'usually' and 'here' their special locus as referring to the place where we have our meetings, and when we have our meetings.

The question of how those terms otherwise get their transparency is one that I take it would have to be resolved by reference to the general availability of the alternation 'patient–therapist.' But how it gets brought to use, to understand or clearly produce any given statement, is quite another question, and one I can't deal with. But in any event, one can see that 'usually,' and whatever terms it will have as substitutes –'occasionally,' 'sometimes,' etc. – can be treated as a set of terms that can be applied to any or some recurrent events or class of recurrent events, where the term refers to whatever properties those events have. So that, for example, if it prefaces a statement like "Ron Fairly bats third," that means 'when the Dodgers play,' 'for each game,' etc.

That term, then, has its character as part of a set of terms, where the unit that they're used with respect to tells you what kind of thing they're doing. Where that may involve that if you get 'usually,' 'sometimes,' and the like, in a use which is possibly dealing with some recurrent activity, then you're to hear it with respect to that given unit, i.e., a 'session,' a 'game,' etc. And that would mean that one would have to have specified what it is that they are overall doing, to get what it is that they 'usually' do.

Now it's clear enough that 'here' alone won't do the reference to time and place and sessions, and 'usually' won't do it, either. Then we have some sort of puzzle as to how the whole statement gets it, where these very general, abstract cases of terms from sets of terms – 'usually,' 'sometimes,' etc., 'here,' 'there,' etc. – lock in to have a perfectly transparent sense. And 'a broad,' itself, has to be interpreted, to get 'a broad who is a member of our group,' and not, for example, the wife of the therapist, or whatever else. If 'here' gives us the relevance of 'patient–therapist,' and then one tries to find, well, which one would she be, patient or therapist, and had some way of saying, not therapist, then patient, such that one got "usually there's another patient here," one might then find 'usually' and 'here' to be 'when we meet.' It's enormously compact, then.

Now what I wanted to do was to consider some of the ways in which the formulation of the absent person as a 'broad' – or female – was relevant to what it is that's being done with that formulation. I wanted to start with that sequence I began off with, and I wanted to develop what seems to be a way of making a compliment of a special sort: One that's weak, and safe. And if we can initially take it that saying that you miss somebody is a way of offering a compliment about them, then we might try to see what ways there are of doing that in this special way – weak and safe.

That formulation of her, "It was nice to have a member of the opposite sex in the room" is produced as an answer to "Do you miss her?," where that could, of course, be answered by a lot of other things, equally compliments: "She was very witty," "She was very bright," "She was very lovely," whatever else. But "she was a member of the opposite sex" is kind of a special one. Its specialness is somewhat related to the developments that take place from "Usually there's a broad in here;" when that gets picked up again on the eighth page of the data handout, several of them say "She unites us." We have a situation where, by saying 'it was nice having a member of the opposite sex in the room,' a device is invoked which has two categories, 'male' 'female,' and for which, in this place, there are a variety of facts that hold:

First, the person being referred to is the only member of the category being used, i.e., 'female.' And then, that category is being pointed to as what's 'nice.' Now that's a good way to make it weak, in that no comparisons are involved with other members of the group. If one says 'she was very bright,' another could say 'Well what about me?' No such thing is involved. So that one is not, by making the compliment, setting up the possibility of comparisons, which would perhaps negatively characterize other persons present. Where, given the characterization of a member, one regularly goes through the population to see how each of the others stand on the very thing used. In this case, she's the only one.

Another of the ways that the compliment is weak turns on the fact that formulating her presence by reference to that category involves proposing a criterion for her replacement. Whomsoever would satisfy that, might well satisfy the missing-ness of her. It's not a 'personal' loss, it's a categorial loss.

And, of course, to formulate that 'I miss her' by reference to the male-female alternative can have another way in which it's quite trivial, in that, that device having only two categories in its collection, completeness would be found by virtue of some member of each category being present. One category not having members present, a member of it could be said to be 'absent,' and the group incomplete. One could propose that to be so even if it weren't the case that she was in the first instance there at some other time. That is, insofar as one could find the relevance of the device, one could propose that 'we lack a woman' by virtue of the fact that we're all men. The group is, then, incomplete in a readily formulable way.

In the case at hand, we have the additional property of safeness, by virtue of the following. First, the device has only two categories, and they are all members of the alternative one. And then, the two categories are such that

any member of one can say of any – known or unknown – member of the other, that it would be nice to have one around. In that case, one is not merely missing her as a representative of a category of which she's a member, but one is speaking as a representative of the category one is a member of. And as such, any one of them could have said the same thing. It involves, then, no special commitment on his part, to some position vis-à-vis her, or vis-à-vis females, but he's invoking some well-formed relationship between men and women.

That there is such a well-formed relationship which permits him to be talking representatively, would differentiate, say, that 'missing' from other missings from categories which don't have it between them. If, for example, the non-present person was, say, Negro, or Mexican, or whatever, and this fellow then said (again, making the split in which they're all in an alternative category), "It's nice to have a Negro in the room," it could well be argued that he was taking a stand which others need not. It is not that for any white person it would be the case that such a statement is properly makeable, or for that matter, that any member of the opposite side could say the same about you, as a member of your category. In this case he needn't even be a male to have made that form of statement. Had the group been all females except for one male, and that one left, any woman could have said exactly the same. It's via that sort of consideration that the enormous blandness of his remark is to be found. He is by no means going out on a limb.

In that regard, the remark "She unites us" has an equally trivial character. That is, by reference to her presence we all become relevantly male. And again, the notion of the completeness of the group need not involve a commitment to the special characteristics of this girl. If she's missing, she can be replaced. In that way, the kind of threat she can pose, the kind of harm she can do, by not coming, are given a rather restricted formulation.

When one wants, for example, to indicate to an other who can be handled via such a device but for whom special properties are said to hold, that they don't hold, one does it that way. That is to say, between husband and wife there's supposed to be one proper member – one proper member, indeed, for all time. However, it could be formulated via male–female, that each one ought to have the other. And when things get touchy, or for humor, when one says "What'll you do when I leave?," the other can say "Find another" as the answer. The ways that one shows that there's something special going on is to introduce a set of features beyond that categorial membership, to restrict replaceability and to provide, then, for a set of ways that one can distinctively assert that they would be missing, and at the same time to formulate what it is that's nice about them. That's a 'personal relationship.'

Now the question of what's being done via the introduction of "Usually there's a broad in here" might be considered. So far, the fellow is supposed to be 'company.' One has the sense that it's a kind of invitation, or pre-invitation, to return, with something offered as what it is that's to be gotten. Something missing now, likely to be here again, things are better, then, i.e., providing for the recurrence of these sessions. It's very quickly

followed by an explicit (but little bit odd) invitation, and that is, "Wanna join our amy?" But until then, I don't think any such usage has occurred, except for the one that almost begins the segment off, i.e., "We were in an automobile discussion," which is, as I mentioned (at great length), undercut as an invitation.

And the formulation of accounts of current troubles by way of relevant incompleteness is an extremely generic thing to do. When they later say 'this is an abnormal session because the broad's not here,' they are using a general form, 'I'm having troubles because of the absence of something,' which is extremely widely used. And it is often used with what might seem to be as little evidence, and in as ad hoc a manner as here, where, as I remarked earlier, we would take it that it's an "abnormal session" because of his presence and not her absence.

Lecture 30
Various methodological issues

I haven't given an occasion for tearing down in a while, so after I make a few remarks I'll open the floor to questions, arguments, or whatever. What I want to point up are some facts which I've mentioned before, but the import of which may not have been apparent.

I've mentioned that someone can say 'We do X' when they do not say 'I do X,' or when they specifically say 'I don't do X.' For example, on the first page of the data handout we have A1 talking about "we get tickets" and then he says that he has never gotten a ticket.

> *Al:*   We do race but the times we do get tickets are the only times when we maybe goin' a long distance, uhh I dunno, 1 – depends on how many accidents you have, and how many of these tickets you get.
>
> *Roger:* I have got a speeding ticket on the average of one every three and a half months. Since I've been driving.
>
> *A1:*   I haven't – I have never gotten a ticket.

Alternatively, someone can say 'I don't do X' when, under some formulation, they *do* do X, or they're doing it while they're saying they don't do it. For example, a bit later in the session, Roger, who has been smoking a cigar, says "I don't smoke." Furthermore, there are some circumstances under which if A does something, B can say 'We did that thing,' where presumably B couldn't say 'I did that thing' – though perhaps he could.

Such sorts of situations have, as one aspect of their consequences, some troubles they pose for observational sociology or anthropology, and of course for informant-based sociology and anthropology. Such sorts of disciplines are largely composed of writings which consist of narratives, or more formalized statements which are composed of activities plus doers under some formulation of both. Even if you're not going to go out into some field and do such work, the questions I'll be dealing with are relevant to reading those things and seeing what they're about, in what sense they're correct, and the like.

Now I say of course there's a problem for the informant-based disciplines, but leaving them aside for a moment, there's a problem for observational disciplines, of the following sort: Suppose you're an anthropologist or sociologist standing somewhere. You see somebody do some action, and you see it to be some activity. How can you go about formulating who is it that did it, for the purposes of your report? Can you use at least what you might take to be the most conservative formulation – his name? Knowing, of course,

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that any category you choose would have the kinds of systematic problems involved that I've considered before, i.e., how would you go about selecting a given category from the set that would equally well characterize or identify that person at hand? How, for example, would you write up a report on the set of questions in the group therapy data? Would you simply say "The old members asked these questions to the new member"? How would you go about deciding that you could count across persons, for saying that the two guys asked ten questions, rather than saying one guy asked eight and the other guy asked two; or formulate some category for handling them? Is it anything that could be counted? Does it require that *they* count it? And must we, or can we, use the count that they use?

Is it always the case that the category of actor that you're going to use to write up who did the thing will at least be one that that person is a member of? Or is it possible that one could have a situation where the category of actor is a category of which the person who did the action that you're reporting is *not* a member, so that 'who did it' would not involve reference to that one? In certain sorts of religious circumstances for various cultures, persons are said to be 'spoken through' by the gods, by their ancestors, etc. Or they may conceive themselves to be actors in the sense that a stage actor is an actor, or in a sense close to that: Doing on behalf of someone who's not present, not alive, not human, but who would be said to be, perhaps, 'the doer.'

The problem of strategy in that regard may not be readily handleable by taking the best notes possible at the time and making your decisions afterwards. For one, there is an issue of when it is for the Members that it turns out that they know who did the thing. So, for example, in the ten-question situation, if that was being written up in a fairly conventional way – not doing a presentation of the record and some kind of analysis off of it, but a description that stands instead of a presentation of the record – would you await the fact that it happened to be the case that after the tenth question somebody says "We're doing better than he is," therefore allowing you, by reference to that statement, to see the others as having been done by both? And if you do that, then there are some special kinds of things that are involved. For you would seemingly be employing a notion that some of the things that persons do are somehow talking about their world, so to speak. That is, that they are 'metastatements;' statements that can literally be seen as 'about' something that preceded them, or which follows them, rather than being another in a string, having just the status that the prior ones had. That is, where one would find it, perhaps in principle, not so obvious how you could say that the statement "We're doing better than he is," which uses 'we' to characterize the past ten questions, is evidence for your view that those ten questions are properly reported as having been done by that 'we.'

If you find that hard to follow, just consider, for example, the following phenomenon. At the beginning of Gide's novel *The Counterfeiters*, the hero is looking at some letters which he shouldn't have been looking at, and then he says something like, "Now a step in the passageway should come," in which what he's doing is saying something like 'Were this a play, then at this point

I ought to be caught.' And one might say that the character in a novel is talking to us out of the novel, about a situation in which, if this were a play or a novel, such and such would be the case. But it is a novel, so it couldn't be doing that.

And of course, the statement is another statement in their world, and so it's not easy to see how they could be talking out of it, i.e., provide a special status to that particular statement which gives it a possible use for interpreting the prior remarks. Any such attempt seems to be seeking a way to say as true – or say as false, for that matter – something that the natives say. That is, to say that some things that the natives say are about their world in the sense that *you* intend to say is 'about their world,' i.e., controlled by considerations other than those which govern whatever activities they otherwise do. Another way we might put it: There would be some statements that they make, which analyze other statements and are not themselves things that we analyze.

Now the question is, how do you go about doing an observational anthropology or sociology? And what place would narratives of various activities, ceremonies, etc., have? And what place would statements in which Members' categories are attached to Members' categories of actions have? At the present time, pretty much any report you look at consists, itself, of statements in which Members' categories of actors and Members' categories of actions are paired in one or another way. And the question is, can we say more about those than that they are possibly grammatical statements in the natives' language, or translations of grammatical statements in the natives' language? Or is that the most to be hoped from them?

One possibility might be something like the following. Suppose you had a film of some scene in which the natives are doing whatever they're doing, and you pick, to start out, some scene that has as what's taking place in it, some set of events that the natives take it are describable – where they have a notion of description, and the notion of description holds for that set of events. Now, at least, say, in our world, the USA, there are events which are describable, reproducibly. The most prominent examples are games. Then what you might do is construct a piece of machinery that will generate descriptions, given those scenes. Where what you want is to generate descriptions that Members will say are grammatical, correct, etc. That having been accomplished, you might proceed to analyze those descriptions, in ways akin to or different from the ways I've been trying to analyze these conversations.

As members of this society, you can routinely write descriptions of all sorts of events. You might, then, write yourself a bunch, where you also have a film or a tape, then sit down and try to see how is it that you build those, i.e., try to reproduce your descriptions. If you do that, you ought to get an apparatus which would be, in part, an analysis of some culture.

The problem, then, is tremendously thorny. And I'll leave it at that.

Q: How would we keep from falling into the trap of subjectivity in attempting to describe events?

HS: I guess I don't see why it isn't perfectly possible to construct reproducible descriptions of whatever it is that we happen to have, as data, so

long as what we have as data is what it is that's happened – tapes, film, or whatever else.

Q: But now can we ever know what categories *these* people, if they were asked, would assign, i.e., those who have been recorded?

HS: In that sense, who cares what they would say?

Q: If one doesn't care, what is the value of assembling the data?

HS: Because we'll build the analysis of it, set up our –

Q: *We'll* build it. Will it ever have any possible relevance to the people who were involved in producing it?

HS: It needn't have any relevance. There's no criteria –

Q: You have no feeling that it would be desirable that it have relevance to the people that we are studying?

HS: That's another question.

Q: Well, I think that was the one question. Is there –

HS: No, the issue of relevance to their lives is another question altogether. I take it that there's an enormous amount of studies that are not intended to be relevant. For example, studies of how cancer does cancer is not intended to build better cancer. And there are all kinds of studies directed to what other animals do, in which we're not intending to improve them. We're not intending to improve, say, the course of the planets or the lives of those plants or diseases under study. Though it may well be that things can be done if you have some idea of what you want to do – that's never been a criterion of success.

Q: Well, then what in your opinion is a criterion of success with relevance to the apparatus that we're trying to construct?

HS: That it works.

Q: That it works for *us*. The particular person who constructs it. But to ten other people who get to view it, it doesn't mean the same –

HS: No, it can work for ten other people, also. That's a basic part of the routine criteria.

Q: Well then does it have relevance whether or not they understand it?

HS: Relevance? They could understand it without it having relevance to other than their professional lives. If someone gives you a logical proof, and other people can read it and see that it's okay so far as they can tell, it doesn't mean that they go out feeling that they've improved their lives, or improved the lives of the persons whose lives they're studying.

Q: But in most cases would not there be any underlying reason of whatever importance, that would cause them to study these reports, and that it would have some kind of relevance to the –

H: Well that could be a sociological problem, as to why they study those things, but I'm not about to suppose the answer to it, as though it were easier to ask why scientists do science than to ask why Members do whatever else they do.

Now there's a tremendous notion that people have, that the easy questions are questions like why the history of science is as it is, when they can't *begin* – for example, people can say "Nobody will ever figure out why humans do the

simplest things they do'' but anybody can say why scientists do what they do. Now I find that strange. I would take it that if you say that we don't know why anybody does what they do, then at least you ought to say "I don't know why anybody does science." If we can say why anybody does what they do, we may also eventually be able to say why they do science. But the latter is hardly the first question that could be answered. And any serious attack on it requires a serious study of things that are at least simpler than that – if that's complicated. Though if you could propose a very good analysis of why humans do science, that would be tremendously interesting. It would be among the first important pieces of sociology or anthropology. It's not a universal, don't forget. Science is not done by everybody, everywhere.

Q: Could you be a little more specific about what you mean by machinery?

HS: Well I've tried to give plenty of instances of what I have in mind. I've tried to put together pieces of machinery. Is it unclear at all that some of the pieces of analysis look like they might do the job of giving us some of those things? That is, we have some events, we try to find what kind of activity is going on, we then try to build a way of reproducing that activity. That's what I mean by machinery. A machine doesn't have to be a physical thing that I roll out here.

Q: It seems that you were discussing the fact that we were constructing machinery which would reproduce the natives' description of the activity, and then do the same thing for our own culture's activity. And then it seemed that you were intimating that possibly to create an authoritative and correct definition of what the natives are doing, we have to compare those two pieces of machinery to see whether or not they are similar enough to explain the natives' event in our terms or our event in their terms.

HS: No. I was just talking about *our* culture being the subject-matter in the first instance. What I meant is, we try to do it for them, we try to do it for us. Then we try to analyze both of them as *both* giving us different and intendedly compatible results from different cultures. Since we can read out descriptions pretty easily, for our own world, that might give us a beginning as to a set of things we could study to see how descriptions are done.

Now there's real problems with that. For one, there are lots of things which do not have the kind of describability for Members that, let's say, games do. And there are all kinds of things about which Members say, 'They're not describable.' Now what you do with them, I don't know, insofar as you wanted to start out with the scene and the description of it. Of course you might try to figure out what, when the natives say something's not describable, they're saying. But I wasn't intending a contrast of the sort you described.

Q: Supposing you had many sets of narratives from the same culture, and you're looking for a special thing; you're looking for maybe how attitudes towards authority develop. Can you do that? Can you go right into a conversation and look for something? Or do you have to look at the conversation first, and then try to decide what it is you've got?

HS: Yes. The first rule is to learn to be interested in what it is you've got. I take it that what you want to do is pose those problem that the data bears.

Q: Supposing you're actually looking for something. Maybe you can see something that you didn't know was there, just by –

HS: Well that's a personal problem.

Q: Do you think it's valid? Is it a valid way of doing it?

HS: My answer is a personal answer. You only can know what it is that a problem is when you dig it out of the data. The notion that you know that there's a problem called 'attitudes toward authority' involves you then in just asserting that notion, using the data as evidence. And you just don't want to use data as evidence. It ought to be perfectly okay with you whatever way it comes out. And if you're interested in a given problem you're not going to have that view, and you'll find yourself defending theses. It ought never to be a matter of concern to anybody who's doing a piece of description which way it comes out, as long as it comes out some way. Since all paths are equivalent, more or less. The world is one way or another way. So what. The question is, how is it? Since you're going to be wrong almost all the time in your analyses, anyway, you might as well not undercut yourself even further by starting out with some problem that you don't even know *is* a problem, or a problem for that data.

Q: ((Untranscribed, re kids' vocabularies))

HS: The best collection of data that I know of is Roger Brown at Harvard is collecting an hour of conversation per week between a pair of kids, maybe three or four years old now, from the time they were two. You might be able to go through that sort of stuff and see what happens to the kids. Even reading it is an overwhelming task. I have six months of it.

One has to have some notion of, given the time in which you're trying to do a task, the time you live, then what sort of task you can handle. And it would be nice if things were ripe so that any question you wanted to ask, you could ask. But there are all sorts of problems that we know in the history of any field that can't be asked at a given time. They don't have the technology, they don't have the conceptual apparatus, etc. We just have to live with that, and find what we can ask and what we can handle. Now it may be that if you really are hot about some topic, you can build a technology that would permit you to do it. But ways of processing language are in extremely bad shape, and that would be what you would need, I take it, to handle anything like that. For a *kid*. A kid's talk, over six months, is an enormous corpus; something that you might not readily read through in a very large time.

Q: ((Untranscribed, re finding 'average' behaviors))

HS: I take it I want to handle each item for itself. If I can handle each item, then I can't be too far bad. 'Average,' then, involves some kind of notion of how you could mesh a bunch of things together, which would involve, then, a notion of various of their properties that are essential or inessential, which would involve a notion of that, in the first instance, which I don't have, and if you have, great.

Lecture 31
Games: Legal and illegal actions

This time we'll have another installment of this ancillary discussion of games. I'll start off with a quotation from a book entitled *Intellectual Growth in Young Children* by Susan Isaacs, page 105. This is about a child aged three years, ten months.

> On one occasion he and other children had made a 'ship' in the schoolroom, with an arrangement of tables and chairs. Phineas' part in this was comparatively a passive one, as he was but a 'passenger' on the ship, and was going on with his own pursuits on the voyage, sitting at a table and sewing a canvas bag. Miss D. was with him 'in the ship,' and all around them the crew and the captain carried on the business of the voyage. And when, presently, a new supply of thread was wanted, and Miss D. said to Phineas "Will you get it out of the drawer?" Phineas replied "I can't get out of the ship while it's going, can I?" and called out in a stentorian voice to the 'captain,' "Stop the ship, I want to get out." After some demur, the ship was brought into a 'landing stage' and Phineas got out, secured his thread, and got in again, saying "Now it can go again."

And here is another, similar piece of data from an unpublished book by Barker and Wright, similar to their *One Boy's Day*. This is a girl, a little under five years old.

> She looked up at me expectantly, anticipating that I would push her. I said firmly, "No. Put your knee in the wagon and you can push yourself." She sat for several seconds, obviously waiting for me to push her. She waited long enough to be certain I wasn't going to push. Then she got down, put one knee in the wagon and the other on the floor of the cement porch, getting ready to push herself. In order to encourage her I said "Come on." She didn't move. She looked straight ahead. She announced, "There's a car coming." Then she looked at me indignantly. She was seemingly disgusted that I couldn't see this car that she announced. An imaginary car was coming, and she had to wait for it to get out of the way.

Now what we want to do is consider those, and see what's up with them. We need a couple of facts about games – very simple facts about games, and facts that are not particular to particular games, but the presence of which

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indicates that even if one doesn't have something that is a named game, game-play is being done, by virtue of the use of these facts. But we can start with with games, in general. What we want to notice is the following sort of relation obtaining:

For the things that can be done in games, and that, when done, can count (e.g., getting a base hit in baseball, throwing a strike, scoring a basket, and the like), they can be done rightly or wrongly, legally or illegally. And in games, if they're done illegally there's a certain very sharp alternation. And that is, if they're not done legally then they don't count. For perhaps any event that can count in a game, the legal–illegal alternation is relevant, and relevant in the way I've mentioned, i.e., unless legal, doesn't count.

So the first thing is this general relevance of legal–illegal. To have such a general relevance for a class of actions is perhaps at least partly special, i.e., we don't tend to think that every action otherwise has that sort of alternation relevant. And furthermore – and in a way much more important – even where that alternation is relevant, it doesn't seem generally to be the case that the consequence of illegal-wrong, is what it is in games. Indeed, that the consequence isn't of that character is of considerable importance for a variety of activities. So, for example, in learning to talk there may, for one, be a rather considerable time when one speaks poorly, doesn't produce grammatical sentences, correct pronunciation, and the rest, and none the less, what one is doing is not only understandable, but acceptable.

It is, by the way, of some relevance in considering what it is that are criteria for, say, knowing the language, that one consider that persons can, not simply produce grammatical sentences and do the various other tasks correctly, but that they also know what's correct or not. And it's kind of interesting to consider how early kids come to monitor others' speech with respect to the correctness of that speech. I have conversations taking place between a four-year-old girl and her brother who is a little under three, of the following sort. The two kids are in bed for the night, and they chat before they go to sleep. There's a tape recorder in the room, and it just catches what they do. One of the things I find on the tape is that the four-year-old is regularly engaged in giving lessons in English to her younger brother. He's at a point where he's engaged in talking to himself out loud, just saying words. So he says the word 'yellow,' and he says "yaller." He just says it, repeatedly. Then she comes along with an interruption which consists of "Not 'yaller,' 'yellow.' Say 'yellow'." He says "Yaller." "Say 'yellow'." And they go along, and there's some modification. And on some of the tapes she is engaged in giving definitions to him. He says "What's a such and such?" and she tells him what a such and such is.

Now, if we have to incorporate into our notion of possessing the language, not simply the ability to produce grammatical sentences, but the ability to teach that language, i.e., not simply such a knowledge as operates to generate correct sentences, but a knowledge which permits one to monitor sentences so as to see, for example, incorrect ones, and also, for that matter, to see what it is that the incorrect ones are a version of, so as to project what a correct version

of that incorrect one looks like, then that seems to involve a kind of image of a language user which is not exactly coordinate with some of the notions that have been offered as what a language user would consist of. So, for example, in some classical considerations of such a matter, it is proposed that 'a grammar is unconscious,' and that it would serve, when it's incorporated, simply to generate correct cases. Under that formulation you might well be able to generate correct cases and, for one, not understand at all incorrect cases – not even see what they are variants of – and furthermore, not be able – except by example – to teach the language. But if it's the case that persons *can* teach the language, then they may well have some way of attending the grammar that's built into them, seeing its properties, and using it to monitor the incorrect statements of others, seeing what they're about – and also to teach.

Insofar as kids learn that they can do 'speaking' and other things in such a way that what they have to attend to adequately (which may be 'adequacy for understanding') is something which is not quite the same as grammatical correctness, then they may have an image of the consequences of error which is not to be wholly generalized if they're to proceed successfully for other things as well. That is, there are matters for which, as we put it with respect to games, 'a miss is good as a mile.' If you touch an electric wire, even for only a second, less than a second, sufficient consequences may occur such that there are things you absolutely do not want to do, at all. And things you absolutely want to do perfectly, and not approximately.

Early on, I raised the question of how it is that kids are going to learn to orient properly to danger.[1] And we could see that they might, indeed, get into positions of danger so as to get the attention of other people, whose business it is to pull them out. It could, of course, be a very troublesome rule to learn. Now games are quite opposing sorts of matters. First of all there is the general relevance of legal–illegal, and the very sharp consequences attached to illegal: Doesn't count. Can't do it. 'Can't do it' meaning you can't accomplish the action you undertake if it's not done legally. The longest home run doesn't count if you don't touch the bases, etc.

Q: This applies to formal games like baseball, but it seems to me that according to your definition of last time, of games, that war could be considered a game. It's got teams, it's got rules, it's got all these things, and yet isn't that a case where this doesn't hold? Where sometimes the most illegal things are done and *do* count? Or were you speaking only about formal games that would have a name?

HS: Well, on the one hand, what the cases are in the classes I'm talking about, is not something that I'd lay down. So whether we want to consider war a game would turn on the question of having found such properties as hold for games, whether we find that war has them.

War is an extraordinarily interesting thing, and there are gamelike features of it which are quite un-understandable were you not to consider the features

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[1] This may be referring to lecture 10, pp. 346–7.

of games. Be it as it may that there are things one does in war which are 'illegal' and yet count, you might well consider alternatively why it is that there are things that persons would seemingly do in war if wars were, as we might suppose they were, simply whatever it is you can get out of it you get out of it; if you win you win, that's it, which they *don't* do all the time. So there are circumstances in wars where rules are abided by which would seem in the short run, even in just that given war, to be very disadvantageous, and nonetheless they are complied with. And that's, I think, much more extraordinary than the fact that there are wars in which rules that may have been held are violated. For one, in *games* rules are violated. That's a shift in perspective on the matter, and I just suggest that this might be considered before saying that wars are an inconsistent case – and I propose that they are a case.

Leaving that consideration aside, there's a habit which I wanted to notice, which is very inconsistent with doing investigations pretty much of any sort.

Our aims, and the aims of researchers in general, are to try to get at sets of properties that something has, see how they work, etc. We're not, then, engaged in saying 'Is X a game or isn't it a game? Is Y a game? Yes? No? Now we have a list of games and that's our discovery.' What we want to do is to consider what makes something a game, and get at, then, these sets of properties. Something may well be partly a game, partly not a game. And the question is not, for example, that if you said that games can be played such that you can play catch with your dog, that you're wrong, but what does the fact that you can or can't play catch with your dog tell us about how games work, or what the members are of the class of games, and why. And the same would go for war. If one had some properties that discriminate games from something else, then the introduction of war is of interest. And one ought to be interested in that way.

Now it's perfectly well the case that in card games people violate the rules and get away with it. 'Getting away with it' is one sort of thing, and certainly I could not possibly be saying that people do not get away with violations in games. Just as there's a history of good play, there's a history of how to cheat. The phenomenon of cheating is not, however, something that undercuts the status of games as being things that have this character that if you do something illegal it doesn't count. Cheating is *directed* to that sort of fact.

So: I've said that there's an alternation, 'legal–illegal,' without specifying at all how it's used. And with that alternation, however it is that 'legal' or 'illegal' gets assigned to something, then there's another relation between that and 'counting' or 'not counting.' Now we're considering this issue of danger, and how it might be oriented to. Relatedly, there's a problem which I dealt with earlier, with respect to lies. I suggested that when it was the case that kids could make good descriptions to build good stories, then you could have a nice index of the fact that they know how to make lies, on those matters on which they can build stories. So one of the things we want to be looking for, also, is how we can tell that kids know that some event is a matter of danger. That's a thing which we would very much like to know, for a large range of

their activities, so as to know whether we have to worry, when they're doing something that may be dangerous, do they know it's dangerous or not.

We'll talk now only about those games that are called 'imitative games,' i.e., where kids simulate some real environment in their play; a real environment of adults, or of kids, or of both. In such imitative play they need some scope for picking out those things which are to be legal or illegal, and which, by virtue of being that, can or cannot be done. That is to say, they need some way of assigning to any possible action its status as legal or illegal, and therefore doable or not. And the question is, what aspects of those possible actions do they focus on to make that determination about an action?

So we have: [legal/counts] – [illegal/doesn't count]. Now, especially when you're engaged in imitative play, the possibilities that arise for doing various things may be quite unformulated – in a rule book or historically – such that the various participants may need some way of monitoring any given proposed activity so as to decide whether it's doable or not. Legal–illegal clearly would not suffice for deciding that, except for activities that were already done – or by some other criterion which was put into a strong relationship to legal–illegal. For example, 'safe–dangerous.'

It may be that participants could monitor any given proposed action within the play as to its status as safe–dangerous, and then tie that to the legal–illegal alternation. If safe, legal. If dangerous, illegal. Then, consequence: If dangerous, can't be done, and count.

Notice that in imitative play it perfectly well 'could be done.' That is to say, Phineas could, after all, have gotten out of his chair and walked over to the drawer without any trouble about drowning. But were he in a boat – which is what the game involves him in being – then the act of going across to shore would indeed be dangerous. And the same, of course, for the second story.

Q: It seems to be more – Instead of 'safe–dangerous,' 'impossible–possible.'

HS: Sure. There's a sense in which that's so, also. I've used that one, also. The question is, when you use one or another of those pairs – 'safe–dangerous' and 'possible–impossible,' the notion of 'possible' is one that may be somewhat more difficult that the notion of 'dangerous.' Let me try to give you a suggestion on the point. We'd say that Phineas would drown if he wanted to go ashore from a boat, and therefore going ashore is 'impossible' – if we could say that he had some fair idea about 'possible.' But the problem, in part, is that there are things that kids can acknowledge as 'dangerous,' where the consequences of the danger are not grasped in the way that, as adults, we would talk of it. In *Children Tell Stories*, for example, you'll find that events occur like the following: Daddy is doing something, he gets eaten by a lion, he's dead, he comes back. Now it's clear enough that something pretty awful has happened, but exactly how awful is not at all attended. Somebody is seen to have something terrible happen to them, they get burnt up in a fire, and the doctor comes and puts a Bandaid on their finger, and they're better.

It seems to be the case that they appreciate that it's dangerous, but that it's irreversible, for a whole series of things, is not seen. And also, the scope of the trouble is not seen. You will find regularly that they get injured in one or another ways that you would take to be enormously dramatic, and a Band-aid is put on, and that's that. Now the sheer fact of the Band-aid may tell us that they appreciate the fact that it's dangerous. But that it's impossible, in the sense of they're dead, and dead in the sense that we understand 'dead,' is not appreciated by kids for rather a while. So whether we can at this point say 'impossible,' always, is something I'm not really willing to claim. Though when it does hold, I take it that the same mapping holds.

What's especially nice is that there can then be a premium, in play with a set of persons, on the detection of events that are 'dangerous' in the real world; using them to point up the fact that some action that somebody proposes to do, can't be done, by virtue of the game features: legal–illegal, counts–doesn't count. And that can be done by participants to stop the action of others, or for a variety of other things. In the case of the second story, it is done as a way of putting down the adult who suggested such an action, i.e., that the adult ought to have known that there was a car coming. And the fact that what we would take to be a hostility generated by the adult's refusal to push the wagon was handled in that nice form, rather than the various ways such a hostility could have been presented, is, of course, worthy of consideration.

Lecture 32
Seeing an 'imitation'

Last time I made passing reference to 'imitative play,' and what I would like to do now is focus on the phenomenon of 'seeing an imitation.' Let's leave aside completely the theater; that's not what I want to be talking of. There are some ways in which the phenomenon of 'seeing an imitation' is of very large importance, and I'll bring that out, at least assertively. But I want first to point up what we're talking about.

If, for example, you see a rather young girl, three years old, perhaps older, behaving coquetishly, you may find that what you see is, her imitating a woman. And there are, of course, much larger collections of actions which one sees being done as imitations. One thing to notice is that you can see somebody doing an imitation although you've never seen that person before, or even if you've seen that person before, you're never seen them do that action. You don't see them doing the thing itself, you see them doing an imitation. And that raises some rather neat questions.

The matter is not restricted to young children. If you look especially at the pre-Civil War literature on slaves – and even, indeed, some current discussions, and certainly current lay talk on the matter – one gets something that can be summarized in the sentence, 'Negroes and children are great imitators.' There are some extraordinary things about that kind of an assertion, and, for one, it's perhaps related to a matter I mentioned some time ago, this thing of 'who owns reality' and what the import of owning it or not owning it is for some category of persons who are apparently not entitled to be seen to be doing some given action, which they technically are perfectly able to do. That is to say, the notion that, say, an adult Negro is a 'terrific imitator' is to say that what he's doing can hardly be distinguished from that thing which, if someone else were to be doing it, would be seen as the real thing. But he's not to get it seen as the real thing, but an imitation of it. Which is explained by the fact that he's very good at imitating.

Why should people be seen to be imitating? And not, now, for something where they do it badly, or the like. There are obviously a variety of things involved in seeing an imitation being done. For one, for example, when one sees an imitation, one apparently has an occasion for observing the technique with which some action is done, and considering the technique as to, for example, how close it looks to the ways of doing the activity that one does with that action. For example, making a request. Where there may be few occasions otherwise for observing the technique; one simply sees that somebody has done something. And of course adults with respect to children are constantly engaged in marveling at the technical proficiency of a young

child, without ever treating it that they're doing the thing that they're technically able to do.

Secondly, there is apparently a situation involving the incompetence of the doers to claim that they are performing the given action. Their relevant set of activities are seen, at best, as proffering such an action, where one can accept it if one pleases, or not – apart from whether it's done well. One might put it roughly that we had something of an inverse to category–bound activities, where there are some activities, otherwise doable by anybody, which for some category of persons are not doable by them, no matter how well they can 'pull it off.'

It turns out that such categories of persons, who can, in fact, often do the thing well, it being regularly seen as an imitation and therefore not the serious activity it might be, they develop related ways of proceeding with such activities, and we get a correlate to the fact that 'Negroes and children are great imitators,' which is 'Negroes and children are great mockers.' And what a 'mockery' is, is to do that thing which you would otherwise be seen as imitating, in such a fashion as to make it clear that you're not seriously doing it, but that you're competent at it – and, of course, treating it in a fairly negative way. Children mock their parents, lessers their betters, students their teachers, etc., when the given thing, were it to be done in an unmocked fashion, would be 'but an imitation.'

One of the things that is present with actions seen as imitated, is that one seeks to see where they got it from. So you could have people doing the following – I'll use an historical situation, it's more transparent, in a way: Suppose you have a situation of an adult Negro slave of the same age as his adult white master, who were brought up much together. The adult Negro slave does something, it's seen as an imitation, and it's explained by virtue of the fact that he learned it from the masters. How it is that his same-age master learned it is no issue. And of course routinely for children, one will explain some action seen as an imitation, by the fact that they learned it from such-and-such, where that the others also learned it from somewhere is no issue, either.

Imitation is apparently one special case where one is unsatisfied until one comes up with some 'how they got it' explanation, and that involves only finding someone who is entitled to do the thing, and for that someone who is entitled to do the thing it's quite irrelevant to seek to find how *they* came to do it.

In the case of children, the 'imitation' observation may be done at that point when the child is not a candidate for doing the activity that they've done. That would make it close to the situation of a slave, who would in principle not be a candidate for doing the activity they did. Such that if you have become, say, a candidate adult, it might well be that it would be no longer seen as 'imitation,' but as 'learning what an adult ought to be able to do.'

When one treats some activity that a non-candidate produces, i.e., something seen as an imitation, as a 'version' of the activity done by

somebody who is a Member in some sense, whose doing it is not seen as imitation, it is important to see that there is no question of treating the Members as otherwise setting a standard. The one that one copies it from can be pretty rotten at it, and nonetheless their thing is seen as quite adequate, and as defining yours as 'a version of it.'

One of the things that would of course mean is, if one had a transcript or a film and one saw some possible activity going on in it, then, as an outsider, one couldn't assert what was being done unless he was apprised of the fact that the person doing it was one who could be doing it. Otherwise it would be seen as an imitation.

And again, to do such activities mockingly, kiddingly, and the like, in play, is more or less explicitly to recognize that in doing them one is making no claim to doing them seriously.

What I've said so far means that when you see yourself seeing somebody doing an imitation, you could get a good sense of the ways that the categorizations you use will enormously control your perceptions of what's happening. You see right off, 'an imitation.' You see it even though you will say 'It's a beautiful job.' You'll see it even though you don't know the person who's doing it. And you'll be happy with an explanation that they learned it from their parents, though you've never seen their parents, though they may do it better than their parents. That means you're dealing with something quite powerful and orderly. If you don't see an imitation, a whole set of the questions you ask and find yourself able to solve, do not get raised at all. And indeed, would be quite irrelevant if they were raised, like, where they had acquired that habit might be askable and answerable, but it will be quite secondary and uninteresting; it's his.

And in that regard, one thing further about imitation is that no matter how many times one does the activity, no matter how well one does it, it's never a possession; it's always borrowed.

I don't think that the situation is much clarified by treating as prototypes those activities which are the special right of some people to do. For example, if you sign somebody else's name to a check, that's 'forgery' and perhaps not anything like 'imitation.' If you try to perform a marriage service, i.e., act as a priest or such a civil servant as can do it, that may be quite different than trying to be gracious and being seen as imitating your betters, rather than being seen as a gracious inferior, or gracious and thereby not inferior.

It's not a matter from which anthropologists, for one, are exempt, in that they will report, for example, things like the following. In an interesting though recurrently confusing (or confused, as you may like) paper by Ethel Albert called something like 'Logic and rhetoric among the Burundi,' she points out that Burundi are very big on very elaborate rhetorical techniques, for argument and other purposes, which the upper classes among them specialize in. If I recall correctly, when she considers the capacities of those who are not entitled to use these elaborate techniques, i.e., the lower classes, the peasants, remarking on the ability of some of them to do it, she treats it as an imitative matter. Though she also points out that even those who can

argue with considerable rhetorical skill, when arguing with upper-class persons, will be 'proper peasants' and argue very badly – though I suppose one could say then that they're imitating peasants.

As I've mentioned that article, I ought to note further about it (and it's about one of the only places I've seen it so far) she suggests that in apparently very routine conversations among the Burundi, when they are multi-party conversations, i.e., more than two persons, they have a formulated way of coming off. That is to say, there is a 'first speaker,' 'second speaker,' 'third speaker,' given by the social structure. And that order is supposed to recur throughout the conversations. The point is unclear, because she notices that if an elder, or 'proper first speaker,' at some point in the conversation refuses to talk, then the conversation stops. Now that makes it unclear as to whether the sequencing rules are the property of those people, or rules which they conform to as well, in that when they talk others follow in sequence and they may not interrupt. But if it were a rule that they all properly follow, then one might imagine that anybody could stop at their point, be silent, and the conversation ends. Or it would pause until they decide to speak.

But in any event, the phenomenon of a rule for sequencing without regard to the number of persons present, which not only controls first speech for each, but the sequence of later speech, is a matter of rather considerable interest.

It is also the case that members of some category that has its members seen as doing imitation when they do some activity, will see their peers as doing imitation when they do that activity well. And they put them down for it. So, field slaves are reported to have treated house slaves as 'putting on airs of the masters,' and 'thinking they're better than we are.' Which is to say, in part, that neither master nor field slaves were engaged in recognizing the possible assimilation of house slaves. For once they were assimilated, presumably one would no longer see that they were imitating; one would see them doing what such a person ought and can.

Lecture 33
On sampling and subjectivity

. . . there are others which turn on when it is and how it is we use a feel for what an explanation would look like, and invoke such conceptions to decide that we've got one. I'm not sure that I'll deal with them in such an order, but I'll try to deal with them to some extent.[1]

The *sampling* matter I think I at least mentioned, and have given some rather cursory remarks on, but I'll take it up again, now. Involved in it is the conception of the sorts of order there are in the phenomena we're investigating. Relatedly to that, there are the locuses of order.

Now the question of the sorts of order there are has been one of the basic problems out of which a social science could be said to have emerged – if it could be said to have emerged, or may eventually emerge – from those things which would historically be called philosophy, for one. And it seems to be the case that the important early models of the order in society were constructed in a hope of providing for their stability, where that stability was seen as something problematic, in a fairly special sense of 'problematic,' and that is, under a fear that it may break down, or it has broken down, or it's tenuous. Where people were concerned – say, Hobbes, for example, or Plato – that the world was falling apart and could be put together again if this or that were done.

I say that's a special conception of 'problematic' because it would be much more conventional – scientifically, anyway – to treat the problem of 'problematic' as one in which if something occurs, then one wants to know how. And if it falls apart, one wants to know how, and all of those are equally well facts to be examined, explained, whatever. And none of the facts, furthermore, is better than any other. That is to say, one doesn't care to find how something can be orderly which, under some formulation, can be not orderly. It's just as well if it falls aparts as if it doesn't.

Now, for whatever reasons there were, the social sciences tended to grow such that the important theories tended to have a view that if you look at a society as a piece of machinery, then what you want to consider is the following: There are relatively few orderly products of it. There is, then, a big concern for finding 'good problems;' that is, to find that data which is generated which *is* orderly, and then attempt to construct the machinery necessary to give you those results. So that, for example, one might fix on the fact that the rate of crime has a certain low status, or that the loan rate that

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[1] The first few minutes of this lecture were not recorded. Apparently Sacks listed a couple of issues that he would talk to. The transcript begins in course.

banks employ is generalized and more or less stable, and then try to see how that happens.

One has a view, then, that one has to find some indices, and build an apparatus that would maintain the indices in whatever way they seem to stand – or fall. Where it's quite crucial to locate which are usable ones. And where you can get a picture of disorder which would involve, say, their rapid fluctuation.

That image, then, suggest that there are a few places in which, if you can find them, you will be able to attack the problem of order. If you don't find them, you won't. And much of what else takes place is more or less random. So you can have a picture of a machine with a couple of holes in the front. It spews out some nice stuff from those holes, and out of the back it spews out garbage.

Even when such a view is raised to the status of a possibly scientific one, it tends to be heavily controlled by its sources, which are things like 'a concern with political order and how that's maintained,' and an overriding interest in what are, in the first instance, known to be big issues to Members. And not that which is terribly mundane, occasional, local, and the like.

It's perfectly possible, at least theoretically, to treat such a formulation as historically adventitious; a mere fact, an accident of the history of the way persons came to think about social problems, and to either suppose, or discover, or propose to discover, that no such thing is present, but that wherever one happens to attack the phenomenon, one is going to find – some would say impose – detailed order.

That would have enormous consequences for what one intends to build. If you want to build the stability of a rate of conformity to law, or a bank rate, then you build large-scale, massive institutions as your image of how that thing could be done.

But if you figure, or guess, or decide that whatever the human does, it's just another animal after all, maybe more complicated than others but perhaps not noticeably so, then whatever humans do can be examined to discover some way they do it, and that way would be describable.

And furthermore, you might find that the fact of 'order at all points' could be used to explain what are otherwise fairly strange facts; things like the following. For one, certain kinds of researches – for example, let's say, taking very conventional sociology, survey research – would use the fact that it gets orderly results to indicate that it must be doing something decent. Now everybody knows – that is, everybody who has ever done such work, or studied it – that it's almost universally extremely bad; that almost never can whatever the constraints are that ought to be used under their own formulation to decide that they have something, be used. There are, for example, all kinds of constraints on proper statistical procedures which are never satisfied, and nonetheless they get order.

Now why should that be? It could be a real problem. Secondly, there are the anthropologists' procedures, which tend to involve a very occasional tapping in to a society, asking one or two people more or less extended

questions, which turn out often to be extremely generalizable. That, again, could be treated as a warrant for such procedures, or a tremendous puzzle.

Or it could be seen to be a consequence of the fact that it would be extremely hard, given the possible fact that there is overwhelming detailed order, to *not* find it, no matter how you look. And a consequence of the fact that that order is an important resource of a culture. Such that, for example, any Member encountering from his infancy a very small portion of it, and a random portion in a way (the parents he happens to have, the experiences he happens to have, the vocabulary that happens to be thrown at him in whatever sentences he happens to get) comes out in many ways pretty much like everybody else, and able to deal with pretty much anyone else.

Were it important for nature, in the way it would build culture, that if persons are to be workable things in a society they ought to have an adequate sampling setup, then it might well be so arranged. I suppose an alternative would be to make extremely simple kinds of environments which are massively reproduced, so that everyone faces more or less the same, and it doesn't matter which. And then, of course, research might employ the same resources: Tap in to whomsoever and you get pretty much the same things. If they're constructed in that way, then the fact that certain results are gotten from one informant would not necessarily be a warrant for those things being good procedures on their own terms, but evidence for an arrangement of the world which could be seen to be usable. And, again, in a great deal of the stuff I've been considering, I've been regularly pointing to the fact that people do it with persons they've never met, extend things to occasions they've never dealt with, etc., and do it with assurance and some success.

Now if one figures that that's the way things are to some extent, then it really wouldn't matter very much what it is you look at – if you look at it carefully enough. And you may well find that you got an enormous generalizability because things are so arranged that you *could* get them; given that for a Member encountering a very limited environment, he has to be able to do that, and things are so arranged as to permit him to.

So, for example, we might take it as a tremendous puzzle, how it is that Whorf, studying the language of the Navajo, talking to one Navajo in New York, could build a more or less decent grammar of it, and somebody else could do the same, about which we'd then say, 'Isn't that fantastic? What a genius he must have been.' But then we could say, well, how many people does any given Navajo encounter when he learns to do Navajo? Are they such geniuses?

We can then come to a view that while we might, under some conceptions, have the notion that a statistical procedure is safer than others, it may well be that we could give a formal account in the way of singular activities. And that would be a very important theoretical finding. That that could be done would tell us a great deal about the character of what we're dealing with – even if it wasn't enormously generalizable. That would just be a matter of how the ball happens to bounce, we'll see how generalizable it is, and, again, that tells us what kind of a phenomenon we're dealing with.

We could tie such alternative conceptions to various other alternative conceptions, like the kind of difference there might be between Catholicism and Protestantism, for example. That difference has been much pointed to, so that, for example, among the American theorists of social life, that one who gets the biggest play from Catholics is Parsons, with his conception of an enormous massive ordering of institutions necessary to account for even relatively minor matters. And some parts of the school of British anthropology which are like Parsons, are called Anglo-Catholic anthropology, where the notion of a massive institution, the Church, which guarantees certain kinds of order, is to be put into opposition to, say, that sort of church which supposes that everybody can pretty much handle it by themselves, and for which, say, large-scale rituals are not treated as crucial to stability in religion, or stability in other things.

In short, then, the problem of sampling is not separate from some possible large theoretical issues. And it isn't obvious that the problems that Fisher posed, and his solutions, are simply to be adopted (Fisher being an agronomist who was concerned to build some system of models that would permit him to decide various agricultural facts, and whose results were the considerable foundation for statistics in sociology). And it certainly isn't the only conception of the possible ways that order can be gotten at. And it's conservative, in a way, and weak. And there are perhaps much stronger available views, formulatable views. And certainly the line that I've been pursuing is one that at least is, in its attempted direction, seeking to see whether it would not be possible to formulate descriptions that are clean, and that deal with singular events. But it may not be possible, and the question is to see whether it is, and also to see what you have to do to see that.

Now, on the matter of *subjectivity*; of using a Member's knowledge and access. The issue has, by and large, never been one of not using it at all. And I could formulate the following kind of opposition. Reading with some care one of the most important books written in the social sciences, Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, I found the following kind of thing going on in it. There's the first half of the book, in which these aboriginal religions are considered, and in which the kind of attachments that these people have is examined. It's a case of a 'they' investigated by a 'we' who are social scientists outside of and with no intuitive access to why they do things. And the question then gets posed: Why do they feel as they do and what's the place of their gods, etc., and their organizations handling this? Once that problem is sharply posed, we get a tremendously remarkable shift taking place. And that shift can be found in a single paragraph of the book. It goes something like this: At the beginning he's talking with the use of 'we' referring to sociologists, studying 'they.' Why do 'they' do it? What are the attraction for 'them'? At the end of the paragraph the solution is found, and the solution is grasped in an altogether different way than the problem is posed. It is: "We know, as members, that society has that power over our minds." And that, then, is an invitation to 'us,' social scientists and whomsoever, to understand 'their' way by our knowledge of our ways.

Pretty much all conventional social science works in a similar way. So at the end of a survey, when you try to decide that you've got decent findings, you will say, 'Well, we know that religion counts for politics, and if we've got that kind of correlation then we can say, "See? We understand it." Because we know that it counts.' ('We' being 'any Member.')

Now that I want to do is turn that around; to use what 'we' know, what any Member knows, to pose us some problems. What activity is being done, for example. And then see whether we can build an apparatus which will give us those results. Where that is not to be decided as to its adequacy by what a Member knows, but may well look quite non-intuitively (i.e., in terms of our Members' intuition) strong (or weak, or irrelevant, for that matter).

We tend somewhat to be overly taken with the constraints that Weber sets for an objective social science, and that is that, say, a Chinese sociologist could understand our analysis. It may well be that you could build a social science which a Chinese sociologist could examine to see that it's cogent and doesn't at some point for the analysis rely on Members' knowledge, but where he could never do another case and could never see why you came to pose the problems that you did, or how you decided that you thought that some activity was going on which you then could show was going on. And of course that's not such a strange conception for many sorts of researches in which persons can understand a finding that they can't themselves have constructed, and can't construct another. People learn how to see math proofs as more or less adequate, and it's not tested by the fact that they can build more of them – though some people ought to be able to.

Now, the question of what would be an *account*, and what it would look like, is by and large purely an adventure. One builds something, and tries to see, 'Does that look like what I want it to look like?' And you construct ways of deciding that it is or it isn't, that it does or it doesn't, and you go on, or stop. That may sound terribly subjective. But it's only historically so, in that if you ever get a profession going, then, that you have a profession going does it, i.e., tends to define 'objectivity' for it.

I take it that we have certain opportunities at this point, whether as Members or not, and that is that one of the ways we may get to see that we have something in an analysis is that it's of that order of primitiveness that anybody can go out and look, and see that the thing seems to be as we said. Now people have come to be, in this modern age, afraid to suppose that that's doable for scientific results, though it must well have been the case that there were times in any field that people could do that. So that in biology in the 19th century there were all kinds of amateurs around, and these were people who could look at results and find another; look at an object and see that it was as people said it was. They could see it with their eyes, they didn't need a lot of equipment. And they knew what an account would look like. So they could learn the field as the field was learning. And it must have been like that earlier in other fields, like at some point in astronomy, for the Egyptians, etc. As compared to now, where that's not so.

I take it that it can be that way for sociology now, and I take it that lots of the results I offer, people can see for themselves. And they needn't be afraid to. And they needn't figure that the results are wrong because they can see them. Since beforehand they didn't know it, and now they can see something they didn't even know existed. As if we found a new plant. It may have been a plant in your garden, but now you see it's different than something else. And you can look at it to see how it's different, and whether it's different in the way that somebody has said. Now that's probably a very short term possibility, so you'd better look while you can.

And of course a way that sociology, at its beginning, could be unavailable in the way that other sciences are, is by using a technology which everybody didn't have available, and by proposing results in a format that did not say what it was that was found out in a way that could be seen. So professionally it gets rapidly shielded from examination, as is regularly the case even now with, say, more or less elaborate mathematical models of something or other. One doesn't know what they propose, or how it is one would see whether it is so. But of course few of them are intended to be descriptive of some observable facts.

I'm sure it is felt that if I propose that that's what we might do; that if I say I look at it and decide that it's okay, and it could change tomorrow as I figure my scientific intuition gets developed as to how that thing works, then I'm making it up. That's altogether a confusion, in which my personal experience is treated as the way to account for what it is that's found. Though of course it's perfectly possible that it is to be so accounted for. If so, I would take it that it's guaranteed to be wrong. But then, if we are produced in that orderly a way, it may well be that by examining how we see a thing, we'll find something out about it.

Appendix A

On some formal properties of children's games[1]

Lectures 13 and 31 constitute a pair of "interjected lectures," an "ancillary discussion of games." Following is a copy of a draft of a paper Sacks was working up, on children's games. All numbered footnotes are Sacks'.

On Some Formal Properties of Children's Games[1]

Harvey Sacks   8-27-65
pre-draft two

(0)   Here my aim will be to locate and examine the import of some formal properties of children's games. It will be seen that the located properties are central to 'socialization.' That is, in this and other work we will be engaged in posing some of the tasks which membership in a community of culture-users requires the learning of techniques for, and in exploring how it is that children's games serve to permit the development of such techniques.

(0.1)   Three sorts of treatments of children's games will be offered: First, we shall locate some properties (and their import) which seem to be general for children's games; second, we shall locate some properties (and their import) which while not being fully general, are not distinctive properties of single games; third, we will offer analyses of single games.

(1)   In previous work (see my 'The search for help: no one to turn to')* this author's discovery of a central part of the culture we have been studying,

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[1] The materials analyzed are not included in this pre-draft. They are basically the reported observations contained in the volumes produced by Roger Barker and his group of co-workers, and made available by him to me.

[2] The word 'a' is not intendedly emphasized here. It may well be the case for any given game that it provides for several *alternative* category sets of players. I think it usual however, if there are alternatives, for these to be organized, and in the following fashion: For all sets but one to be subsets of that one.

* Probably a draft of 'An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology,' now in D. N. Sudnow (ed.), *Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Macmillan, The Free Press, 1972), 31–74.

the set of membership categorization devices (MCD), has been reported, and a variety of properties and rules of use of those devices noted.

We have observed there that learning of the existence, features, and rules of use of the devices constitutes a central set of the tasks of becoming socialized. The question of how such learning takes place went unexamined. Here, among other things, we shall see that children's games are (expectably) a central set of phenomena the performance of which serves to provide for the learning of the properties and techniques of use of the MCDs.

We begin by noting some properties which may obtain for the class of games for which children have names. IT MAY BE THE CASE THAT:

(2)   For any game for which children have a name there is a category-set of players.[2]

(2.1)   To say that there is a category-set of players is to say, for example, such a statement as: Reference to the game's players with regard to any occasion of play need not involve the use of an MCD which children who play games know the use of, and which provides a relatively unique reference to each player – that is, the set of personal names – but can involve the use of a set of categories which have as one of their central properties that they provide whatever uniqueness of reference the particular game requires.

Furthermore, the category set is stable over personnel change, (b) given a maintenance of personnel the category set is stable over changes in the categorial incumbencies of the set of players, (c) and, of course, the category set is stable across occasions of play.

(2.1.1)   Given the foregoing the following phenomena can be seen to be observably orderly:

(a) In reporting their actions children recurrently say that they played game A with BB and CC (names of children, where A is a game name) and that the reporter was L, and BB was M, and CC was N (where L, M, N are categories for the game A).

(b) On beginning game play, or on changing games (from game A to game B) or on starting another play of game A after some prior play of game A, or on making changes in the personnel during a game's play, children recurrently map the set of players-to-be into the set of categories, using as the initial terms of the mapping, either the players'-to-be personal names or some pronouns, and the category set terms as the final terms of the mapping.

(2.1.1.1) The fact that in doing (b) above, either the set of personal names or the set of pronouns (or a combination) may be used to provide the initial terms of the mapping is notable.

First, the fact that both collections (personal names and pronouns) can be so used, are mappable from, involves children in learning to see certain central properties of both of these collections. The two collections consist of the categories of Pn-adequate devices of a particular sort. They, and only they,

provide sets of categories which are mappable into the categories of any other Pn-adequate device. With this some central uses of them, for example, their use in preserving reference in discourse which involves reference to varieties of categories, can be grasped. An exploration of this basic 'mappability from' status of the two collections might prove illuminative of how come it is that when the categories of any two devices, one of which is a category from one of these devices, and one from some other, are employed about some given person, sentences tend to be formed with the category from these devices as subject and the category from the others as predicate. (The matter is not strictly grammatical since the sentences can readily be formed the other way.)

Second, while both devices are basic they are not equivalently powerful. The set of pronouns are generative in ways that the set of personal names are not. Thus, given the set of pronouns, one can, for example, form questions which are directed to determining the categorial status of some person vis-à-vis any other categorization device, including the set of personal names.

The basic character of the two category sets is something that children in doing such game relevant actions as assigning game positions may – insofar as they do not yet know that – come to learn. It may be noted that they will be regularly forced to use the two devices. They cannot routinely map from the categories of game A to the categories of game B since any two given games may not have categories of the same relative uniqueness, even if they can be played with the same complement of players.

Now the fact that game play can have its mapping done with either the set of pronouns or the set of personal names as the initial terms turns out to provide a solution, a formal solution, to a very familiar observation. It is widely observed that children's groups have an 'open-ness' which is not present in adult groups. Why is this so? Or rather, how is that fact provided for? In solving the problem we will also see how there is wisdom in the proverbial advice to a new kid in a neighborhood, that, if you want to get to know the kids, just go to the playground, and try to get into the games.

If it is the case that mapping into game categories can properly be done from the set of pronouns it follows that the set of players need not initially have that acquaintanceship with each other which would involve them in using personal names to each other. For children, then, in contrast to adults, the most prominent of social activities in which they engage are so constructed that entry to them does not require prior use of the rule-governed occurrence of an exchange of names. It is of course not merely the case that an occasion for being properly introduced, or otherwise learning personal names is not a requisite for participation (and for those activities which require written or phoned invitations, if not introduction, then at least the name need first be known somehow) but name exchange need not take place at all – for game activities, reference to someone can then be accomplished via the game categories.

The fact of the adequacy of the pronouns as the initial terms for mapping into game categories is not of course sufficient to provide the opportunities for 'strangers' to play. Other matters are also relevant. For any given game, the

playing of it requires a personnel adequate to its categories (and whatever number of incumbents the categories may require). The set of acquainted persons who desire to play some given game may not satisfy the categorial constraints – and indeed under even minimal formulations of the categorial constraints the set of acquainted persons may not, as is regularly required for team games, add up to an even number. The chances of any unacquainted person to get into a game are then heightened by virtue of the possibility that if he is not let in, sought in, some acquainted person may have to be left out. For adults that problem is less pressing – since adults tend to 'come in pairs.' There are however a variety of occasions where the more or less even numberedness of participation provides the basis for the seeking out of unacquainteds – e.g., for debutante cotillions.

(2.1.2.)   Elaborating briefly on (a, b, c) of 2.1 we note: Neither change of personnel, nor exchange of categories for a stable personnel, nor replay of the games are events which operate to change the game categories.

Given these facts it may be the case that children's games are central environments within which the central property of the organization of this culture – stability of categories over interchangeability of personnel for a large number and important group of activity relevant positions – is learned.

It may be noted that this fact is not learned in connection with the first basic MCD children learn to use – i.e., that one, two of whose categories are (mother, father). Children are not taught, and do not seem to take it, at least when young, that there is an interchangeability relation for these categories between a variety of persons. It is that in part which may account for (a) the fact that there is apparently not a terribly smooth shift in the divorce–remarriage or death–remarriage scene. There is, that is, not merely a proper number of incumbents of the categories (mother, father) for any given child, but there is a proper incumbent. (b) The fact that the activities which are learned to be activities of these personnel, while (obviously) performable by any persons who may occupy such a position for other children are not seen as obviously adequate; 'I want my mother to do it.'

(3)   For any children's game which has a name there is a category-set of game events. The game events are the observables the game provides for. The notion of 'observable' that playing games involves one in employing is (obviously) central sociologically. For, 'observable game events' are events which are detectable via the game rules; this is deeply true. It is, that is, not merely a matter of the game rules being used to determine whether a given event is game-legal or not. Rather, in contrast to many objects for which, at least it is conventionally said, one can know that the object is nameable or has a name one doesn't know, the very specification or location of the event as something may involve use of the game rules. To learn that one needs some set of rules merely to see what is going on in the social world is of course to gain among the most basic of social resources.

In this regard, the recurrent feature of game-events, that one can see not

only 'legal occurrences' but one can also see violations, that the rules may be used to observe violations is perhaps of similar interest to the way that programmatic relevance of categories provides for the observation of absences.

We shall return to the matters raised in this section anon.

(4) The categories of the category-set of players of any game are *programmatically relevant* (see SFH).* This apparently central feature of the use of some MCDs is given a specially powerful formulation for game playing. Any given game is properly non-playable unless each category of the game's category-set has the proper number of incumbents. Every time that children desire to play some game they are confronted with the fact of programmatic relevance of game categories.[3]

(4.1) It is noticeable again that those basic categories of the categorization device 'family,' i.e., (mother, father) are not such as in their use provide kids with the occasion for learning programmatic relevance. For these categories, i.e., mother, father, do not merely have proper number of incumbents (in this culture) they have proper incumbents. Thus, while one certainly learns the notion 'missing' as an observable state of affairs with regard to (mother, father) one does not learn what is core to programmatically relevant categories, and that is that there are things which cannot properly be done if a category is unfilled, or if an incumbent is temporarily absent, which can be done if one is able to get the category filled.

(4.1.1) Kids who will not play baseball without a right fielder will play even if the right fielder they get is utterly incompetent – e.g., a very small child. And, an obviously incompetent person may get the opportunity to play in a game in which their performance is no advantage at all vis-à-vis game outcome because the position happens to be unfilled.

(4.1.2) Given the fact that for some games there are various category-sets, some of which are proper subsets of one of the category-sets, and given programmatic relevance, we see how it is that playing a variant of some game, e.g., two-man basketball, can get modified as potential players happen to arrive. Each pair of potential players can take a position as the game moves to basketball proper, through the variant subsets – two-man, three-man, etc., though apparently when there are five on a side, new arrivers must wait or start another game.

(4.2) The fact that programmatic relevance is given such an emphasis in game play may be worth some consideration. The remarks are strictly

* 'The search for help.' See n. 2 above.

[3] It is no objection to this observation to say that 'basketball' can be played with two on a side. Two-man basketball can only be played with two on a side, i.e., cannot be played with only two or three or five or more players.

speculative. It is perfectly apparent (to the author) that programmatic relevance of categories is utterly central to the working of the community of culture users. I cannot offer the materials for backing this point up in this draft, but I refer the reader to other work of mine, and ask him to consider for example the way in which persons who are unable to find a spouse seem to take the matter with such grave seriousness. Now it is not at all obvious how it comes that persons so deeply feel the pains of missing things which in the first instance they have never had. Yet that they do miss them is obvious enough, that they do get deeply pained is obvious enough, and that it is utterly important that they do miss and do get pained is obvious enough.

Perhaps it is the case that the central focus which children's games give to programmatic relevance, the constant focus that is involved in the import of not having a complement of players, and the clear comparability of having and not having that complement, provides them with the basis for the variety of later ways that they can so deeply orient to programmatically relevant category-sets.

(5)   Closely related to the foregoing and generally central is the fact that the categories of any category-set of any given game are used, in a variety of their uses, according to the *consistency rule*. (see SFH).

We may note that as it was with the 'programmatic relevance' feature so is it with the consistency rule; that it is operative for game categories in a particularly strong fashion. The category-set of each game (except for game variants) are mutually exclusively relevant. If one has enough players for a variety of alternative games one does not pick some categories of one game and some categories of another. If one does not have a complement of outfielders for baseball one does not choose a category from some other game which does not require so many incumbents – e.g., fill up the infield with players and put a quarterback in the outfield – because there is only one potential player left.

(5.1)   Let us first note: The consistency rule holds not only for any game's category-set of players; it holds as well for any game's category-set of game events. The import of this will be considered in the ensuing.

(5.2)   The combination of programmatic relevance and the consistency rules has as its import that: When the positions of a game are occupied, it is not possible to expand the game by adding positions from other games, but either new games or such things as substitutions must be introduced.

(5.3)   We have said that the consistency rule is especially powerfully operative in games; while the fact is obvious enough its import remains to be considered. The remarks to follow are again (as in 4.2) quite speculative.

First, only mentioning now something to be given fuller consideration later, we note: There is the fact of learning how much orderly activity can be

done by use of only a restricted set of categories (player categories), and particularly where for each person there is at any given time but one characterizing category.

Second, there is the enormous importance of seeing that categories come in sets, and that if for some activities some category or categories are appropriate then they may well be exclusively appropriate, and that they can effectively be exclusively appropriate – effectively, that is, whatever needs get done can get done without moving out of the category-set.

Third, especially since it is the case that there are a larger than one set of Pn-adequate categorization devices, persons must come to learn that if they are engaged in some activity for which some category-set, say a particular MCD, is exclusively appropriate, then it is improper to categorize personnel by reference to some other MCD and to use their category status in that other MCD to involve them in the given activity. Recall here the discussion of the search for help for suicidalness, and the use of R.*

Fourth, and here we point to one of the most core importances of children's games: The fact that children's games operate under a unique combination of the operation of the consistency rule for some category-set of players and some category-set of game events, means that almost as strong a rule of relevance is operative in children's games as is theoretically conceivable. This cryptic observation will be given the elaboration due it in the ensuing. And for children to come to learn the phenomenon of relevance, its uses, and its import for the formulation of their own and the grasp of others' activities, is utterly core to their socialization.

Now while it is clearly the case that the relevance phenomenon is much more powerful and much more simple in children's games than it will be in the adult world, the fact that this (and other of the phenomena we have been considering) are first dealt with in a relatively pure form is non-trivial.

It is regularly said by those who on their own say-so are engaged in studying the phenomenon of play, that one of the special facts about playing games is that in the game world sets of attributes of persons that are normally relevant are made irrelevant; for example, social status, age, and the like. We shall leave aside for the moment the point that there are centrally important ways in which the analysts' notions that persons have sets of attributes which are leavable aside – both that they may be said to have them, and that they are leavable aside – is deeply misconceived. With regard to children's games the point would seem, if we may glean it, just wrong. For it is, I think, in learning the multiplicities of games, and their player category-sets, and the category-sets of game events, that children are first engaged systematically in dealing with the multiplicity of category-sets and the sorts of relations; e.g., mutual exclusion, that obtain between sets. To get into various games is not to remove some relevancies, but to add some. The worlds of young children

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* 'R' is a collection of paired relational categories. See 'An initial investigation of the usability of conversational data for doing sociology,' in D.N. Sudnow (ed.), *Studies in Social Interaction* (New York: Macmillan, The Free Press, 1972), 31–74.

are (notoriously) event-poor and membership-category-poor. Games are event-generative and membership-category generative.

(6)   A passing point from the foregoing may be picked up: Children's games are event-generative phenomena of a rather particular sort. It is notable that even for the simplest of children's games it is the case that via a restricted set of categories of players, a restricted set of game events and a restricted set of rules, an indefinite set of ordered occurrences may be generated.

Now, it is widely observed that one of the most crucial things that young children have to learn in becoming socialized is to 'concentrate.' The observation that they do not have powers of concentration may be given a formal explication, and the ways that games help to teach them what it is and how it is that one concentrates may also be given such a formulation. A notion of concentration may be formulated as follows: A person may be said to be able to concentrate if for some string of his activities a set of rules may be specified such that those rules generate some relevantly sized string of actions. It is possible, but not necessary, that some subset of the set of rules provide for ending the string of actions, and if that is so, then a person may be said to concentrate if he produces a string which is only ended on the proper use of the ending rules.

Now it seems that when it is said of children that they do not know how to concentrate, what is being observed is that the string of actions and the sets of rules stand almost in a one to one relation.[4] If that is so, it is of course difficult to say that the rules which might be constructed to generate some given action of theirs are employed by them to generate it. Their actions are more plausibly seen as random.

There are striking similarities between the rules that generate the first words children speak and the first games they play. Murdock's paper in *Anthropological Linguistics* and Jakobson's analysis of it (in Heinz Werner (ed.), *On Expressive Language*) indicate that the simplest occurrence which is recognizably a word, i.e., rule governedly meaningful, is one that consists of two parts, used in alternation, and reduplicated – for example, Mama, Papa, (consonant vowel, consonant vowel).

It may be noted that the simplest of children's games, those social activities which provide perhaps the earliest, or among the earliest instances of what may be called concentration socially, are games wholly built in this fashion. They have two parts, for two players, one action for each player, where the actions alternate, and where the playing of the game consists of an indefinite repeat of the alternating actions; for example, rolling a ball between two kids, or pushing an object between them; one pushes and the other catches – a

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[4] Cf., "The patient appears to be unable to focus his attention on any one topic for more than a few moments. Frequently he suspends the conversation in the middle of a sentence or he may turn away and close his eyes." Paper, Victor et al. in *JNMD*, 128, p. 529. Here lack of concentration found in a relation of less than one between rules (for generating a sentence) and produced actions.

reversal and a repeat of the initial, etc; other games; swinging, one pushes, the other swings, and the reversal; hide and seek, etcetera.

There is obviously rather good basis for these games lacking completion rules; to have such rules requires an orientation to developmental features of a game – being, e.g., able to count so as to keep score for the simple games that end when someone reaches some given score, as compared to those much more complicated ones which have internal histories – i.e., for which the state of the game at any one point requires reference to what has so far happened.

Children then learn the rudiments of concentration, i.e., the production of extended strings of rule-governed actions, in the primitive games they play. The fact that they are able to play such games for such long times may be marked down perhaps to the fact that at the point they play them they lack what adults would naturally use to monitor the game, an awareness of such things as the number of alternations they have gone through; the game lacking but the simplest of histories, proceeds in terms of who did what last on any occasion of play. And on any next occasion there is relevant reference only to what it is that has just transpired. The simplicity of the rules involved consists, of course, of the fact that the rules need only provide for the initial pair of actions and a repeat with alternation rule. (The observation that in playing games children learn to concentrate need not then be a merely bland remark.)

(7)   The category set of game events is organized into subsets, where: For each subset it is recurrently the case that (a) the subsets have a listable group of members, each of which have names, and (b) for any given subset, on some event occasion, the occurrence of a member of the subset excludes the occurrence of other members of the subset. (For the simplest of games this remark is trivial.)

As compared to the circumstances that adults face, the situation, while terribly important, is oversimplified in that in games the relation between 'event occasion' and 'event subsets' is extremely sharply formulated; consider baseball. At some point the next event-occasion may be specifiable as 'a pitch' and the subset of possible occurrences may then be readily specified (given some further contextual information, the subsets may be more or less sharply reduced – e.g., if there is no one on base). It is, by the way, given the fact that there is such a sharp relation between 'event-occasion' and 'event-subset' that the notion 'expectable event' gets an extremely sharp formulation in children's games, and the notion is obviously an important one. In simpler games than baseball the matter is considerably sharpened yet. 'Next event' in a game of 'catch' is either receiving or throwing for either player and the relation of event-occasion and event-subset reduces to one possibility. The notion of expectable next event is of course a rather crucial one; in children's games one learns to use it.

(8)   Children's games are describables, and in deeply interesting ways.

The category set of players provides an adequate set of categories for referring to personnel. The category set of game events provides an adequate set of categories for referring to game occurrences.

One of the most central things that children must learn is that for some domain of occurrences there are some membership categories, reference to which provides that the report of the action is adequate. One need not, on the one hand, use every possible combination of categories that might characterize the personnel involved, and it is alternatively not any category that might characterize the personnel which does the job. In children's games players come to see that however complicated the events are, and however extended the game is, all its events are reportable by reference to the player categories. Of course the unique tie between a set of events and a set of membership categories is a simplification of the problems of choosing relevant membership categories (and most particularly category combinations) with which they shall later be occupied. But the task and that it can be accomplished – i.e., the appropriateness of a variety of restricted category sets – is something which game play may well make powerfully apparent. (Possible relevance to doing stereotyping.)

When we said that children's games are deeply interestingly describable what we meant to notice is this: It is not merely the case that games are describable occurrences, the play-relevant events providing the terms for description, and the player categories the actor terms, but, quite elegantly, the descriptions can be expanded in an orderly fashion. Thus one can report a baseball game by giving the score; one can proceed down to inning-by-inning recounting, or play-by-play recounting; and one can shift the detail of description in such an orderly way. The possibility that a request for more detail than the detail offered in some report may be handled in such an orderly fashion is an extremely neat one.

It may be that such a feature (which in large part mainly obtains for games not played by the youngest of game players) is relevant to learning to converse, i.e., for one to hold and to explore a topic. The game as a topic of conversation would be a particularly simple, though obviously possibly rich, item. Relatedly, the comparability of play-occasions – where comparability is of course handleable while retaining the orderliness-of-level-of-detail consideration.

A further way in which the describability of games is interesting involves what might be called the non-perspectivity of game reports. That is to say the terms by which participants locate what is happening provide the terms of the report, and the player categories are so usable too. The usability of player categories and game event categories for reporting the occurrences to whomsoever provides a sense of 'generic domains of membership categories and their implicated activities' which is otherwise relevant in seeing and reporting a great many other such 'domained' matters – for example, occurrences of the family; the usability of 'what the pitcher did' and 'what the mother did' may have deep similarities, and to learn that what happens between person A and person B for some set of occurrences is graspable by

whomsoever if they are informed that, for some activities, person A and B are mother and son, may well be both unobvious and non-trivial. (It would be especially non-trivial for the family since, as we have observed, the categorial members are not treated as interchangeable, but are seen as 'proper' members, and perhaps then, relatively unique, and if unique, perhaps it might get seen that reporting events requires 'personal information' and not mere categorial reference.)

Related to the non-perspectivity of game events and reports, and differing from the events of other sorts of units, is the fact that as is obvious enough, games can be watched; and what is going on can be seen as well by an audience as by participants. The same set of terms used by the one to see what they are engaged in is usable by the observer to find out what is happening. The 'public' character of games is then something quite special – there are a huge number of events that can take place in the view of others but where the others – even indeed if they can hear the talk, do not have available to them what is going on in the way that those who are participating do.

(Let me note, for those who might read this draft; I am not intending to say as news, games can be watched. I want to come to see how that fact is interesting, and I want to see what apparatus is necessary to provide for its occurrence. The same goes for a raft of the points made in this draft – in later ones we shall start with a set of properties and then provide for the known facts.)

(9)   The following sorts of phenomena that children in playing, not necessarily named, games do, have widely been observed.

On one occasion, he (3:10) and other children had made a 'ship' in the schoolroom, with an arrangement of tables and chairs. Phineas' part in this was comparatively a passive one, as he was but 'a passenger' on the ship, and was going on with his own pursuits on the voyage, sitting at a table and sewing a canvas bag. Miss D was with him ' in the ship' and all around them, the crew and the captain carried on the business of the voyage. And when presently a new supply of thread was wanted, and Miss D said to Phineas, "Will you get it out of the drawer?" Phineas replied, "I can't get out of the ship while it's going, can I?" and called out in a stentorian voice to the 'captain,' "Stop the ship. I want to get out." After some demur, the ship was brought into a 'landing stage' and Phineas got out, secured his thread, and got in again, saying, 'Now it can go again.' (p. 105, *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, by Susan Isaacs)

She looked up at me expectantly anticipating that I would push her. I said firmly, "No, put your knee in the wagon and you can push yourself." She sat for several seconds obviously waiting for me to push her. She waited long enough to be certain I wasn't going to push. Then she got down, put one knee in the wagon and the other on the floor of the cement porch getting ready to push herself. In order to encourage

her, I said, "Come on." She didn't move. She looked straight ahead. She announced, "There's a car coming." Then she looked at me indignantly. She was seemingly disgusted that I couldn't see this car that she announced. An imaginary car was coming and she had to wait for it to get out of the way. (p. 95, *Margaret Reid*, by Barker and Wright, unpublished but copyrighted)

She gently put the doll in the carriage and sat down on the porch floor spreading her legs out in front of her. She hardly settled on the porch when she looked up at me and said, "You fetch the doll."
    1:20 I was writing and said, "Me?" Meanwhile I pushed the carriage so she could reach the doll easily. She explained, "Not the wetty doll." In other words she meant another doll than the one she had shown me. She reached in the carriage and got a slightly larger doll, "This is her sister." (ibid., p. 159)

Let us consider the above materials. In the remarks to follow we revert to the looseness of the 15 or so pages on game playing which were not graced with pre-draft status.* I want to consider Phineas' actions; the big points will be present, but crudely.
    It is obvious enough that a central property of game events is that for any given action the set whose members are mutually exclusive (legal–illegal) is of first-order relevance. The special importance of the fact lies in an affiliated one, and one that makes for the sharpness with which games provide a sense of the omni-presence of right–wrong considerations for actions: If an action in a game is attempted, and is done illegally, then the attempted action does not count at all. For purposes of being counted as an action, the thing is only countable if done, and if done correctly. An illegal action is invalid. Note the closeness of this to: If the programmatically relevant categories are not filled, the game can't be played.
    Now it may be noted that this does not obtain for some rather central actions of young children – for the case of language – their speaking. Their talk may be violative of the correct adult ways of speaking, the correct ways known by just slightly older children, and be heard as saying the thing they seek to say. Their speech is satisfactory to get what they intend said, although (although in quotes) it is incorrect. The penalties for doing something poorly are not a failure of it to be treated as having been done at all.
    Now consider the sort of situation Phineas is in; where the play consists of simulating the actions in some possibly real environment. There are a variety of alternative contrast sets obtaining for actions in real environments, and most particularly those for which danger is involved – a proposed action can be possible of accomplishment or impossible of accomplishment, it can have injurious consequences or not have injurious consequences. If the child is

* There is a 15-page text, 'On some properties of children's games,' dated 8–26–65, which *is* given pre-draft status: 'pre-draft one.'

playing with some real environment treated as a play environment, then if any given action that might be proposed in the play environment gets its treatment in the play environment by reference to the legal–illegal consideration, where that consideration involves 'illegal means not accomplishable,' and where the determination as to which alternative the proposed event involves is determined by a direct mapping from some alternative the event involves in the real environment where, e.g., possible is mapped to legal, and impossible to illegal, then the assessment of what in the game can be done, provides the kid with a very sharp view of what in the real world ought not be done, where in the game world the consequences have a clarity that may otherwise not be apparent. The concern with legality, and the concern with determining how to determine whether legality is satisfied, which may lead the kid to consider the proposed action vis-à-vis the actual correct properties of the real world, then provide any given player among the set of players and observers with opportunities to learn what can be done and what not in a real world – since players will be ready to propose that that can't be done; is illegal in the play world – and to demonstrate their grasp of the real world's consequential and non-consequential features by those they propose and bring up and come to terms with in the play situation. Play then becomes an environment for learning and demonstrating criterial matters in real world action.

(10)   For a, and perhaps the, class of team games, the teams have a composition of duplicated category-sets. I.e., both teams, or whatever number of teams there are, are composed of the same category-sets of players. It may be noted that it is not at all apparent why this need be so. Certainly it cannot be claimed that only this way can equivalence of strength be maintained, for, obviously this neither guarantees equivalence, nor is it the case that if, by use of this there is not equivalence, play is not done or not permissable.

But, again, duplication is central to playability, or in any event play is not done if duplication is not present, and the set of players-to-be may not be fully used if their full use does not provide for duplication. The fact of game variant's permissability may seem to suggest that duplication is even more central than fully complemented categories, i.e., one can play game versions if there is duplication, though full complements for the game proper are not present. (One does not apparently try to get at least one fully complemented team out of the players-to-be and then use the remainder to fill as well as can be, the other team.)

(10.1)   Some observations may be offered about the duplication phenomenon. As before, it must be noted that the remarks are extremely rough. We may proceed first by noticing some relevancies and occurrences of duplication apart from the game situation.

The remarks are relevant to the discussion in 'Search for help,' and as such are to be incorporated into further versions of it. There it is noted that one

who is not, or is no longer a member of some particular duplicated category-set may feel that as a considerable lack. It is also quite apparent that for members of some particular case of a unit that is properly a duplicated unit, the fact that there are persons who are not such members is also an annoyance. It is, that is, not sufficient for any given Member that he be ensconsed; he is concerned that others be so ensconsed in other cases of the unit. Why should this be so?

Two observations:

1   For any unit-domain, which is a domain by virtue of the fact that all cases of the domain are properly composed of a duplicated unit, and all persons are properly ensconsed in a case of the duplicated unit, a single set of rules may operate to govern intra-unit activities; and the rules then obtaining between any given group of persons so ensconsed are available to any others who know no more than that the group are ensconsed together in a case of it.

2   The use of a single duplicated unit may well constitute the most powerful basis for generating universally usable experience, i.e., anyone's experience is relevant to anyone – or anyone, at least, occupying a given category of the unit may have or seek from anyone so situated, relevant experience to or from them.

There are some close relationships between the relevance of duplication in games and its relevance in properly duplicated units. Games, as before, are stronger – thus, one not ensconsed in a duplicated unit simply cannot play; the way to get to play is to get into such a unit – for any given person. So too there is, for activities of the duplicated units, or activities of persons ensconsed in such units, or activities of persons who may formulate those activities as activities of the duplicated units, that one who is not so ensconsed is not routinely a participant. Unaffiliated males and females are not routinely dinner or party guests, where the fact of 'being a couple' is quite relevant to participation.

The kinds of accessibility of anyone's activities that incumbency in duplicated units provides for, ought to be considered: The limited materials needed, given the operation of duplication, for gossip.

[There are 4 missing pages in the draft manuscript]

(12)   We have proposed that kids learn some of the formal properties of MCDs in game playing. Now it could easily be recognized that some of the properties of MCDs in general hold also for games; but is it particularly evident that the game group provides rules used via the other?

Yes. Note that it is the case that a good bit of non-preformalized games children invent and play in may be seen to involve just this: The fact that there is, for some domain which the kids come across, an MCD, provides them with a basic set of resources for building play. Here the so-called imitative play – house, the various occupation games – painter, doctor, etc.

The fact that kids find there are a set of activities which cannot be done within the severe constraints of playing is perhaps for them a demonstration

of the viability of a set of categories, or some category – e.g., a given occupation.

We can perhaps fairly easily come to see how it is that these games are seen to be 'imitative' though it is terribly important to see that such a claim is not analysis. (Note the relation of the observation that much play is imitative, to that that much play is absorbing, ought to be given attention. We have proposed, perhaps not in draft yet, that it is quite easy to see why the observation 'games are absorbing' gets made. It is made by virtue of the fact that in the first place observers can see game play via the same terms used by participants, to notice what is and is not an action of the game.

If observers use the constraints players use, then observers will of course come to see, as things the players do, just the things provided for and no more – i.e., no more is a something done; no more is observable if the rules are used. Then the fact that the observer sees no more providing him with the basis for saying that the players are doing no more, permits him to see the games as fully occupying the action and interest of the players. People who do not know the rules of some game not only find it dull, but may also find that the players don't seem to be involved, i.e., are standing around doing pretty much nothing.)

To see actions in play as imitation is simply to fail to see them as play-rule controlled, but to see them via the thing in the real world whose properties the children in play may be engaged in exploring.

(13) Whatever developments there are, are proved in actual play. For many of the things children learn or are taught it is not the case that there is a practical efficacy criterion operating to provide them with an opportunity to see either that they have learned, or how it matters that they have learned. In games, the fact of a possible development, a change of skill, is tested and provable, and only so provable in actual play. Given the relevance of games to children's thoughts even when not in play, it may well be that this is among the sharpest of ways that the difference between reality and fantasy is brought home to them.

For what they will be in the future, their occupations and other such possible accomplishments and statuses, that is not clear; i.e., the difference between reality and fantasy. But it is clear here, and so too is the beauty of success.

(A series of facts involved: The difference between the dreams one has of good performance, and the clarity of what good performance is, so that it has a clear formulability in dreams – and how one does indeed perform. The difference between having a good argument as to what one ought to do, and how one ought to play so as to succeed, and how it is that one does indeed perform. So, not only reality and fantasy, but theory and practical efficacy, are both sharply formulable.)

The set of features that we have remarked on as those games have, gain somewhat in their general significance when one stops to notice that it is not merely the case that one can play a given game with a stranger, and thereby have these features implicated in one's activities with one one doesn't know,

but rather more importantly perhaps, there are more than a few games which do not at all require that the participants be Members of the 'same' community of users of a culture. There are of course some other activities which are doable, love-making for example, but perhaps the latter and the former are somewhat to be discriminated as to the import of the fact that they are doable between mutual non-Members; the resources to be brought to bear are perhaps less extensive in the latter.

In any event, to the extent, then, that game play, for given games, is doable across cultural boundaries, it is not merely the case that games, like language, is present within each boundary, but more, it is the case that the ways games are done are unlike the way talk is done – highly similar, and graspably so without regard to the culture which produces the gameplayer. It is, I would take it, an extremely strong criterion of 'cultural universality' that one require of some feature, not merely that some version of it be present in the various relevant places, but, more stringently, that the features be present in each such place in a way that permits them to deal with persons not from that place at all, and deeply different, but where the criteria for doing some given activity, for doing it properly, for sustaining it and cooperating on it, permit them to restrictively but interestingly, each sensibly interact. Without regard, then, for the issue of universality, the stringent test of 'same feature' we have suggested would seem to be satisfiable to some extent for some large collection of cultures, for games, and perhaps for little else. Cultures whose members can not negotiate, who can not successfully argue – though they have access to a common language – can nonetheless successfully play the game on different or the same teams.

That fact is a rather specially powerful one. In its light all our previous discussion should be reassessed as to the size of its import. What constraints are there on not merely playing a given game, but on one some occasion of play, playing it with a foreigner? Note too, that the origin of a game may quickly become irrelevant in any of the places of its play. The incorporability of games into cultures in such a way that – unlike loan words, though alike to other things – is a notable feature. But the thing again is, that though incorporated, they do not become nationalized, as for example it is the case for personal names. The latter are incorporatable into different languages than those that generate them, but having been incorporated, it regularly remains the case that where they came from can be determined by inspection, and they are not further generative within the given language that has incorporated them. It is, in short, a rather stronger thing to say about the common humanity that it may be that any given set of persons may play some given game together, than to say that any given culture has a language, where the Members of two different cultures cannot talk together, though each is a language user.

Another fact about games: We have noted in some other materials that one thing about some rules, one thing that kids learn about rules is this: That when a rule has been announced by someone who has some authority to do such things, then the rule is invokable by others – by those who would lack

the right to announce it – in asserting that there is a violator. We noted this in connection with the Schoggen materials on some dinner occasion his observers presented. To follow is another instance from his materials (p. 1331–4) in a school room; the teacher is having the kids who have been gathered round her in a circle move their chairs back to their desks – this is first grade.

02'55"   "Row 2, you can take your chairs and go quietly back," says Mrs Kingsley in a calm and quiet voice.
    Reenie still sits studying the group, the same pensive expression on her face. Suddenly she cries in loud and directive tones, "Ken, you're in row 2" and she points accusingly at him, her right arm at full length straight out from her.
    Ken hesitatingly gets up and starts to go back to his desk.

On this occasion there are several such announcements made by single or groups of kids. This fact, the invocability of rules, is one that is, I take it, widely operative in games. The kind of observation of activities, vis-à-vis their conformity to some rule, where a rule having been proposed, the fact that actions are or not in conformity to what it proposes is no longer a matter strictly under the control of the rule's announcer, provides a sense of the objectivity of rules. Kids see them as objective, and of course not only kids, and the notion that rules can be used to monitor actions such that violations as well as conformings are detectable through their use and their use is not restricted, is, I take it, of more than passing interest.

How they come to take it that there is such a division of competence which permits them to invoke that which they cannot pronounce, which involves them in using, to observe, that which has just been announced, that I do not know. We are of course rarely amazed when, on an umpire's announcing some decision – strike – the crowd boos in disagreement. That they can conceive to disagree, and that they would have been making for themselves the determination to which his is to be compared so as to be found possibly in agreement and possibly not, is the sort of thing we are pointing to as of interest. The crowd, the players. Job, after all, could see it to complain. Even His rules, once announced, are partially thenceforth outside his hands. Cf. The Grand Inquisitor discussion.

On this rough observation about the invocability observability of activities re rules, one may consider the draft somewhere in the notebooks on learning a language wherein it is observed that even quite young children go about correcting the language performance of others. There we take it that to some extent some rules of a language are not merely 'unconsciously followed' (cf. Boas' introduction to the big volume on American Indian languages, now reprinted by Georgetown University Press) but that they are known in a way that permits them to be used to determine errors and what it is that for some detected error, a correct action would be. The importance of this for the

non-disorderliness of some errors is considered there.* In that sense, rules of a language, as rules of a game, provide a domain of observables where knowing the rule, in the sense of being able not only to use it to produce correctly an action, or to detect a correctly produced action, but to see something as a version, relevant but incorrect, is, if not crucial, then clearly not trivial. As the paper referred to gets further developed, the matter will be given more careful consideration.

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* The "draft" referred to here has not turned up.

Appendix B
A Note on the Editing

In lecture 04.a, p. 281, a bit below the data, Sacks says: 'You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and the therapist is going to do them, . . . ' The unedited segment runs off differently: "You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and *this fellow Dan* is going to do them . . . " [emphasis added].

In contrast to the pronominal changes discussed earlier (Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 2, p. 18, n.1 and Appendix A) as matters of policy, the change from "this fellow Dan" to "the therapist" runs acutely counter to editorial policy. In this case the policy is one of preserving Sacks' categorial references and the non-occurrence thereof, in light of his concern with the phenomenon of category-selection (see, e.g., Fall 1964–Spring 1965, lecture 6, esp. pp. 41–2, and Spring 1966, lecture 1 and lecture 04.b, esp. p. 295).

On occasion, editorial policy was confronted by problems arising from the editing process itself, and such was the case here. The lecture designated 'Spring 1966, lecture 04.a' is a combination of materials from two lecture series in which successive runs at the introduction sequence were made: Fall 1966 (lectures 1 and 2) and Spring 1967 (lectures 6 and 7). Extracts were taken largely from the more developed Spring 1967 discussions, and the introduction of these latter materials into the Spring 1966 series resulted in an anachronism, in the following way.

The Spring and Fall 1966 lectures are associated with a data handout which uses the speaker-designation 'Therapist' (see the handout preceding this lecture, pp. 270 ff). This designation originated in Sacks' 1965 transcript (see the handout for Fall 1965, pp. 136 ff), and subsequent transcripts followed suit. But in late spring 1966 a new transcript was being prepared in which, specifically by reference to Sacks' concern to "analyze" such things as categories, and not just "employ" them (see Spring 1966, lecture 04.b, p. 295), the categorial designation 'Therapist' was replaced by a name, 'Dan.' And the Spring 1967 handout (not included in this volume) was taken from that new transcript. (A segment of the 'Dan' transcript appears in the unedited version of Spring 1966, lecture 30, but in the interests of simplicity it was replaced in the edited version by the segment which appears in the Spring 1966 handout.)

All of which is to say that the Spring and Fall 1966 data handouts use the speaker-designation 'Therapist' while the Spring 1967 handout uses the designation 'Dan', i.e., the two sets of materials used to assemble Spring 1966, lecture 04.a have data with two different types of speaker-designation.

And Sacks' references to the speaker in question tend to vary accordingly ('tend to' because he uses other means of reference; e.g., pronouns). Thus, in Fall 1966, lecture 1, p. 1, just after a data fragment with the designation *'Therapist'*, Sacks notes that if the introduction series is "going to come off as an utterly routine, uninteresting fact, *the therapist* could pick either Al or Roger to start off with, then go around continuingly." And in Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 1, just after a data fragment with the designation *'Dan,'* Sacks proposes, "You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and *this fellow Dan* is going to do them, what the import would be of various ways that he would go through the three persons he's going to introduce Jim to" [all emphasis added]. (There are no explicit references to Fall 1966 or Spring 1967 in this Volume.)

Perfectly simple. A transcript has 'Therapist' and Sacks says "the therapist"; a transcript has 'Dan' and Sacks says "Dan." The anachronism cropped up when materials associated with a 'Dan' transcript were introduced into a lecture series associated with an earlier 'Therapist' transcript.

To avoid the incongruity of a speaker designated 'Therapist' in the transcript being referred to as 'Dan' in the text, the reference term which actually follows the 'Therapist' fragment (i.e., from Fall 1966, lecture 1) was inserted into a segment of text which actually follows the 'Dan' fragment (i.e., from Spring 1967, lecture 6). The result is the hybrid, "You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and the therapist is going to do them . . . "

In short, although counter to editorial policy, a person-name was changed to a categorial term, to eliminate an anachronism generated in the editing process.

There are eight places in lecture 04.a where reference is made to 'the therapist.' Two of them (pp. 281 and 284) have this configuration of Spring 1967 text with Fall 1966 reference term. Another (p. 285) is simply an excerpt from Fall 1966, there having been no discussion of this particular matter in Spring 1967. Two others, one (p. 284) from Fall 1966 and one (p. 287) from Spring 1967, involve a change from a pronominal reference ('he') to the categorial. And finally, there are three changes of a Spring 1967 'Dan' to 'the therapist' (pp. 282, 283 and 286), there having been no relevant references in Fall 1966. Following is the collection of changes [all emphasis is added].

(1)   Spring 1967 text with Fall 1966 reference term

Fall 1966, lecture 1, p. 1 (just after 'Therapist' fragment):

"That is to say, if [the introduction is] going to come off as an utterly routine, uninteresting fact, *the therapist* could . . . "

Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 1 (just after 'Dan' fragment):

"You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and *this fellow Dan* is going to do them . . . "

   Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 281 (after 'Therapist' fragment):

   "You might consider, if introductions are going to take place, and *the therapist* is going to do them . . . "

(2)   Spring 1967 text with Fall 1966 reference term

Fall 1966, lecture 1, p. 6:

"You want also to notice that we have what could possibly be seen as a rather intriguing grammatical form, in the sense that, that Jim is being introduced to each of them, is handled by *the therapist's* statement remaining open in a special way, while inserted into it are pairs of complete statements by other people."

Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 5:

"Let's look again at the language here. 'Jim, this is Al, Ken, and Roger' says *Dan*. It's in its fashion a terribly interesting piece of talk. The first thing you want to notice is, it's one sentence in which room is apparently left for insertions of greetings by the various parties introduced."

   Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 285:

   "Let's look again at the language here. 'Jim, this is Al, Ken, and Roger' says *the therapist*. In its fashion it's a terribly interesting piece of talk. The first thing you want to notice is, it's one sentence in which room is apparently left for insertions of greetings by the various parties introduced."

(3)   Excerpt from Fall 1966 – no discussion in Spring 1967

Fall 1966 lecture 1, p. 4:

"He knows *the therapist* as Dr so-and-so, probably. That is to say, in the prior company in which he's spoken to *the therapist*, say with his parents or whatever else, that is presumably the way they've talked. And in any event, it may well be an issue as to how it is that he's going to address *the therapist* . . . "

Spring 1967 (no such discussion)

Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 285:

"He probably knows *the therapist* as Dr so-and-so. That is to say, in the prior company in which he's spoken to *the therapist*, say, with his parents or whatever else, presumably that is the way they've talked. And in any event it may well be an issue as to how it is that he's going to address *the therapist* . . ."

(4)   Excerpt from Fall 1966, pronominal changed to categorial

Fall 1966, lecture 1, p. 3:

"So that the fact of a first name, nickname, being used throughout, can be in the first place quite informative, and even more informative if differences are involved, i.e., if *he'd* said 'Jim, this is Al, that's Mr so-and-so, and this is Roger'."

Spring 1967, lecture 7, pp. 7–8:

"As it happens, just as the order of introductions related to the ecology of the room or whatever else, can be used to make distinctive points about the group or not make any points about the group, so too can the sorts of name used do the same kinds of work, in combination or independently, i.e., *they* could go through this sequence and say, instead of 'Ken,' 'Kenneth Goss,' 'Mr Kenneth Goss,' while saying also, 'Roger, Al, and Jim'."

Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 284:

"So that the fact of a first name, nickname, etc., being used throughout the sequence can be quite informative, and it can be even more informative if differences are involved, i.e., if *the therapist* had said 'Jim, this is Al, that's Mr Kenneth Goss, and this is Roger'."

(5)   Excerpt from Spring 1967, pronominal changed to categorial

Fall 1966 (no such discussion)

Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 8:

"If, given something that can come in sequences, a first has been seen and oriented to, then a second can be done observably without using that form which would be required for a first. That is to say, if *he* had simply said 'Ken' as a first, then what he was doing would not be clearly an introduction."

Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 287:

"If, given something that can come in sequences, a 'first' has been seen and oriented to, then a 'second' can be done observably, without using that form which would be required for a 'first.' That is to say, if *the therapist* had simply said 'Ken,' as a first, then what he was doing would not at all be clearly an 'introduction'."

(6) Spring 1967's 'Dan' changed to 'the therapist'

Fall 1966, lecture 1, p. 1 (no such reference)

Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 2:

" . . . i.e., the seating is arranged as follows: [*Diagram with names: Dan*, Al, Ken, Roger, Jim]. If *Dan* begins with Al . . . "

Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 282:

"That is, the seating is arranged in a rough semicircle with *the therapist* closest to the door, then Al, then Ken, then Roger. When Jim is introduced, he is standing near the door. If *the therapist* begins with Al . . . "

(7) Spring 1967's 'Dan' changed to 'the therapist'

Fall 1966 (no such discussion)

Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 4:

"One wants also to see that it may well be that adequate decisions could be made as to what *Dan* is doing with that sequence, with only that sequence available."

Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 283:

"One wants also to see that it may well be that adequate decisions could be made as to what *the therapist* is doing with that sequence, with only that sequence available."

(8) Spring 1967's 'Dan' changed to 'the therapist'

Fall 1966, lecture 1, p. 7 (no reference term):

"There's one absence of a 'hi,' and I really can't say whether it's an absence of a greeting, since it's perfectly alright to have no sounds in a greeting, but things like a nod, etc."

Spring 1967, lecture 6, p. 7:

"Al doesn't say 'Hi.' I'm not sure whether he did some greeting, e.g., by nodding, waving, etc., or just didn't do a greeting, and was treated as having had his time passed by *Dan*, who just went one. Rather than say, waiting Al out."

Spring 1966, lecture 04.a, p. 286:

> "Now Al doesn't say 'Hi'. I'm not sure whether he did some greeting, e.g., by nodding, waving, etc., or just didn't do a greeting and was treated as having his time passed by *the therapist* who just went on, rather than, say, waiting Al out."

Of the eight segments in which this speaker is referred to by category in the edited version, only one of them, segment 3, reflects categorial reference in the unedited version from which it was excerpted. All the others are shifts from 'Dan' (segments 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8) or 'he' (segments 4 and 5) to 'the therapist.'

Part IV
Winter 1967

February 16

Omnirelevant devices; Settinged activities; 'Indicator terms'

I want to focus on some stuff to try to exhibit some ways of proceeding. Let me begin with how the problem I'm going to deal with comes up. I faced the following kind of problem: I wanted to propose that the membership categorization device 'patient–therapist' is *omnirelevant* for the session that I'm analyzing. And I wanted to find out how I could go about showing that it's omnirelevant.

One obvious way of proceeding turns on formulating the session as a 'group therapy session.' Now that, conservatively, is to say at least that 'group therapy session' is an omnirelevant formulation of this session. That is, 'group therapy session' is *a* formulation, which has, proposedly, omnirelevance. And it would be in terms of that, that we could formulate the omnirelevance of patient–therapist. Where we could suppose, for example, that it might well be the case that not only would there be other possible formulations at some time of membership categories for the session, but there would be other possible formulations than 'group therapy session.' And of course, that the various 'types' might stand one to another in some relationship, i.e., that when 'group therapy session' were relevant as a way of formulating what's taking place, so, too, might be patient–therapist, etc.

So I wanted to be able to formulate the fact that one way of conceiving the setting – to be sure, one omnirelevant way – was as a 'group therapy session.'

That led me to notice two kinds of things very directly. One is that of course we're talking about formulating the setting as a such-and-such, i.e., 'group therapy session.' The other, that formulating it as a such-and-such was something that participants occasionally did. When? Why? And with what kind of consequences?

Running along with that is, of course, an issue which we should like to get into position to raise and deal with: Have we any special rights to assign name-formulations to the actions, upon, say, occasions when they are *not* assigned by participants? Can we construct rules for doing formulating – generally, and then for doing specific formulating, i.e., saying it's a 'group therapy session,' for example. What does that hold for?

So the issue of formulating comes up. And then, since I'm talking about a possible omnirelevant formulation of the setting, and thereby of course quite directly of other possible formulations of the setting, one gets led to

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Only three lectures were transcribed in the Winter 1967 quarter.

considering a question like this: Can you talk about a setting without a formulation of the setting? We can translate that somewhat by saying: Are there ways that persons have of attending and, for that matter, *doing* the fact that their activities are 'settinged,' without making specific formulations of the setting, i.e., selecting *a* formulation, or selecting a formulation and then later selecting another? We could put it this way: Is it possibly the case that, first, the phenomenon of a 'setting' needs be recognized as also a Members' phenomenon, and not, for example, one of those things which, as social scientists, we construct and manage? And if so, then we have got to find out what kind of a thing it is that they're doing with it – what kind of a thing it is.

And, if they have a phenomenon of 'setting,' and a setting can be formulated in one or another ways, then it fairly rapidly seems obvious that it would be extremely nice if Members could invoke – let's call it 'the pure fact of settinged activities,' without having to formulate *a* setting. There are a variety of reasons why that would be nice. One way to put the core of it is: Members can't do pure formulating. That is to say, you can't be engaged in 'merely' – non-consequentially, non-methodically, non-alternatively – saying 'This is, after all, a group therapy session.' To do that – even though you're merely invoking one thing that's true about this – is to do other things as well, e.g., put somebody down for something they just said, propose special relevancies, propose that some topic ought to be discussed or not be discussed, invoke a status hierarchy, etc. At any rate, in each case that a formulation of a setting, or an identity, is done, that's something that has some line of consequences, and some analyzable basis, for participants, which can be one differentiated from another possible formulation, and also from not doing it at all.

I have now and again proposed that there's no room in the world to, in principle, use a procedure of requested explication to find out what somebody is doing. There's no room in conversation for such a procedure to, in general, work. You can ask somebody "What do you mean?" and they may well tell you what they mean. But what I mean by 'in principle' is that if you say to somebody "What do you mean?" they can say "What do you mean what do I mean?" and you're off.

I think in parallel to that it's also the case that there's no room in the world to definitively propose formulations of activities, identifications, and settings. They are things that have got to be used with caution. And there may well be ways of allowing things to go on without their necessary invocation.

I am not engaged in saying that it's a specific trouble in the world that you can't find out what any given person means on any last thing they said, by, for each piece of talk, using such a procedure. All I mean by that is to say that insofar as such procedures are suggested to be definitive of, say, 'meaningful talk,' they're wrong. That is to say, 'meaningful talk' cannot have that sense. Which is either to say that talk is not meaningful unless we construct a language which is subject to such procedures, or, that couldn't be what 'meaningful talk' is. Or 'meaningful actions.' I am not saying that there are defects to the way people proceed, but that if we're going to suppose that in

order for persons to behave in an orderly fashion, say, in the course of their conversations or in the course of any of their activities, one set of things that have to be involved is that they're always able, say, to formulate their role relationships and systematically invoke their consequences, then we'd be wrong.

And of course that's something that, for example sociologists might take to be the way of talking about orderly rule-governed activity in stratified society, say. Or in societies in which there are more than one role relationship. So that persons shift, and it would be necessary for them to know, and be able to invoke at any point, which one is now operating. If it's the case that there's no room in the world for that, then either orderly activity is impossible, or that requirement for orderly activity is irrelevant or absurd or wrong. That is, there may be ways of invoking orderliness of activities, say, without having to formulate what the terms are of that orderliness, i.e., without having to say who you are and who I am for now, or what we're really doing for now.

I wanted, then, to see whether there were ways of invoking the fact that activities were 'settinged,' without making *a* formulation of the setting that they were 'settinged' in. I wanted then to see whether it was the case that there was some specific machinery the working of which involved that you could invoke the fact of settings without formulating *which* setting *now*.

Now let's hold all that discussion for the moment, and turn to a body of problematic phenomena. These are 'indicator terms.' For our purposes now, the 'indicator terms' need only be considered things like 'here,' 'now,' 'there,' 'later,' 'soon,' 'this,' 'that,' etc. As an initial source book for consideration of them, there is Quine's *Word and Object*, in which he cites much of the earlier literature, particularly Goodman, *Structure of Appearance* and Peirce, volume II of his *Collected Papers*. Peirce is a modern logician who initially began to talk about those terms.

While a lot of talk about these terms is by logicians, and the indicators are said to pose logical problems more specially than other things, it's important to notice at the outset that the indicators are noticed via conceptions of their reference and meaning. So, for example, Peirce, talking about 'indices,' says that they are things that instruct you to look for some object which is being pointed to by reference to the use of one of those things.

Now, the first big important property of the 'indicator terms' is that they are indeed referential terms. And second, that given any first use – in a sentence, say – no second use needs have 'the same' reference as the first. That is, there's no reason to suppose that any token has the same reference as any other token. For example, in some conversation where somebody says "I went to the movies" and then somebody else says "I stayed home," the two indicators, 'I,' have two different references. That's the kind of thing that we are in the first instance pointing to.

The reason that the logicians are discussing these issues of different reference turns on their interest in the 'truth' of sentences including them. So, for example, Goodman gives as an instance, a sentence like "The Red Sox are in first place now," which can be true at some time, he says, and false at

another. The introduction of the notion that no second use need have the same reference as the first, raises such issues as the constraints under which you can say that, say, a sentence or a token of a sentence, having one of these terms, can be true or false. Where what one wants, ideally for doing logic, is not to have to be worried about the tokens of sentences, but to be able to make statements that are true or false for the 'sentence type' without regard to the occasion of its use. That is, "Ice floats on water" is true, any token of it is true on any occasion of use – and you can forget about tokens, as a matter of fact. For "The Red Sox are in first place now," it's not the same sort of thing.

It ought to be noticed – and indeed later into his discussion Goodman does notice in a fashion – that there's ways in which the proposal that "The Red Sox are in first place now" can be true, is quite misleading. And Quine, in his discussion of 'this,' leads us into the way in which it's misleading. He says something like, "When somebody says 'this' it can have clear reference by virtue, say, of an object standing out in its environment. So when I point to 'this,' one can find which object I'm talking about."

The core thing about both of those in a way, is that they're concerned to find, for the indicators, a formulation of 'some object,' 'some time,' etc., where, that the use of the indicator in its sentence *intends* such a formulation goes without saying. And that whole business was exploded by Wittgenstein. When talking about that sort of stuff he says something like, "If I point to something and say 'this,' how are you supposed to decide that I'm talking about the nameable object, its color, this side of it, its depth, whatever else?" That is to say, the very order of phenomenon being invoked by the indicator, is not invoked by the indicator. So that, for example, we could complain to Goodman about "The Red Sox are in first place now" by saying, "Well, only really partly 'now' are they in first place. For example, to be sure today they're in first place, but we have to choose an order of temporal terms to decide what 'now' they're in first place for. In terms of, say, a 'now' which is used with respect to 'this year' it's only true that for a small part of it is it so that 'The Red Sox are in first place' is true."

In that regard, then, we might be involved in saying that one would at least need to formulate the order of aspects that the indicator was invoking. But then, of course, we might ask whether in *any* event the indicators are doing such sort of reference as is characterized by our normally referential terms, i.e., whether the way to see what somebody is saying when they say "The Red Sox are in first place now" is to rewrite it as: "The Red Sox are in first place on July 21, 1953," or whether perhaps they're doing something at least partially different when they use indicator terms.

The issue of having to decide – if one is going to determine, say, the truth of a term like 'now' or 'here' – what in the first instance it's referring to, has a kind of problem with it, since each formulation may well be consequential. That is, if, e.g., 'here' is 'the group therapy session,' there might be good reason for wanting to say, e.g., "Usually there's a broad in here" or "What are you doing here?" rather than saying "Usually there's a broad at our group

therapy sessions" or "What are you doing in group therapy?"

There are other things that we can begin to notice when we look at the use of these things. For one, that it's kind of obvious that the distinction between temporal and spatial indicators is weak. If we were going to make some interpretation of "Usually there's a broad in here," presumably it means 'When we are here usually there's a broad here.' And time terms can have a spatial sense, also. That is, when the kids say 'what we did last week;' for example, "You were hysterical last week," they seem to be meaning 'at last week's session here.' Not last week, but for the two hours we met, and in this place.

So, there are ways in which the spatial indicators invoke time and the temporal indicators invoke space as well. And furthermore, again, they may not invoke those things in a way that is non-consequentially formulatable. When one considers these, and some of the other things I've so far said, the idea that these terms are, in the first instance, directed to doing individual reference – in the sense that, say, 'chair' refers to a chair, etc. – is at least open to reconsideration. So that our aim, in characterizing how they work, might not be to try to find the ways in which they're versions of referential terms, such that the sentences in which they occur can be fiddled around with so as to find that they are referential sentences, and thereby at least sometimes true. Let's forget about that for now.

But let's preserve a first point, anyway: That for all anybody knows, any next use of one of them will have, say, little to do with the last use. And then consider the following: What if it turns out that in great big blocks of them, they seem to be stable? That is to say, that people can be producing strings of talk in which, say, 'here' is occurring, and in which there seem to be no question about what it means, and it seems to be invoking something extremely similar across its uses, whatever that may be.

It is of course an important question: How can we say that the use of these terms may be stable, without having some way of assigning their meaning to them; their meaning then being a formulation of what they refer to – assuming that they have that kind of reference. That is to say, we do it for the pronouns doing tying, by virtue of running backwards to find a noun that the set of them are chained to. So if we have a theoretically possible chain of indicator terms, then how are we going to say that they're a stable chain, or that they're a chain at all? Now that's a real problem. And it's clear that we want to avoid the circularity of saying, 'Well they're a chain, and no problem seems to be arising from them, so they must be a chain;' where the issue is, since there isn't especial regulation, perhaps, on a next use being chained to a last use, why call them a 'chain'?

Let's just consider data like:

Louise :   Oh, he could be HERE just to spend his father's money.
Roger :   Maybe that's it.
Ken :   I don't think his father's paying for THIS is he Al?
Al :   No, not THIS PLACE.

.
.

Louise: Who's paying for THIS for you? His // father?
Ken: Who's payin' – No who's payin' for THIS // for *me*.
Roger: Now I'm gonna make you all mad. I don't pay at all. hehhehh
Ken: Ahh– I don't know who's payin' for THIS, I think it's my father. I hope.

It would appear in the first instance that 'this' in "paying for this" throughout that string is, in each case, related to the last case. Now in a situation like that, we might use the notion of a 'round' to begin to get some basis for treating the uses of, say, 'this' as stable there, without having to say in any of those cases that in the first instance 'this' is equivalent to, say, 'therapy.'

What we want is to be able to have some way of formulating what I take it is observable. And that is, the stability of the term 'this' across that body of talk. We want to be able to do that without having to say that each of those cases of 'this' equals 'therapy' so that each of those sentences could be written as 'paying for therapy.' One obvious reason for not wanting to do that is they could perfectly well *say* 'paying for therapy,' and on some occasions they talk about 'therapy.' and we don't know what are the ways, and the rules, and the occasions for doing formulating. And, again, it may well be that there are ways of invoking and maintaining a stability without making formulations.

Now what you get when you look at the run of our data is, first, that there's an enormous, by and large unquestioned, usage of the indicators. They are altogether 'abstract,' i.e., 'here and now' is usable on any here and now without reference to the fact that it's late at night, early in the morning, in 1950 or whatever else, and without, of course, formulation of whether 'here and now' means in this room now at this moment, here in this world now in this eon. Given their abstractness, if any set of terms could be capable of invoking the sheer fact of the setting without the specification of the setting, it would obviously be these.

And then, if they had some business like that, there would of course be no reason at all to treat them as 'the way that people with small vocabularies talk about specific objects.'

And furthermore, their stable use as a means of invoking an unformulated setting, and referring to uncategorially identified persons, and noticing uncategorized activities, could be their specific business, and a machinery for doing this piece of work. It is, in a way, an expectable piece of work to exist, and one that the indicators can be seen as designed to be able to handle, insofar as everybody plays along. That, in any event, is my guess about these things, and about how one goes about formulating that there is a setting, that we are indeed in a setting, doing a setting. It is a matter which others can also acknowledge for you, which can occasionally be formulated, but can have its course of activities proceed without formulation.

There's a bunch of things that this kind of thing can do for us, were it to

be so. One of them is that it would be an obvious way of showing that persons had and used the notion of 'a setting,' i.e., that the language was designed to allow them to do it – that these poor terms which have been subject to such abuse were not what they've been made out to be, and thereby made to be subject to such abuse. And it has the virtue at this point of permitting us to see another layer of the world – or it gives me that feeling, anyway. If anything like it is at all conceivable, then it does provide strong reasons why we should not be engaged in proposing rewritings or proposing formulations as the ways that persons go about making the world orderly, or referring to it, or invoking it, when they don't do that on some occasions – at least out loud. It may well be that many times they go about interpreting those terms for themselves. But that they don't need to do it out loud can be quite nice; where, then, perhaps insofar as things become troublesome, they may well have to get into formulation.

What we've seen in a way, is a consideration of the import of the fact that when it comes down to having to do formulation, there will not be definitive ways, non-consequential ways, of doing it. As we go about constructing the methodology of any given activity, we will come to find that the method is able to produce a thing that is seeable as 'an alternative.' And my guess is that we'll never get a stable formulation in which these things stand one to one – and if they had to stand one to one, then there would be an enormous mess.

Again, then, what I want to be able to say is that there can be ways of invoking the fact of a setting, and a bunch of its features – whatever the features are of settings – without any specification of *which* formulation of the setting, *which* formulation of participants, being involved.

One wants, then, to be able to see what is involved in, say, the settinged character of activities, so as to see, e.g., that there may be things about many or any settinged activities which are doable in *each*. So that, for example, in this session, and perhaps in any conversations that go on in sessions, there's talk of things like 'early,' 'late,' 'middle,' and things like that, as ways of handling them.

Those sets of terms and those usabilities are specifically features of settinged events. In any given setting the notion of what's early and what's late, what's the middle, what's usually, what's always, what's last time, may be – in terms of when it is that they get invoked – quite different. But the fact that they're present, and can be present without specification, furthermore, are things that we can now begin to focus on as ways that persons are ordering the activities they're dealing with, via what I call an 'abstract apparatus,' i.e., that whatever the setting's calendrical features are, there could be a way of talking about, say, 'early' in it.

One of the things that I expect to happen is, it's not simply that you invoke a setting, but one of the ways that you *make* a setting out of some course of activities, is by beginning to develop things like time in it; and that involves being able to coherently use things like 'early,' 'late,' etc. And furthermore, you find that generic explanations of things like 'Why is X late *here*?' are

available. That is to say, whatever explanations people use for saying 'Why X is late' without respect to setting, can be used. And, without regard to what happens to be the explanation of it, it will be the case that it's noticeable that X is late, and that 'Why is X late?' can be asked. The matter of space in the place is, of course, another thing, and, at least within this culture, things that arise, arise within 'this room' or arise in 'other rooms;' there are battles over who's chair is which, and things like that. And there's talk of territorial rights, territorial distribution, etc., which can apparently go on in a room as well as in anything else formulatable as a 'setting,' perhaps. Histories are developed. So the idea is that whenever people can set up and maintain the fact of a setting, there's an enormous amount that they can get going for them.

One of the things we want to move to, as an ultimately interesting thing is – let me put it this way: You could imagine that everybody who isn't in the jet set would find the world boring. And, to be sure, some people who aren't in the jet set find the world boring. But it's apparently the case that you don't have to be in the Pentagon Chart Room all the time to find that the world is full of interesting things to do, to see, talk about, notice, consider, explain, etc. And a group of four kids who get together for two hours Saturday mornings, among other things that they do, find that adequate. And whatever they know about the world, whatever formulations of its units, participants, etc., can be used there. What we'd like to come to see, then, is that in that sense, all settings are equivalent; whatever you can do in one, you can, in some sense, do in others.

March 2

Turn-taking; Collaborative utterances via appendor questions; Instructions; Directed utterances

I want to consider the issue of features, properties, of *multi-party conversations*. What I especially want to arrive at, if possible, is that one could feel that they could come to see the way in which 'multi-party conversation' is a distinct phenomenon; and order of facts; something to be investigated in its own terms, and not merely – as I think a good deal of my discussions of that phenomenon treated it – as a variant *off* two-party conversation.

Now one might figure that they have some features of multi-party conversations which suffice to make it an area of research. And these could be considered, to see not only whether they are indeed features of multi-party conversation, but whether, upon seeing them, you could rightly figure, 'Well, this is a real thing, multi-party conversation, that has to be studied, and whatever is going on in it has to be worked out,' and it isn't simply that one can contrast it, say, to two-party, i.e., a list of features to be arrived at by virtue of two-party, to be checked out as to whether they also hold for multi-party or not, etc.

Such a feeling might be attacked, and rightly so. But there are times when you ought to have such a feeling. That is to say, you may well have made a finding, but you didn't see what its import was. That's extremely important, and it's by no means coincidental with having seen that something was so. What you want to ask, in part, is, if that's so, what it does for whatever formulations you may have made of the thing you figured you were studying.

I'll begin by just saying a couple of the things that were in the first instance my grounds for looking at 'multi-party conversation' as something to be named. That is to say, it could perfectly well be the case that there were three persons present or seven persons present at a conversation, and you wouldn't have any reason to construct a new name. We had in the first instance this A-B-A-B formula for the course of two-party conversations, as a sequencing formula which had some consequences – not on its own, but in a combination with a variety of other things; sequencing rules, ways of detecting the completion of a type of utterance, etc. The multi-party conversation phenomenon was forced upon me in the first instance by virtue of the fact that it didn't appear that the formula for two-party conversations, A-B-A-B, was a special case of a general formula for n-party conversation such that A-B-C-

A-B-C, A-B-C-D-A-B-C-D, etc., were formulae for multi-party conversation.

The question was, then, were there some general sequencing rules for assigning speakers in conversations of other than two parties – using, now, the fact that 'two parties' doesn't mean necessarily two persons. And I began to collect features of multi-party conversation, without regard to whether any of these features might, if sufficiently considered, lead us to see the ways in which multi-party conversations are something to be considered independently of two-party conversations. The features that I came up with didn't so lead me, anyway.

There was, however, some idea that came up, turning on things like the phenomenon of 'the floor,' which became especially problematic in multi-party conversations. And that is, if four or more persons were present, you could have different conversations being set up so that what may remain a general rule for n-party conversations – one person properly talks at a time – was something that could be equivocal, in the sense that if two persons were talking at the same time, it could mean either that a violation of 'one party at a time' was taking place, or that a second conversation was emerging, or, for the moment, competing.

When I say 'one party talks at a time' is a rule for conversation, I'm just pointing out something that I suppose is, in a fashion, known. I am pointing it out, not for that 'message,' but for the observations it leads to. And of course 'one party talks at a time' doesn't mean that you never find more than one party talking at a time. Somebody once said to me that they found people who violated the A-B-A-B rules, as if that were something that ought to be enormously shocking as a fact. That is, as if, in fact, A-B-A-B would characterize any two-party conversation as a natural law, rather than that it was something that persons attended and used in various ways, and something that, in combination with other things, could tell people that, and *when*, it's their turn to speak. And also, that its use permitted such things as the work of A-A-B, i.e., a repetition which says 'you should talk.'

It is, of course, the case that a good deal of the time one party only is talking, the other party is listening. And by and large, rules for talk in conversation are sequencing rules. And those sequencing rules are rules that operate on completions. It is not the case that if 'one party talks at a time' is a rule, that, for example, thereby its affiliated rules provide that you can talk interstitially in the words of another. That is, you could imagine talk being 'one party talks at a time' and it having the character of certain kinds of music, in which the spaces between the talk of one party would be the place of another. That could be a 'one party talks at a time' situation also. Here, we have 'one party talks at a time' with sequencing as a crucial kind of thing. And the sequencing turns on completions. That means, then, that there is an orientation to when a party will have been complete, as a point that others can talk. So what we get to is the kind of other rules that might follow given the first, and then, of course, the combinations. 'One party at a time' and 'sequencing' is an affiliated set of rules.

Given the orientation to sequential talk and completion, we can notice something which it's nice to be able to make problematic and then to be able to get some grip on solving: If a notion of completion is used as the touch-off for a next party's talk, then the question is, how is it that a party can decide that another has completed an utterance?

What's interesting there is, in part, *when* can a party decide when another party is complete? And how do they go about doing that? You could imagine that, e.g., when another party pauses for a certain length of time, then the utterance is complete. That would involve listening to them, and then beginning to measure pauses whenever they seemed to be countable. Now it doesn't seem that they proceed that way. One of the striking things about ordinary conversations is the enormous speed at which a person who has been a listener starts to talk, upon what is recognizable as 'a completion' by the person who has just been talking. That is to say, we seem to have a person being able to attend the fact that an utterance is going to be completed soon. And to treat some word or phrase as recognizably 'its completion' when it occurs. Now how they do that would seem obviously to turn on their use of a grammar. That is, grammar has a structure that is usable, while it's being produced, so as to see 'completion is coming,' 'that's completion.' And thereby the key thing is that a completion can be recognized *at* its occurrence, permitting, then, talk to start right off. One doesn't wait to see afterwards.

So they start talking awfully fast. They're not wrong, by and large, it appears, about the fact that the other person had finished. This also permits us to see that there are a class of what we could call 'interruptions' which are quite rightful if such a procedure is properly used, i.e., if one can talk on completion. And that would turn on the fact that persons do what hearers properly recognize to be completions, but continue then – or want to continue then.

That is to say, there will be places where, if you look at where interruptions occur in conversation, you'll find that they don't occur randomly. By that I don't mean that you'll right off get a direct pattern. But you can begin to pick out of a collection of interruptions, a series of different orders to them. There will be a bunch of interruptions which occur, and which you pick up as 'interruptions' by virtue of the fact that two parties are indeed talking, where what happens is that you have, for one, an adequate grammatical production by one party, the start of talk at its completion, and the continuation by the first party. As compared to that interruption occurring, say, in the middle, i.e., anywhere along in the grammatical structure of that other utterance. They occur right at the beginning of utterances, also, but that's a different thing, and we'll consider that eventually.

It isn't the case, then, that I'm saying that interruptions will only occur on completions. What I'm saying, by 'not random' is, not that they have only this organization, but that each class can perhaps be separated out and considered by itself. Especially when you consider the types of interruption. An interruption occurring at the possible grammatical close of an utterance will have quite a different character than an interruption occurring at the

beginning. For one, you can see that the party is intending to talk *after* the first in the former; it may be found that the second utterance is tied to the first, and may even be addressed to the first.

So there's this sequencing phenomenon, given 'one party talks at a time,' which permits us to focus on those places where *which* party *now* comes to be an issue. It also permits us to see the spacing that's involved, and the spacing, which is small, nevertheless preserves 'one party at a time.' It isn't the case that talk happens to be distributed so that more or less one party is talking at a time. But they're making it their business to have it that one party is talking at a time. This one begins when he figures that one is finished.

One of the consequences of 'one party talks at a time' gets kind of nice when you begin to play around with it. And that is, it's pretty regularly the case, with very few exceptions – in principle with few exceptions – that if two parties are talking at a time; that is, if it happens that they find themselves talking together, then one person will stop in a quite distinctive way. They will stop without completing the utterance they began. That is, they will produce an utterance which is, which respect to its end, 'ungrammatical.' Where, then, somebody might say, 'Look, there are two parties talking at a time, so what are you talking about?,' when two parties are talking at a time you do find that most of the time they do not bring their utterances to an orderly completion, and indeed mark that they interrupted, or that they've been interrupted, by stopping. And that, of course, brings an obvious fact, which is that it's impossible to violate, on your own, 'one party talks at a time.' That is, the other party has to go along with you to have an extended violation of 'one party talks at a time.' What *is* possible is that if you decide to violate that rule the other person won't let you. They'll stop and let you talk.

I say 'by and large' only because there are people whom you might encounter who never seem to attend that rule very much, and they produce utterances across your own, say. And, at least in orderly conversations with them, you get people figuring that 'I've been talking and I've been interrupted, and it's the business of the party who does the interruption to stop, and this interrupter will surely recognize that he has interrupted me.' So you can get, even in two-party conversations, people talking in through-complete utterances. But even there, you will find that the breaks in one or another's utterance will not be at the end of sentences.

So the virtue of this very bland, obvious rule, 'one party talks at a time,' is that it will permit us to see things going on in conversation. It will permit us to see, e.g., when two parties talk at a time, one of them stops before he's finished – where by 'before he's finished' I mean in the course of some so-far grammatical utterance, he makes it ungrammatical by ending before it is completed as a sentence. That is a fact we can come to observe; and indeed it occurs. There are, of course, other things that are found, which will be added to 'one party at a time.'

Now, one thing that seems to be involved in multi-party conversation – and I haven't begun to work on the differences between three, four, five; I'm

sure there are some nice things that might be differentiated, but I'm not now making any differentiations – one general issue, clearly enough in such conversations, since it's not solved given that there's no formula, is: How is it that who speaks next is regulated? Are there any regulations? It would appear to be the case that one possibility is that a given speaker has the right to choose a next speaker. That that's possible turns, in part, on the fact that utterances may be directed to specific people, and sequential-type utterances (which are artifacts of two-party conversations, in part), like a question directed to A (which, in a two-party conversation would obviously be directed to A since he's the only other person there), are usable in multi-party conversation. And there are, then, a bunch of ways that a given party can provide who should speak next. And if that is about the size of the rules for choosing next speakers it means that, for one, a given party can't choose next-next. That is, if the rules hold such that he can choose next, then the one he chooses can choose their next, and if that is so, then a given party doesn't control the 'speaker after next.'

It's perfectly clear, of course, that a lot of choosing of next parties goes on in multi-party conversation. And when you consider that such a usable rule exists, you get a grip on another interruption phenomenon which is kind of interesting also. Now I think – I can't really swear to it because it is the kind of thing that needs an analysis using larger bodies of data than I tend to use, but it's my suspicion that in multi-party conversations you get a lot of interruptions of the following sort: An utterance is coming to completion (and we're dealing here with 'recognizable grammatical completion'). The next party starts to talk before it's completed. Is there some reason why that should occur? In part, it seems to turn on the following combination of things: First of all, it appears that if a given speaker does not direct an utterance to somebody, i.e., leaves it open as to who should speak next, then speakers can opt for who's to speak next. And secondly, it's apparently the case that first starter goes. That means that persons who want to speak next are going to attend carefully when an utterance has been completed. Now there could be a situation where it wouldn't really matter that you won or not, if we had this sort of thing: If you came second in that race, so to speak, then you got a chance to speak after the person who beat you out. There isn't such a rule, and furthermore there is this rule that the person who's currently speaking can choose the next speaker. Which means, of course, that the person who beats you out can choose a next speaker other than yourself, ad infinitum. If, then, you lose any given race – supposing it's a competition – there's no guarantee when you will next get a chance to talk, i.e., when you will in fact beat somebody out, or be selected to talk.

Now that sort of combination, further combined with other ways that utterances get tied together, and given the structure of conversation, means that if you had something to say at point X, then it could very shortly be that you would have to say something very different, to be saying something understandably. And it wouldn't do to interrupt right in the middle. Because that would be merely an 'interruption,' which, since the other party clearly

has not completed, there is no reason for them to stop, and it's your business to stop. But we could expect that there would be an edging up on parties now talking. Especially where the utterance they were producing did not seem to be a directed utterance. And you can very frequently tell that it's not directed, though they might at the end put in some directing to it. It might be interesting to see if non-directed utterances were interrupted towards closing with some orderliness to that occurrence. If so, then that collection of facts, which anyway are somewhat operative, might be seen to be combinably providing for such an occurrence.

In fact, most of the investigation of multi-party conversation that I engaged in for a while was concerned with sequencing the ways that parties would go about maintaining 'one party at a time,' and the various kind of 'ordinary,' i.e., two-party sequencing devices, that were used to, say, direct an utterance to somebody else, or to provide that some other person who wasn't directed to speak, if they spoke, would speak in a certain way. So, for example, a question might be done, and not addressed to anybody. That means if nobody answers it, it's no particular person's failure to answer it. *And*, we find that while it may be nobody's business to do an answer, persons who speak next very heavily do an answer. So that there's a separation of the two-party situation where, say, a question first provides the occasion for the other party to talk, and also provides what they ought to do, i.e., produce an answer. In the multi-party situation, with non-directed questions, it's no particular person's business to answer it, and nonetheless it's treated as sequentially relevant for *whoever* happens to talk next.

And of course also the specific issue of how utterances are made directed to other particular parties is a real phenomenon in multi-party conversations. It's no problem in two-party conversations; every utterance is directed to the other. In multi-party conversations, insofar as directedness is an issue with regard to sequencing, there are a large store of techniques whereby persons go about making directed utterances. Obvious ones are, of course, "Well John, what do you think?" There are some quite nice ones. I'll talk a bit about one I came across yesterday.

I am much interested in collaborative utterances. In the course of studying those things I've been looking at a type of collaborative which I talk about as 'appendors.' They work in the following way: Some person A, introduces a sentence. B treats that as an independent clause and builds, say, a question which is of itself grammatically incomplete, but which, if seen as the dependent clause to an independent clause, is okay, with one possible variation on being okay, and that is that if the first utterance had a pronoun like 'I' in it, then the appendor has a pronoun like 'you' in it:

A: I'm about to drown.
B: In your own humility?

That's a typical appendor. The second utterance clearly is not a sentence of its own.

Appendor questions are a very characteristic kind of thing, and what they do is, they are specific ways of doing directed talk. One thing an appendor question does clearly is provide that that question is directed to the speaker of the utterance to which it is appended. One thing it does in doing a question in this appendor fashion is to select the person who will answer the question.

And a thing I've talked about elsewhere is the general problem of instructions directed to parties other than those being specifically instructed. That is, a thing like "What do you think, John?" may be directly instructing John to say something, and presumably the speaker of it will allow John to say something. In a multi-party situation it is also in some way instructing various other persons to shut up for some period of time. The structure of those kinds of utterances is a fundamental kind of issue, and especially in the case of non-obvious directedness, that parties are indeed seeing that they are being instructed, in what ways, and with what effectiveness, are fundamental problems.

For such situations, instructions in instruction manuals are typically very uninformative, since they normally work to simply instruct the various parties who are about to do something, e.g., a host should greet a newly entered person. That means that all the parties present have got to analyze out of it who the 'host' is, and if there is no 'host,' who is it that is 'like a host'? Some of them shut up, another sees that he's the host and what he ought to do. All that being done with some speed, and all of it necessary for a connection like introducing a new member to a group, to come off with the right party doing the right thing and everybody else shutting up and allowing it to be done – and indeed perhaps collaborating in its being done. Now instructions in the etiquette books don't tell you how you locate who is 'like a host' if there's no obvious host, or how it is that the other parties to such a scene ought to behave. The problem, then, of rewriting instructions to handle these sorts of situations is obviously an altogether fundamental one.

Here is the piece of data. A conversation is going along, then Ken whispers something to Al and Roger, and this goes on for a little bit. Then:

Ther:	Ken, why don't you make these arrangements out of here.
Ken:	Oh.
Al:	Yes, Teacher.
Ther:	Is that what I sounded like (for a moment)?
Al:	(Yes) Teacher.
Ther:	What'd it make you feel like?
Roger:	Like it reminded us that // we're in group ther–
Al:	I felt like // ( )
Ken:	Back in school.
Ther:	Would you like to hit me?
Roger:	You reminded us that you're in group therapy. hehh

Just to get into what's involved: Here's a remark addressed to Ken by the therapist. A reprimand of sorts. And Al responds "Yes, Teacher" and then

Roger says "Like it reminded us that we're in group ther–." Now most of the time that I've been talking about activities in conversation in general, I've been talking about things like 'insults,' 'invitations,' etc., A to B, B to A. Now here's a situation in which T reprimands K, and that reminds A and R of something. That is, T is doing something, not only to the person to whom he addresses his remark, but to the others. Something different, also.

Now forgetting about 'reprimands' and the things that they involve in particular, what we have in the multi-party situation is, it's not at all completely analyzed when one has focussed on that activity or that set of activities that the speaker is doing to whomever he happens to direct his utterance. We have things like: A directs an utterance to B which has as its point that he's doing something to C, also present; something other than he's doing to B. What we get, then, is that the multi-party situation is one where we're dealing with the relationship of activities – not sequentially, not the blocks I talk about, not that sort of orderliness – but across the parties present, given an activity being done directed to some person. Focussing on that activity alone is not by any means a complete analysis. It can be for two-party conversation, i.e., whatever A does to B is what A is doing. In a multi-party conversation, whatever A does to B, assuming A is addressing B, is by no means all that he is doing. One has instead to work out how it is that the various parties present are seeing what's being done – not only what's being done to B, but what's being done to them. So as to see, for example, what they may then come to do. As in this case they take it that the reprimand to Ken is an invocation of a set of rules for them as well – he's only a sample – and they respond to that.

Of course it's of interest to see the extent to which various activities will, in this fashion, turn out to be in orderly collections, i.e., if you do an X to some A then you're doing a Y to some B. It would also be nice to see which ones remain equivalent, i.e., if you do an X to A, you're doing an X to B in the same conversation.

So, whereas I was perfectly well talking about the fact that persons who are not the speaker or the directed hearer are not overhearers, there was no systematic incorporation of the other parties. Now, we had grounds for saying why they should be listeners. One of the questions I was interested in was to try to work out: Why should it be the case that the person who is not addressed in some utterance in a multi-party conversation should listen to it? It turned on matters like, very simply, suppose there's A, B, and C. An utterance comes off, it's addressed to B by A. Now C can tell right off that it's addressed to B – say the utterance begins with B's name. Why should C listen to that utterance? The reason is that even though the next utterance will be by B, and if C is going to talk after that he can always listen to that one, C should listen to *each* utterance no matter to whom it's directed, because, for one, B's utterance is expectably tied to A's in such a way that to understand it – say, answer a question that B makes – you would have had to listen to the utterance directed to B.

So I had provided a place, then, for C. But there was no indication that a question to B was something also to C, and that C would be engaged in considering what that was. And that, furthermore, A would be engaged in considering what that was. And, furthermore, A could, e.g., choose to address a remark to whomever he pleased, without regard to that being the person to whom he was addressing some action. He might well want to direct an action to C, and direct his utterance to B. There are ways of doing that sort of thing – whatever that sort of thing may be.

The kind of incorporation, then, of the tasks of this C, who has had no utterance directed to him, is something far more elaborate. And it requires a whole new order of analysis, in which is considered what A is doing to these various parties, and what they figure he is doing to them – although they have not been addressed, in the case of somebody being addressed – or what they each figure if none of them had been addressed specifically.

And we can make obvious chains, e.g., if A challenges B, then C can see it also as a threat to him. Or showing off. And you can see, then, an issue which immediately comes up when you begin to consider this sort of thing, which is what I've been thinking of as the 'effectivability' of actions in various formulations of parties present. And here is the data which leads to that area of phenomenon. Right at the beginning of the first session they're talking along, and Al says to Ken:

Al :   I'll give you 'til three to move.

.

.

Al :   One,
Ken :   hehh
Al :   Two,
Ken :   heh heheh Alright . . .

An obvious challenge. And when I was reconsidering that piece of data by reference to the therapist's intervention into the making of arrangements, i.e., "Ken, why don't you make these arrangements out of here," I was wondering why didn't the therapist say, "Al, why don't you do that kind of stuff out of here," i.e., don't make any challenges here. Or why didn't he involve himself somehow in that challenge? And there could be some perfectly obvious reasons, where, say, it sounds like a challenge, and in some environments it could be effectively a challenge, there is no reason to suppose that here it could be effectively a challenge, i.e., that one outcome of a challenge – a fight, say – could come out of it. And that furthermore, Al and Ken perfectly well know that, and would somehow arrange things to go as they would perhaps be gone through in a challenge sequence of talk, but would not have one of the outcomes of a challenge. They wouldn't bring it to that because they were perfectly well aware that if they did that he would have to intervene. And of course one of the persistent things that they're doing all along is having him not intervene.

In that regard, then, the conditions under which some action can be effective, are something independent from the fact that a form of that is produced. And that the whole sequence of talk involved in one of those forms is gone through, is independent of its possible effectiveness.

One needs of course to get at those issues of effectiveness. And obviously one of the things about possible effectiveness turns on the possible identifications that are invocable in a scene. So, for example, in the case of a challenge between Al and Ken, we could know that it would not come to a fight by virtue of the fact that a fight would invoke patient–therapist as a relevant set of identifications, and that ought to bring it to a stop. But also, of course, there's a point to playing at challenges, since what they want to see is what they can do short of that authority being invoked.

And in that regard of course you could consider a perfectly obvious case, i.e., seductive behavior in a multi-party conversation. Is he or she trying to make he or she, or are they doing it for somebody else? Obviously one would deal with the situation of A teasing B sexually in a scene of three or four persons, differently than in a two-party scene. So generically there is that issue of 'effectivability' with respect, say, to two-party activities, and then the linkages of two-party activities have got to be fitted to the handling of multi-party conversations. Where the handling of multi-party conversations gives you a start at that by virtue of requiring you in the first place, in considering whether you've done an analysis, to consider not merely the fact that you've located and given an explication of that A has done such a thing to B and the way one does it is such a way, but also, what is it that C and D would make of what's been done to them, and how that could have been involved in A doing what he did to B. For example, a 'challenge' is 'showing off.' And such considerations, of course, could give you something that one would very much like to have – the higher level relationships between the various activities.

What we've now gotten is, in the first place while the non-directed hearer was not an overhearer, there were ways in which he might as well have been an overhearer. But now I'm proposing that he's nothing like an overhearer and can be perfectly well the direct subject of some utterance, even though that utterance is not directed to him.

It may well be that this will be helpful on stuff like utterances directed to B, which C then inserts a remark about before B does. C could be 'violating' some sequencing rules, but it may well turn out that there's some way in which C figured that he had some business answering.

So one gets, then, a set of intrinsically two-party activities which, when done in multi-party situations, can be different sorts of things. And if that's the case, we have another way of tackling this issue of whether a dictionary treatment of the words that are used in conversation could possibly, could conceivably work as a way of handling it. Where what we get to see is that some word used in some utterance in a perfectly standardized way in a two-party conversation (leaving aside the issue of it being used, e.g., in a text), need not be at all the same sort of thing in the 'same' utterance ('same' in the

sense in which people talk about 'same token', 'same type') in a three-party conversation in which, that utterance having been done, it invokes one or another set of identifications, depending on which ones happen to be there to be invoked.

It is now unveiled, revealed, made transparent. Because one should now come back to look at the data, to begin to examine that thing. It's all over the place, and it's perfectly obvious that such a thing has got to be investigated – and that furthermore it is investigatable, since third parties are, among whatever other ways they have of telling us what they figure had been done to them, constantly announcing what they make of what something did to them which wasn't directed to them.

So, for example, there's a thing that can be done in conversation; talking to each other through another. In a conversation I've been working with, from Barker and Wright's *One Boy's Day*, the parents are interrogating the kid about this big crate he found. It seems to me that they are talking to each other through him. Now I recently came across a case of it where it's announced. It's a supreme court case that was reported in the newspaper. Now, during the hearings, the judges do not talk to each other. Their form of talk is, they address questions and hypothetical arguments to the lawyer who is arguing the case at the moment. At one point in some case one of the judges apologizes to the lawyer for using him as a way to talk to another judge, and says that that's what he was, in fact, doing. This is the kind of data we need – that persons not only do that kind of thing, but do it knowingly, in that sense of seeing it as a thing that they can accomplish – in this case, under the constraint that they couldn't in fact talk directly to each other.

Now we can begin to see that the multi-party conversations will require further analyses, beyond the interpretations of how some technique for doing a challenge is a technique for doing a challenge. How it also is a technique for showing off to somebody who is not the challenged person, etc., will be equally well the problem. But it also will give us a way of beginning to form up the kinds of thing that any given way of doing something can be doing it. And then, obviously, the relationships between the various categories of activities. And the ways in which those things can, say, invoke various complications.

It's seeing that sort of stuff, seeing these sorts of requirements, and seeing some data which first generates them, and then when you look back to it seeing that it's all over the place, that I then understand, Alright now, attention has to be payed directly, independently, to multi-party conversations, and there's ways in which they could be much more interesting. Two-party conversation is much blander, perhaps, at least with respect to these other issues, than is multi-party conversation, though clearly enough one needs the two-party conversation because a lot of the things that get done in the first place are two-party phenomena.

It struck me as I thought about it, Well why in all this time did it never occur to me? Why did I always proceed by, if some utterance is directed to somebody, then trying to see what it was? Now, having great faith in the

machinery that gets built into our heads, the fact that I proceeded that way seems to me to suggest the following kind of thing: The line I'm taking now can create, theoretically, tremendously involved problems having to do with, say there are three persons who are not talking in a four-party conversation. A says something, and suppose it's obvious that he says it to B. How do C and D go about deciding what in the hell has taken place? Does D, for example, first try to decide what has been done to him and then choose ways of seeing what has been done to C and B, etc.?

Given the fact of the way I'd been handling this stuff, which seemed to be in the first place so compelling, it occurs to me that it may well be that the first methodological rule for C and D is, if an utterance is directed to B and is doing some activity, find out what that is, and use that to find out what's being done to you. That is, all parties who are rules users will analyze in the same sequence. The first thing they'll do is see who it is directed to and what it's doing to him, and then use what that thing could be doing to anybody else, by virtue of it doing, say, a 'challenge' to B, to find out what it's doing to them, or anybody else. That would then suggest that the sequence of interpretation could be orderable, and that a sequence of possible things the utterance could be doing, could be orderable. So that to find that it's a 'threat' to you, you have to have seen that it was a 'challenge' to him.

Furthermore, the speaker may pick out the person he's directing some utterance to, to do some action with, by reference to such considerations as the orderly analysis of action possibilities, turning on such an issue as, e.g., if he addressed somebody else with the same utterance it wouldn't be a 'challenge,' but, say, a 'mockery.' That is, if Al challenged Louise to a fight, that might well look like a challenge but not be a challenge at all, obviously, but a joke. Then it wouldn't be a threat to the others. So, for the very same form there would be an issue as to, not only what it was initially, but what it could end up to be – turning on what it was initially. Where that would involve everybody agreeing to treat what it was initially as the first thing they should find out, i.e., what it was to the person to whom it was directed.

That seems like a very nice possibility as a way of proceeding, and, for one, it would provide that the use of directedness has some systematic importance. And perhaps, then, it would also set up controls on what could be made of an utterance done in conversations of various numbers of personnel and various possible formulations of that personnel. Picking who you were addressing an utterance to could be formulated as quite a crucial activity, for the purposes of the chain of interpretations.

March 9

Topic; Utterance placement; 'Activity occupied' phenomena; Formulations; Euphemisms

I'll start off with a consideration of 'topic;' some technical features of *topical organization* of conversation, the general issue that's involved in it, and, using this as something of an example, consider how it is that one may notice a phenomenon as something which can be possibly cut into. There are some very obvious things about topical organization of conversation. It does appear that persons orient to the fact of topical organization, and that they have a variety of ways of doing respect for topical organization.

Naively, one could ask a question like this: People come to conversations, and they regularly enough have a bunch of things to say. Indeed, there are conversations which persons come to with a de facto list, e.g., kids on first dates. There is the issue of being prepared to talk about things, having 'something to say.' Now, why don't they just say it in a bunch at the first chance they get to talk, or intersperse these things every time they get a chance to talk? And furthermore, as talk goes on, things occur to them; why don't they just stick them in? They don't do this. Or take, for example, calling somebody up with a specific item you want to tell them. You probably won't start off the conversation with that; you'll allow it to be something that comes up in the course of the conversation. And there are things which 'come up in the course of the conversation' which you can figure the person was perfectly well going to tell you. (Not even raising the classical issue of when does a person coming to ask for a favor raise the fact that they're coming to ask a favor, and how one would set thngs up so as to get that to occur.)

And then, there is an enormous amount of saying-things-to-something-that-somebody-else-has-raised. Consider the following, from GTS 2. As part of a joking interchange Al is addressing Ken:

Al :	Then you– then you'd have t'start shaving.
	(/)
Ken :	hehh
Roger :	Hey I shaved this morning– I mean last night for // you.
Al :	Yah I- I'm glad– I noticed that today Roger,
Ken :	Ye(hh)s I did too.
	(/ / / /)
Roger :	That's 'cause you made that vicious remark.

Now Roger went out of his way to shave, because he was insulted the week before – at least that's what he says. He comes in, doesn't say anything about it, nobody else says anything about it. He brings in his item at a place which has been provided by something else.

In another session, Al has a car that he bought from Roger. He's had the car a short time, the car malfunctions – and malfunctions by virtue of a possible defect that it had all along, that Roger didn't tell him about. He comes into the session and doesn't say a thing about it. It is an enormous issue for him that here his buddy sold him a bum car. He doesn't say a thing about it. At about one hour and 15 minutes into the two-hour session, the following occurs:

> *Ken*:   Now Al. Al likes t'likes t– Al likes to uh t– to ride sailboats or–or something–
> *Roger*:   Not any more hah hehh ah hah heh
> *Ken*:   Why? What happened?
> *Roger*:   She's gone hehhhh
> *Al*:   She is sold. She's gonna be sold.
> *Ken*:   Oh. Well, he used to.
> *(Al)*:   Mm hm,
> *Ken*:   Or he–he still does in–in the back of his mind probly.
> *Roger*:   Now he likes to drive fast Austin Healeys now.
> *Al*:   Not any more.
> *Roger*:   What happened?
> *Al*:   It blew up.
> *Roger*:   <u>Didju</u> <u>really</u>?

And the thing is pulled out of him. But he doesn't bring it up.

Now I don't think that I would use as part of my argument such a thing as 'they have something to say and hold it in abeyance so as to stick it in when they get a chance, as second items.' But I'll make a principled statement, which is quixotic enough, but I believe in it: I don't think it's any worse for sociology to anthropomorphize than, say, for physics to do it. No better, but no worse. All research anthropomorphizes its objects, and I don't see where it's wrong to anthropomorphize humans. This is not to say that I believe that they're anthropomorphic. I certainly don't. But I don't think you get into any special trouble, as a way of focussing things. And what I'm trying to do here is make my transcript noticeable to me; to get at such things as, say, now being able to see stuff being placed second.

Just consider stuff like the following; a telephone conversation between two elderly women:

> *A*:   Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Beth Michaelson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday,
> *B*:   Mm hm,
> *A*:   And on the way home we saw the most goshawful wreck.

B: Ohhhh

.

.

A: . . .I was going to listen to the local r–news and haven't done it.
B: No, I haven't had my radio on, either.
A: Well I had my television on, but I was listening to [the blast off, the astronauts] . . . and I–I didn't ever get any <u>local</u> news.
B: Uh huh,
A: And I wondered.
B: Uh huh, no, I haven't had it on, and I don't uh get the paper, and uhm
A: It wasn't in the paper last night, I looked.
B: Uh huh. Probably didn't make it.

.

.

A: Boy, it was a bad one, though,
B: Well that's too bad.
A: Kinda // (   )
B: You know, I looked and looked in the paper– I think I told you f–for the uh f–fall over at the Bowl that night. And I never saw a thing about it, and I looked in the next couple of evenings. Never saw a th– a mention of it.
A: I didn't see that either.
B: Uh uh. Maybe they kept it out.
A: Mm hm, I expect.
B: Uh huh, deliberately.

Now, drop the question of whether the first one came into the conversation with her 'bit' in mind, and the second one didn't, or did. The issue is that you get that kind of fitting together of things, if, when A raises an item, B has 'another' one on that point. And it is done immediately, right into the place for it.

In certain kinds of two-party conversations, that kind of 'you got one, I got one' for any item anybody raises, is legion. But the thing to see is that it happens just that way, and not, say, coming 18 lines further into the conversation: 'By the way, you were one ahead of me on things that you had, and I didn't have one, and now I happen to remember that I in fact saw an accident.'

So we're not just saying that someone has something to say and then 'waits' for an opportunity to say it, but that when somebody says something, then he says this thing. One wants to get a sense for the fact that items are placed where they belong in conversations, by virtue of things that occurred immediately prior. Regularly, things are placed nicely. And you can begin to see that persons seem to be definitely orienting to putting something in as a second utterance. And in thinking about it, I perhaps exaggerate, but I put it this way: They would much rather say something second to a raised topic than bring up a topic. This fellow Ken does a slightly perverse version of this

sort of thing, which is, when he has something to say he frequently starts a topic by inviting somebody else to talk to it. Then after they talk to it, he says the thing he had to say all along.

Now, the references to 'waiting,' etc., were to focus on this matter of placing an utterance, as doing an activity which can solve the possible questions which can be raised about items that somebody might produce anywhere: 'Why did you say that?,' 'Why did you say that *now?*.' It being the case that, on the one hand a particular topic is being talked to, and, for the run of things there is a topic at hand, it would then perhaps be the case that insofar as you are respectful of topics, i.e., talk to raised topics, then to some very considerable extent, that persons come to see your remarks as fitting into the topic at hand, provides for them the answer for how come you said it now. That is, it solves the possible question automatically. Upon hearing the statement a hearer will come to see directly how you came to say that. And given that you've placed it topically, positioned it appropriately, the specifics of the thing, in the sense of why you did *that* thing, may be quite irrelevant. That is, surely you could have said various things now, about that topic, and you said this one of that set. That may be a special issue.

But the clarity with which, orienting to 'topic,' they can then see how that now came to be said, is one tremendous gain for all concerned. That is, it's not only that you can slip something in where people will not complain, but that they have the gain of the fact that you preserved for them the existence of a 'now,' oriented to the present topic.

One would then want to begin to get ways that persons go about, e.g., showing respect to topics, avoiding a topic if they can, etc., so as to begin to determine, e.g., that indeed they do go out of their way to show their respect for a given topic as a case of 'topics.' For example, in the first GT session, the participants have formulated a long stretch of talk as an ongoing attempt to get Al to say 'what's troubling him.' And he's engaged in an attempt to not give that. There's a variety of ways in which he doesn't do it, and they talk to the fact of what he's doing, e.g., that he is silent, or that he takes opportunities to do things other than talk to the topic. But the things that he does are regularly not un-oriented to the fact of a topic existing. So, there is a sequence that goes like this:

> *Ther*:   'Cept that it is part of the function of the group to begin to share uh <u>in</u> some of these things, so that the others can understand themselves, // (   )
>
> *Roger*:   Well that's why we're pumpin' // him.
>
> *Ther*:   Right. Right. No, I was (   ) answering Ken.
>
> *Al*:   I have to adapt myself to the idea that I want – –
>
> *Roger*:   You don't feel secure with us.
>
> *Ther*:   Butchu don't // wanna–
>
> *Al*:   That's right.
>
> *Ther*:   As I said // earlier you don't want to adapt // yourself out of existence, Al,

Roger :   I'm gonna blackmail you.
Al :   Fuck you.
Ken :   hhh
Roger :   Better not I become pregnant easy heh // hehh heh hhhhh
Louise :   heh heh hehhh
Louise :   Take birth control pills.
Roger :   hehh heh
Al :   Hey I saw // saw a real neat // joke
Ken :   The little green pills?
(   ) :   ((COUGH))
Al :   I went down to the Ports O'Call Village, not to be changing the
             subject but she brought it up–
Roger :   Not to be change– "I wouldn't change the <u>subject</u>,"
Al :   But there was a birth con– they had a joke shop with a birth
             control pill and it was made out of styrofoam. Put it between
             your lee– legs'n press very hard.
Louise :   hehh hhh
Al :   heh heh heh

Where what Al is then doing is treating the sequence as a respect for topic by picking up the matter that's been proposed. He does this partially as a joke, but now as a conceivable report of, now we're talking about birth control pills, here's something about that. Which would be perfectly okay if it were indeed the case that birth control pills was the topic.

What's interesting is that he talks to the fact that he's 'not changing the topic.' Is it just that such is the case, or is it that his talking to the point is some recognition on his part that indeed he could not properly treat this string of one-liners taking off from his initial "Fuck you" as providing a new topic – where, whatever it is that they are about, it is not the provision of a new topic.

That excerpt then becomes accessible to technical considerations with respect to an orientation to preservation of topic, e.g., the kinds of items these one-liners are, the possibility that the topic is in fact shifting, that things can be treated as shifts, that locuses of shifts can be identified – for example, approximately 11 minutes following the above sequence, we get:

Louise :   Hey wait a minute we were talking about <u>his</u> problem . . . . And
           you got us off it beautifully. With that lousy little joke about the
           uhm birth control pill. We were trying to get him to tell us what
           was wrong.
Roger :   You <u>sneak.</u> hehhhh

And if things can be treated as shifts, there is the issue that an item can now be introduced as second to a given topic that's been raised, by references to the utterance that did it.

If that's so, it provides an interesting machinery for getting topics changed, i.e., one could get into one of these insult exchanges, where, whatever the content of one of those insults is, that can be treated as a proposed new subject. If so, persons would have to be, perhaps, much more careful about the content of their insult returns, objections, etc. We would have to check out whether such things are in fact done, so that we could see whether Al's proposal "not to be changing the subject" is put in by virtue of its being more or less analytically obvious to them and to him that indeed he's made a move which he could perhaps justify, but it's not legitimate, conventional, preferred, etc., and indeed 'exploits' a possibility.

The underlying large issue which one would be interested in having attended in a consideration of orientation to topical organization of conversation is this: Assuming that you've got your hands on some order of fact, you want to try to find what sort of order of facts it is, i.e., where does it fit, what is it derivative of, what's consequential on it. Can you say, e.g., topical organization of conversation is a consequence of X phenomenon, and X phenomenon is more primary then topical organization, and topical organization has as its direct consequence Y, and Y has as its direct consequence Z? This is a general issue, having to do with the arrangement of a theory. If, for example, you take things like 'one party talks at a time,' 'no general sequencing formula for multi-party conversations,' 'orientation to completion,' etc., and try to arrange them and see what kind of order there is between them, you may find, e.g., 'one party talks at a time' seems to be a primary rule for conversation, where an 'orientation to completion' is one of a series of rules combined with it that give you machinery for the various other phenomena.

For the question 'Why should conversation be heavily topically oriented; is there some systematic basis for that to exist?' an answer to it is perhaps to be found by considering, as the locus of the solution, whether it's not the case that topical organization is a direct consequence, almost an artifact, of the tying structures. If you're going to have tying structures as a fundamental organizing principle of conversation, then you're going to have topics as a consequence.

Tying structures are fundamental to topics as organizers of conversation by virtue of the fact that the tying structures are a general, and also completely local means for checking out and enforcing the work of showing that one is understanding somebody and requiring them to understand you. Tying structures work by tying utterance to utterance, i.e., pairs of utterances. In fact, if you begin to ask directly about the local operation of tying rules, you could easily find difficulties occurring merely by virtue of a skip of an utterance, turning on, e.g., the speed at which persons insert remarks. A says something, B says something, C says something intendedly tied to A's utterance. It may be altogether unclear whether C's remark is tied to B's or to A's. And if while in principle tying is local in that strong sense, there are some apparently systematically characterizable extensions on it, e.g., a given speaker can tie utterances of his own together across utterances of other

persons. A talks, B talks, C talks, then A talks with clearly a tied utterance, tied not to B's or C's, but to his own. And, e.g., things like those single-line jokes can be 'ignored' for tying, so that if people are talking along, someone sticks in a joke, there is an obviously tied next utterance. To find what it's tied to, the joke is perhaps not something you have to consider. However, basically tying is a two-utterance phenomenon, in which the basic components are the pro-terms. If the pro-terms are going to be used to do tying, and used extendably, combinably, etc., then the things like nouns and verbs get special use. And insofar as they more or less totally populate an utterance, then that utterance tends not to be a directly tied utterance. Now, the nouns and verbs are the topic carriers. It is then, in a sense, directly a consequence of having tying that you're going to get those nouns and verbs becoming what we take to be 'topics,' i.e., in an extension in which they remain 'the subject' over much more extended grammatical or non-grammatical units.

Considerations such as these would permit us to treat the machinery for orienting to 'preserving a topic' as something fitting onto the tying structures, as an accessory to those. And then we would be in a position to find that there might be a systematic relationship between those sorts of phenomena.

Now, one needs every resource one can muster to, in the first place, crack into what can then be an observable organization of phenomena, i.e., to make the data accessible. One such resource is to find some way of seeing how this thing is noticeable by a confrontation with, say, the fact that as a common-sensical reasoner someone's life matters, or their good name matters, etc. Then one can notice the things that people will do which are inconsistent with that, and raise to the status of primaries, these inconsistent things. Once you crack into it, you don't need to do that. But some sense of how much these 'conflicting' things matter can be gotten at by virtue of the extent to which, say, a person under great stress will continue to live with them. For example, some techniques for getting confessions turn on an obvious fact: People will, when confronted with a possible inconsistency in their statements, act to preserve their claim to rational talk at the expense, say, of their lives. So, persons on trial for murder, when confronted with proposedly inconsistent remarks, will confess. Embarrassment of this sort is apparently a primary.

Such a fact can be brought to attention here. That is, we can begin to try to see to what extent is it the case that persons will respect the existence of topic, and talk to it, while doing what we commonsensically know are drastically self-derogatory things. We might come to see that they, in the course of a topic, will go out of what seems to be their way, their interests, their claims to decency, etc., in order to acknowledge their respect for a topic in which its current course involves them in saying such a thing. And, conversely, there are a list of topics which people may want to refuse to talk to at all. Where one can see right off that the issue is not anything and everything that has to do with that topic, but with, say, a very circumscribed set of statements that might expectably be made by virtue of that topic being up.

It is by virtue of this sort of thing that we can begin to get an idea that what we suppose to be of primary importance over something else, may not be.

Where you could only make these confrontations between, say, someone's life and embarrassability, someone's promise and a respect for topical organization, if you begin to get the idea that 'embarrassability' is something, or that 'respect for topical organization' is something – where you always have the idea that 'life' is something and 'a promise' is something. I am not here proposing that what you do is now raise something that everyone knows matters – say 'embarrassability' – to a status of 'it matters much more than you think it matters.' I am trying, rather, to break into a course of talk, and be able to see that, and how, it is organized.

That is to say, you can use our conventional ideas about what matters in order to see that some things that persons say by virtue, apparently, of something like topical organization, are not what we would expect if we supposed that, e.g., they want to preserve their good name, with that formulated in terms of their respect for values, etc., rather than in terms of respect for topical organization.

Once you crack into it, you can begin to focus on such things as the order of facts it is, and the various levels of features of it, so that it can be put into whatever place it has, as another thing involved in the analysis of any piece of talk, and which may or may not be overtly involved. So that you can say that the rules of topical organization are involved, say, as an accessory to the tying rules, that persons are attending it, that a consequence of topical organization may be that it provides for a 'now' at all points – in the sense that if an utterance is fitted topically, it solves for hearers the question of why was that said and why was that said *now*, and where the conversation is 'now;' giving you a characterization of 'now,' abstractly.

One can attend a bunch of talk and begin to pick out the machinery by which persons show their respect for a topic, by which they preserve an orientation to topic. For example, there's a whole range of meta-facts, i.e., direct topic-talk machinery, "You're off the subject" and things like that. One can see as obvious consequences of the order of facts that topical organization is part of, such things as, you can't get a topic done by yourself. You might be able to stick in a monologue, but it requires collaboration. One might also begin to look at stories and jokes to see that they work as things that permit extended tying, but they're quite different phenomena from topic talk – at least the participants to the conversation we're considering seem to figure that a sequence of telling jokes is 'not talking about anything,' i.e., is not topic talk.

It would be of interest to work out things like: What things does a conversation provide you with a place for them to go fittingly? And what are persons' orientation to the accommodations that a conversation may have vis-à-vis the things they have to say, or figure they might be 'forced' to say? (In that regard, the statement "We were in an automobile discussion," apart from being an 'invitation,' has as one possible interest that it's informative to the entrant as to how he should orient to the proceedings, i.e., that a respect for topic is something that they do. He can use such a notion and attend the conversation as topically organized, where he might have expected rounds of monologues, question–answer sequences, etc.) Most particularly, one can ask

how persons go about showing that they're preserving respect for an orientation to topical organization, by reference to *a* topic, while topics are fast changing.

Now, I have a further remark to the very first piece of data I used in this lecture. It is at this point parenthetical and not much more than anecdotal. The data is this:

Al :   I noticed that today Roger.
Ken :   Ye(hh)s I did too.

Where, semantically one could say 'You didn't do it *too*, you *did* it.' That is, 'too' serves to mark the fact that this is a second observation on that thing which was just noticed, announcing no more than 'I'm saying the same thing as he said, after him.'

This pair, 'I did,' 'I did too,' occurs with enormous frequency. And it may be that people, on hearing that 'too,' are somewhat suspicious of it, i.e., there's a general malaise hanging over that kind of use, and it doesn't quite come off. This may have to do with one of the alternatives for 'I did too' being an independent statement of sorts. For example, 'I noticed that,' and then someone else, 'I *knew* there was something different about you,' as a way of saying 'I did' second to someone else's having said 'I did.'

As soon as you play with 'I did' you realize that just 'I did' is impossible. It can be accented in two different ways: '*I* did,' or 'I *did*.' Each of those has perfectly clear meanings. The first is competitive and the second is insistent. So there's no place to do with 'I did' what you can do with 'I did too.' That is, 'I did,' having been done once, it cannot be repeated, and is in that sense, '*activity occupied*.'

This opens up a couple of directions one might go with this sort of thing. For one, intonation and accent patterns as systematically characterizable activities. And then the business of a phenomenon being 'activity occupied.'

And finally, the following is a kind of appendage to the lecture on February 16. Let me quote something from the data, GTS 1, page 61. There's a fracas of sorts, where apparently Al is picking on Ken. Then:

Louise :   You're pickin' on people you know are weaker than you.
Al :   How do you know // he's weaker than // (   )
Roger :   Now you're pickin' // on people you know are weaker 'n you.
Ken :   THANKS!
Louise :   I'm not— I'm only pickin' on Al,
Roger :   Well you're pickin' on HIM you // clod!
Louise :   Not Ken!
Roger :   Yeah sure! You told him he's pickin' on people weaker than you. So you said he's weaker'n you.

I have the idea that data like that may have a kind of special interest for us, in the sense that it may deal with something I've talked about. For

example, I've made the kind of rash statement, "There's no room in the world for interpretation." I've talked about things there's 'no place for,' 'you can't get away with doing,' things 'you can't do *only*,' etc. And I've been looking for that sort of data which an analysis of will exhibit clearly the kind of thing I mean to point to by those remarks.

My feeling is that things like 'You're *picking* on him,' '*You're* picking on *him*,' are the kinds of things that one wants to look at. Where an assertion by A may be restated by B as an assertion of the things that, now, A is doing. This may be generally stated as: Any case in which A proposes, say, a formulation of what B is doing (strictly, now, not doing anything but naming what B is doing), it's available that now A's proposing of a formulation can be treated as the doing of something other than that; indeed, perhaps, ideally, the very thing that A has formulated B as doing.

Now what we want to see is how such a thing is in principle possible, and the way it shows us that there's no room to 'just name' what B is doing as a thing that could now be seen as what you're doing. Where you might suppose that you could be 'merely putting a name on what he's doing;' that you could control what formulation could be done on what *you* did – say, it was a meta-conversational remark for somebody who doesn't know what's going on; such a thing as an anthropologist would treat as the kind of information he's dying to get. And that's what I was getting at in my previous examples, "What do you mean?." "What do you mean what do I mean?"

If it's the case that any doing of a naming is also formulatable as doing something else, where, say, the 'something else' includes, among other things, that sort of thing as was named, then one gets into a nice set of consequences. One of them is, you can't say 'At *least* they're doing naming' and try to save your results that way, because if you get, e.g., the combination Insult + Name, and that's the thing being done minimally, then you have no guarantee that this is 'an acceptable name' which can occur otherwise than with an insult, for the object that's being named.

I have talked about the phenomenon of 'intentional mis-identifications' of persons, i.e., where somebody says "Yes, Mommy" to somebody who isn't their Mommy, where it's seen to whom it's directed by virtue of its being a 'second insult.' It became obvious to me that I had to break down 'intentional mis-identifications' into, e.g., 'intentional mis-addresses' and 'intentional mis-references.' For example, in GTS 2, Roger says to Jim, "Daddy sorta sheltered you." It's not Roger's father who's being referred to, it's Jim's father, who is not a person Roger correctly refers to as 'Daddy,' but one who Jim proposedly addresses as 'Daddy.'

That he can intentionally mis-identify, reference-wise, that person, is one of the many cases where you can refer to X with a term that is not a term that applies to X, as one of the items on a list of names from which you would select to refer to X. So that you can't say definitively that with Insult + Name you at *least* have a normal, correct name for the person being referred to, where you can have an intentional use of names known to be incorrect, used referentially for somebody.

Even supposing you were returning to the issue of 'merely a name,' and not Insult + Name, the question could then be put: What does doing 'merely the name' involve, given the fact that the selection set for a name is not initially restricted to the correct set of names but first has to be extended to, e.g., the collection of things that anybody could be called nastily but that are not correct for anybody. Where the very fact, then, that a name is being used, puts one into the situation of trying to see what's being done.

Further, 'merely the name' may involve, as well, such techniques as naming euphemistically. For example, in GTS 1, page 8, Al has just gone through a threat to Ken. Then:

Ken: He's in a jolly good mood this morning,
Louise: Yeah
(/ / / /)
Ther: He was in a jolly good mood last week.
(/)
Louise: ⌈But that was–
Roger: ⌊I think we ought stone him for these uh appearances hehhh
Louise: No <u>he</u> wasn't in a jolly good mood last week, <u>we</u> were in the jolly good mood last week.

Where it is perfectly clear that 'jolly good mood' is being used euphemistically for 'lousy mood,' and then in Louise's utterance, Al might well have been in a good mood, *we* were in the lousy mood.

Euphemism is by no means a special thing. And one might suppose that one would first ask why would someone say something euphemistically rather than directly. But that is, as an approach to the problem, wrong. A first procedure ought to be: Given a fact like the tremendous use of the tying rules, etc., the mandate of talk involves talking in such a way that the fact that somebody else understands what you've said involves them in some kind of work. So it's much better to say something such that, then, that they understand what you've said, proves the relevance of your remark. The crucial thing is always the relevance of your remark.

And if it's obvious that Al's in a lousy mood, it's a nothing-to-say. The thing is to try to talk in such a way that a task of analysis is involved. The success of that analysis provides the lack of need of an account of why you came to say it – and that, of course, is relevant to the earlier discussion of topics.

Methodologically, were you to ask the question, 'Why is euphemism used here, why is mis-reference used here, when they perfectly well could say directly what they wanted to say?' you'll get into trouble. It may be that you could make a case for euphemism as an alternative to direct reference, where direct reference is seen as a norm. However, it seems to me that the things called 'indirect reference,' the pro-terms, etc., are the most usual ways to talk. Where, roughly, the fundamental issue for talkers is that of relevance. And the fundamental aim is to have proved, by the de facto understandability of

what they've said, that the other, by understanding what you've said, sees that he's not in a position to, need not, turn that utterance into a problem. That is to say, all that machinery for checking things out – why an utterance is said, why now, why did he do that, why did he refer that way, etc. – as much as it is possible, is built into the structures for doing talk. And if that talk is at all understandable, it solves those issues.

Part V
Spring 1967

Lecture 8
"Everyone has to Lie"

While I really should move on to other data, I'm going to stay in some sense with the same materials we've so far been using because I want to pound home – if I haven't already – the relative non-exhaustability of what one might be able to dig out and use from what on first glance is relatively uninteresting. What I'll do is present one of the 'exercises' I'll be presenting now and again. Let me first give some background. A few years ago I was working on an extended study in 'greetings.' Things like "Hi" "Hi," "Hello" "Hello," etc. In the course of it I acquired various more or less small points. Recently I've considered the matter of 'absences' and the way in which 'absences' could be found directly from 'greetings.'[1] The stuff I'll present now uses 'greetings' and uses results about 'greetings,' but involves a kind of indexing, i.e., keeping 'greetings' in mind when other things are being thought about (where one wants to get results that can employ other results, and lock in on the kinds of ways that things seem to be organized, rather than, 'Here's a piece, there's a piece, here's another piece').

I had a fascination with a problem like this (and it's a very conventional problem in that it's obviously been 'answered'): How could we as social scientists go about saying about something that a Member said, that it's true. Where what we're talking about is something that a Member says about the social world. What I was looking for was a place where I could do an exercise consisting of seeing what might be involved in being able to say about something a Member says, that it's true; what the warranting of such a statement as 'Members say such-and-such, and it's true' would consist of.

In some tape I had, I came across a statement that I'd heard before, which looked like it was intended as true: Somebody said, "everyone has to lie." The reason that I could take it that the statement was intended as true, is that it sounded like a 'complaint.' And 'complaints' seem to be things which

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Lectures 1 through 7 are not included in this volume. They consist of a consideration of the 'one party speaks at a time' phenomenon, using an article by Ethel Albert, 'Rhetoric, logic and poetics in Burundi,' as its point of departure, and transcripts of a group therapy session for teenagers as its materials. A rather more developed consideration can be found in the next set of lectures, those of Fall 1967. An earlier discussion of 'one party speaks at a time' can be seen in the Winter 1967 set, the lecture of March 2. The earliest reference to the Albert article is in Spring 1966, lecture 32, pp. 481–2, this volume.

[1] See, e.g., Spring 1966, lecture 04.b, pp. 293–5, and Spring 1966, lecture 5, pp. 307–8.

intendedly assert that something is so (a matter I'll deal with at another time).

There are a lot of ways in which a thing like that can be interesting, in that one wants to see how it is that the world is so arranged that the statement is true. Where one of the virtues of its being possibly the case that somebody can say something that's true about the social world is that it gives us some idea about what's available to them. That is to say, it might well be that whatever we have to find as the arrangement of the world that provides for that statement to be true, we also have to come to see that such arrangments are available to Members, so that a person could have arrived at that as a statement. It's not that now a social scientist comes up with such a statement – which would be one sort of thing – but that a Member is able to make it. (It is in other ways a possibly fascinating utterance, such as, if it's so, then of course we could play with things like how it is that the world is so arranged that persons have to do evil even if they want to do good – if, that is, lies are bad things.)

At the time I began to work on this thing I didn't have a very good idea about what 'everyone' means (and eventually we'll get to a consideration of terms like 'everyone'). But a first way we might consider it – so as not to get hung up on a way to show that it's *not* true (which would be to show that *someone* doesn't have to lie) – is to consider that way as one of two different ways that terms like 'everyone' might get used.

So, this one way would be 'summatively.' That is, whatever singular individuals 'everyone' might encompass, it has to be true for each of them for it to be true about 'everyone.' For example, there are ways in which a term like 'we' could get used summatively, so that if I use 'we,' referring – understandably and not necessarily overtly – to me and somebody else, e.g., "We stayed home last night," you could figure you knew who that 'we' was. And if you then asked another person properly included in that 'we' and they say "No I went out," then you could return to me and say "But you said 'we' stayed home."

Alternatively there are things like the usual *categorial* terms – 'males,' 'females,' 'Democrats,' etc. – for which one can say "Democrats do X," and if some Democrats don't, it doesn't affect the intended correctness of the term. It's not that a Member would go about complaining about a statement made with the categorial, in terms of 'I can show you one of them who isn't that way,' and then everybody would figure that they'd have to remove the remark or apologize for it, etc. Instead, there's some other way that those terms are controlled.

Now, 'everyone' might seem in the first place to be a 'summative' term. But let's leave it open as a possibility that it's a 'categorial' term, and governed in the way those are. It might be, for example, that terms like 'everyone' and 'no one' stand in juxtaposition to one another. If you come home from a party, for example, and someone asks you who was there and you say "No one," then, that there were 12 people there doesn't matter for the correctness of 'no one.' 'No one' means 'under some formulation of who

should have been there, no one was there.' Likewise, it might be the case that when asked "Who was there?" somebody says "Everyone," then there are formulations of 'everyone' which provide for the fact that 'everyone was there' indeed, though millions of people weren't.

So it isn't in the first instance our intention to say that "everyone has to lie" has to involve anyone who could be called a someone. There may be other reasons why 'everyone' gets used, and I'll suggest one right now: One of those reasons may be that 'everyone' is perhaps that categorial usage which doesn't have as its members, specific reference to a restriction to some other categorial. For example, 'everyone' doesn't mean that all 'males' were there or all 'females' were there or all Jews were there or all Negroes were there or all whites were there, etc. But there's a categorial, e.g., 'everyone,' that says 'whoever should have been there was there,' and they are not restricted to one of those other categories. So you could use it if there's some collection known as a group which doesn't have a group name. You have an informal club which doesn't have a name; you have a luncheon, and 'everyone was there,' i.e., all club members.

The idea is not that I'm proposing that some usage is 'correct,' but that the terms seem to be so used. And what we want to do then is find out how they could be used, rather than insisting that 'everyone' must mean something which is in fact not in conformity with the way it's handled – though you could perhaps construct such an 'everyone.' So then we don't have to begin by trying to figure out what 'everyone' is, and then use what 'everyone' is to set up a test of the incorrectness of "everyone has to lie." We don't want to start with a required interpretation of, say, each of the terms in the utterance (i.e., it could be given a 'strict usage;' that usage which you could adopt and debate with someone – and lie in the same fashion). Rather than that, what we would want is to be able to look to the way those terms get used, to find how they could be being used here.

Now, some of the results on 'greetings' seemed to be relevant to "everyone has to lie." So I began with 'greetings' material. In the first place what I wanted to see was this: If, whatever 'everyone' is and whatever 'has to lie' is, I could see, as intended: 'Sometimes for something,' and find a 'something' which is done many times by anyone, and find that sometimes that something would have to be lied about. Then I could have established the correctness of "everyone has to lie."

So what I was doing, then, was looking for a something that happens frequently for 'everyone,' assuming a lay sense of 'everyone' without specifying it. And 'greetings' turn out to be interesting in that regard. Because one thing we can say about 'greetings' is that they're *ahistorically relevant*. What I mean by that is, as compared to, say, 'introductions' which, having been gone through once (or perhaps erroneously three times, five times, whatever else) are no longer appropriate, between any two people without regard to how long they've been acquainted, there isn't any rule which says: On the n + conversation, no longer begin conversations with 'greetings.' Instead, any conversation they ever have – they could be married 40 years –

can begin with some greetings. And it's not only that when they've been married 40 years they can begin their conversation with 'greetings,' but it's also the case that their first conversation could begin with 'greetings.' To say that 'greetings' are ahistorically relevant is not to say that every conversation must begin with greetings, but that there's no exclusion rule for greetings. That's one sort of fact about greetings.

Also I've smuggled in another fact, and that is that if they do occur, then they properly occur at the beginning of a conversation. Now that sort of fact turns out to be important. And the way we get at its importance will be to suppose that there's a class of what I'll call 'proper conversationalists,' and construct subclasses of that class.

We'll talk about, first, a largest subclass of the class 'proper conversationalists.' We'll say about the largest subclass that what's definitive of it is that its co-members may engage in something we'll call a 'minimal proper conversation' – perhaps no more, but they may engage in a minimal proper conversation (if there is such a thing). Then, various smaller subclasses will be persons who can properly engage in more extended conversation than minimal proper conversation.

Let me just point out one nicety that we're going to try to find. What we want to see is that a minimal proper conversation is not something that can only be done by the largest class, but can be done by all other classes as well. There's good reason for that to be required, since it's not that we're merely trying to arrange things, but we're trying to find out how they're arranged. Suppose it were legitimate for the largest class to do this minimal conversation, but it were specifically illegitimate for some smaller class to do such minimal talk. Then it wouldn't be a 'minimal proper conversation' for 'proper conversationalists' and we wouldn't find that all the subclasses were indeed subclasses of that class. We would have a problem.

The question is, then, is there a 'minimal proper conversation'? If we can say that a minimal proper conversation is an exchange of greetings, then we have both that the largest class of proper conversationalists can do that – they may be able to do no more – and that the smaller classes, the people who can engage in more than that, can begin with that – since the exchange of greetings is ahistorically relevant.

Then, the question for the smaller classes is whether they can do *only* that on some occasion. And it does appear that even though people have been married 40 years, they can not only begin conversations with greetings, but there are occasions on which they can do no more than that, and do it without being violative for each other. That is to say, suppose a couple married 40 years pass each other on the dance floor. They can say "Hi." And one of them won't feel that something bad has been done to him by the other merely saying "Hi" and passing on, after a "Hi" has been returned.

One consequence of that is: The sheer fact that persons exchange greetings is not informative of their intimacy. Any two persons, no matter how intimate they are – or how un-intimate they are, if they are at least intimate enough to exchange greetings – can at some time only exchange greetings. So that you

wouldn't say, for example, if two persons merely happened in passing to say "Hi," that they couldn't be very intimate.

Now there is a class of *non*-proper conversationalists. And while they can come up and talk to you, they do it in a special way. That is, they announce that they know they're not proper coversationalists but they're beginning anyway, and for good reason. The kind of thing they use is a '*ticket.*' That is, they announce in their first utterance how come they started to talk to you even though they shouldn't: "Excuse me, I'm lost," etc.

But there are some people for whom the class 'non-proper conversationalists' is extremely restricted. That is to say, for some people there are few, if any, others who are not 'proper conversationalists' for them – at least among the largest class. And these are people like congressmen. Anybody can walk up to a congressman and say "Hi" and they'll get "Hi" in return. They'll in fact shake hands with you. Whereas a lot of people if you walk up and say "Hello," they'll look at you hesitantly and not say "Hello" at all. The consequence of that being so for congressmen, though not everybody perhaps know it is so, is something like this – and here I'm reporting a thing that's quite common in a small way, reported in the *New York Times*.

There was a fellow who was an 'influence peddler,' name of Julius Klein. And he was up for consideration once, turning on some investigation of Thomas Dodd. And now they're talking about the way Klein operated. He often had as clients people who didn't know very much about the government, whom he would tell about his relationships with all sorts of people in government. And what he would do is this: He would be standing there talking to this client, outside, say, the Congress, and a congressman would walk by. And he would charge over and grab the guy by the hand and say "Hello" and the guy would, with perfect friendliness say "Hello," maybe put his arm around him, and then split. Now Klein, by this technique, was informing his clients that this fellow and he were of some great intimacy. Klein knew that even though the congressman didn't know him at all, he would exchange greetings.

In that regard, then, the use of the non-ability to assume, from the fact that persons do engage in greetings, what intimacy they have, constitutes a sort of resource. A resource that is special in this case to those persons who will 'greet anybody' though of course most people don't assume that there are persons or some particular person who will greet anybody, because they take it that, since the class of proper conversationalists is bounded for them and most people they know, then the class is bounded for everybody. So the construction we're making can give us an expectation like the above, i.e., how Klein could go about being a phoney like that. Systematically. It's not such a big thing, but a nice bit of spin-off.

So: There's a largest class of conversationalists. They can engage in a minimal proper conversation, and perhaps no more. And there are smaller classes. But one of the things about the smaller classes is that while they can perfectly well engage in more, they can also on some occasions engage in no more than a minimal proper conversation. And an exchange of greetings is a

minimal proper conversation. That is to say, on some occasion, any pair no matter how familiar they are, can do only an exchange of greetings without arousing from one or the other, "What's going on?"

In this regard let me point out, again as a passing matter, that the fact that there's no exclusion rule for the use of greetings has as its consequence something people are well aware of: There isn't any good way to decide when an exchange of greetings should not be done in the course of recurrent units which would seem to make it mildly absurd. That is, in the course of a day you pass somebody seven times. The first time, okay. The second time, okay. Now when do you stop saying "Hello" to them, without them then feeling that there's something the matter? And apparently there isn't any good way to decide that, concertedly. Again, it's one of the kinds of things we're pointing to with the observation that there is no exclusion rule for these greetings.

Now, if things like "Hi," "Hello," etc. are 'greetings,' then there's a thing which we would call a *'greeting substitute.'* "How are you" is a 'greeting substitute.' in that it *may* be used as a 'greeting.'

One might say since "How are you" can go where 'greetings' go, why call it a 'greeting substitute'? Why not call it a 'greeting'? The reason for differentiating "How are you" from greetings is that one property of greetings seems to be – and this property will then exclude "How are you" from that class – that given some sequence, 'greetings' are not repeatably used. That is, 'greetings' cannot be combined with 'greetings' sequentially. I will demonstrate the sort of combining I intend they cannot do, by showing a special case where it might be done: In a telephone conversation, the one who answers says "Hello." That's to whomsoever may call. If it then turns out that it's somebody whom you would like to further acknowledge, you can then do another:

A: Hello?
B: Hello.
A: Hi!
B: Hi!

But for conversation in general, you do not get this sequential combining of 'greetings' with 'greetings.' But it is the case that if you have *a* 'greeting sequence:' "Hi, Hi," "Hello, Hello," "Hi, Hello," "Hello, Hi," whatever it may be, you can in addition to that have "How are you," then its answer plus a return of "How are you":

A: Hi,
B: Hi.
A: How are you?
B: Fine. How are you?

So then, "How are you" is excluded from the set of 'greetings' by virtue of the fact that membership in the set of 'greetings' does not provide for

combinations of those members as a 'repeated' use in a sequence. But "How are you" can be used after a 'greeting pair.' This might indicate that it isn't a 'greeting' at all, except that you can get things like "How are you" as a proper beginning of a conversation which would not then be said to lack a 'greeting.' It is by virtue of this distinction that I talk about it as a 'greeting substitute.'

Then, whatever we've said about 'greetings,' i.e., their distribution, their use as minimal proper conversation, hold for "How are you" as a substitute greeting. We're going to look, now, at "How are you" because it's with "How are you" that we begin to move in on "everyone has to lie."

But I need some more classes. I'm going to define two classes. One of them I'll call 'personal states' (PS). It consists of things like mood, appetite, sleep, etc. The other is called 'value states' (VS), and it consists of a bunch of terms like good, lousy, rotten, great, wonderful, etc. We'll talk of personal states as 'describables' and value states as 'descriptors.' Any one of the VS can describe some PS. "How's your appetite?" "Great" or "Rotten."

The value states are organized into three subsets; minus, zero, and plus. Here are prototypical terms: For [−] it's "Lousy," for [0] it's "Okay," for [+] it's "Great." That organization is mutually exclusive. If a term belongs to one it doesn't properly belong to the other. And you can pick an answer to a question like "How have you been sleeping?" from the descriptors.

There are some rather interesting kinds of things that obtain for these descriptors and that are strong support for talking about them being organized into subsets. Whereas you might suppose that if you are a recipient of one of them given that you've asked a question of somebody, then handling those descriptors requires some familiarity with the one whom you're dealing with − and indeed that it's almost strange that they would be used with respect to people who don't have adequate bases for 'understanding' them. If somebody says "How are you feeling?" and you answer "Normal," the question is what does somebody have to know in order to deal with "Normal," "Fine," etc. For example, that they would have to know how you go about measuring your daily variations. But it's a most remarkable fact that it just isn't so.

Now "How are you" also has its answers among the descriptors. So if you come up to somebody and ask them "How are you?" they pick a term from the descriptors. And the way that the subsets work, relevantly to our consideration, is this: If you pick a term from [0] or [+]; for example "How are you?" "Okay," then that's the end of that. In the case of it being you who was asked first, you might say "Okay, how are *you*." Or if you were asked second, then you would just say "Okay" and the conversation goes on. (There's some slight variation; if you say "Wonderful," they're liable to say "That's great").

If you pick a term from [−], then there's a procedure that would properly apply, which involves eliciting what the matter is. And the way you do that is to use various of the PS phenomena as question items: "How are you feeling." "Lousy." "Haven't been sleeping?" etc. That procedure, then, is

applied for [–]. And it's applicable without respect to what the parties know about each other, so that you can find that, e.g., you're going through the supermarket exit and a guy says "How are you this morning?" and you say "Rotten," he'll say something using the PS terms. The product of such a procedure is the eliciting of an explanation for the negative state. And it apparently is sufficient condition for engaging in such a procedure that a term which belongs to the negative state has been inserted as an answer to "How are you."

Now let's formulate a notion of 'lying' in this context. We'll talk about two steps in giving an answer to the question "How are you." First is selecting a subset. Second is selecting a term, which you announce. We'll call selecting a subset 'monitoring' your state. Now, since what seems to be involved is that it's the subsets that count, and the terms picked are picked as members of the subsets, and the subsets furthermore are mutually exclusive, then you can say that somebody is lying if, having done the 'monitoring' operation, they pick a term that the product of the monitoring operation excludes. The monitoring operation comes up with [+]. It then excludes all terms belonging to [0] and [–]. If you announce a term belonging to [0] or [–] you're lying. The same holds across the board. If the monitoring operation comes up with [–] and you pick a term belonging to [0] or [+], you're lying.

It may seem artificial to talk about a 'monitoring operation' except that it seems that the subsets count, so that it wouldn't be obviously wrong to say that a person first selects a subset, as compared to, e.g., merely just picking a term. And consider, for example, that people don't go about saying "You're lying. It's not true that you're feeling 'rotten,' you're feeling 'lousy'," or "It's not true that you're feeling 'great,' you're feeling 'wonderful'." But they might well say "You're not feeling 'great,' you're feeling 'lousy'." That is, what happens when you announce the term is that it's handled by virtue of subset membership.

Lectures 8 and 9 deal with the phenomenon, "Everyone has to Lie," which was later published in M. Sanches and B. G. Blount (eds), *Sociocultural Dimensions of Language Use* (New York: Academic Press, 1975), pp. 57–80. Because the published version exists, the transcripts of the lectures have been a bit more lightly edited, left perhaps a bit rougher than usual.

Lecture 9
"Everyone has to Lie" (ctd)

I'll continue talking about "everyone has to lie," and how a consideration of that statement might permit us to exhibit an instance of our warrantably saying about something that a Member says, that it's true. The long range interest of the exercise was in part to give us some additional materials which could be looked at and considered in terms of whether that's what a demonstration of truth for something a Member says, should look like. Where the analysis that's presented can then become material for its examination, so as to see whether that's what 'warranting as true something that was said' should look like, or not. We could pick out, then, components that seem to be important, others that don't, and move from it to other materials perhaps, to see what such a sort of proposal should look like.

Before going on, I'll briefly go over some of the things that were done last time. The idea was that 'greetings' as a phenomenon could have various of its properties explored and employed in building up a something that everyone might be sometimes said to have to lie about. One of the properties that was used was the ahistoricality of relevance. Another was that an exchange of greetings could constitute a minimal proper conversation for any subclasses of conversationalist; from what I called the largest subclass – who might do no more than that perhaps – to the smallest subclasses – roughly, people on intimate terms, who could surely do more than that but on some occasion could – without violations – do only that. That would provide that 'greetings' were, then, a minimal proper conversation.

Then there was the 'greeting substitute,' "How are you." There are perfectly well other kinds of greeting-substitutes, and they would be things that had just these properties: If they went without a 'greeting' they could be seen as a proper beginning of a conversation which would not be said to lack a greeting, but they could also be combined with 'greetings.' Such things as "Nice weather isn't it," "What a crummy day," etc. So 'greeting substitutes' are systematically different from 'greetings,' but they can be used where no 'greetings' are used, as a 'greeting.'

Then we also had the two classes: personal states consisting of things like mood, appetite, sleep, etc., and value states, a bunch of terms organized into three subsets [–], [0], and [+], where a prototypical term for [–] is 'lousy,' [0] 'okay,' [+] 'great.' And where subset membership is mutually exclusive.

Includes pp. 1–6 of the original lecture 10.

Then the point was made that although it's in its fashion curious that assertion of an answer to the question "How are you" would be used independently of the recipient's knowledge of the person he's dealing with – how he goes about measuring his states, etc. – those answers do seem to be usable and used in systematic ways. And, if the one who's been asked "How are you" is the first recipient, an answer which is a member of either [0] or [+] provides then for his use of "How are you" and a return from the other; or, if he's the second recipient, for an end of that sequence:

    A: How are you?
    B: Okay, how are you?
    A: Okay.
        ((end sequence))

Where, furthermore, you don't have to know the person you're dealing with to know what subset the term belongs to. That is, it's his business to use them properly, and not yours to figure out by virtue of what you know about him; e.g., that if he uses 'okay' he has some private subset intention. That's not to exclude the possibility that a given term can be used in such a way as to indicate that it is not its normal subset that's being named, but another. For example, the sarcastic "Great" which indicates 'not at all great, but lousy.' That introduces things like *intonation*, and I'll deal to some extent with that phenomenon eventually. But the very fact that by intonation you can indicate that 'great' is now being used as a member of the [–] subset is a very nice way to see that there is indeed a [–] subset, and a proper place for 'great,' not in the [–] subset. That is to say, the *positioned* character of these subsets and their terms as belonging to one or another, is something that is regularly, systematically available by considering the possibility of 'sarcasm' – where the availability of 'sarcasm' regularly turns on the positioning among items. And 'sarcasm' is something I'll consider some other time.

Q: Could you go over that again? What you said about you can't try to determine what they really mean when they say something?

HS: What they 'really mean' is what they say, for all intents and purposes. People have the conception that psychological terms are properly used by virtue of special knowledge of the persons you're dealing with. (And by 'psychological terms' I mean conventional, lay sets of terms like 'thinking,' 'having a reason for doing something,' etc.) Now that's a kind of thing that people who have had some university training are specially wont to insist on, i.e., "You don't really know about somebody until you . . . ect." But our language is not built in such a way. Persons use psychological terms with the same freedom and 'lack of knowledge of other persons' as they do any other terms.

And persons perfectly well figure they know what somebody is thinking; they know why people are doing things, etc., on the same basis that they know that they're 'white' or 'Jewish', etc., and on the same basis that they know what they're doing. We'll get to some of those things eventually, but

consider a statement like the one we have in the data:[1]

> *Roger*: When a cop sees a hopped up car, he don't care if you're goin'
> forty five you must be doin' somethin' wrong, and if he wants to
> be mean, he can bust you on a thousand things.
>
> *A1*: He doesn't have to have a reason, you know you're not s– cops
> aren't supposed to talk to you unle– s–stop you unless you're
> doing something suspicious. If you have a hotrod that's enough.
>
> *Roger*: He can bust ya on a thousand things non-moving violations if
> you give him any lip, even if you didn't do anything wrong. They
> can just go over your car and write you up ticket this long.

The general sense of it is, cops aren't supposed to stop you unless you've done something wrong, but if a cop wants to be mean he can go over your car and write you up a ticket this long. Where the core thing is 'if he wants to be mean, he can do X.' Now you might figure that the kids might well know what the proper rules are for giving a ticket, but how could they know that the cop was doing that by virtue of 'being mean.' But the decision that the cop was 'being mean' is no different than the decision that somebody is 'eating lunch.' The decision is arrived at via what they're doing.

In any event, the thing that I'm intending is that if somebody says "Okay" and they don't use it 'sarcastically,' etc., then what you understand is that they're naming that their state is in the [0] subset – 'normal,' whatever you want to call it. The consequence being that there is no need to now inquire into why that's so, or what's the matter, or what 'Okay' is for them or for yourself. It's our responsibility to use those things so that persons can make their inferences as they ought to. And we can do that for whomsoever.

So: I introduced those three subsets, their terms, their uses, and the fact that there are two different procedures, the application of which turns on what subset a term belongs to. If a term belongs to [–], then 'the diagnostic procedure' is properly employed, i.e., a procedure directed to determining 'what's the matter.' If, however, it's [0] or [+] there's no such procedure and the sequence is ended.

Then I introduced the notion of 'lying.' And if you're hung up on the fact that after all you can't use personal state terms unless you adequately know about somebody, so as to see how the terms are being used in some special way, then just consider again a thing like the fact that lying is perfectly observable, in the same sense that anything else is. In this case, what the notion of 'lying' involved was that there were two steps, one of which I called 'monitoring,' which consisted of finding the subset, and the second, which involved picking a term from that subset. What 'lying' involved was picking a term excluded by the monitoring operation. The monitoring operation gave you a subset and thereby gave you a set of available terms, and since the

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[1] The data referred to was used in the considerations of lectures 1–7. A transcript is included in the Spring 1966 set, between lecture 2 and lecture 04.a.

subsets are mutually exclusive, it also gave you a set of excluded terms. And you 'lied' when you picked an excluded term.

I suggested that the notion of subset organization is crucial, by virtue of the following sort of thing: If you say you're feeling 'okay,' people will perfectly well say "You don't look okay, you look lousy" or "... you look great" or some such thing as that, but you don't find them saying "You don't look okay, you look normal." Or, if you say you feel 'rotten,' you don't find them saying "You don't look rotten, you look lousy." That is to say, the subset terms are somehow equivalent in ways in which others are not. And correction is by virtue of alternative subsets. Likewise, 'lying' would be claimed by virtue of it appearing that you're not in the subset, rather than that you picked a wrong term from the same subset. (There will be ways in which that concept of lying is quite generalizable, and I'll talk some more about lying when I get through this discussion.)

Now that's essentially where we were. What we know at this point is that if one happens to encounter someone who says "How are you," and one chooses the answer that happens to be 'correct,' then if that answer is from the [–] subset, it's their business to begin the 'diagnostic procedure,' i.e., begin to attempt to determine 'what's the matter.' It is interesting, at least in regard to those who have some notion of the special status of psychological terms or the privateness of emotions, etc., that you can perfectly well give an answer to pretty much anybody, no matter who it is, and they can figure that that's a damn good answer to why you feel lousy – again, even though they don't know you. "Why are you feeling lousy?" "My wife died." They perfectly well can be satisfied with that as grounds for your feeling lousy. Maybe you're joyous over it. Or maybe you haven't seen her for 30 years. Or maybe she died 30 years ago. In that regard, those things are radically standardized phenomena. In any event, there is some body of information that can be used to end the diagnostic sequence, once it gets started. There are a bunch of answers to "Why are you feeling lousy" which are adequate, and which persons do accept – again, without regard to that they don't know you, or do know you, etc.

The core issue is whether there is some regulation of the exchange of these items – forgetting for now about the sequence that can lead to that presenting of information, since there are other sequences which can just as well lead to that presenting of information. You could call somebody up and say "Isn't it terrible, I have to have an operation" instead of meandering around in front of their house until they came out and asked "How are you." So the presenting of that information is a something independent of getting found via this sequence. What we have to consider is the kind of regulations there are about requesting or presenting such information. Where, roughly, that information is anything that could be an answer to the question "Why" when the answer before has been "Lousy" to the question "How are you." Any kind of personal troubles, from extremely minor ones that happened this moment, to very large ones.

I take it that it's perfectly plain that the use of that information is indeed

regulated, and that one could lay out some of the terms of that regulation. That is to say, there are such things as: For some information it should be held within the family; for some information it should be told only to your doctor or your priest, etc. So some of these personal troubles can have extremely restricted legitimate audiences. There may be some troubles for which there's 'only one other person in the world' who has rights to hear it. Sometimes also, 'one other person in the world' who has rights to hear it first. And in that regard, there are various kinds of regulations telling you a sequence which you ought to use. If you're in such a trouble, turn to X first. Such a sequence can be quite important, and it can be quite standardized for all kinds of personal troubles.

There's a recent book out on dying.[2] And at some point there's a discussion of the sequence in which persons are informed about the fact that somebody has died. And that's not a random matter. You just don't call anybody up in any order. Consider, then, if somebody just died, and, for example, somebody calls you up who shouldn't hear now, though they should hear eventually. One of the problems there is that persons who hear such a piece of news properly tell others, and some people shouldn't hear it from certain people but should hear it from others. For example, the brother of the decedent shouldn't hear from a recent acquaintance, but should hear from, e.g., the doctor.

So there are a variety of personal troubles, and they are formulated in ways that can tremendously restrict who, at any given point, should hear them. Furthermore, one is not only concerned with those restrictions that say B doesn't have rights to hear that, but also that B shouldn't be burdened with hearing that. It's not his business in one of either ways, for anybody he would happen to encounter.

Now the regulation of those matters is quite independent of who has rights to say "How are you." As we've seen, pretty much anybody who has rights to say "Hi" has rights to say "How are you." The independence of the regulation of the presentation of information about personal troubles, from the regulation of the use of 'greetings' is, then, something that's quite important to the apparatus we're setting up.

You could imagine that if it were the case that you couldn't deal with some answer to a question like "How are you" that you might ask some person, then you wouldn't ask it. That is, knowing the set of possible answers, and knowing that you could not apply the appropriate procedure given some answer, you just didn't ask the question. That would be one way to regulate avoiding trouble. And that might stand as an alternative to its being the business of the person who is asked the question, to determine whether you can properly handle answers to it. It's clear from what I've already said that having it be the business of the person who asks, to consider whether he could handle any answer, would be impossible to accomplish since you might be the neighbor and best friend of somebody, and under most circumstances if they were 'lousy' they could tell you why, but there would be some circumstances

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[2] The reference is to David N. Sudnow, *Passing On* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1967)

which you wouldn't know, that they couldn't tell you why. There might be that trouble occurring which you don't tell a neighbor or don't tell a best friend but tell somebody else, or don't tell a neighbor or best friend now but tell somebody else now.

One further importantly relevant matter is, it's not sufficient with respect to the regulations about talk about personal trouble, that somebody be an incumbent of such a category as could hear it (and questions about the special ways that membership categories are used will be considered in enormous detail). What I'm trying to point to is this: For example, it might be the case that you should tell your doctor about your pain. And you could say the rule is, if somebody comes up to you and says "How are you," then, if you're 'lousy' and if he's your doctor, then you could tell him what the troubles are, and you should give him the answer "Lousy." But that just isn't true. If you stand around, say, in a hospital, you'll perfectly well find that people who look like they're just about to die – and may be just about to die – will be sitting, say, in a wheelchair in the hall or in the dayroom, their doctor comes up to them, says "How are you?" and they say "Fine."

The issue is, is this interaction he's beginning a doctor–patient interaction or is it just a somebody who's passing you in the hall, who knows you, who is your doctor but isn't at this moment your doctor. That is to say, people belong to many categories; some of them provide that, in general, if you see this person you greet them and no more. Doctor–patient may well provide that under no circumstances except the business interaction may you provide that answer which will then provide for the diagnostic sequence. What one has to determine, then, is not merely that this person is indeed your doctor, but what he is for now. And that he is your doctor may not mean that he is your doctor for now. The fact that you can determine that he is a member of a category which can get such an answer doesn't mean that he gets it now. And that kind of thing that holds for doctors, holds as well for other things on some occasions.

What we have then is: Whereas it was at least initially theoretically possible that potential *askers* would consider whether they could handle any alternative answer before they ask, we saw that that can't work in general. It appears to be the business of the *respondent* to provide that the asker doesn't have to do what he isn't entitled to do, or the respondent isn't entitled to ask him to do. And the way that's controlled is by restricting the subset that you're going to pick answers from. Depending upon 'who it is you're dealing with.' Where they, however, don't have to restrict what they can greet you with – at least within the boundaries of "Hi, how are you," etc.

So there would be some persons who you meet, for whom [–] is always out, others for whom [–] is out sometimes, etc. Where, if they ask "How are you" what you do is 'lie,' i.e., pick an answer from a subset that was excluded by the monitoring operation, if it happens that you are in the [–] subset. You can't announce that one to them by virtue of that announcement generating the diagnostic procedure which they have no business doing for this item at this time.

Now, it isn't in the first instance obvious that 'everyone' will be, has been, at some time or another, confronted with that situation of being in one or another way in some personal trouble and having somebody come up to them and say "How are you" who isn't entitled to know what that trouble is. That could hardly be a basis that anybody would have available for making the statement "everyone has to lie." One can't imagine that somebody could come to know that everyone has to lie by virtue of having collected, by observation, that everyone – even everyone they know – has on some such occasion lied.

That it's 'everyone' turns, I think, on this: That there isn't any available way of telling that it won't happen to you today or tomorrow or next week. That is to say, there aren't procedures for excluding anyone. If you're up and about and meeting people, then it may well happen, given, say, the variability of moods and the chances of life, that you will be in a circumstance such that you have some information that some person ought not to have, and if they say "How are you" they might get it. There's machinery for providing that, and there's no machinery that says 'this will not happen to you.' There's no way of excluding that kind of thing for anyone.

From the beginning, 'has to' has been left open as to what it would involve. But, for example, one can use 'has to' correctly, not only in circumstances where 'there's nothing else in the world you can do,' but where there's some rule that tells you to properly do that. 'Everyone has to pay their taxes.' You don't have to pay your taxes, you can go to jail instead. That is to say, the scope of 'has to' can apparently be appropriate with respect to some kinds of rules. So that if you ought not to tell people why you're feeling lousy, then with respect to that kind of rule you may 'have to' lie. We can then see in part how persons could be in a situation in which there would be machinery which would involve them in *choosing*, say, between lying or not, i.e., choosing whether to say 'lousy' or something other than that.

At this point it would be perfectly interesting to say that we can see how it is that 'everyone' is in a position to 'have to' *choose* whether to lie or not. Where, if I had said at the beginning, "Wouldn't it be nice to see whether everyone is in a position to have to choose whether to lie or not?" nothing could sound less interesting – though it might well sound interesting to know that "everyone has to lie."

Now, the notion of 'lying' that we've developed for the "How are you" situation is generalizable, and I want to offer that generalization and then consider some of its importance. We've noted about the "How are you" situation that what provided for the dilemma that could lead to having to lie was the fact that: Given that the answers were seen to invoke subsets of the set of possible answers; and that subset membership is exclusive; and that, dependent on which subset is invoked there are different consequences. Thus, if [–] were invoked, a procedure was properly applied, what we've called the 'diagnostic procedure,' one directed to developing an explanation for one's state; whereas if the other subsets were invoked by an answer, that procedure was not employed, but either the sequence ended, or, if the answerer had been the first questioned then he might return the question.

The fact that persons may lie in this situation of giving an answer to "How are you" involves us in seeing that they can be oriented to the different consequences of their alternative answers. We may construct a generalization of the situation under which lying is expectable, in the following way: If there is a situation of questioning where the answer is a 'which-type' answer (i.e., the alternatives are known in the first instance as possibles) and where to these alternative possible answers there are properly attached different procedures which are applicable given the particular answer, and where those procedures are differentially consequential – either directly or otherwise – then it is expectable that the differences will be oriented to by answerers and they may attempt to control the use of one or another of the procedures by producing answers that are constructed by reference to those procedures' use, and not to what happens to be the case, i.e., what is otherwise the 'correct' answer, and known to them as such.

What I am proposing here is not so much that I can tell you where to look to find that people will turn out regularly to be lying, but that: If one locates situations characterized as above, then what one will find is that questioners and answerers will regularly expect that persons will be found to be lying. Thus we can locate the situations where claims of lying – or claims, before others have been raised, of *not* lying – will be found. That is not all. What is in its way quite interesting is that both of the following are true: First, that in such situations – as in "How are you" – it is not *any* answer of the alternatives that will be treated in the first instance as a possible lie. And second, that if an assertion that a lie has been made, is made, and it is acknowledged, then we can locate the circumstances, not only under which the assertion can be recurrently made, but also under which the confession will be believed. Only certain answers will be seen as 'possible lies.' If such an answer that is seeable as a possible lie is made, and it is called a lie, and that is confessed to, it will be believed.

This sort of generalization is of interest since it involves a confirmation by quite independent materials, of the formulation we made of lying. And it indicates that lying as a phenomenon's expectability for Members, is something that has systematic bases, and that only certain alternatives of such systematic alternatives are so recognizable, and where such a one has been done and confessed to, that repudiation of it now, is believed.

This has various subversion relevances. For one, consider that the analysis can be used to locate situations in which, if one's task is merely to lie undetectably – lie in such a fashion that, though 'lying' is attended as a possibility in that situation, your answer will not be so seen – then the analysis tells you how to do it. It may further be noted that this possibility of the non-expectable lie is one that has been used, at least literarily, to formulate a type of hero: That fellow who, e.g., confesses to another's crimes and bears the burdens of another's guilt, and who, in confessing, does something that is not seen as a lie, where it is denials that are expectably lies.

What is thus being emphasized and what is of real interest to us, is that the generalization of the lying situation provides us with an expectation of where

persons expect lies, and provides us further with an expectation of what sort of answer in such situations they treat as 'possible lies.' What we get, then, is a way of seeing that lying proves that persons do orient to, and are expected to orient to, the procedural location of their answers, and to produce answers not just by reference to the question that elicited them, but also to the various uses that that answer may have for next actions that may be done.

The fact that persons are so oriented, and that they are recognized by others to be so oriented, has as one of its consequences that wherever such a situation in which lying, as thus systematically expectable, is present, then one would not readily be able to treat an answer as 'just an answer to the question asked.' One would not be able to treat a set of answers as independent of each other, attached merely to their respective questions. And that sort of issue is of some importance in various decoding operations in questionnaires, and issues of statistical treatments of responses. It is in those areas that lying is an important possibility. But the importance does not turn on such a fact as, e.g., that some percentage of answers may not be true, but on the fact that the answers are produced in such a way that the methodology for treating answers is not applicable if conditions such as 'independence' need be assumed to hold for the various answers. And it is because of that that it is no solution to the problem posed by the possibility of lying, to 'allow a margin of error equivalent to the reasonably expectable rate of error due to lying.' Its import is rather more drastic.

And, for example, the fact that persons can lie, and that they lie in appropriate circumstances, is very good information as to their grasp of reality. Why should that be of any interest? Consider the following. When children begin systematically to lie, you have tremendous information about what they're beginning to attend. Whereas lying is, e.g., treated as 'when children begin to lie, isn't that a terrible time,' it's instead information about their orienting to larger and larger sequential structures and their conse-quences. And those are matters which can turn out to be terribly important; e.g., that they can orient to 'danger.' In that regard, then, the emergence of lying for children is something to be attended.

Now, earlier I said that if we could give a systematic account of a certain sort, of the truth of "everyone has to lie," one of its possible interests would be that we would begin to have evidence that the structures which generated the occurrence of lying were somehow available to Members. And that would begin to tell us what kinds of abstract analyses of the social structures they had available. Where one very non-trivial consequence of that is that in going about assessing talk, we're forced by the phenomenon of 'lying' to attend what kind of treatments alternative answers can get, are known to get, i.e., what structures they're parts of, so as to see what could be going on in the production of answers.

But it should certainly not be said that the fact that somebody can say that "everyone has to lie" proves that there are ways in which the analyses are laid out and are already known by Members. For one, they say all kinds of things. Presumably under some random production of talk, some of the things they

say would be true. If, however, various of the parts can be shown to be analytically available to them – like the systematic ways they would be found to be in a position to recognizably lie; change their lies; lie believeably, etc. – all these things can begin to be used to fit together the fact that such a situation is available to them.

In the case that we have at hand, the dilemmas involved in "How are you" can roughly be gotten by, say, considering the kinds of advice on such matters one finds in etiquette books. Here are a couple of quotations which exhibit that in their fashion Emily Post and Amy Vanderbilt were attentive to these kinds of circumstances. The first one is from Amy Vanderbilt's *New Complete Book of Etiquette* (1963), page 212, from a section entitled 'A guide to tactful conversation.'

> In greeting people we say "How do you do." We do not really expect an answer but it is alright to reply "Very well thank you" even if it is a Blue Monday and you feel far from well. No one wants a clinical discussion in response to this purely rhetorical question. In fact, you may answer Socratically with "How do *you* do," expecting and getting no answer.

That was Amy Vanderbilt. Here's Emily Post from her book called *Etiquette* (1955), pp. 16–17. A section called 'The answer to "how are you".'

> The trait of character which more than any other produces good manners is tact. To one who is a chronic invalid or in great sorrow or anxiety, a gay-toned greeting, "Hello Mrs Jones, how are you, you look fine!" while kindly meant is really tactless, since to answer truthfully would make the situation emotional. In such a case she can only reply "Alright, thank you." She may be feeling that everything is all wrong, but to 'let go' and tell the truth would open the floodgates disasterously. "Alright, thank you" is an impersonal and therefore strong bulwark against further comment or explanation.
>
> As a matter of fact, "Alright, thank you" is always the correct and conventional answer to "How are you," unless there is reason to believe that the person asking really wants to know the state of one's health.

In his book *Behavior in Public Places*, Erving Goffman has a discussion of the sociological usefulness of etiquette books, and people who feel that things like etiquette books are laughable, might read it. You wouldn't laugh at it if it were called 'Description of interactional requirements among the Ubangi.'

Lecture 10

Lecture 10 was almost equally divided between finishing up the consideration of "everyone has to lie" and starting off a consideration of 'We' that continued on through lecture 11. The first part of lecture 10, then, has been incorporated into lecture 9, and the second part into lecture 11.

Lecture 11
'We'; Category-bound activities; 'Stereotypes'

Ken: We were in an automobile discussion
Roger: – discussion' the psychological motives for
Al: – drag racing on the streets.

I am going to begin a consideration of 'we' in "We were in an automobile discussion." One interest we would have in 'we' would turn on trying to figure out how it is that somebody who hears it would go about determining to whom 'we' refers. Are there ways available of solving 'we'? In more or less naively considering ways of solving 'we,' you might pose the problem as something like this: Of the various people 'we' *might* refer to, which of them *does* it refer to? Then you might consider, say, the set of persons in that room, and go about including or excluding one or another.

But 'we' is kind of a special term, and I want to do two things. One of them is to point out its complexity, and the other is, while doing that, to introduce some considerations relevant to dealing with 'juxtaposable sentences.' What I mean by that is, when, in the past, logicians went about considering natural languages and their utterances, they engaged in constructing sets of contrary statements, or considering whether one sentence implied another, etc. Where, if you could get contradictory statements, and both were admissable, you had interesting troubles.

The burden of the kinds of remarks I'm going to make goes to the issue of: What are the circumstances under which two seemingly perfectly well juxtaposable sentences are in fact interestingly juxtaposed. For example, if we had '*We do X*,' '*I don't do X*,' we might ask: If those two are admissable isn't something strange? Those two shouldn't be admissable. 'We do X' ought to imply 'I do X.' I'm going to be looking at pairs of sentences like that. The line we'll take is that before deciding the juxtaposability of two sentences, one ought perhaps to see how either one or both are in the first instance – forgetting about juxtaposition – *warranted*. Then perhaps consider the procedure that warranted them as telling you something relevant about what it is that that utterance is saying – where it would be by reference to that procedure that the question of their comparability might arise, or might turn out to be not at all of interest.

I want to treat as primitive to these purposes, statements of the form '*Y do X*,' where 'Y' is some category of persons. 'Women are fickle,' 'Jews cheat,' 'Negroes smell.' Now, it's not any category plus any verb, but a relationship

like the above. And we're not concerned with whether they're true, false, or whatever. Those are just 'known things;' known whether they're correct or not. We'll be considering in part, some of the relations between those things and various possible consequences, and possible non-consequences, of them.

Let me begin with an instance of the sort of thing I mean by 'warranted' statements and their derivation. Consider the following kind of thing. A person can say "I don't smoke" while they're smoking, and it's not anything that's directly usable to convict them of inconsistency or lying. We have it in our data, as a matter of fact. The question is, what are the conditions under which one comes to say "I don't smoke," warrantably. It seems to be the case that one is in a position to say "I don't smoke" if, e.g., when one is offered a cigarette one says "No thank you I don't smoke." People routinely say, not merely "No" when they're offered, but also or only "I don't smoke." And that's in the first instance how they come to be saying "I don't smoke." I suppose what's involved is, if somebody habitually doesn't do something that people do habitually if they do it at all, then that they happen to be doing it on some occasion is irrelevant to their being able to say that they don't do it. "I don't smoke" is directed to, say, the *habitual* character of the non-smoking. So that, for example, if there happened to be a discussion about smoking – or any such thing which you might turn down with such a sentence; for example, drinking – you perfectly well may say in the discussion, "I don't smoke" or "I don't drink," even if in that discussion or on some other occasion you could be found smoking or drinking.

What is of interest here is the preserving of the use of "I don't smoke" out of a history of doing refusal with the use of this item. Where, then, loss of the right to say "I don't smoke" is independent of one's being found on any given occasion to be smoking. It would turn on buying cigarettes, no longer doing refusals, whatever else. If somebody who, say, never turned down a cigarette in that fashion were on some occasion to say "I don't smoke" while smoking, you might figure you could do a conviction or that there was something puzzling. But as long as they were engaged in refusals in this form, they could use the statement on other occasions. It seems that persons perfectly well do that.

Now I'm treating these '*Y do X*' statements as premitive for the following sort of reason. Suppose a bunch of people, A, B, C, do X. Then you might figure that if A, B, C are each Ys then you could say '*Y do X.*' And that's not true. The fact that they're all Ys doesn't mean you can say '*Y do X.*' You can only say '*Y do X*' if there is already a Y for that X, or if, under some procedure which I have no idea about – and I don't think anybody else does – you're going to build a new case of a Y for that X. So, for example, if it's after a baseball game and three players are standing there smelling, and one of them says "Protestants smell," that doesn't go. It's queer. And besides, if it were done it would be seen as some kind of a joke based on a replacement of some other Y that smells, which is already known.

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[1] See the Spring 1966 data handout, p. 278. Al and Roger are smoking cigars, and Roger says "I don't smoke."

The sheer fact that a population of persons can be found to be cases of some one category doesn't mean that you can then build a characterization of the 'Y do X' form with that category. But – again to see the primitive character of 'Y do X' – if A happens to be a person in a category for which there is one of these statements, and you see A do X, you can turn to somebody and say "They always do it." And that involves a series of kinds of things.

For one, you say 'they' always do it. You don't say the Y that A is a member of, you use a pronoun, but it's perfectly well seeable what Y it is. And you're not even using a correct pronoun. That is to say, there may perfectly well be only one person doing it, and nonetheless you can use a plural pronoun. (That's one of the interesting ways in which our notion, say, of pronouns being differentiated into plural and singular, and the conditions for the use of, say, a plural pronoun being that there is more than one person being referred to, doesn't directly capture the kinds of things that seem to be involved.)

'We' can be used in exactly the same way. There are places in our data in which, for example, Roger says to Ken, "You're a poor little rich kid" after which Al says "Now you're a poor little rich kid, we've told you that." And you could read that to say: In Al's statement, he also having said it, 'we' is correct by virtue of his also having said it. That is, as compared to its obvious reading: Al is treating what was said by Roger as said by both of them, in some way perfectly entitleable to be done. (Though again, if a kind of enthnographer were reporting the event he would presumably say, not "Roger and Al did this action," but "Roger did this action." And that's kind of important because if ethnography is supposed to be producing at some point the kinds of characterizations that are, for Members, correct, then you would have to know, say, what a Member in this scene would be making of this scene. And that involves for one, correct characterizations of the persons involved. And, possibly, correct pronouns. Seeing what was done 'on our behalf,' 'on my behalf,' 'not on our behalf at all,' etc.) There's another such scene in our material. Al and Ken are wisecracking about the possible observer to the session, and Roger says "Now don't carry on like that, they'll think poorly of us." Where for that use of 'us' he could say – and presumably somebody who doesn't have the procedures available would have to have said – ". . . of you" (singular or plural).

So on the one hand what we find is that if a single person does something, there are conditions under which it can be said, "They do" (or "They did") and it is perfectly well acceptable. And you can lay out what 'they' will be heard to be, by virtue of reference to one of these 'X do Y' premitives. And alternatively, the fact that a bunch of people are all members of a Y category and they all do something, doesn't mean that you can make a new acceptable statement of the 'Y do X' form, i.e, that having a known Y, you can make a new X for that Y.

And if you have a statment of the 'Y do X' form, then those plural pronouns are usable. If you're not a member of Y you can say "They do (or did) X." If you're a member of Y you can say "We do/did X." Further,

you're in a position to be able to say "We did X," altogether independently of being in a position to say "I was among those who did X," i.e., "I did X." You get to be able to say "We did X" by virtue of 'Y do X' being known, and your being one of those persons who can use 'we' for Y, on whatever occasion you happen to be using Y. It has nothing especially to do with any use of 'I.' So that, for example, 'we' can get used for achievements of the race, of the nation, etc., where no participation was involved. And again one wouldn't convict somebody who came up to you on the campus and said "We're going to play USC tonight" or "We beat USC yesterday." That is to say, one wouldn't say to them, "Unless you can say 'I was among those who beat USC yesterday' you can't say 'we beat USC'."

It's possible of course for some person that both 'I' and 'we' are true, by virtue of, say, his being 'on the team,' one of those who did whatever was being done. But again, 'we' does not necessarily imply 'I,' and the fact that 'I' is usable doesn't necessarily mean that 'Y' is usable – that's arrived at in another way, i.e., you may be one of those A, B, C who are doing something, but the question of how that is to be formed up as a plural phenomenon with some category, is independent of that you can say "I was among them." And once one abstracts all those matters, then one sees that the question of which ones are to be juxtaposed, or which ones are consequential, has to be arrived at according, say, to those rules of use for each one of them.

I want now to focus on the fact that 'we' is a pronoun, and get to a consideration of what relationship there is between statements with those categorials and statements with pronouns. Let me first go through a variety of the ways that pronouns get used, so as to set up some of the issues involved in dealing with them – particularly dealing with 'we' – and then we can get some of the 'variables' involved in fixing in on particular usages and what they may be doing, and what may be involved in analyzing them. And also, then, to see that even though it's obvious that some given usage is doing some particular task, that one can't in doing an analysis, simply state the obvious – "He's obviously excluding Z because he uses 'we' not to refer to Z" – because that wouldn't give you a rule that would hold for other uses of 'we,' and 'we' may not be the only thing involved in such a use.

First of all it's very frequent that if somebody has used a categorial, then later speakers can use 'we' or 'they,' preserving reference to that earlier categorial. "Kids don't drive long . . . ," "We do race." 'We' preserves 'kids.' The choice involved there is to use a pronoun instead of a categorial – and also, which of the pronouns will be used. And in that regard, we can notice that Roger in his statement uses 'they' in the first place:

> *Roger*: Kids don't drive long. They start off when they're si – by the time
> – when they're sixteen, by the time they're eighteen they're back
> walk(hh)ing hehh

whereas in later uses he'll clearly be considering himself such a one; i.e., a 'kid.' So it's not apparently required that for all uses, if one is a member one

use 'we.' And I'm what saying about 'we' does not imply any usage of 'I' at all; it's not the case that automatically if one finds 'we,' 'I' can be used.

In any event, if a categorial is used, then one can refer back to it via certain pronouns, particularly 'we' and 'they.' One would then read a pronoun as a term which is instructive in the sense of it constitutes an instruction to search for such a noun as it could be referring to. That's a very conventional, textual use of pronouns. For one, it's very often found in extended texts, that after a noun has been used, some pronoun is then used to refer back to it, tying the various sentences or statements into some sort of package.

I want to restrict attention to categorials-and-pronouns, and not consider nouns-and-pronouns generally. That is, not to consider as singularly control-ling, syntactic considerations which would operate for nouns and pronouns generally. There will be a lot of things that syntax would permit, that on the one hand do not seem to be permitted, and furthermore do not seem much to occur.

Secondly, there are matters which specifically turn on conversation. For example, matters of 'address.' And here what you have is a series of different results which all look alike in their 'realization' – the utterance. So, for example, if one is talking to some other person or several other persons, for some kinds of things one says, one can always use 'we' inclusively of the recipients of one's utterance. As a matter of address one can say 'we' inclusively. It isn't a matter of 'feeling like we're a we' in the sense in which one talks about it; of being co-members of anything other than the conversation. You can perfectly well get "We never agree," "We certainly do fight a lot," etc. It's not a matter of persons being co-members of anything much but the current conversation, but that there are address rules which permit the use of 'we,' inclusive of them and yourself, to whomsoever you're talking to. And that can be one other person, two others, thousands of others. Now that situation is quite different than the conventional textual use.

It's also the case in conversation that one can be using pronouns for reference purposes, independently of the first usage and differently than the second usage. Consider, say, a situation in which A is addressing B, and in addressing B uses 'you.' B may then return with 'we,' where 'we' can apparently be heard as exclusive of A and inclusive of B and somebody else:

A: What did you do last night?
B: We went to the movies.

One can then get series of different strings of 'we's, some of them being preservatives of earlier 'we's:

A1:   We do race but the times we do get tickets are the only times when we maybe goin' a long distance . . .

others being exclusive strings, i.e., the 'we' of the first excludes the 'we' of the second:

A: What did you do last night?
B: We went to the movies.
C: We stayed home.

One thing to be noted, then, is that 'you' and 'we' are alternative ways of doing address. Now, 'you' as an address term can be quite interesting, because it often does have *categorial import*. Persons often seem to use 'you' in such a way that we might call it a *'local representative'* of persons who, were the one called 'you' not present, would be referred to as 'they.' Where it's not obvious that everybody not present would be referred to as 'they.' Plenty of non-present people can be referred to as 'we;' for example, the case of "We went to the movies." And if 'you' is heard as a local representative of 'they,' those 'they's are characteristically some category. Further, one notable thing that follows from 'you' being a local for 'they' is, if you have a simple arrangement of the pronoun terms, 'you' is 'second person' and 'they' is 'third person.' And in that sense, the terms would be treated as, if you want to refer to a singular 'they,' you would use 'he' or 'she.' But the old chart: I, you, he, she, we, you, they – is not the only way it works.

Once we get into the issue of address, and particularly to that of directing an utterance to somebody, as something that can go on in conversation, then one finds some uses of terms like 'he' and 'she,' which tend to be treated as terms that refer to somebody non-present whereas they're not at all necessarily that sort of thing. One characteristic use of 'he' involves this sort of thing: A person is present and has just talked. The current speaker is picking up something that one said. If the current speaker used 'you' as the subject of that utterance, then that utterance would be re-directed to the last speaker. If what the current speaker wants to do is not direct the utterance to that last speaker but not necessarily exclude that last speaker from speaking, i.e., just leave the matter of who should talk next open, then one way to proceed is to use 'he' as the subject. For one thing, such a use needn't mean that such a person is being treated as 'not one of us.' So, for example, in our data pretty much every one who is ever referred to as 'one of us' is also in some utterance referred to as 'he.' So in that regard, somebody who can be referred to as 'we,' can also be referred to as 'he.'

Then there are other matters with respect to 'we' and 'they.' Earlier I mentioned that if A did something that B is talking about, and if A and B are relevantly co-members of something or other – relevantly to what A did – then B may say "we did" that thing that A did, i.e., he may treat A's action as having been 'on behalf of' A and B, or A and B and others, or a category that A and B belong to. In which case you can have a situation in which 'we' is used for some action that you would otherwise – if you were watching it, or for all A knew who did it – think was done by a singular doer, and not a plural, which 'we' proposes about it.

Note that that's often done with intentions of turning A's action into a categorial action, i.e., such a thing as 'we do.' And the converse is also found, i.e., where A did some action and B, in talking about it, will say "They do

0that sort of thing" or in various ways use 'they' to refer to that action. And there, it will turn out to be quite clear that some categorial is being intended by 'they.' (We leave aside now the question of how that categorial can be found, and that a single categorial may be seen to have been intended though not mentioned, and why somebody would choose to use 'they' or 'we' rather than the categorial term.) So we can see that there are some relatively systematic relations between some of those, i.e., just as singular actions can be treated as something that 'we' did, so, too, can another singular action be treated as something that 'they' did. The instruction that 'we' or 'they' would be treated as giving, would be 'find the categorial' – not necessarily a mentioned categorial.

Of course 'we' or 'they' can also be used in the fashion I talked of as 'summative,' i.e., if A, B, C do some action, then if A is speaking he can say 'we.' And there, there may be no issue of a categorial, or for that matter any singular noun that would be intended, invoked, etc. Similarly, if B, C, D do an action, A talking about it can talk about 'they.' Now one way in which such usages become possibly interesting is where it's not obvious that A, B, and C did some action – in the sense that it may be perfectly obvious that A did something, B did something, C did something, but that they are treatable as something that A, B, and C did for purposes of 'we,' is something you can then learn from the use of 'we.' For example, A asks a question of E, B asks a question of E, C asks a question of E. If one of them says "Well, we've been questioning you for ten minutes," then that those things are treated as having been done 'serially,' say, where each of them in some way participated in a series, is an independent issue in part from that A, B, and C asked single questions. And that matter can then come up in cases of, say, those actions which are specifically plural but where each of the parts are done by a single person. That they are parts of some plural can be picked up by virtue of uses of 'we' or 'they.' For example, 'taking a side in an argument' is something that might be picked out of A taking a position, B taking a position, C taking another position, and then D saying "A and C and I have been arguing with B." As compared to what might otherwise have to be treated as pairs of alternative positions taken by A and B, B and C, etc.

Part of this can be summarized by saying, roughly, that terms like 'we' and 'they,' when apparently used for actions done by single persons, will not be found to be used for *any* action. They're not randomly distributed. And the kind of order that's involved in them can then be a matter of interest, something extracted, and something, then, that informs us about the way in which actions are seen as coordinated. Not any action that A does will be said by B to be something 'we' did or 'they' did. And one can look to see which ones and what kind of properties they have. But you also have to attend whether it's the case that the pronoun is being used *only*, e.g., to do a directed utterance, or to treat some prior utterance, or to invoke a category, or to do *combinations* of them. That is to say, we can get clear cases of each sort (how they are clear cases is of course a problem), but then we get more or less intricately combined cases. But, as I say, there are some initial positions you

can take so as to begin to lock in on the stuff. For example, if what seems to be going on is 'referring to some action initially done by A, as done by "we",' then you can see that something special is involved because you won't find that being optional for any action. You get a set of such actions, and you find that they're quite restricted. (And by the way, it's also perfectly okay for a single doer of an action to refer to it as something 'we did', i.e., it's not necessarily required that the doer say 'I did' and that only another can say about it that it was something 'we did.') And it will often be the case that one might want to leave the 'we's and 'they's aside, because it turns out that the populations of speakers will reverse them. That of course is quite interesting. It will tell us about agreed-upon formulations of the action as categorial, independent of the group that's treating it as either their sort of action or not their sort of action, or some specific other sort of action.

With that kind of stuff at hand, even if we're going to say that 'we' should in the first instance be treated as an instruction of some sort, the sheer occurrence of 'we' is not going to tell us what kind of instruction it is. And furthermore, it's not going to tell hearers what kind of instruction it is. That they can nonetheless perceive it, means that there must be some way in which they are able to find what instruction it is. Which may then require us to deal with other things than 'we' in determining its use.

Just as it's not the case that the use of either 'we' or 'they' for actions done singularly is random, so, too, combinations of some categorial with some verb like 'kids race cars,' 'kids drive fast,' are not random either. The range of possibilities is huge since, given that one is dealing with verbs that take human nouns in the first place, one can put in any or many human categories if one can put in one of them, and get perfectly grammatical utterances. It is nonetheless the case that you do not get *any* pairs uttered. And each such pair is then something to be considered.

Of the pairs '*Y do* X,' whatever they are, at least some of them have a set of uses, ways of being dealt with, consequences, etc., which are quite general to that set. So that the sort of things done with 'women are fickle' is formally similar to the sort of things done with some other 'Y do X.' And rather than it being the case that you ought to be puzzled by a person saying 'We do X' and then also saying 'I don't do X,' the uses of 'I don't do X,' i.e., those verbs with which it is combined, are almost a signature of the existence of a statement of the form 'Y do X' as a known thing. The situation is partly similar to that of absences. Just as it's imaginable that people can say on any scene that something didn't happen, and they don't do that but, rather, proceed in quite regulated ways in referring to absences, so also it's the case that things that are said to be 'things I don't do' could also be treated as indefinitely extendable and therefore trivial. But again, they're used with great caution. And the specific basis for their use is typically that one is a member of a categorial, and for that categorial there is such a statement as 'Y do X.' Where, that statement being known provides the relevance of 'I don't do' such a thing.

Furthermore, one can rather generally state the kind of activities that statements of the type 'I don't do X' are. They can regularly be one of two

sorts of things: 'complaining' or, say, 'boasting.' If you take the case of 'complaining,' you might begin to locate what might be complained of by taking what can be specified to be something valuable attached to some group – that the group thinks so or somebody else thinks so – and just negate it, then you can get expectable complaints from one who is a member of that category. And you can begin to get some sense of the status of those 'Y do X' statements with respect to things like 'truth.' It often isn't the case that the juxtaposition of 'Y do X' and 'I don't do X' means that therefore 'Y do X' is false. It means "What's the matter with me that I don't do X." And what it involves is then trying to set up a program whereby you can come to be a proper member of Y. And of course you don't need the juxtaposition of statements on any given occasion. Sheer membership would provide for the observability of one not doing X, where it's not just anybody who would notice "I'm not doing X."

In our data you can see, for one, that "Kids do race" would seem to be such a thing, not only in the sense that 'everybody knows it' but also as something that for members is valuable. Such that Al, for one, has got to justify how come he doesn't get tickets:[2]

Roger:	I̲ have got a speeding ticket, on the average of one every three an' a half months.
	(//)
Roger:	Since I've been driving.
Al: →	I haven't – I have never go̲tten a // ticket.
Roger:	A:n' I dese̲rve it.
Dan:	ha ha // ha hhh hhh
Roger:	I dese̲rve it.
Dan:	hhh // ((softly)) ( )heh
Roger:	Because–
Roger:	I always drive, about seven miles an hour faster'n everybody else.
(Dan):	((very softly)) (//)
Roger:	Y'know?
(Dan):	((very softly)) Yah // mm hm,
Roger:	Like, everybody's driving thirty five, I'm drivin' 'bout forty two something (like that).
	(/)
Roger:	So this's the conseque(hh)nce I hafta pa̲y. Cause I can't stand driving that slo̲w.
Al: →	I've – I've – I've – All the time // I've been driving, I haven't gotten a ti//cket,
Roger:	Specially when I think I can –
Roger:	– handle a car at that // spe̲ed.

[2] The data is not shown in the original lecture. The excerpt is taken from the Spring 1967 data handout, slightly simplified.

Al :	But I've always –
Al :	⌜But I've always –
Roger :	⌞(in traffic.)
Al : →	I should've gotten a // ticket but uh
(Dan) :	((very softly)) ( )
Ken :	Oh I c'n think of a million times when I̲ should've gotten a ticket . . .

That is, getting tickets would be something he would seemingly be proud of. That he doesn't is something that people may complain about of him, and which he has got to justify. He does it quite voluntarily. But, given the announcement by Roger that he gets tickets, the rate at which he gets them, and given the earlier discussion, "Kids don't drive long," etc., you'll find people like Al volunteering that they don't have tickets, and explaining why they don't. And that sort of thing will be found for all sorts of things in which you have, in the first place, one of those 'Y do X' statements.

I'll just make a passing remark. Lots of people think that these things – often talked about roughly as 'stereotypes' – are terrible sorts of things, and the world would be a lot better if we did away with them. In that regard I offer a caution: One of the basic ways they get used is, if some action is done and one wants to find who did it, the existence of a 'Y do X' statement is an instruction 'look for such a one.' Or, if there is a somebody to whom something happened and now your task is to identify them – where they could be identified in many ways – then the existence of such a statement tells you which one to use.

If you remove the statements you couldn't get things like this: You read in the paper, 'In the last year and a half 26 Negroes were killed in the South, in unsolved murders.' Now people who don't like a statement of that form, in that it can be used to enforce prejudice, etc., have got to consider that if you remove 'stereotypes' what you lose is how to classify those 26 murders. There were, say, 124 murders in the South, and we're dealing here with 26 murders that nobody knows who did. If nobody knows who did them, then nobody knows why they were done. Then the question of how to classify them becomes systematically impossible to handle, i.e., you go through a list of the persons with, then, lists of traits: This person was a man, he was such and such age, etc. Now the idea that it was the murder of a 'Negro' already sets up how it is you're going to go about finding who did it. That categorization which starts from some relevancies independent of a single action, permits you to go about, e.g., doing an explanation, or searching out how the thing could have happened. And ordinarily, if you have a singular recurring action, and you get a statement "we do that" or "they always do things like that," what's involved now is not simply that one is proposing to have categorized it as the actions of such people, but to have *explained* it as well. If you can turn a single action into 'a thing that they do,' it's thereby solved.

Lecture 12

Category-bound activities;
Programmatic relevance; Hinting;
Being 'phoney'

I want now to deal with a few edges of the 'Y do X' stuff. I call some of the statements of that character '*programmatically relevant.*' And I initially intend to notice by that term, the stuff I've talked about by reference to 'I don't do it.' That is, if there is a 'Y do X' statement, and you're a member of some category Y for such a statement, then if one comes to say things like 'I don't do X,' one treats that on some cases as a problem one has, to be remedied by some course of action, i.e., so as to bring oneself under the auspices of the statement. The statement is preserved, and various persons who are incumbent in the category of that statement go about arranging their lives by reference to making the statement 'more correct,' perhaps. That is, you don't use your state to falsify the statement. Instead, your state can be 'defective' by virtue of the statement. The idea is, then, that there are various programs which persons can generate so as to satisfy their being one of those for whom that thing is so.

In that regard, the statements can constitute kinds of advertisements. If something is known about, e.g., what lawyers are like, then persons can pick a religion, pick a place to live in, pick people to be with, so as to have themselves fitted into the formulation. And there are other matters involved in that sort of thing. For example, each person may find themselves instructed that it's their business to maintain themselves in such a way that the correctness of what is known can be seen in their actions. "Remember, you're a lady." That is, people will see you and see you via that thing, and see that it's being upheld. There are many other uses of these sorts of things, but I'll leave that aside for the moment and start somewhere else, with respect to something that will partially merge with what we've already got, and will also set up some further problems.

It's a perfectly obvious fact that there are other ways of doing identifications which intend a category (identifications of oneself or of others) than by announcing that 'I'm a such and such' or 'he's of a such and such group,' etc. I want to be interested in several of those other ways. Here's a quotation from a piece of data. A conversation between a suicidal man and a psychiatric social worker.

P: So you can't watch television. Is there anything you can stay interested in.

S: No, not really.

P: What interests did you have before.

S: I was a hair stylist at one time. Did some fashions now and then. Things like that.

P: Then why aren't you working.

S: 'Cause I don't want to I guess. Maybe that's why.

P: But do you find that you just can't get yourself going.

S: No. Well– as far as this job goes?

P: Yes.

S: Well, I'll tell you. I'm afraid– I'm afraid to go out and look for a job. that's what I'm afraid of. But more, I think I'm afraid of myself because– I don't know, I'm just terribly mixed up.

P: You haven't had any trouble with anyone close to you?

S: Close to me? Well I've been married three times, and uhm– close, you mean as far as arguments or something like that?

P: Yes.

S: No, nobody real close. I'm just a very lonely person. I guess I'm very–

P: There's nobody who loves you.

S: Well, I feel that somebody must someplace, but I don't know where or who.

P: Have you been having some sexual problems.

S: All my life.

P: Uh huh, yeah.

S: Naturally, you probably suspect, as far as the hair stylist and– either go one way or the other. There's the straight or homosexual something like that, I'm telling you my whole life is just completely mixed up and turned over, and it's just smashed and smashed and I'm not kidding.

The idea behind that is, when he names that he's been a hair stylist, etc., he seems from later talk to take it that he's *hinted* that he's a homosexual. It appears then, as one way, and not at all unusual, that there are some categories that identify oneself, which one can hint at belonging in by naming some activity that one does. So that one other way that one goes about doing identifying is by 'hinting.' And it involves picking some activity which has some properties, whatever they may be, which provide for the activity to be hintable with, about some particular category – specifically, some membership identification category.

When the 'hinting' phenomenon is itself subjected to consideration it turns out to be extremely interesting in various ways. One thing which will turn out to be of interest for our consideration of "We were in an automobile discussion" is something like this: One can be found to have hinted at an identification, and if it turns out that you're not a member of that category that you were found to have hinted at, then we don't have a situation where

it's simply a matter of 'correcting a first impression,' i.e., I got a bit of information and it looked like you were hinting at such-and-such, later on it turns out that you're not a such-and-such, so maybe you weren't hinting. Rather, the initial, properly-seen-hint may be used to formulate, by reference to what later turns out to be the case, that you were a *phoney*.

The notion of a 'phoney' is, then, methodologically very important. One of the key things about it is that you can be found to be a phoney about some category that you've never claimed to be a member in. And then one comes to see that doing 'hinting at an identification' does not necessarily at all involve that you intend to do 'hinting,' but that there may be, e.g., things which are said and things which are done which are properly seeable as 'hinting at an identification.' And if you don't intend to hint at the identification that they imply, then you'd better not do that thing.

Just as a matter of indicating where we'll be moving towards, let me point up what that could mean for our data. Suppose it were the case that saying "We were in an automobile discussion" constitutes a way of hinting at some categorial membership. Then, even if it were perfectly true that you were in an automobile discussion, if you are not a member of that category – or not relevantly a member of that category – then you had better say something else. The perfect correctness of what you announce, and the fact that you might have said it and meant nothing more than that it was true, does not control what can be made of it.

What we then need to consider in that regard are the following sorts of things, which we can consider by reference to the fact that we've done them, and can then consider some of their import. Somebody calls up your house, you answer the phone, they ask what you're doing, and you lie. What are the kinds of things that you'll find yourself not telling somebody that you were doing? There are some that are specifically illegitimate or private or whatever else. But there are a lot of things that you'll find yourself not telling somebody that you were doing which, say, you know perfectly well that anybody does on some occasion, but which would permit a formulation of the sort of person you are, which for some reason or another you may not want to have. Or, for example, somebody knocks at the door and you're doing something. And now you don't just stop, but you remove its traces. The magazine you were reading, you stick away. You may not turn the television set off, but change the channel. And it's interesting in its fashion that persons will do that for anonymous audiences i.e., it used to be a funny thing in the television monitoring systems for finding out what programs people were watching, that they might say they were watching Walter Cronkite, at any hour of the day or night, when they weren't even watching television. It's interesting in that they're controlling an impression of themselves for somebody who couldn't matter less in some fashion.

So there's that sort of thing in which conclusions are apparently known to be arrivable at, by reference to such observables and such reporteds. And if you happen to be caught directly, you might say I just turned it on, I never watch it, I never read it, only this time, etc. Alternatively of course, there's

that sort of activity which involves arranging matters when somebody is expected, so they will find, incidentally, something on the table which they can then use to see what sort you are.

Now the thing is that it may perfectly well be true that you bought and read this month's magazine of that sort. But you'd better not have it on the table unless the kind of inference that could be made about you will stand up. Otherwise, that it happens to be perfectly true that you read this week's issue, or every issue this month or this year, is not sufficient for it to have been there, i.e., somebody will see that and treat it as a known usable event. If they then find out that whatever else they figure such a one as reads that magazine does, you don't do, then it's not just that you happen to be reading it, but you're 'a phoney.'

What's interesting is that you can be a phoney at a whole lot of things, and that each of those are arrivable-at in the same way. And again, there's no issue of merely revising earlier impressions, but those earlier impressions are treated as having been produced so as to *get* them, which then permits the assertion 'phoney.' One doesn't, then, want to constrain 'hints at identification' to those produced by reference to an intention to mislead or an intention to correctly identify, but one wants to allow that 'hints at identification' have the scope that permit identifications to be made which can then be found to be 'phoney.' One comes, then, to see that if some matter is relevant to identification, that, independently of the issue of it happening to be true, correct, or whatever, it nonetheless, in its utterance, in its presentation, whatever else, is to be controlled by reference to what identification will be made, given it. With respect to our data, "We were in an automobile discussion," then: If that's a thing that could be hinted with, then it ought not to have been asserted unless that 'hint' were known to have been correctly placed. And 'correctly' doesn't mean necessarily that it's true that they are such people as do it — whatever category that is. It could as well mean that they are trying to put something over on somebody.

One can then see another partial constraint on the use of statements like 'We do X' or 'I do X' or 'I was just doing X' or 'We were just doing X,' etc., which is that independently of whether it perfectly well is true or not, its assertion can have consequences which operate to provide that you should say something which, while on the occasion of its utterance is not true, might otherwise be true. That is, if they're asking you something that they're going to use to make an identification, then answer with that sort of thing which permits a correct identification, independently of whether, when you happened to be found, you were doing it. I take it that people find themselves doing such things all the time.

Let me now go on to a piece of data and a discussion to go with it, to deal with a slightly different but obviously very intimately related set of usages. If there is some statement that's known, and one wants, e.g., to show that a case falls under it without however making that claim on one's own part, one can so construct a characterization that persons who know that known statement will 'automatically' use your material to see that's what you're saying. Where,

that they arrive at that conclusion involves them sometimes in showing that they know the statement also, and know its relevance, and can use it proceduraly.

The simplest cases are, typically again, that sort of thing where somebody says "they always do it," you survey the scene, see a 'woman driver' or some such thing as that, and see that that's what's being talked about. Where the fact that you see that undercuts any claim you might later try to make that women drivers aren't like that – which you could have made if, instead of "they always do that," they had said "women drivers are just terrible." That is to say, there are ways of preventing somebody from playing dumb in ways they might like to do.

There are also ways of, let's say, more or less subtly being prejudicial. There was a time recently when the Soviet Union was accused of being anti-semitic and encouraging anti-semitism among the Russians, and they claimed that it just wasn't true. Now they had a procedure for being anti-semitic which served to permit anti-semites to see what they would like to see, without it ever having been claimed that Jews were after all what everybody knows they are. It works like this: A variety of people were prosecuted for 'economic crimes.' That they were Jews was not claimed, that they were prosecuted because they were Jews was not claimed, no such things were claimed. What was done was that the report of economic crime convictions involved among other things, lists of names. And among the Russians, lists of names may be inspected for such things as, are they Jewish. And given the fact that it's known that Jews are people who do things like that, the question of who these people are could in the first instance be handled by inspecting the list so as to see whether there is information that would tell you that those were Jews. Then the product can be perfectly consistent with whatever one knows, and in that case, then, could be something which persons could claim was encouraging latent anti-semitism.

Now the technique for presenting information which can be inspected, given that persons know what they want to look for, involves finding that sort of thing which stands in some relation to the category they want to find. And while the right names can work to locate all sorts of things (i.e., to encourage anti-semitism you would have to pick people with good names, since lots of Jews don't have 'Jewish' names), names are not always so usable.

I have, with regard to categories hintable-at by naming an activity, used the term '*category-bound activities*.' And that notion will be to some extent applicable to some of those things that I've been talking about under the form 'Y do X' (which are regularly hintable-at). The notion of 'category-bound activities' is extremely gross, and there are much finer ways that activities and categories can be useably related to each other. So I want to offer the following sort of caution.

Once students have that sort of notion at hand, they then use it to preserve in their discussions the kinds of things that they had begun to get cautious about saying. That is to say, in the first instance you might have said "Therapists behave in such-and-such a way." You might then get cautious

about using such a statement. You may however, go on to say "That therapists behave in such-and-such a way is category-bound to being a therapist," and figure that you can then use it in precisely the same way as you used "Therapists behave in such-and-such a way" to draw your conclusions about, say, how *this* therapist behaves. Whereas, first of all, what you always have to do is begin with: "It's a known thing that therapists behave in such-and-such a way." The inferences that are permitted from that are not anything about how a therapist behaves, or how any given therapist behaves, but what it is that might then follow as an inference that persons who know that 'known thing' make.

Our discussion so far about such kinds of known things is that they're known quite independently of whether each given person you happen to encounter, does them. One of the marvelous things about category-bound activity phenomena is that you could conceivably perfectly well say "Negroes are such-and-such, but every one I've ever known is an exception." Now that means that if you're doing a study you cannot use such things as methods for generating results of the sort: 'They are known to do such-and-such, he did it, therefore he's a such-and-such.' Instead, you might find yourself in a position of having to say something like: 'They are known to do such-and-such, he could be found to be one of them, and therefore he might be expected by Members to do that,' or ' . . . that would be used to explain why he did it if he did it,' or ' . . . they would find that what he was doing was that very thing.'

Even that, however, is not yet anywhere near good enough. What you have to do is, each time that you want to say that something is a 'category-bound activity,' have some way of proving that it's so. Where the fact that you know that it's so in the first place, only sets up the problem of proving that it's so. Now what are the ways of proving that it's so? Some of them we've already gotten. That, for example, the category is hintable-at by naming the activity, is one way of coming to see that it's one of those. But even here, you have to be able to show that what took place was a 'seen hint' or a 'seeable hint' – or a 'wrongly seen hint' as in the case of the 'phoney' situation. There are lots of ways of proving that something is category-bound to some category, and I'll try to give some instances of ways of proving that next time.

Lecture 13

Category-bound activities: "The baby cried;" Praising, warning, and challenging; Tautological proverbs

I'll start off with the consideration of how you'd go about proving that something's a category-bound activity, giving one instance of such a thing. Then I want to pick up a few other considerations, and deal also with some of the reasons why we need the notion 'category-bound activity.'

I'll take a perfectly plain statement that would initially seem to refer to a category-bound activity: *"The baby cried."* Everybody knows babies cry. If there seems to be no interest in that, then we'll see right off one aspect of what import there is for dealing with an utterance that it turns out to be a case of; i.e., 'Category, plus category-bound activity bound to that category.' And that is that there are perfectly good ways in which a statement like "The baby cried" is ambiguous, which one wouldn't see. And that one has a situation where the separate parts, when put together, turn out to produce an ambiguity that is not expectable; that would not be found – though if pointed out it is perfectly obvious. That is one of the things that category-bound activities do.

In the case of 'the baby,' the phrase 'the baby cried' is perfectly understandable, under the assumption that the 'baby' is an 'infant.' But the term 'baby' is used with quite different kinds of intentions also. If it was used as 'the baby of the family,' 'that's my baby,' things like that which do not have the meaning 'infant,' if you then have a statement "the baby cried," "my baby cried," it would be something quite different if it were referring to an 'adult' who happened to be being called 'baby.'

Consider things which are quite parallel in their fashion, e.g., "Catholics often confess" and "Criminals often confess." There are lots of them, and we can see ways in which, while just by reference to the components one would figure them to be quite ambiguous, they turn out not to be heard as ambiguous at all. Where I'm taking as a given, the fact you wouldn't merely select the category being used by virtue of the fact that it's true, since a lot of them would be true, and in any event, being true might be quite incidental. But you're intending to point out that, e.g., 'people confess to crimes,' where, then, you would presumably pick, for a single case of it, "a criminal confessed," even though that criminal might also be called 'a Catholic.' But to say "a Catholic confessed" might be doing something quite different than confessing to a crime. Likewise, if it were an 'adult' who cried, even if he were

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the person referred to as 'the baby of the family,' you might well not say 'the baby cried,' but something quite different than that.

The selection of a category, then, can have some impact in resolving potential ambiguities; that is to say, making them not-arisable; under, of course, a circumstance where you're not dealing with, e.g., machine translation, but with another Member, who knows the categories' uses. You might be using terms which are ambiguous, say, dictionarywise, but by putting certain combinations together you will not get misunderstood in ways that you perfectly well could get misunderstand in intending to point out the 'same' action with the use of other, correct, terms.

Now how do we go about showing that 'baby' and 'cry' have this characteristic of 'cry' being category-bound to 'baby'? The procedure I'll use is rather more general in its capabilities than handling 'baby' and 'cry,' though it is not by any means the only way of doing things like this. Let's suppose for now – and in a while I'll consider how it is that we don't have to leave it a supposition – that in one sense of the term 'baby,' it's part of a set of what I'll call '*positioned categories*:' 'baby' . . . 'adolescent' . . . 'adult.' The dots mean that there are other categories in there, in various places. By 'positioned' I mean such a matter as, that 'B' could be said to be higher than 'A,' and if 'B' is lower than 'C' then 'A' is lower than 'C,' etc. And I'm not specifically intending that by 'higher' or 'lower' what we'll be talking about is anything like the mere fact that there's an age progression. That is not what is key to a positioned category collection.

So we have a collection that has positioned categories. The category we're dealing with is a member of such a collection – a member of at least such a collection; in the case of 'baby' it would be a member of other collections, e.g., 'family.' Where 'family' does not happen to be a collection of positioned categories i.e., 'baby,' once applicable to somebody, is thereafter indefinitely applicable – you remain 'my baby' until I'm dead. The term in its collection of positioned categories wouldn't get such a use.

If there is an activity 'bound' to some category of the positioned collection, then one thing that we may find about it is that if a person is a member of another such category and does that action which is bound to this category, then he can be said to be 'acting like an X,' that X being whatever category the activity is bound to. And when "You're acting like an X" or things to that effect are said, that turns out to be one of two sorts of actions. If the activity is bound to a category lower than the one the person is in, then the statement is a 'degradation.' If the activity is bound to a higher category than he is in, then the statement is 'praise.' So that, say, in the case of an 'adolescent' found to be crying, they can be said to be 'acting like a baby' and that statement will be seen as a 'degrading' remark. And if we process 'cry' through this kind of thing, we find that it's bound to 'baby' in even a stronger way than we need, but in a way characteristic of these things also, which is: If there are circumstances such that for a 'baby' to cry it would be quite appropriate and he doesn't, then, for one, what we get is one of those 'doesn't do X' statements of absence, i.e., that he isn't crying is noticeable.

And it also can be said that he's 'acting like a big boy,' which is seen as 'praise.'

You can then use those 'acting like an X,' 'looks like an X,' etc., types of statements to begin to get some of the data relevant to proving that some statement you want to show to be category-bound is or is not. And you can collect, e.g., the specific damning uses of categories, i.e., where you say about somebody 'he's an X' where it's not true, on an occasion of seeing that the thing he's done is category-bound to 'those people.' There are a bunch of things which are specifically named objects, now named by categories: 'Jewing him down,' 'doing Nigger-work,' etc.

On the issue of 'positioning,' the reason one doesn't merely want to talk about 'age progression' as an obvious base for saying that what seem like age-type categories are positioned, is that it perfectly well could be the case that while, say, 'adult' is higher than 'adolescent,' it may also be the case that 'old man' is lower than 'young man.' In regard, then, to positioning with respect to some problem, you would have to be able to determine that there was positioning, and what that positioning was. And a kind of way to get at that may be something like the following. Let's suppose that 'boys' and 'men' are relatively positioned to each other, 'men' being higher than 'boys.' Suppose also that a member of the lower could become a member of the higher. Consider the case of somebody who's a 'boy.' For 'boys' there's a bunch of things which are seeable (by audiences or by the boys) as 'dangerous.' A lot of things that are 'dangerous' for 'children' are not 'dangerous' for 'boys;' other things, that are 'dangerous' for 'boys,' are not 'dangerous' for 'men.' When something arises that's 'dangerous for such a one,' then that one can be 'warned.'

Now the very fact of 'warning' about something is informative to the person being 'warned,' of the classification that's being made of them. That's plain enough. You can make jokes like that. The depth of a wading pool that a little kid can be warned of, can be used to jokingly denegrate a full-grown man by warning him of it, thereby proposing that he's that sort of person, i.e., a little kid, where he's obviously not. So, the very act of 'warning' can be informative about the kind of formulation that the warner is making of the warnee.

Further, there's a wonderful kind of ambiguity involved in receiving warnings. That is to say, what one who receives an observable 'warning' can make of it, involves that observable 'warning' in having alternative possibilities. The big thing is that a 'warning' can be heard as a 'challenge.' In fact their linguistic forms, for example, are often quite indistinguishable. Now, that relation of 'warning/challenge' can turn on the categorial positions of the warned – possibly challenged – person. Specifically, if a 'boy' is warned *qua* 'boy,' and turns that warning into a challenge, then he takes the, now, 'challenge' as a chance to prove that he's not in the first instance – or is no longer – a 'boy.' We have a kind of 'testing boundary' which on the one hand can be set up and used by virtue of 'challenges' made. Alternatively, it can be set up and used by virtue of things that are not intended 'challenges' turned

into such things. So that there are a bunch of things you can prove you're not a member of, not a member of any more, by some successful response to a 'challenge.'

That that sort of thing obtains between categories, i.e., that there is provision for some movement, would seem to capture at least part of the sense of their being 'positioned.' It is by no means all the ways in which any two categories that we figure are 'positioned' are in fact 'positioned' – some may not provide for any movement. But then there might well be other procedures which can involve us in seeing how that they are 'positioned' is to be found. But for one, what seems to be involved is that if you're using the phenomenon of 'positioning' to handle the 'category-boundedness' of some activity, then you have to deal with 'positioning.' And that may be an altogether independent task, involving altogether different procedures, etc.

Now there's a bunch of other things that one could look to for getting at category-boundedness in some way other than 'we think they're category-bound.' You could consider the distribution of the *tautological proverbs*: things like 'women are women,' 'boys will be boys.' The occurrence of those things tends to be involved in one way of marking that some activity took place which is category-bound to the named category. I found the following incident in a book called *Washington Wives* by an extraordinarily brilliant woman who was the wife of a congressman in the period of about 1890 to 1915, and she wrote observations about Washington at that time. But she came from a very old Virginia family, and at one point she reports a story that took place in her youth. It goes something like this (and we've heard parallel things many times): Some woman is brought to trial for being a 'common scold,' which was a misdemeanor in Virginia at that time (it may still be for all I know). The woman's lawyer goes through a whole big thing about what a wonderful person she was, took care of the family, etc., etc. Finally the judge inquires what she was like, relevant to what she's been accused of being like, to which the return is "Well your honor, women will be women."

That's just the way these tautological proverbs occur. They are not merely announcing what is perfectly well true for them, i.e., women are of course women, but they're pointing out that some thing that they're dealing with, some occasion that provides for their occurrence, involves an activity which is category-bound to that category. Now, in the case of 'boys will be boys' I have a much nicer instance which involves an occasion in which President Johnson had a conference with a bunch of congressmen, after which somebody gave out a version of what had taken place. That created a big storm, which forced out the real version – which was apparently quite different than what this guy had given out. So then Johnson is asked about this whole story and he says, "Most of the time when you tell people certain things in confidence, they treat it that way. But some very partisan politicians or other mischievous types just can't be held to that, and now and again you get into trouble. You know, boys will be boys." Here, the appropriateness of 'boys will be boys' by reference to, say, mischief-making, is doubled by the use of the category 'boys' to degrade what wasn't a 'boy.' So you can get that

kind of a combination. But wherever you get a specific occurrence of one of these tautological proverbs you can lock in on something of the sort we're dealing with. They're not merely logicians playthings, and by no means 'platitudes.' They do quite a specific task.

I want to point out a couple of things. One of them is that this feature of *'programmatic relevance'* I talked of earlier, is something that seems to be not merely an analyst's construction but is specifically learned. Kids seem to learn that thing as a special phenomenon, and learn it quite early. When I was working on the notion of 'programmatic relevance' and the phenomena it dealt with, a friend of mine came up with this piece of data: He'd just come to California, they had a four-and-a-half-year-old daughter who had been told all about California before they came. One day it's pouring rain out. She's standing at the window and she says "It never rains in California." Now if she was older that could be ironic. Her whole statement was, "It never rains in California. Silly rain!"

And the kind of extension she was making of a phenomenon, is perfectly plain. That is, she's at that point where people are saying to her things like, "Big girls don't go potty on the floor," where that sort of thing, 'You're a big girl now and big girls don't do that,' is asserted at the point that she has done it. And that teaching technique is precisely the technique that gains for the kid, as a generalizable concept, this 'programmatic relevance.' That she has a concept is available in the most simple way, i.e., by virtue of the fact that some thing which is a case of this, which she has never been specifically taught, is invented. So there's that aspect of 'programmatic relevance.' It isn't something that was just made up and doesn't characterize a real thing. It may be perhaps an object not heretofore named, but it is something that is surely as real as a different sort of mushroom is, even though until now it didn't have a name.

Finally, I just want to mention what is in its way the most important use of 'category-bound activities.' We can start out by noticing that the problem of *selecting identifications* is by no means a simple one. It is in principle never the case that persons are simply faced with applying a correct identification. And the procedures whereby they then go about selecting identifications in systematic ways, are a major problem for us. Now one whole range of ways that identifications get picked, turns on category-bound activities.

In the first instance, *a* way that you go about selecting an identificatory category – given, say, that some action is going on, done by some person – is to determine if there is a category-bound activity of that sort, and if that person is a member of that category, then use that category to identify them. Now those kinds of things are not just 'correct descriptions,' they're correct descriptions in quite powerful ways. Most particularly, these sorts of correct descriptions do not, in themselves, pose problems. Whereas lots of category-and-activity combinations will pose problems like "Why in the world did that happen?," "Gee, isn't that unusual," in the specific cases in which you've got a category-bound activity and the category for that applied to some scene, *why*

the thing happened is not a question. That it happened is explained by the very characterization.

Again, one might want to play with picking categories other than the category-bound activity category, for an announced activity that is category-bound to some category – where that alternative category you pick is also possibly correct. E.g., if the baby crying is also Catholic and you announce "The Catholic cried," you'll find that you get into lots of queries which you wouldn't otherwise get. What's involved then is a whole range of ways that identificatory categories are selectable, and are indeed selected.

Lecture 14
'Cover' categories; Omni-relevance

The stuff I want to develop now has interest for our data, but also has some more general interest. So I'll begin in a way that seems rather indirect and unrelated, but get to our stuff eventually.

The application of the categories of some collection to a population, is an operation that can be talked of as 'partitioning' a population into various categories. One consequence of that operation – in the first instance for analysts, but then perfectly obviously as a matter that's oriented to – is that we get a population that can be considered to be composed either of co-members and cross-members of some categories, or of all co-members or all cross-members. So, for example, application of the categories of the collection 'sex' to any population will give you the partitions 'male'/'female.' Then, there might be three people, two males, who are co-member to each other, and cross-member to one female. There might be two people, one male and one female, giving you 'all cross-member,' or two people, both males, giving you 'all co-member.'

It's perfectly plain that this co-membership/cross-membership feature is something that can be relevant to the participants, and, furthermore, that it's a kind of thing that can be relevant independently of which collection happens to be used to find the categories into which persons are partitioned. That is to say, persons use a notion of co-membership for more than *a* collection. They don't just talk about being co-members in, e.g., the category 'male,' but they may talk about being co-members, by reference to other collections' categories, i.e., co-membership is used also for 'race,' 'religion,' etc. And in that sense its use holds for each collection across various of the collections. And either co-membership or cross-membership can be relevant for all sorts of activities. Some things are not appropriately done unless persons are cross-members, other things are not appropriately done unless they are co-members. And sometimes the fact that they're co-members can provide for various activities independently of what they happen to be co-members in. So co- or cross-membership is not, then, simply something that we, as analysts, can assert as a consequence of an 'identification problem,' but it's a feature that persons orient to.

Now it's perfectly well true that persons do not always use, for some population, only *a* collection of categories. They may use several, and if you give them enough time, they may use many. If they use several, you can obviously get on one use, some relationship of co- or cross-membership, and on another, a different relationship, i.e., for one collection they're co-members, for another they're cross-members, etc. And it will be in that

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direction that we'll move with our material. But I want to introduce the notion I'm going to develop, on other material.

I was once reading some of the literature on child training in various cultures. And one question that regularly is considered in child-training literature is, when is it that a culture begins training persons for various future memberships the culture might have. Now there's a way of considering that problem by formulating, for some matters, when they *possibly* could begin training. And that turns on there being systematic relations between various collections of categories. Such that, given one collection and now considering a second, the relevance of which will arise later, you can say what a member of a category of the first might be eligible for with respect to the second. If there's a perfect relationship between membership in a category of the first and membership in a category of the second, then persons could begin to be trained for that second, however soon you wanted to start. Whereas if there weren't such a relationship between the first and second collection, the beginning of training might have to be delayed until, say, a further formulation of those persons was available.

So, for example, if 'male'/'female' partitioned a population in such a way that eligibility on 'husband'/'wife' is controlled by status in 'male'/'female,' persons can, from the outset, be trained to be an adequate 'husband' or an adequate 'wife' by virtue of their being 'male' or 'female.' And in some societies you have a situation where all 'females' are expectably 'housewives,' and there's only one occupation for 'males.' Then you can begin to train 'females' immediately for being 'housewives,' and to train 'males' immediately for their sole occupation. And indeed it appears that in some societies, very early in play, children are being engaged in training which is controlled by such kinds of situations obtaining. So two- or three-year-old children are preparing for 'adult roles.' Alternatively, in some societies there's no one occupation for 'males' – there may be several or many – while nonetheless 'females' are to be 'housewives.' In that case you could begin working on 'females,' preparing them to be 'housewives,' while you may not be able to begin training 'males' until something else comes about. Or perhaps there's some combination which can be immediately arrived at, e.g., 'male' plus 'mother's brother's occupation' – or, again, training might be delayed by some such selection procedure. So you could have those things breaking in quite different ways.

We can talk, then, about 'eligibilities' in terms of the kinds of relationships that various collections have to each other. And we can also see that there could then be some quite simple – at least intendedly universal – relationships between categories, even where some category only becomes operative fairly late in someone's life, i.e., it isn't that they are in the first instance both 'male' and 'husband.' Such a consideration, then, could be used to perhaps account for when training for various things begins.

Now the idea there, is that one wants to deal with splits between populations, while categories are being amalgamated. And one wants to see whether a split on one collection would hold up when another collection was

added, and then to consider whether, say, preserving a split was something that was oriented to. And when we return to local materials and forget about, say, intrinsic relationships between categories of different collections, we can ask about a population, identified, say, in the first instance by the categories of one collection and now being identified by the categories of another, whether there is what I'll talk about as *'partitioning constancy.'* That is, we have persons split, e.g.: A,B,C/D, and we can ask whether that 3/1 is preserved over the addition of another collection of categories. Where what we want to ask is, not whether it just happens to be preserved, but whether that it is or is not preserved is something criterial for doing identifications. And we can say that we find 'partitioning constancy' when it is preserved, and we have 'partitioning inconstancy' when it isn't.

With that sort of thing abstractly at hand, I wanted to look to see whether identifications might be chosen by reference to such a feature. Let's for example note about the population that we have in our data, that if we use 'patient'/'therapist' as categories, then we get A,B,C/D. Also, if we take 'teenagers'/'adult' as categories we get the same. Let's suppose now that the possibility that partitioning constancy holds between two collections applied to some given population, can serve as the following kind of resource. Suppose in the first instance that one of those categories is relevant to some activity. Suppose, for example, you're dealing with a mental patient at a hospital, who is allowed freedom to go into town under certain circumstances – one of them being that he is accompanied by, say, a nurse. If it was a matter of embarrassment or trouble for them that they might be seen as 'mental patient' and 'nurse,' then they might look for a *'cover'*, i.e., something that categorized both of them but categorized both of them in different terms than 'mental patient'/'nurse.' And of course it's the case with lots of mental hospitals, especially those not located in large urban areas, or those in local neighborhoods of large urban areas, that people have as a relevant thing they're looking at, among people who arrive, say, in their store or pass them on the street, whether those two are 'those people.' And the 'cover' would be a kind of thing that permitted concealment of such a fact – where 'covers' are, specifically, identificatory techniques directed to concealing some otherwise relevant identification.

We might ask what kind of constraints are there on building 'covers.' And we could consider such things as the narrative literature on mental patients' problems, or more specifically, technically, problems of spies. Having 'cover identification' is one basic problem that a spy has. And what it consists of in part is, they have some itinerary they have to go through; people they have to meet, places they have to be at various times, etc. And what they need is some identification or set of identifications which operate to provide that, under that identification, they're legitimately meeting this person, legitimately being in this place, etc. It's in that context that the notion of 'cover' has its most technical formulations. So that, then, a given task may be assessed to find the kind of formulation of a person that your spy ought to have, to be in that place, meet that fellow, etc. Where, what would be

necessary is not merely that he can say that he's a machinery salesman, but that he's able to support the assertion. And that, furthermore, his actions are not inconsistent with being such a person.

When you consider the notion of a 'cover' with respect to, e.g., a spy, you can see that, first, the properties of a single person's identification, and then also, properties of series of persons' co-identifications, need to be assessed, to find other identifications which can be used to mask the first. And, say, in the case of a mental patient, it's nice if one can use, e.g., 'possible relatives,' 'a couple,' as a cover when you send the mental patient into town. So that if it's a male patient, you might like to have a female nurse, and if it's a female patient you might like to have a male nurse, such that those two people could be seen as 'another couple,' and could engage in such conversations and such activities as need be engaged in. (Although obviously, for example, if the mental patient is going into town to get a shave, then it doesn't do you much good to have a female nurse around; you need a male nurse and he would have to be passing as a 'friend.' Wives rarely show up and sit around in barber shops while a guy gets a shave.)

There are, of course, lots of identifications which persons don't want to have to use while they're engaged in some activities which they seem to need to be engaged in, or when they might be discovered to be in some activity. Let me consider this by reference to a thing from much earlier in our data corpus. It's from the first session I attended. I sat in another room, in which there was a one-way mirror. And the fellows were told that I was an observer, and was going to record the session. They dispersed for awhile to get coffee. And when they came back into the room, the following sequence takes place:

A: Turn on the microphone.
B: Testing,
A: We're about to start.
B: We are gathered here on this day,

Something like the following may have been going on, and if so, it's terribly nice. We had a situation in which, there they were, 'patients,' and I was the 'observer.' And that's kind of a pain, and furthermore has a variety of difficulties involved in it which can be clarified when we consider the alternatives they seemed to invoke by the actions I just reported. And that is, 'performer'/'audience.' It's perfectly clear that they were doing a performance, in the sense that what they were doing were 'performance activities,' which are independent of any particular performance, i.e., any performer might do those things. And the 'performer'/'audience' relationship is much more comfortable in a way, than that of 'patient'/'observer'.

Let's just consider what's going on. They're now going to be in a position where they're talking to each other while I listen. Overhear. That's a rather special circumstance, somewhat close to eavesdropping which is specifically illegitimate, such that if you detect somebody overhearing there are ways of sanctioning him, and of course there are lots of ways of detecting that persons

are overhearing. Now the situation of 'performer'/'audience' is one where what is specifically legitimate is that some group, the 'performers,' talk among themselves without participation of the 'audience,' while nonetheless directing their remarks in part to that 'audience.' It provides, not merely for my legitimate presence – which was in part provided for by my status as an 'observer' – but it provides for their legitimately orienting to my presence, in what is a perfectly conventional format – 'performer'/'audience' being widely used and having just those properties. In that regard then, one can say that – as sociologists love to say, and I love to say – it would not be expectably accidental that they would have invoked that formulation. It handles very neatly a series of specific problems. And it handles them while preserving that all the various participants stand to each other as they did under the initial formulation, i.e., 'performer'/'audience' splits things up in the way that 'patient'/'observer' does.

In that regard then, one can imagine that they could – being in some situation where some identifications are operative and those identifications have consequences and split persons in various ways – find that one, or those others, which retain the split while providing for some activities to have different bases. What we're moving towards as a possibilitiy is that the phenomenon of partitioning constancy could be used not simply with regard to, say, our characterizing actually-used pairs of collections, but might in the first place be used by participants in selecting from among alternative collections. And that it might be so used especially where one such collection was, say, 'unavoidably relevant' but needn't be mentioned, and where another could be used to handle at least some of the events in a more comfortable way.

With that kind of background I want to introduce another notion called *'omni-relevance of a collection.'* What I intend by that – and there are a series of things I don't intend by it – is this sort of thing. Suppose some course of action is taking place, like a 'group therapy session.' Then, some collection of categories is 'omni-relevant' if on the one hand there are some activities whose effectiveness turns on categorial membership in that collection (and by 'effectiveness' I mean, for one, that the sheer seeing that something being done is intended to be such-and-such an action, or that that observable action is legitimate, may involve reference to that categorial membership) and on the other hand, until the course of action is ended one can't rule out the further use of that collection (i.e., even if it isn't being used right now it might well be needed or invoked at any point up until the end of that course of action; e.g., the 'session'). Again, then: On the one hand there are some actions which, for their effectiveness, involve categorial membership in that collection, and on the other hand, until the course of action is ended, one can't rule out the further use of that collection.

What I want to be able to say is that 'therapist'/'patient' is 'omni-relevant' for the 'group therapy session.' I don't want to say that it's the only collection of category used or usable in the session; that would clearly be absurd. And I don't want to say that it's the only collection that's omni-relevant; there may

be many that are omni-relevant. It is one omni-relevant collection. Now, how would we come to see that it's one omni-relevant collection. If there were some activities that might need get done in the session, for whose effectiveness categorial membership in that collection was criterial, then we would have a beginning of moving towards omni-relevance. We would have it if we could not at any point rule out its further introduction. And one way we could get at not ruling out its further introduction would be if it were the case that an effective end to the session were something that was to be found in, say, some action of that person who, for purposes of that action, is to be formulated as 'therapist.' And in our data we have an extremely nice such usage:

Ken: I still can't figure out what the hell I spilled on my shirt.
Roger: Alright I give up what's on your shirt.
Ken: Kill it! heheh hhhehh
Al: That's not loud enough. KILL IT!
Roger: You're gonna bust his tape recorder.

((light laughter))

Dan: Well what's new, gentlemen?
Al: That's a hint we must get outta here before he gets mad at us.
Roger: We adjourn to lunch now.

It's not that he merely announces 'Session's over,' but that what he does is something seeable as a 'hint' at that, where its seeability as a 'hint' turns on seeing him as 'therapist' for that activity as a possibility. There's a double character of 'hint;' he's hinting at closure, and also – in the sense that we talked about hintable identifications – hintedly invoking his 'therapist' status. And here, the effectiveness of the action turns on his being seen as 'therapist.' For the newcomer Jim, what Dan was doing at that point, if anything, might not expectably be known – and that is presumably what Al is informing Jim of (if that's what he's doing).

There are other such phenomena in the sessions. At one point in the course of a discussion going on, Ken turns to Roger and makes some remarks about Roger's being able to pick up a radio that Ken is repairing, later on in the afternoon. Then we get:

Dan: Ken, why don't you make these arrangements out of here.
Ken: ((very quiet)) Oh.
Al: Yes, Teacher.
Ken: ((cough))
Dan: Is that what I sounded like for a moment?
Al: Yes, Teacher.
Dan: What'd it make you feel like?
Roger: Like it reminded us that we're in group therapy
Al: I felt like back in school

Where again, the effectiveness of "Why don't you make these arrangements out of here" is in its being observable in the first instance as not merely a 'proposal,' 'suggestion,' etc., but as a 'rebuke;' seen as a 'rebuke' via his status as 'therapist.' Though of course in this case you have an equally nice alternative, which is that instead of, as they might, saying "Yes Dr so-and-so," they use a collection which partitions them again in the same fashion, and which also would have that action as effective, i.e., 'teacher'/ 'student.' But insofar as the possibility of bringing order to unruliness, or bringing closure is doable or done by virtue of categorial membership in 'patient'/'therapist,' the category being 'therapist,' then we can say that 'patient'/'therapist' is omni-relevant.

While 'patient'/'therapist' is omni-relevant, there are some transparent reasons why participants would like it to be minimally used. They might then look to the selection of alternative ways of formulating as much of what goes on as they can, while perhaps, say in the ideal, allowing that the 'therapist activities' or the 'patient activities' or both, could be handled via an alternative formulation than 'patient'/'therapist' and nonetheless come off. For example, that they could do a good deal of what they figure they have to do as 'patients,' without formulating 'patient' as the thing that is involving them in doing what they're doing, but, for example, 'teenagers.' And that could work if, roughly, they could have a discussion going which any set of 'teenagers' might have going – at least in terms of its 'topic' – and where, in the course of it they can deal with whatever they figure they ought to deal with as part of the business of 'therapy.' That would set up a lot of nice things. For one, if, say, it's the case that they're going to have an 'automobile discussion' as something 'teenage boys' are occasionally prone to have, then while there is in 'teenager'/'adult' and 'patient'/'therapist' this kind of partitioning constancy, one nice thing that takes place is, you have a general account of why that guy doesn't talk very much, i.e., it's not a topic that interests him very much, *qua* 'adult'. There is also a reversal of expertise; i.e., they're the ones that know about those things, not he.

Lecture 15.1
'Safe' compliments and complaints

I've been talking about relationships between collections of membership categories for some population, by reference to how the various collections *partition* persons into co-groups and cross-groups. What I'll be considering now is the way partitioning might be relevant for the doing of some activity. And I'll focus on how an orientation to the way some collection of categories partitions a given population, can be used in formulating specific cases of certain activities. I'll be talking particularly about 'compliments' and then I'll make some additional remarks about 'complaints.'

First, here is the data we'll be considering. It's from another one of these group therapy sessions. What has happened is, there is a girl in the group, Louise. At one of their sessions she says she's going to have to quit because she got a job. At the following session we get:

> *Ken*: So did Louise call or anything this morning?
> *Dan*: Why, didju expect her t'call?
> *Ken*: No, I was just kinda hoping that she might be able to figure out some way t–to come to the meetings and still be able t'work. C'z she did seem like she d–wanted to come back, but uh she didn't think she could.
> *Dan*: D'you miss her?
> *Ken*: Well in some ways yes, it's– it was uh nice having– having the opposite sex in–in the room, you know, havin' a chick in here.

What I want to focus on is part of the technique used for building such compliments as 'it's nice to have you around,' etc. I want to talk about a class of compliments I'll call *'safe compliments.'* I'll discuss the criteria for 'safe compliments' by reference to one way that persons can go about making them – where our interest in that is via these considerations of 'partitioning.' The rough idea is that there are a good number of ways that one could go about building a compliment for someone, where some of those ways may be selected by reference to – not just identifications of the complimented person, but identifications of that person relative to usable identifications of the other members of what turns out to be a relevant population.

The first thing that we want to notice is that what is proposed to be 'nice' is 'having a chick in the room.' And the collection that that involves is 'sex,' with the categories 'male'/'female.' Now, she is the only member of the relevant population who is a member of that latter category. Furthermore, it happens that in this case there are only two categories and all the other

members of the population are members of the same other category. It could be the case that there were three or four other categories, and while the person being talked of is talked of via some category of which they're the only member, it might also be the case that others are in various other categories, not that all the rest are in one other category. The fact that there are just two categories and that she's in one and all the rest are in the other, can turn out to be relevant to doing 'safe compliments.' That is, for some person who is possibly going to be complimented, one might want to find a collection such that, of the relevant population, that person is the only member of one category and all the others are members of one other category.

For a compliment like 'it's nice to have such a one around,' one aspect of the way such a location of a person as I've just described is 'safe,' is by virtue of the fact that by using that location one does not set up such a thing as one might get if you said, e.g., "It was nice to have somebody with a sense of humor in the room," or "It was nice having somebody smart around," at which point others might say "Well what about me?" A great many proposed compliments can be treated as allowing for classification of the other parties present via the same category, and rejecting those parties as so classifiable. Where, then, those sorts of compliments can be considered to be 'implied characterizations' of the others.

In that regard, then, one aspect of a compliment being 'safe' or 'weak' turns on the fact that a category is used as part of the compliment, and that category has no other local incumbents. There is a perfectly obvious sense in which such a thing can be said to be 'safe.' And of course it is not specific to the case of 'females' where all the rest are 'males,' or for that matter 'males' if all the rest are 'females.' It can be used and is used with classification of personnel via other collections satisfying that kind of constraint for a given population.

As it happens, for a thing like "it's nice having the opposite sex in the room," there are other ways it's 'weak' or 'safe,' turning on the fact that you're not only not implicitly categorizing the others by reference to your criterion, but also it's the sort of thing that any member of your category might say about such a one. That is, you're not going out on a limb by reference to the other persons in the same category you are. Where it might well be the case that even if the 'no other local incumbents' constraint held, there are things you could say which could set up an argument among your co-members. For example, at one point they're talking about the time when they had a Soshe in the room, none of them now present being in that category. Somebody proposes that it was nice having one around. Somebody else says, "No it wasn't, because as long as they were here I couldn't be honest." And there are other ways that co-members might propose that what you said wasn't true.

One could easily enough construct controversial compliments within a group, e.g., "It was nice having a Negro in the room," by virtue of the partitioning being 'white'/'Negro' with all the co-members being 'white,' to which some other might say "No it wasn't at all," i.e., that's a thing that all

'whites' don't agree on. And furthermore, not only don't they agree on it – lots of 'males' might not agree that it's nice to have 'females' around – but it's something that they can perfectly well announce without having their status as a member of the group brought into question. That is, if any male says it's nice having a female around, it's fairly hard to get another male to propose that it's not, while being able to retain his position as a sane member of the category. So in the case at hand, the compliment is additionally safe by virtue of the fact that any other member of the category he's formulated himself as a member of by reference to doing this compliment, could do it in just the same way, and without an argument getting set up.

There are two ways, then, that such a statement avoids argument. One is that it is not 'implicitly categorizing' others in the room, and the second is that any co-member might have done it. Of course there can be issues by reference to what is a 'co-member,' where what the complimentor selects might be perfectly appropriate for such a partitioning as 'male'/'female,' but not something that all persons present would agree to. Suppose for example, there was a teenage girl, three teenage boys, and a 70-year-old man. Then, if one of the boys said it was nice to have a member of the opposite sex in the room, the 70-year-old man might feel it incumbent upon himself to say "It would have been nice 50 years ago," in which he would have been slightly disaffiliated from the compliment. But you aren't going much out on a limb if you build compliments with those two properties, and compliments are regularly built like that. We can also see how 'safe critiques' could be built in a similar fashion.

Now let me point up a related way that *'safe complaints'* can be done. And 'safe complaints' could be contrasted with 'unsafe complaints.' We have a rather neat case – a little bit neater than we need in a way – at the beginning of one of the sessions:

Al: Hey you have a hole in your shoe,
Roger: heh Do(hh)n't tell me hehh
Al: This place costs too much money. Can't afford to buy shoes.
          (/ /)
Roger: 's breaking my folks.
          (/ /)
Ken: A(hh)h
Roger: My insanity's breaking their bankbook.

Now Al's remark, "This place costs too much money" is a complaint, let's say, on behalf of Roger in the first place. But to make the case more simple, let's say Roger had said "This place costs too much money." The character of a 'safe complaint' involves in this regard that he is situated with a bunch of others, and can use co-categorial status with respect to something else, to formulate a complaint. Ideally, say, all members but the person or object being complained of, are co-members of an alternative category. And the complaint is formulated as such a thing as any member of that category could

say about that other. And that stands in contrast to such a thing as, while you are a co-member with others, you formulate a complaint which such co-members don't make. Or you formulate a complaint about co-members. Or about the category of which your co-members are co-members.

There are lots of 'safe complaints' in the data; things like, 'cops pick on us,' 'it's all their fault,' etc. And those are the kinds of things for which one is in quite a different position making them in one group than in another. That is to say, any of these 'safe' phenomena would have different characteristics depending on how the given population were to be formulated. And of course one then gets a basis for seeing a typical mythical history of persons' careers, in which they start out being seen as heroes within their group by doing what sounds like strong complaints which turn out, however, to be 'safe complaints' in that they're the sorts of things that their co-members would agree with – using them to achieve high position, at which point they no longer make them. I say 'mythical' because it's known independently of cases being available to be used as examples. But, say, American images of a politician for otherwise weak groups, have just that picture in mind: He becomes a member of the establishment.

So we can come to see quite generally that the way collections partition populations can have varieties of consequences in doing – in particular ways – what might be not a small number of activities. And also, to see that some version of an activity – like a 'complaint,' like a 'compliment,' like a formulation of an identification of a population – has describable alternatives in terms of those category collections and how they handle populations. In that regard, then, this phenomenon of how a collection partitions a given population, can be of specific interest.

Lecture 15.2
Ultra-rich topics

I want to go on now to talk about some aspects of the phenomenon of an 'automobile discussion.' I'll start off with a long quote from a wonderful chapter of a nice book. The book is called *The Nuer* by E. E. Evans-Pritchard, and the quote is from chapter 1, pages 18–19; a chapter pretty much on conversation among the Nuer.

> We have seen in a brief survey of some Nuer institutions and customs that most of their social behavior directly concerns their cattle. A fuller study of their culture would show everywhere the same dominant interest in cattle. For example, in their folklore they're always talking about their beasts. I used to sometimes despair that I never discussed anything with the young men but livestock and girls. And even the subject of girls led invariably to that of cattle. Start on whatever subject I would, and approach it from whatever angle, we would soon be speaking of cows and oxen, heifers and steers, rams and sheep, he-goats and she-goats, calves and lambs and kids. I've already indicated that this obsession – for such it seems to the outsider – is due not only to the great economic value of cattle, but also to the fact that they are linked in numerous social relationships. Nuer tend to define all social processes and relationships in terms of cattle. The social idiom is a bovine idiom. Consequently, he who lives among Nuer and wishes to understand their social life, must first master a vocabulary referring to cattle, and to the life of the herds. Such complicated discussions as those which take place in negotiations of marriage, in ritual situations, and in legal disputes, can only be followed when one understands the difficult cattle termi-nology of colors, ages, sexes, and so forth.

If we consider in parallel an 'automobile discussion' for teenagers, or for hotrodders, then some of the kinds of things that Evans-Pritchard points up would seem also relevant. What I basically want to do now is to pick a couple of aspects and give them some strong formulations. It's easy enough to say "they always talk about cattle," etc. To be able to show that some such things are going on is quite another sort of problem. My main interest here is, I want to be arguing that something like 'category-boundedness' holds for an 'automobile discussion,' for teenagers. Where, however, it's perfectly well the case, and perfectly obviously the case, that adults, male adults, etc., also have

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'automobile discussions.' In that regard, what we want to do is show that an 'automobile discussion' is something special for teenagers, for 'hotrodders.'

What I'll try to do, then, is to show that the way it's special is that for them it's what I'll call *'ultra-rich.'* One aspect of a topic being ultra-rich is that we can have ways of showing that it's 'inexhaustable.' Now, saying that something is inexhaustable and finding ways of showing that it's inexhaustable are quite different sorts of things. And in the procedure of coming to see how it's inexhaustable we will come to see differences in an 'automobile discussion' for teenagers and for adults.

The procedure is very simple. Let's begin by supposing that we can talk about a car as having a finite set of parts. And there is an obvious way in which you can talk about a car having a finite set of parts, by reference to manuals of parts or production techniques, etc. Now suppose also that for any given part there's some finite amount of things you could say about it. Under that kind of formulation, you can see 'talking about a car' as something that involves cutting into the amount of talk you could do, i.e., you could go through the subject from A to Z, proceeding to exhaust it.

There is one kind of fact for 'hotrodders' that's relevant to a formulation of the infiniteness of an automobile discussion, and that is that any part of any car, under any shape it's in – brand new, right off the assembly line – is replaceable. Now that's not so for adults. If I were to tell somebody that, e.g., I just put a new engine in my car, they would ask "Was the other worn out?" And there are a set of ways in which I could go about accounting for a proposed replacement of some item. The issue is now not so much what I could do, but the ways such matters in fact seem to get handled.

The grounds for replaceability for a 'hotrodder' are in no way like the above. They are a series of different kinds of grounds – one of which, of course, is that something is worn out or destroyed, but others of which – and which are equally acceptable – are 'a new one has come out that's better than the one we have,' or, given the set of things that you have in your car, for that combination a new X is better than the one you have. So that any given replacement implicates the rest of the parts of the car, i.e., if one starts out by intending only to replace the engine, one may find that, having replaced the engine you ought to also replace the rear end to set up an optimum combination. In that regard, when one buys a car one is not doing what an adult does when he buys a car.

And it's not just that any part is replaceable, but any replaced part is replaceable also. So that having replaced the engine, and then the rear end so as to satisfy the engine, it may turn out that now something else is to be replaced to satisfy the rear end and then ultimately that the engine is to be replaced to satisfy the new combination. And furthermore, all these things are available to be talked of as matters being 'planned,' i.e., the grounds for talking about replacements of parts, and even replacements of replacements of parts, are not that it's been done or is being done. And one needn't restrict consideration to the first series of replacements, but you can plan on getting a 387 such-and-such right now, and after a while replacing it with something else.

We're talking, then, about a car – any car – as having an infinite set of parts, under the usual formulation of 'infinite,' i.e., any set is 'infinite' if, under any finite formulation of it, one more is addable. And in that regard then, if any part is talkable about, the conversation is inexhaustable by virtue of it having an infinite store of topics, i.e., the parts.

You can see, then, perfectly legitimate topics which are distinctive kids' topics. You might well bring up, as an adult – or as a female for that matter – that you're going to get a new engine for your car. I doubt that it would occur to you to propose that you're getting a new engine now and that will then be replaced by another engine. Or, for that matter, it seems that there are kinds of replacements you can't propose. For example, you can't say you're going to buy a new Chevvy and take off the body and put on an old Ford body.

Now the tremendous generativeness of this kind of thing is twofold. For one, some guy may have such plans as I've just propposed. The second is that for any plan that seems to be okay, given the fact that every participant allegedly has the same motive – to build the fastest car – then every such plan is thereby a proposal that a hearer has to take into consideration for his own car. And again, you reach a point at which you're not talking about an adult phenomenon. That is, if I propose that I just replaced my engine, somebody will ask me how come, and when satisfied, that's that. It is not for them a consideration that, given that I did it, maybe they should do it. Further, there's not some local set of conversants whom one uses as the exclusive persons who can propose a plan for their car which you need consider for yours. Rather, it's the case that if C comes into a conversation between A and B, and says that D told him that E replaced his engine with X engine, then all parties present have it as a thing to be considered. And again, one can set that up for adult consideration. Consider the possibility of coming home and reporting that you're going to replace your engine because you heard about some guy who met a guy who replaced his engine. This is an absolutely admissable statement for hotrodders. Where, again, one of the things that we have to consider is that for an adult, certain possible replacements having consequences of requiring other replacements, provides as their consequence that a new car should be bought. For kids there's no such requirement. The notion of a 'new car' is something altogether different. A new car is not something that is to be driven as it happens to be purchased, but that one now goes to work on.

What you have, then, is a situation where the community is the set of possibilities. And anybody's formulation is assessable by all others by reference to themselves, properly to be rejected only by virtue of the fact that it was wrong for him to have done in the first place. That is, one decides not to do that sort of thing for one's own car in the strongest way – by determining that he shouldn't have done it for his. Again, that sort of procedure is not appropriate for adults talking about cars, though there are things for which it is appropriate for adults in talking about, e.g., gardens, perhaps.

If it can turn out that the set of constraints we come up with for kids talking about cars excludes, say, adults talking about cars but holds nonetheless for other things that adults talk about, we can have an extremely nice way of seeing some topic as 'central.'

Let me just note that if you look through transcripts in which kids are discussing cars, or listen to them talking about cars, you'll find that there is an extremely limited environment under which the word 'car' will occur alone. That environment is pretty much a question, e.g., "Do you have a car?" Otherwise, there are a variety of other terms than just 'a car.' 'Fast car,' 'gasser,' 'stocker,' brand name, model, 'Voodoo,' 'Roadrunner,' all sorts of things like that. That's a fact that might have some importance, not only with respect to the special kind of phenomena an 'automobile discussion' and cars are for kids, but it may be a partially discriminative feature of a class of objects in general. So, to indicate the point cross-culturally as well, in this chapter of Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, he points out that the Nuer never talk of 'a cow.' They talk about a 'good cow,' they talk in terms of its color, its histories, its type, who owns it, etc. They don't talk about 'a cow.' And again, cattle are perhaps in some ways parallel objects for the Nuer to cars for teenage boys. The feature that one doesn't talk about 'a car' may then be one that has some criteriality for a characterizable class of objects, which furthermore may be a cross-culturally operative class in some fashion or other.

Lecture 16
Possessables and Possessitives

This time I'm going to consider the possessive pronoun 'my.' It comes up because in the data we have a phrase, "In that Bonneville of mine." Though there are some relevancies to what I say about 'mine' that will hold for other possessive pronouns, consideration of those others is an independent problem, and what I'll be saying about 'mine' in particular, does not directly hold for them. I'll not only talk about the possessive pronoun 'mine,' but also to some extent about 'possessions,' insofar as they turn out to be relevant to uses of possessive pronouns.

To start out with, you can feel pretty comfortable with a notion that if something is called a 'possessive pronoun,' then it must be indicating 'possession.' I say you can feel pretty comfortable about it because even quite recently, anthropologists studying notions of possessions, say, among primitive tribes, figured that the possessive pronouns were a great resource, and what you could do was collect things which had possessive pronouns, possessive prefixes, possessive suffixes, and use those to find out what the 'objects of possession' in such a culture were. But that was subjected to some criticism, and that kind of literalism on the name 'possessive pronoun' is something we would figure to be merely quaint.

Rather, a first thing we would do in considering the use of possessive pronouns, is to break down a bunch of types of uses – of which 'possessional' use is one, but by no means the only one. Here are just a couple – there may be, for all I know, a thousand more: You can use 'possessive pronouns' when you're engaged in asserting *affiliation*. And that could be done with some membership category plus a possessive pronoun; 'my family,' 'my country,' and things like that. They can also be used with respect to the *relational* categories, e.g., 'my brother,' where those are something different than the first, and different also than, say, 'my car.' And they also work in ways that are different in at least quasi-grammatical ways. So that, for example, if you're able to say 'my country,' and now there is something that is a possession of that category 'country,' then it's pretty much the case that you refer to that possession, not as 'mine,' but with the use of the first-person plural: 'My country' – 'our bases.' 'My country' –'our flag.' Where you're not, by virtue of being able to say 'mine' with respect to, say, 'country,' entitled to say 'mine' with respect to its possessions, but you can say 'ours.' And in the case of the relationals there's no automatic relationship at all. So that if you say 'my brother' and now you're referring to a possession of his, it's just, e.g., 'his chair,' 'his toothbrush,' etc. There are circumstances in

which you can say 'our' something-or-other, but that's another issue, and you normally get at that a different way.

So there are at least those three things; possessional ('my car'), affiliative ('my country'), and relational ('my brother'). And if you were an anthropologist 20 years ago – or perhaps if you like to construct psychiatric versions of the history of language – you might have treated the fact that 'my' is being used, as indicating that there is some 'possessional intention' in the sentence, i.e., you could figure out the way that 'my brother' and 'my finger' are similar kinds of objects to me. But you could just as well reject the classification of them as 'possessive pronouns.' After all, that was invented by somebody; they weren't always formulated as 'posessive pronouns.' And they don't necessarily work alike. You want to get to the kind of regulation there is, and implications there are, in the use of 'mine' with respect to the various objects.

Now, what I want to do first is to talk a bit about 'possessions.' The reason for that is, when people started to say that you couldn't use a posessive pronoun to formulate the fact that something is a possession, and therefore you couldn't use the fact that persons produced a sentence with some object and a possessive pronoun as evidence for the fact that they were intending to mark posssession, they proposed that you had to work out independent ways in which something was to be seen as a possible possession. (And that seems to be the right direction. You'll note that one of our first results is that you do need independent determination of whether something is a possible possession, to say that given the use of a possessive pronoun and some object, possessional reference is intended – as compared to affiliative reference, relational reference, etc. – where we don't want to be saying that somebody is claiming possession because they say 'mine' or 'my,' etc. They might be, but that needs independent consideration of the object being talked about.)

But they then got into an issue of what are the criteria for deciding that something is a possible possession. And the question of the choice of criteria is not terribly easy to solve. What we find is some tendency to proceed by constructing quasi-legal formulations; things like, 'something is a piece of property if it is produced by the labor of man,' or, '. . . if it has value,' etc., and then trying to see how well such a conception will acount for natives' uses of possessive pronouns with respect to possible possessional objects.

I have no idea about what, ultimately, that sort of criteria would look like. However, the orientation that we're adopting is to try to focus on recognizability for Members. And that leads us to proceed in such a way that what become interesting are things like this: Somebody stands up in a classroom and says "Who's hat is this?" where what's of interest is, it's not only that they don't know who's it is, but that it's anybody's hat is something which is not necessarily the case. That is, given that they don't who's hat it is, for the analyst it becomes now a way of seeing that there is some object never before seen perhaps, which is known to be 'a somebody's.' Seeing a case of the class 'a somebody's,' you can recognize that it is 'owned.' Those classes of things are then, specifically, recognizably, 'property.'

I want to introduce two words to handle a distinction I want to make. Leaving aside the word 'possession' which we could use in its ordinary sense, we'll talk about 'possessables' and 'possessitives.' A *'possessable'* is something that anybody can come to own. If you find it and you want it, it's yours. A *'possessitive'* is specifically something from those classes of things, of which, seeing one, you see something that is owned by somebody. There's this kind of image: You're walking around the world, there are all kinds of things you see, sitting in all sorts of places; things which are not, for example, in somebody's direct control. For some of them, were you to pick them up, you could feel assured that you might be considered a thief. For others, you could perfectly well take them if you wanted them.

For some of these, it turns on where they happen to be. One of the big problems about 'possessitives' is, since a person encountering them sees that they're somebody's, they're kind of hard to get rid of. You have to do fairly special things to get rid of them in such a way that people will see that that is your intention. For example, the proper place of cars is in the street. When you walk along the street and you see cars sitting there, you know that each of them is somebody's car and somebody put it there. Now that means if you want to abandon a car and have it be known that you've abandoned it, then it's pretty hard to do. The place you would normally abandon something would be on the street, where you abandon lots of things. But it's very hard to detect that a car sitting on the street is an abandoned car for anybody to pick up. I'm not making this up; it turns into a major problem in urban areas. Lots of people abandon cars, they sit on the street, somebody figures they may be abandoned, but nobody knows. Now, cars are increasingly becoming things that you can see as possibly abandoned in the streets, and it is becoming possible to bring some car to a police lost-and-found (although earlier you would have been found odd by virtue of that), and go through the procedure of leaving it for a certain period and if it's not claimed it becomes yours. But even then, for cars and things like them, you don't just pick them up, you have to turn them in, and then they become yours.

With that line of consideration you could begin to formulate which objects are 'possessitives' and which objects are 'possessables' by seeing what objects you could turn in at a lost-and-found, that would be accepted at such a place. There are lots of things you can turn in that they would reject – though that doesn't mean that the objects are not of value, that you couldn't own them as a matter of pride, and things like that. It does have this consequence of course: If you couldn't turn it in at a lost-and-found, then if you own it you'll have to be careful about it. If it's a rare rock that you found on the beach and that you love and you keep in a case, if you stick it out on your front lawn, somebody's liable to pick it up, not figuring that it has those characteristics. And again, if they did figure it had such characteristics, and, seeing it out on a lawn, figured it was lost, if they walked up to a lost-and-found with it they might be laughed at. So what you get then is, with 'possessables' you have to keep more care of them than with 'possessitives,' independently of their

'value' – apart from the issue of not being able to turn certain things in because they weren't 'lost,' they were 'just lying there.'

Another way to begin to make the differentiation between some sorts of objects is, some 'possessitives' are usable to claim things with. If you stick a book on a table, other people don't sit down, they figure the table is occupied. While if you stick yesterday's newspaper down, or a pencil, what happens then? And you can then be seeing persons' orientation to the recognizability of particular objects they've never seen before, as 'somebody's.' And also as 'somebody's in various differentiations: Somebody lost it, somebody left it, somebody put it there for a moment, etc., all without respect to knowing who it is or what their habits are, whether they're careful or not, etc. In that regard, then, 'possessables' and 'possessitives' turn out to be quite different sorts of objects, generating peculiar troubles, having peculiar implications which, under this formulation, we can come to see and to understand.

Further, this distinction sets up solvable socialization problems. Children have got to learn all those differentiations. A kid comes home with something, "Where did you get it?" "I found it." As we've seen, there are things which, if you find them they're yours. There are also these things which, if you find them then somebody lost them. And the sheer fact that the bicycle was just sitting on the street and nobody was occupying it, doesn't mean that you found it. Part of the education of kids, then, in some fashion or other, has to be in seeing what it is that's 'somebody's.' And also, seeing when it is that somebody who they don't know has given up possession of a thing that would otherwise be that other person's property – a rather sophisticated little task.

And with that kind of formulation we can see some kinds of interesting things in the following piece of data. This is from the book *One Boy's Day*, Barker and Wright (1951), pages 379–380. The boy is seven years old. He's been playing with a crate which was at a lot at which there was a house which burned down, the lot still owned by the guy that owned the house. Now he's having dinner with his family.

Father:	What are you going to do with that big crate you have?
Son:	I'm going to bring it home.
Father:	You are? Don't you think we have enough crates and that kind of stuff around here?
Son:	((no answer))
Mother:	What are you going to do? Use it for a tent?
Son:	Yes.
Mother:	Maybe Mr Nelson wanted it. Did you ever think of that?
Son:	No. He was going to burn it. He doesn't want it.
Father:	How do you know? Did you ask him?
Son:	No.
Father:	Are you sure?
Son:	Yes I'm sure.

Mother :	Was it there where they usually burn things on that rubbish heap?
Son :	Yes.
Mother :	How are you going to get it here?
Son :	I'm going to put it on my wagon and bring it over.

Now he's seven years old, and he can see at this point that some definitive formulation of Mr Nelson's intentions with respect to that crate is available by the movement of that crate around the lot. So that, at the point that it's on the rubbish heap, it's available for his removal. Note about that kind of thing, he doesn't have to know Mr Nelson very well to know the way Mr Nelson treats objects with respect to rubbish heaps. It's Mr Nelson's problem that if he happens to put something on the rubbish heap, that this kid or somebody else would figure that they have rights to pick it up. And for that matter, the issue is not simply that Mr Nelson's wanting to burn it means that Mr Nelson has every right to burn it – he may have pyromaniac tendencies or whatever – but that having placed it there for burning, others can figure that he wants to get rid of it and therefore they can take it. (And in that regard, let me just note that there's an occupational difference between 'beggars' and 'scavengers' which consists of: Beggars ask people for things, are required to say "Thank you" in such matters. Scavengers go to those places where, if people don't want things they leave things. And they owe nobody nothing.)

You can work out how elaborate a kind of analysis is involved in being able to make those differentiations – though of course there is tremendous emphasis placed on little kids to be correct on such things. They can be correct at quite early ages, and can know how to be correct. And in that regard, then, my initial formulation of the 'recognizability' matter, and talking about 'finding' and 'seeing something as owned,' is directly appropriate for an issue like kids coming to know what are 'possessions' in these various different senses of possession. Such that it's a possession for now, of somebody unknown, and furthermore, that it may be lost, etc., with respect to a set of different objects. It's presumably the case that not everything that would be found on the rubbish heap could properly be assumed to have been intended to be burned – though that may well be an arguable matter.

And you can – if you can find the material – focus on the way that, how parents deal with remarks like "I found it," are progressively incorporated by kids as criteria for examining the world for possible acquisition, possible things to be returned, etc. And you can begin then to get a mild sense of awe at the utter casualness with which somebody will turn up at the lost-and-found with a thing that somebody lost. It's an elaborate kind of organization that has to be available to them, to just see 'There's something somebody lost.' Also, of course, there's the importance of conforming to proper ways of disposing of things, where there can be all kinds of trouble if, when you want to throw something out, you throw it in an inappropriate place. It'll keep returning.

Lecture 17

Claiming possession; Emblems; Pro-terms and performatives; Utterance positioning

I'll be making a variety of observations, working roughly off of the phrase, "In that Bonneville of mine." Now, the general point I was making about the possessive pronouns was that one has to have some formulation of the objects in combination with possessive pronouns in order to determine that the pronoun might be used posessionally, in that there are a variety of other uses; 'affiliative,' 'relational,' and the like. That's one sort of issue.

Another sort of issue is, *which* possessive pronoun is going to be used. And the general point I want to make is that for formulating the rules of use of a term like 'mine,' consideration with regard to 'address' is fundamental. That is to say, the use of pronoun is not stable, and consideration of who is talking to whom, in the environment of whom, is necessary. The one who says 'that car of mine' may also say on some occasion 'that car of ours' or 'that car of yours.' One cannot infer from some appropriate use of 'that car of mine' that the car is owned by that one, or, by treating 'mine' as an alternative to 'ours,' suppose that only that speaker has the right to say 'my,' whereas if he said 'our car' then you could figure there would be others who could also say 'our car.'

That various objects get that kind of variation is, I think, very plain. And not all objects that get some of the variations get all of the variations. That is to say, 'car' and 'house' are not, apparently, treated the same sort of way. So that people in, say, a family can say 'our house' and can say on some occasions 'my house,' and the same can be done with a car. But with a car it might also be the case that they might say, for example to their mother 'your car,' though they might say when talking to their friends 'my car,' while they would not, apparently, say to their mother 'your house,' nor would they say to her 'my house,' though they would say 'our house.' There is, then, that instability, and that instability is in some ways structured by reference to matters of 'address.'

Now I want to make two points. One of them is that possessive pronouns are not exclusive means for asserting or claiming possession. The other expands the 'pronoun' phenomenon in a different direction. So: Possessive pronouns are not exclusive means for asserting or claiming possession. There are various other means whereby the same kind of work can get done. And they can be at least mildly interesting means themselves.

Consider a fairly characteristic utterance. The kids are talking about a movie:

> *Ken* :   I never saw it before 'cause I was on the ranch when it first came out.

The use of 'the' next to things like 'ranch,' apparently in contrast to the use of 'a,' seems to be treated as possessional. That is one alternative way of hearing 'the ranch;' there are obviously others, one of which is 'that ranch that has been mentioned before.'

It's kind of interesting that hearers, dealing with a first reference to some object via 'the,' regularly don't find themselves asking 'which?,' but figure that what they're hearing is not merely an assertion about some particular one – which 'a' would do as well – but some particular one which is in some way owned by this speaker or somebody in relation to him. Why that should be so is a matter of at least some curiosity. It might well be something like the following, though I am really quite uncertain. It's simply speculation. What they may be hearing is what they take to be a usage appropriate in some other environment where, that the object is a possession is already known, and it gets referred to as 'the something.' So that, for example, people in a family talking about its possessions regularly talk about a possession they have singularly with, simply, 'the.' "I want to take the car," "I'll be up at the ranch." Now that usage is well enough known, independently of knowing the objects that any given person might refer to with it, such that if one hears somebody talking about an object which, in your specific environment, they might have first introduced in some other fashion, one can apparently hear it as 'being referred to in the fashion conventional among some other people, of whom this one is one.' But in any event, things like 'the' plus some possessitive can do the work that possessive pronouns also do.

You can get mildly subtle interchanges turning on that sort of thing. Here's a case. It's at the beginning of the two-hour session from which our material was excerpted.

> *Roger* :   'Ey you got the matches,
>   (/)
> *Al* :   Yeah, I got some matches,

I was just initially curious that the second usage was "some matches," where that Roger was claiming anything by "the matches" is not necessary, i.e., he could be saying 'my matches,' 'some particular matches,' etc. But Al is apparently attending the possibility that Roger is claiming those matches for himself, which is kind of relevant in that if he says, e.g., "Yeah, I've got them" and throws them to Roger, then perhaps he can't expect that he'll get them back. And putting in some indication about claims to ownership is at least relevant for that issue. Now they go on, and apparently Roger is mildly puzzled by this return, and he says "What – did I take some?" and Al just

laughs. A couple of minutes later we get:

Al: Hey throw me my <u>matches</u>.
Roger: Your m— um <u>Your</u> matches, she gave 'em to <u>me</u>,

And that issue seems to have turned originally on Al's picking up a possible
sense of "the matches," making his possible claim, and then reasserting it
when the matches, having been used, weren't returned. So parties can attend
to the fact that 'the' plus a possessitive is used, and it can apparently be a
matter by reference to which possessional intentions are heard, where it can
then be a focus for, e.g., a quarrel.

   Now, the combination of the possessive pronoun and the object is not
definitive of the kind of inferences people figure they can make, but that there
is a distribution for the instability of use of the pronouns, is available across
the actual pronouns used. That is to say, there are things for which somebody
can say 'my such-and-such' where the persons hearing that can know that
with regard to them you could say 'my such-and-such,' but with regard to
somebody else you couldn't say that. Persons may well be able to see various
things about that usage which the assertion 'my' does not conceal – matters
like how it was acquired. In that regard, then, the question of what kind of
effectiveness a term like 'mine' has, would have to be raised. If somebody says
'mine' with respect to something, it's not only that they don't have to be
taken at face value, but there are rather specific kinds of inferences, quite
different than one might in principle propose, that are directly makeable.

   What I want to be able to get to is, roughly, how it would be the case that
if a kid says "In that Bonneville of mine," others can take it that that's the
car his father bought him, at best. Or it's really not his car, it's his mother's
car. In any event, that it's not a car he bought. I'll just sketch out a line of
argument. Let's consider a class that goes under the name '*emblems*.' Things
like medals. Now the thing about those is, if you have them, they're not the
sort of things that persons are fully puzzled by how you acquired them. If you
have them, they're assumed to be had rightly. The question – if there is a
question – is, which of the rightful ways that these are acquirable, did you
acquire them by. So that, for example, if you're asked what you did to get
that medal and you say "Nothing," that will not be heard as a description,
but as 'being modest.' And the same, with certain variations, can be heard
with respect to, e.g., wearing a fur coat.

   That kind of fact is important, in that one doesn't want to *define*
'possessions' – again with respect to how they're seen – by reference to the fact
that they're purchased. If they are 'possessions' what's seen in the first place
is that they were purchased. So that the circumstance under which that they
were purchased is a question, is very special. Persons who are seen to be
driving a car that they might not have purchased, get stopped. And the
question is, then, one on which there is doubt.

   Now I want to expand on the phenomenon of 'pronouns' in a different
direction. I'll begin with a quotation from an article by Uriel Weinreich, 'On

the semantic structure of language,' in Joseph Greenberg (ed.), *Universals of Language*, page 126.

> All languages have 'pro-forms' such as 'he,' which substitute for other forms to avoid their repetition within a unit of discourse considered as 'the same.'

That explanation you can forget; it's ridiculous. But that's not the point. He goes on:

> But pro-forms are on the whole very unevenly distributed with respect to the parts of speech. Perhaps all languages have pronouns, but few have pro-verbs. English is perhaps unique among European languages in having, in 'do,' at least the rudiments of a verb-phrase substitute.

That's roughly to say that 'do' works something like the same way that the more familiar pro-terms, i.e., pronouns, work. So that if we have a thing like 'John put on his hat and he put on his coat,' the 'he' there is characteristic pronoun usage. And for 'do,' you'd get something like 'Mary baked a cake and so did Jane.' What we have then is the idea that pronouns are not the only kind of pro-form, but there seem to be other pro-forms, maybe not as widely used, or at least not as widely known.

A question that raises is, are there pro-forms for each class of proper word classes? What kinds of things are there? You start off with the class 'pro-verbs,' and we have a member, 'do.' And you can find in our data that 'do' is used for verbs in a way similar to the way pronouns are used for nouns, with tremendous regularity. All I intend to do now is to indicate that 'do' is not the only proverb, by giving another case and suggesting some of its workings. Where again, that's only intended to open something up. One could perhaps find all kinds of other pro-verbs, and perhaps pro- other things.

The pro-verb I want to talk about somewhat is 'say.' What I want generally to propose about 'say' as a pro-verb is that it's a pro-verb for a class of verbs which have been studied in a famous, brilliant series of articles, and the class is called *'performatives.'* There's a wonderful book entitled *How To Do Things With Words* by the British philosopher J. L. Austin, which is about 'performatives.' Also an article in his *Collected Papers*, entitled 'Performatives.' Now 'performatives' are things like 'I promise,' 'I bet,' 'I claim,' 'I doubt,' and things like that. Where what's crucial about them is that in uttering such a phrase you're doing the action it characterizes, reports, or names. By saying "I promise," you can 'promise.' By saying "I bet," you can 'bet.' Our point is that 'I say' is a pro-verbial phrase for such performative phrases.

There are certain very important constraints on performatives, and one is that not any of the forms of the verb or any of the pronouns for that class of verbs that work as performatives, can work as performatives. Only first-person indicative use, and present tense. So, "he promises" is perhaps a report

on somebody's promise, it isn't the doing of a promise, whereas "I promise" is. That holds for the performatives and it also holds for their pro-verbs. 'I say' is quite different from 'I said.' 'I said' may name that a quote is to follow. But 'I say' is not, e.g., a preliminary to quoting what I said to myself and haven't yet uttered. What it's doing is announcing that I'm doing some case of the class 'performatives.' For example, 'asserting,' 'promising,' 'betting.'

Then, the question 'which one?' is a similar problem to the categorial use of pronouns. Recall that somebody can say "They always do it" and a hearer can, with some examination, determine that some categorial is intended. As a pro-verb for performatives, a similar kind of operation is involved for 'say,' And that it's heard as a pro-verb for a performative would be evidenced from the differences in the ways that what's said in combination with it could be attacked. You might say "I said" plus something, and somebody could say "You didn't say that, you said something else," where in the case of 'I say' plus something, the form of the critique turns on determining what's being done, and dealing with that formulation. If, for example, it's heard as 'I assert such-and-such,' then somebody might deal with it critically by saying "That's not true" or various things like that. If it's heard as making a bet, somebody might take you up on it.

One of the key things that's consequential on the use of these pro-verbs, is that if the use is an action of a sort, i.e., an 'assertion,' a 'promise,' etc., then that thing can be saved for later use by others to watch, for example, for a change in mind, backing down, etc. If, for example, "I say" is an 'assertion,' a position in an argument, it can set up the task of getting the one who made it to change their mind. And then you can get various combinations with "I say." So, for example, in our data this fellow Ken has this utterance, "I still say though that if you take a big fancy car out on the road . . ." etc. And with "I still say though . . ." what he can be seen to be doing is reasserting or re-claiming, in the face of some opposition.

Now this is not intended to be worked out here, but my guess is that a combination like "I still say though" can be informative. And in this case it might be informative to the new entrant, in a series of important ways. That is, they were in an automobile discussion and now they get back into it, and what "I still say though" indicates is, first, that such a position as is being asserted now was asserted before, by the same speaker. And, that in between the assertion of it and the current reassertion, somebody else asserted something in contravention to it. So that the very phrase "I still say though" can be informative that they are in the course of an 'argument.' "Still" and "though" can then position the "I say" within some course of talk, and, as modifiers, can then indicate that the person is being 'stubborn,' etc., and asserting this stubbornness via such a formulation. And of course the phrase "I still say though" can be important in various other ways, one of which is, if this is one side of the argument, then it's perhaps possible to figure out what the other side is.

You can look at uses of "I say" by reference to the class 'performatives,' and see whether such utterances are dealt with differently from, e.g., "I said,"

and also differently from other pronominal combinations with 'say' – and, furthermore, to see whether they are dealt with by reference to formulations of what performative is being done with "I say." If some structuring is made available that way, then one can work it out, look for other pro-verbs, etc., and in any event come to see that pronouns are not the only things that are pro-terms.

Lecture 18
Paradoxes

This lecture is not included in this volume. It deals with paradoxes, and an earlier run can be found in this volume, in the Spring 1966 series, lecture 21. A later run can be found in the Fall 1967 series, lecture 9.

Part VI

Fall 1967

General Introduction

I have one suggestion as to what would constitute a helpful background (as compared to no background, which is quite alright), and that is, some book of Goffman's like *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. What I do has only the following relation to Goffman's work: He tries to – and with some great success – make sociological points turning on the details of ordinary life, such that when you read a book like *The Presentation of Self*, on pretty much any page you come across something that's news to you, which you hadn't noticed, which you could notice, which you can thereafter more or less see going on. (He tries more than that, he tries to put it all together in some sort of package.)

The sorts of things he's attending and the kinds of points he's making in no way stand in a one-to-one relationship with the sorts of things that I do. But nonetheless, as compared to what it is that's available in sociology, that would be the best thing to have, if one wanted some background. If what I'm doing seems strange, then after a couple of days reading in *Presentation of Self*, you might be in a position to feel at home with some of the things I'll try to do.

What you get from Goffman is that there are a lot of things going on, they're perhaps studyable, and the study of them can be assimilated to, or assimilate to itself, interests that sociologists have had, or might have. And one thing that Goffman does is to make relevant to his interests a literature that is not at all designed for that; e.g., there's a place where he talks about the literature on social stratification. Now what he does with that literature is something that its authors had no intention of having done with it. He also makes available to sociological consideration a wide range of things from biographies, novels, etc. (I won't do that.)

I want to give some background on what I plan to do. While the question 'What are you going to do?' 'What is the course going to be about?' might seem quite straightforward, I want first to try to locate the sort of answer I'd like to give by fooling around with the question a little. In a context like this, it would seem to me, anyway, that one partial analogue of the question 'What are you going to do?' is this sort of thing: Children get asked the question "What are you going to be when you grow up?" Now, there's certain rather interesting features about how an answer would be done. First, an answer would consist of selecting some occupation from a list of occupations that are known, available, existing, used. "What are you going to be when you grow up?" "I'm going to be a so-and-so." What a 'so-and-so' might be is something that anybody might know, or anybody might discover by looking at, say, the census list of occupations.

Now if that's the sort of thing that an answer would be, it's kind of curious. (Let me make a parenthetical remark, and I give it as a piece of advice: Somebody once pointed out that when I say something is kind of curious, what I mean is it's perfectly ordinary but that I intend to make something out of it. So when I say something's kind of curious, then a point is about to follow.) Now, "I'm going to be a fireman" and that sort of answer, is kind of curious in this way: If, for example, it were relevant with respect to what somebody finally does, what they answer to such a question, and if the list of known occupations defined the set of possibilities, one would have the expectation that the list of occupations would be unchanging. And that the task of choosing an occupation would not consist at all in, say, the task of *making* an occupation. On the one hand we would, I suppose, find it strange for someone to answer with the name of an occupation that may only develop in the future, but on the other hand, we wouldn' find it strange that somebody at some point tries to build such an occupation and give it a name.

Now, answers to the question "What are you going to be?" don't, perhaps, control what anybody or everbody turns out to be, but it's more conceivable that how they make out in the conversations in which those questions and the answers occur, might well be terribly relevant to what they turn out to be. If, for example, a kid were asked "What are you going to be?" and he said "I'm going to be an atomic scientist," and the questioner was his father, or a teacher, then there are readily imaginable circumstances where the retort to that might be, "No one like us has ever been that," or ". . . will ever be that," or ". . . will be that in our day," or whatever else. Where, again, being able to get along in such a conversation might well be relevant to the kinds of directions you take, etc.

I mention that sort of thing to pick up one feature of the way I take it students attend their classes or peruse the catalogue, i.e., how they understand what a course is about. And that is that the catalogue is a menu. And the way a course is to be conceived is comparatively to the set of items that constitute the catalogue. In that regard, one would want me to answer the question "What are you going to do," "What is the course going to be about?" by some characterization that could be used to place what I do relative to what anybody else does, where for that purpose, that set of categories are treated as just God given. Whereas the set of names that characterize what sociologists do are, perhaps, victories of certain groups, and are more or less legislated, and quarrelled about, and changed any time, say, there's a major change in the field.

If I were to provide a name, then the set of names would be used, within which the name I gave can be placed. And I don't especially want that to be done, as I couldn't do very much about that set of names in the first place. As the field gets well-developed, the set of names tend to have some coherence to them. People do this sort of thing and that sort of thing, and those things fit together in some fashion.

Let me use another partial analogy. Consider the question "What are you doing?" There are some ways in which it would appear that nothing could be

easier to answer. But with respect, say, to the issue of what is to be made of that answer, then let's note that there's a phenomenon of 'field.' In sociology it might be called the sociology of knowledge, intellectual history, etc., which takes as its pervue formulating for itself, as a technical field, what anybody's doing. Where it's hardly very relevant to it what anybody says that they're doing. It stands in a position, say, parallel to perhaps psychology, perhaps sociology, with respect to *your* answers to what *you're* doing. That is to say, you're no authority. And in that regard, then, I'm no authority either, with respect to what I might propose to be doing intellectually. It's a matter of history. It's a matter of somebody else's business. What I can do is what I do, and I might have some say over that. But it's not my business to say, except as an 'informant,' what I figure I'm doing.

As it turns out, that field – sociology of knowledge – has not yet taken over the world. And people feel quite free to announce what they're doing, and figure they can hold others to it. But when it does, that question may disappear, as, say, the question tends to disappear for people who take psychology courses. That is, when their friends ask them "What are you doing?" they may feel terribly unable to find an answer which satisfies both their scientific interests and what they figure to be the question.

What that sort of suggests is that I can tell you something, but you have to be careful what you make of it. And in any event, if what I do lives to have an epitaph, I won't write it.

The upshot of what I've said is this: I make no commitment to what kind of placing anyone makes of what it is that I do, nor to whatever recommendations anyone might provide me, which turn on such a treatment. Now that will be very hard to accept, except maybe under one condition: If said I was doing maybe poetry, then, that one doesn't want to accept somebody's paraphrase, that one doesn't want to treat the various classifications that are available as locating it, as fully dealing with it and equivalent to it, is acceptable under perfectly conventional views of what poetry does. For example, the French poet-philosopher Paul Valéry, in his book on the art of poetry, gives a characterization of it which roughly is: You have a poem when nothing that's a paraphrase of it is equivalent to it; when you have go to back to the poem to find out what's in it.

Now for pretty much the rest of our intellectual work, such a criterion is not even supposed as appropriate or possible. One figures that of course one can paraphrase what one has heard, and can assimilate what one has heard elsewhere to it, and the like, rather than having to stick to what was heard to find out what it might be about. What I'm saying is, if anyone wants to paraphrase, that's their business.

Let me try to locate what I'm doing. When I started to do research in sociology I had this particular aim: I figured that sociology couldn't be an actual science unless it was able to handle the details of actual events; handle them formally, and in the first instance be informative about them in the ways that primitive sciences tend to be informative. That is to say, you could tell your mother something you found out, and she could go and see that it was

so. Primitive fields tend to be informative in just that direct a way. It's a tremendous control on seeing whether you're learning anything.

Having that interest in mind – could there be some way that sociology could hope to deal with the details of actual events, formally and informatively – I wanted to locate some set of materials that would permit a test – if not a negative test, then maybe a positive one. You might figure that certainly I needn't have begun that way, given that it had already been shown that it was perfectly obviously doable given the vast literature, or alternatively, that it was perfectly impossible to do given the literature. For whatever reasons, I figured it hadn't been shown either way, and I tried to find a body of material that would have the virtue of permitting us to see whether that was possible, and if possible, interesting.

So I started to play around with tape recorded conversations, for the single virtue that I could replay them; that I could type them out somewhat, and study them extendedly, who knew how long it might take. And that was a good enough record of what happened, to some extent. Other things, to be sure, happened. But at least that happened. It wasn't from any large interest in language, or from some theoretical formulation of what should be studied, but simply by virtue of that; I could get my hands on it, and I could study it again and again. And also, consequentially, others could look at what I had studied, and make of it what they could, if they wanted to be able to disagree with me.

So, the work I'm doing is about talk. It's about the details of talk. In some sense it's about how conversation works. The work tends to change, and let me just say a little bit about what I plan to do here. I have a bunch of stuff and I want to try to see whether an order for it exists. Not that I want to try to order it, but I want to try to see whether there's some order to it. The focus will be on *sequencing in conversation*. (And for now, 'sequencing' is just a word.) The aims will be, roughly, to try to lay out some of the ways that the discoverable aspects of single utterances turn out to be handleable – perhaps handleable only – by reference to sequencing considerations. That is to say, I will try to lay out how it is that sequencing considerations turn out to be implicative of what happens in a given utterance. I'll be starting out with a characterization of a conversational system where such an event would not at all be expectable. That is to say, a conversational system in which there might not be anything in the talk that dealt with things like who should talk next, who talked last, what they did, etc.

There are two ways in which we could justify the sort of interest I've mentioned, i.e., that the study of single utterances will require and will permit the discovery of features of those utterances which deal with sequencing. A first is non-polemical, and that is, that if it's true, then it's something to be known. A second can be considered to be either polemical, or additive on other interests. By and large, the specific interest of linguistics in the utterance is that study of the utterance which involves detecting those features of it which are handleable without reference to such considerations as sequencing, i.e., without reference to that it has occurred in conversation. So we can be

considered to be taking up that task; seeing if it's takeable up. Polemically we could be seeing if there is the *possibility* of, say, a fully comprehensive, coherent linguistics *without* such matters.

Recalling that the specific aim is, in the first instance, to see whether actual single events are studyable, and how they might be studyable, and then what an explanation of them would look like, then, if there's any polemical position, it's with regard to sociology and anthropology. That is to say, we might engage in trying to see how the kinds of findings I'll offer, the sorts of explanations I'll construct, could be brought into alignment with what we know about sociology or anthropology. And if not, what then?

But I won't be spending time criticizing the field, or reporting its findings. And pretty much the only lecture which will have as its take off some piece of literature, is the next one. And I only start with a piece of literature next time because it's probably a much more comfortable way for people to get into the sorts of things I want to be doing. People would, I think, feel terribly uncomfortable if I simply started off with 'the data' that we'll be talking about. But we'll move from that directly to the business of the course.

Q: Am I understanding correctly when you say you want to find out whether single events are studyable? You've been studying them for a long time, haven't you decided yet whether they are?

HS: That's not for me to say.

Q: You're just going to go on until you finally decide whether they are or not.

HS: No, I'm not going to go on until I find that they are. If somebody were able to convince me that it was a big waste, then I might do other things. But if I were to tell you, "Single events are studyable and they're studyable in this way," then you would write it down, and you would confront some other teacher or something like that. Your problem is to decide for yourself. I would just as soon that you found that it more or less satisfied you, or that it didn't.

Q: Well aren't you convinced?

HS: That's such a private question.

Q: Oh, I'm sorry.

HS: What I mean is, suppose I tell you, "Honestly, I am." Either you believe me or you don't. And if you believe me, what do you do with it.

Q: It means that *you* believe it. It feels good.

HS: Sure, I believe. I believe for cosmological reasons. It's an orderly world. How could it possibly be otherwise. I found out a lot of things. I find them interesting. Other people do. Some people tell me it's wonderful stuff. Others say it's terrible. But they don't come and tell me. They tell my friends, who tell me.

Lecture 1
The speaker sequencing problem

I'll begin with a quotation from a very interesting paper by an anthropologist named Ethel Albert, 'Rhetoric, logic, and poetics in Burundi: culture patterning of speech behavior,' in *American Anthropologist*, volume 66, number 6, part 2 (1964), pages 40–41.

> The order in which individuals speak in a group is strictly determined by seniority of rank. If the eldest present is lower in social rank than some other individual, age gives way before social status. Thus, a nephew may be older than his uncle but the uncle is of higher rank and will speak before him. A prince or chief may be younger than others present but speaks first by virtue of his higher rank. There are no recorded instances of confusion or conflict in the matter of determining order of precedence even in very large groups.
>
> In public, the rule for servants, females, and other inferiors is to speak when spoken to but otherwise to maintain silence. Nevertheless, the pattern is so arranged that younger or socially inferior persons are in due course able to express their views. Thus, the senior person will speak first; the next in order of rank opens his speech with a statement to the effect, "Yes, I agree with the previous speaker, he is correct, he is older and knows best, etc." Then, depending on circumstances and issues, the second speaker will, by degrees or at once, express his own views, and these may well be diametrically opposed to those previously expressed. No umbrage is taken, the required formula of acknowledgement of the superior having been used. If the *umukuru*, senior person, is truly very aged and weak, his son may speak first, explaining his departure from the rules at the outset: "My father is old. His memory is not good. He wishes me to speak for him." Or some other appropriate excuse is given. It is not unusual for the formal order of precedence to be abandoned in the latter part of a protracted discussion, and for loud voices to be heard even among upper-class individuals.

Let me now briefly locate the interest of these materials. I'm doing a bunch of research on *sequencing in conversation*, with the particular focus on the way some group of techniques involved in sequencing in conversation turn out to implicate the features that compose single utterances. Having collected a variety of findings, I was looking to see whether there was some central organizing problem in terms of which, say, some of those findings might be seen to be coherent. Or, alternatively, I was looking to find some possible

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problem about sequencing which seemed to have the widest and/or the deepest set of implications for what happens in conversation.

What I'll be doing, at least in large part, will be attempting to see whether those organizing facts which I think will do that work, seem to do it. And what I think is crucial, and permits the organization of a great deal of findings, is that this society – which is where all my materials come from – has what I'll be calling a 'next speaker solution' to the 'speaker sequencing problem.' And by the 'speaker sequencing problem' I mean this: If the society happens to have, as one basic rule for conversation in it, that not more than one party should talk at a time, then there needs to be techniques whereby speakers, potential speakers, etc., go about ordering their speech relative to each other. And one wants to find those techniques, see how they work, etc.

As an introduction to 'next speaker solution.' I'll first consider a reported alternative solution, which I'll call an 'order of speaker solution.' I'll be proposing that Ethel Albert, in her paper on the Burundi, is to be read as proposing that for the Burundi there's an 'order of speaker solution' to the speaker sequencing problem. With regard to what she says, I will first of all try to give an organization by reference to this speaker sequencing problem which she doesn't systematically discuss. Then I'll try to consider some of the conditions under which such a solution as she presents is possible. Then I'll try to deal with some of the consequences, and then finally I'll make a variety of critical commentaries on this quotation I started off with.

What we'll roughly come up with is that here's a system – the Burundi type – which, given the way it handles speaker sequencing, doesn't involve us in having to look to what anybody says in conversation among the Burundi, to be in a position either of describing any actual conversation's sequence of speakers, or accounting for that sequence of speakers. That will be in sharp contrast to what obtains for a 'next speaker' situation. We are starting out, then, with an heuristic contrast to what we'll hereafter be considering. This has as one use, say, that one can come to see that it's not in the nature of man in society that things work the way they work in the system we'll be characterizing hereafter. We can also, perhaps, get in miniature, some idea about how one could focus reasoning on such matters.

The quotation is titled 'Rules of precedence and good speech manners,' i.e., Albert presents the material as dealing with rules of precedence. Later on I'll have something to say about whether that's an analytically ideal way to talk about that material, but I'll hold that off for now. In the first sentence we get: "The order in which individuals speak in a group is strictly determined by seniority of rank." Then there are sorts of instances of how that might operate. If we take it for now that Albert's summary of a set of norms is in some way seeable as correct, then we can say that with respect to the sequencing problem for that society, a first key unit we need is a notion of 'rounds.' We would say that, like many games in American society and elsewhere, speaker sequencing is organized in rounds, for the Burundi. A round of talk consists of each participant to the conversation speaking once. A conversation consists of some number of rounds.

Now the technique of rounds holds, apparently, independent of two things: (a) the number of parties to a conversation, and (b) the number of rounds to a conversation. We can note that variations on that are perfectly conceivable. For example, it's conceivable that this system would hold up to a certain number of speakers, or up to a certain number of rounds, and then shift into something else. Also, Albert is not clear on this point, but for purposes of exemplifying one possible system it would seem that what we've so far characterized holds for *any* conversation in that society. And again it's imaginable that such a situation would hold for some classes of conversation, e.g., formal debates or other such things, and not for others. Or the system might hold if certain classes of persons were present or certain classes of persons were not present, but Albert seems to characterize it as holding independent of who the parties are, under whatever formulation one might make of 'who the parties are.'

What we can also say, given Albert's report, is that the key problem for participants to conversation in that society is assigning positions relative to each other, of participants for the first round. Once that's been achieved, then conversation can proceed thereafter by repetitions of the order of that first round. And key to the determination of how that first round should go is, among the Burundi, 'who the parties are.' That is, the various parties use an available ranking system to assign first, second, etc., speaker. They can do that, apparently, by inspection.

One thing Albert doesn't say, but it would seem to be a part of such a system − at least a part considered contrastively with others − that it holds independently of what anybody says. That is to say, e.g., in some parliamentary systems where speakership is assigned by signing up in the morning and getting an order of speakers, if somebody insults a given member of the group, then that member has an immediate right of reply. But we'll suppose that there's some way of determining for any conversation in the society, by reference to this ranking system, who speaks first, who speaks second, etc., given some particular set of participants for some actual conversation. What that means for an analyst is that we could precharacterize any conversation by considering, say, the possible conversations as combinations of ordered letters for speakers and ordinal numbers for rounds. Then, any conversation with, say, five parties for two rounds would look like: (1) a, b, c, d, e; (2) a, b, c, d, e, irrespective of what anybody said, and who those parties were. That is to say, we could make predictions about speaker sequencing in perfect detail without listening to the conversation at all.

One thing that is quite interesting is that the arrangements of letters would exhibit an oriented-to order. That is to say: Consider a lettered notation of a conversation having three or four parties, in our society. Suppose now that you used the ordered letters to handle the string of speech starting from the beginning. You might get {a, b, c, d} if you had four parties. You perfectly well might not get that, you might get {a, b, a, c}, you might get {a, b, a, b}, etc. And furthermore, as you extend it, you get some set of letters where you'd have no idea whether some analysis of those letters would give you, say, a

theory of speaker sequencing for this society. You might not want to use letters at all. Having used letters, you might find that you had lost information relevant to determining how come the conversation took some course at some point. That is to say, you might figure if you only knew who happened to speak at some point you could know who might speak next. Or, if you knew what a given party said at some point, you could know why a given party spoke next. And furthermore, it's not at all obvious that it would be interesting to pose the problem in terms of a whole conversation as that which you want to be able to account for. That is to say, it may well be that ours is a system for which what one may want to account for is, perhaps, that given at some point A has spoken and B spoke next, how come that happened – and not the whole string of talkers.

I mentioned one condition for the operation of the Burundi system, and that is, that speakers have some way of silently, before the conversation, determining what the order of speakers should be. So that at any given point we don't have, say, two people starting up, or no one starting up, or four starting up, or the wrong one starting up, etc. Of the tasks involved, one key task may be trivial. That is, a key task is, apparently, determining when some current talker is finished. I say that's a key task and perhaps trivial since it's conceivable that they would have (though there's no indication of that) some particle, some word which was reserved for use to signal 'end utterance.' There are things like that in various procedures which require that somebody signal that they're finished, e.g., 'Over and out,' etc., for radio communication systems. It could be trivial, but it could also be very important. It could be very important because one interesting feature of the Burundi system is that one needs little more than a notion of 'speaker' – one hardly needs a notion of 'hearer' – to handle what's happening. That is to say, with respect to conversational sequencing and what motivation it provides people, all that needs to be done for anybody who's not a speaker is, he needs only to listen to the speaker who properly speaks before him, and only needs to listen for that end. Nobody else has, with respect to the sequencing of talk, to listen to what anybody says.

We'll find out that with respect to the society we're going to be dealing with, there are built in requirements that involve any participant to a conversation in listening all the time; and furthermore, that by virtue of those facts we can develop a conception of what a 'hearer' is for that society. But for the Burundi there need be – if listening to another is going to be something that is cared about – other means of dealing with it. In fact, Albert mentions some other means. First of all there is something which almost amounts to a division of labor between speakers and hearers. Albert says that females are trained from early on, in being virtuoso hearers. They're supposed to sit silently, and be able, after a given conversation that they've heard, to repeat it relatively verbatim. Also, Albert says that one basic thing going on in conversation among the Burundi is competition. Points are scored in various ways, and in order to make points 'better' than, say, people who have gone before, it may pay to listen.

Now, if it's this situation of rounds, a speaker talking only once per round, each speaker getting a chance to talk in each round, that is centrally characteristic of the Burundi society, then we ought to be able to see that the use of a ranking system is but one choice as a means for arriving at an order of speaker solution. That is to say, it might well be that they could have other ways than 'rules of precedence mapped on to a stratification system' to get that result. It might be convenient, if the society wasn't very mature, to have a system like they have in some markets where you take a check when you come in, i.e., you use, say, the order of entry into the place where conversation occurs as the means of determining the order of speakers in the first round. Not only 'stratification systems,' then, but other techniques might be used to permit an order of speaker solution, as a generalized solution, to take place.

One thing one has to eventually get to is that a stratificational system can rapidly become more or less inadequate. As Albert points out, there aren't all that many groups – princes, commoners, servants, maybe a couple of others – and there's lots of people in each one. Everybody has to pretty well know their relative ranking to each other to be able to use it. And there are some ways that that could become troublesome. What's involved is really a combination of possibilities. There's that group of ordered categories – prince, commoner, servant, etc. – by which you differentiate people. Then there's apparently this kinship stuff. 'Uncles speak before nephews' for example. Those two sorts of things are not at all alike. It may be perfectly obvious that if one's a prince one is not a commoner. It may be perfectly obvious that if one's the uncle of X, then X is a nephew of yours. But kinship is more complicated than that, in that it's perfectly conceivable that any two persons are related by more than a pair of kinship terms. And it's at least in theory possible that the two sets of pairs might have different results. Suppose A is B's uncle. Now suppose that B has a daughter who marries A. Then B is A's nephew and also A's father-in-law. And in the rules of precedence, fathers might speak before sons. Then you would have a trouble with respect to whether A should speak before B because A is the uncle, or B should speak before A because B is the father.

The key point I want to make here is only this: When you start to deal with combinations like this, and particularly combinations of a stratification system which has the property that if you're one you're not another, and a kinship system for which this is not the case, these can generate trouble if what's needed is a clear determination of who speaks first relative to any possible next person for any conversation in the society.

The sort of trouble I've mentioned may sound far-fetched, but it can serve as an initial way to move into something that's far less esoteric as a possibility, and that is: Albert talks about uncles and nephews, and princes and commoners, and says that the norms that have been collected are formulated in terms of such kinds of categories; i.e., a prince should speak before a commoner. What I want to propose is: The task of determining whether facts fall out as such a rule provides, is overwhelmingly more complicated than it's suggested to be. A first thought in that regard arises by reference to the

possibility that A is the uncle of B, but B is also the father of A. That is to say, when we're talking about uncles and nephews we're not talking about people, we're talking about categories of people. And any real people may be some set of those categories, and the question is, how does anybody decide which of those categories is appropriate at any given point. The rules are formulated in terms of the categories. But the rules don't tell you when those categories are appropriately to be used.

Now the notion of 'when' can have different senses. I saw, for example, a picture in a newspaper a couple of months ago in which there were two little boys standing in front of a car in the first frame, gesturing at each other, and in the second frame one of them was entering the car and the other was standing behind him. And the caption tells us that these two boys, one eight, one five, one is the Queen of England's son, and the other was some duke's son. And the point is made that these kids, even at this age, were engaged in using the rules of precedence which assign for British aristocracy, who enters first. The Prince had gestured to the other boy to get in, the other refused, and told the Prince to go first. Now there's that sense of 'when:' When, in the course of a person's life, does such a system become operative. There's also, however, that sense of 'when' which turns, say, on the Prince being the employee of somebody who's a commoner, etc. If you have a rule which says 'employees should not speak unless spoken to' and you had another rule that say 'never address a prince unless he addresses you,' then you have possible kinds of issues with respect to which of these things is to hold in any given case.

That sort of problem has a perfect parallel with respect to the other part of any rule which contains one of these terms, that other part being the action named. Now, the action named is characteristically such an action as persons in the society decide to be a case of *that* action as compared to some *other* action for which they also have a name. So that if you said, "How come in that last conversation I watched, the Prince didn't talk first?" somebody might say "That wasn't a conversation, it was a [something else]." And, not saying it with the intention of showing you that the rules they have are always followed, but saying it as they fully see the way the world happens with them.

Ethnographies are always written in just such a fashion as Albert writes. They always talk about categories of actors formulated in terms that the society has of them or translations of that into categories of actors formulated in the names our society has, and categories of actions formulated in just the same way. Invariably. But if your aim is to find out, even, in the first instance whether such a rule is followed, then it would appear that you will have to construct characterizations of how it is, for example, that events are determined to be cases of the action named, how it is that persons are determined to be, relevantly, cases of the classes of actors named, and things of that order. It would appear, further, to be possibly quite misleading to suppose that, having the rule, one is in a position to, say, wander around and apply it to whatever you figure might conceivably be a case of it, so as to see whether it's being followed or not.

Let me just pick up a couple of further things about Albert's formulation. She says "In due course everyone gets a chance to express their own views." When I first read that I figured it was just a piece of casual remarking, not to be taken terribly seriously. How in the world would she know whether 'speaking' equals 'expressing their own views'? On the one hand, I find that view supported by what she says elsewhere – that given the enormous relevance of the ranking system, persons who are lower down in it don't dare 'express their own views' in the presence of others that are higher, for fear of not getting presents, or whatever else. They get a chance to speak – the round system provides that – but to say that that involves 'expressing their views' is just loose talk.

But then I want to note that it might not be such a thing. Insofar as what we have is a system in which everybody is assigned a chance to talk, and they're assigned that chance by reference to their position in the stratification system, then one thing that may be operative is this: Who a person is when he talks is something that anybody knows. That is to say, 'who' with respect to that stratification system. It's, now, not my neighbor, a friend whom I know, the guy who has the plot next door to me, but the Prince that's talking. And in situations where one has that sort of knowledge of who's talking, then, in our society it's regularly the case that what is heard is that the speaker is expressing the views of his position. That is to say, if you meet a guy and talk to him, you may have little idea of how you would say who's views he's expressing, if he's expressing any. He's agreeing with you, disagreeing with you, because he's ornery or for various other reasons. If, however, you hear a debate, say, posed as a debate between a Communist and a Bircher, then what you'll hear of things they say is that that's the view of the Communist and that's the view of the Bircher, as compared to that's the view of a 40-year-old man, or that's nobody's view he's putting us on, or whatever else.

In that regard, then, where there is this definite category that provides how come a given person is speaking now, it may well be that that person is heard as speaking in the name of that category. And furthermore it would be hard for him not to be heard as speaking in the name of that category. And that being the case, he'd better attend to what will be made of what he says, i.e., what princes are thinking. It's parallel to being a celebrity in this society. Any time you're recognized, you're recognized as that celebrity. Whatever you're doing, you're seen as doing under that single formulation. You live, you die, you get seen buying things, etc., as that. You don't get a chance to be something else for the moment, if somebody sees you. And in that regard, then, a system under which how you come to talk is not so formulated, has larger possibilities with respect to what 'role' you might choose to 'express' in a piece of talk, as it might be put.

In another part of the article Albert gives an answer to one kind of problem that could be raised about such a system. If a condition for C's talking is that B has finished, what happens if, when A is finished, B doesn't talk? She says, on page 41:

. . . silence on the part of the ranking person present . . . directly blocks further discussion. Application of the principle of seniority is such that a superior's silence effectively silences all his social inferiors.

We might wonder what happens with the silence of somebody else.

The very fact, of course, that Albert can speak about *a* person's silence means that apparently they have some clear way of deciding that, for example, some prior speaker has finished. The notion of 'silence,' then, is the notion of a *responsible silence*. It is by no means very easy to give clear formulation to. Are you talking about what stands as a 'pause' in the talk of the currently speaking person, now not saying anything? Or are you pointing to the silence of the one who should speak now – given that somebody else has finished – but who hasn't started speaking? Within our society both of those are apparently noticeable objects. And they're also consequential.

In that regard, let me consider the phenomenon of silence by reference to a case of conversation in our society, in which there is a solution to who speaks first, i.e., the telephone conversation, which has as the solution, 'answerer speaks first.' And what I'm going to say now is in the following specific context: I take it as a general constraint on proposing something as a finding, however abstractly analytic it is, or however trivially obvious it is, that such a proposal be accompanied with a piece of news it gives us. That is, if we're going to count something as a piece of real world, then one thing we require of it, apart from, e.g., that it's analytically convenient, is that there are things that we didn't notice that it permits us to see. When I talked, in my introduction, about primitive science giving you news, this is one place where we're going to require it. So the question is, what can be illuminated by the telephone conversation as having 'answerer speaks first' as a solution to who speaks first?

For this consideration I'm using a soon to be published paper by a sociologist at Columbia,[1] which is on 'first speaker' for two-party conversation. He has an enormous amount of data that he's dealing with, and he has with it a little anecdote that he got while he was discussing this with one of his classes. It goes like this: One of the students, a girl, was bothered by obscene phone calls, by some fellow whom she didn't know. Now, obscene telephone callers seem to fall into various types, one of which are called 'panters,' i.e., they breathe heavily while they're talking to whoever it is that they're making obscene phone calls to. These calls were very bothersome to her, and she got into a habit of picking up the phone and listening on the line before she talked. And if she heard the panting she would hang up; if not, she would talk.

Now the story she was trying to tell was that her friends complained to her that it was very bothersome to them to call and have this period of silence. And she wanted to use that to show that there was indeed this rule in which

[1] The reference is to Emanuel A. Schegloff, 'Sequencing in conversational openings,' *American Anthropologist*, 70 (1968), pp. 1075–95.

the person who answers the phone should speak first. And, furthermore, should speak when they pick up the phone. Now the guy that writes this paper points out something else that is going on in her story, which is that apparently if she didn't speak first, the caller, even though he was going to do something extremely violative of a whole bunch of rules, would not talk. So she could pick up the phone, he would know that somebody picked up the phone, but until she talked he didn't talk. And in that way we can see that there will be apparently strong conditions under which a party who calls doesn't start talking until the one who picked up the phone talks. That is, it's not merely that the conversation happens to occur with the first speaker being the one who picked up the phone, in the sense of it being just a matter of convention which you can modify as you happen to please.

And once you have silence as a problem, you could consider another sort of problem in the system Albert is reporting on: What is the potential for filibuster? If the end of some party's talk is the condition for the next starting, what constraints are there on the length of utterance for any given party? Albert provides no answer on that. Now, in the thing we'll be considering in detail – the next speaker solution – there are ways of dealing with each of those sorts of things, i.e., silence, completion, etc.

Now, pretty much all of what I've been doing here has involved us in doing theorizing. That is, given a system such as Albert has characterized, and a rule that says 'B speaks on the completion of A,' then, to look for some set of rules that say how A brings about his completion, and whether A must bring about his completion within some determinate length of time, etc., is to be looking for such a matter without in the first instance knowing that it exists. And that is to be doing one kind of theory. To take, as I took, her first law, and to subject it to considerations which involved us in trying to find material that was not necessarily presented sequentially around that, is to be treating something she says as involving us then – having done some thinking about it – in looking for something else in the world, that it figures ought to be there if what she talks of is there; or in saying that if what she says is there but something else is also there, then what she proposes couldn't be so, etc. Doing that, what we're doing is 'theorizing.' And that can then be considered with respect to whether that's what theorizing ought to be, whether that's all theorizing ought to be, and the like.

Lecture 2

The 'one-at-a-time' rule; Violations; Complaints; Gossip

This time I'll talk about one basic rule for conversation in this society. The sentence that names the rule couldn't be less interesting, so it's not that announcing the rule is any special news; the question is what we'll do with it. The rule is, *'not more than one party should speak at a time.'*

What I'll do first is to simply name several relevancies of that rule and I'll come back eventually to considering those relevancies in some detail. The first is a relevance with respect to the state of research i.e., concerns why research has taken the course it has. What I want essentially to propose is that the research productivity of the notion 'utterance' – and it's been enormously productive – heavily turns on the existence and operation of the rule 'not more than one party should speak at a time,' and other rules that are affiliated with it.

The second concerns the rule's relevance for the things it's affiliated with – specificially what I'll talk of eventually and at great length as 'tying structures.' By that term I mean to name various techniques whereby a speaker goes about tying some utterance he makes, to some prior utterance that, say, somebody else makes. Instances of classes of tied utterances are things like, "He *did?*," "*He* did," "That's true," and much more complicated versions of those. One general feature of them is that neither the utterance itself, nor any of its components, locates the utterance that this utterance is tied to. Its *positioning* locates the utterance it's tied to. In order for that to operate, what one needs is some way of determining, for example, after which utterance this utterance went. And where, for example, several people are talking at a time, such locations are not routinely doable. You need other information than relative positioning to locate to which utterance an utterance is tied. If I say "I went to the movies," somebody else says "I stayed home," and somebody then says "You *did?*," then which utterance "You *did?*" intendedly ties to is not determinable by reference to the fact that it should be tied to the directly preceding utterance.

Those, then, are the names of two sorts of relevancies that this rule, 'Not more than one party should speak at a time,' has. I mention those in the first instance to show that, trivial as it may sound as a rule, perfectly obvious as it may appear as a rule, it can have consequences which may not be as obvious as its appearance might lead one to think. I am not going to start out with a consideration of the import of its relevance. I want, instead, to consider the sort of rule it is. And I do that for what could appear to be rather parenthetical

interests. But I'll be taking the occasion of our being engaged in considering this rule, as one on which what we'll be doing is considering 'such a rule as this,' where – in the ways I'll talk about it – there are lots of rules like it. I'll therefore be saying things about some, perhaps many such rules.

Why bother? For this reason: For example, in Albert's discussion about precedence rules and techniques among the Burundi she says at least two sorts of interesting things. One of them was that there are no recorded instances of confusion or violation of the precedence rules. Another thing was, that because of the importance of speech to that society – perhaps to any society – speech norms are the sorts of things that Members (any Members or Members who have a reputation for wisdom) can state to a researcher.

Those are quite important sorts of statements, and they are quite different sorts of statements, one from the other. They are also very very characteristic sorts of statements that researchers make. You can ask a native about what are certain classes of norms, and what they tell you, you can treat as an answer. Then there are various means for deciding, for example, that a rule is being conformed to. Like the fact that there are no recorded violations.

In other words, what we're going to do is consider some of the issues involved in talking about norms. We'll do it by reference to the particular rule we start out with; 'Not more than one party should speak at a time.' Imagine, however, that what we were talking about was the Burundi precedence rules. Albert doesn't tell us anything about *why* those rules are conformed to, where why those rules are conformed to is not necessarily equivalent to how those rules are enforced. That is to say, it might well be that on the one hand there are bases for conforming to the rules which are quite independent of avoiding the sanctions that are available if you violate them. And the sanctions may then be directed, not to preventing *any* violations, but to preventing *some* violations.

With respect to, say, the rules of precedence, the techniques for dealing with violations might be quite critical sorts of things. Consider, with respect to the 'one party talks at a time' rule, alternatively to the rules of precedence: If one party is talking and another starts up, the one who was talking might say, "You interrupted me," or "Shut up, I'm still talking," or things like that. Now, such an occasion for bringing attention to the occurrence of a violation is not obviously present, given the rules of precedence, for the Burundi. That is perfectly simply seen. A, B, C, D is the order of talk. After B talks, D starts up. We already have a possible violation. How do we handle its immediate correction? One sees that, for one, there are few of the people participating in the conversation who, if they talk now, would not be also violating the rules of precedence. So if B talks then D talks, perhaps C could talk without also violating the rules of precedence, but A certainly couldn't talk, because if A were to talk, A would also be violating the rules of precedence – A doesn't talk after B or after D. It's a game in which there's very limited possibility for doing correction, *at that time.* You might write him a note and send it to him. You might tell his mother afterwards. But it isn't a system which has built into it allowance for instantaneous correction of

an occurring violation, except under relatively limited kinds of possibilities. And even those rather immediately exhaust themselves. Suppose, for example, C starts up and says "You shouldn't have spoken." Then D clearly has a chance to speak, since D talks after C. D says "Yes I should." C doesn't have a chance to talk, it's E's turn.

In that regard, then, it's not at all trivial that Albert doesn't tell us how that set of rules of rules is enforced. And – what's an enormously usual fact for conversation in our society – that various sorts of speech rule violations are immediately assertable, would not obviously be present for the Burundi. They may have other means, but who knows what they are. It might, then, be very important that rules like the rules of precedence were not violated at all. Each violation would have cumulative consequences. If K spoke after B, and nobody noticed it, does that mean that L should speak after K, or C should speak after K?

Means of enforcement and bases for violations are matters of considerable interest. And there can be, perhaps, for some actions in some society, means of enforcement which are usable on the occasion of the violation, as a next action to the violation. That may be not only an option, it may also be that if one did not mark a violation on its immediate occurrence, no further chance, or restrictively orderly further chances are available. What I mean by 'restrictively orderly further chances' is this sort of thing: If someone interrupts you while you're talking, and you don't say "You interrupted me" or "I'm still talking" but you allow them to continue, then you may not have it available to you as an option to say, seven utterances later in the conversation, "By the way you interrupted me a while back." But you may have it as an option that if that one interrupts you *again*, you can say "You keep interrupting me," noticing, then, not merely the most recent, but what you take to be a pattern. You can, then, save up a case for later use, but that later use is conditional on the occurrence of another case.

With respect to 'one party talks at a time,' if there are events that do not have that rule as their correct characterization i.e., events with, say, two or three parties talking at a time, then one option is that while or directly after that takes place, a claim of violation on somebody's part can be made. That is, these are rules where the occasion of asserting violations is provided for, and one such occasion is directly on their occurrence. One then has a place to look to see whether a possible violation is going to be dealt with. Now let's ask, "Well, suppose you have a violation and you look to the next utterance and you don't find a pointing up of the violation. What do you make of that? Decide that perhaps you were wrong, maybe there was not a violation?" Not necessarily. What one wants to do – and again I'm not only talking about the possibility of interruptions, but about a class of which interruptions is a case – is to examine as, now, your empirical phenomenon, actions of 'noticing violations,' and attempt to see what kind of organization they have.

Let me pause to indicate some of the methodological relevance of the discussion so far, and as it shall proceed. If you had a rule that said, seemingly, that something was a violation, and violations are noticeable, then an ideal

procedure for deciding that there was a violation would be that it was noticed. Any other constraint gets very tricky to handle. For one, you may not even have a rule, and therefore what you figured was a violation was not at all a violation, or, if there was a rule, the rule wasn't operative at that point. And what you want to be discriminating is, the researcher thinks that the rule should apply here and it apparently didn't characterize events, but it may be that the rule doesn't apply there, and that's why, for example, nothing happened.

One is, then, not in a position to freely assert, for any rule you figure should be operative, that it was violated, when you can't point to anybody doing anything about its violation – assuming, that is, that you already have some idea about how they go about dealing with violations, like, e.g., that they can immediately notice them. Now, the ideal rule is, after all, the rule of the character that Albert claims for the rules of precedence – they're never violated. But if you've offered as a constraint on there being a rule even though it's violated that, e.g., it be noticed, then if you have a violation and it's not noticed, you're in a problem with respect to deciding that you have a rule. You're in a position of asserting that a rule was violated and not noticed, though your criterion says the way that a violated rule can be dealt with is by noticing it.

So we're lead to further moves; to considering the action of 'noticing violations,' trying to, on the one hand, gain an apparatus which will justify assertions that a violation occurred where one can't point to noticing of the violation, and, in doing that, also making some findings about the activity of 'noticing.' In this regard, the troubles we have with justifications are not merely burdens we have, but *gains,* in the sense that they're leading us to make new findings.

Let's for the moment forget about cases where possible violations occur and no noticing takes place, and, even forgetting about possible violations, let's just deal with noticing a violation, whether it's justified or not. Let's take prototypes such as, e.g., "You always interrupt me," "You never let me finish," and other instances like that. What we want to see in the first instance is whether they have orderly occurrence. Can we state some conditions which characterize when utterances like that occur? Such utterances are interesting because you might figure that if they look like 'You always . . . ' or 'You never . . . ; ' they might be made anywhere. Aside from an issue about to whom 'you' is directed, they're not overtly tied utterances.

But they don't occur like that. If they're going to be possibly effective, then there are relatively limited environments in which they do occur. First is directly on a case of what they propose. Somebody interrupts somebody, and the other says "You always interrupt me." And there they can be effective. They occasionally occur elsewhere, and that elsewhere can be roughly characterized. It's quite different, and also has different consequences. If, for example, persons are engaged in an exchange of complaints (and I'll deal with in a while how they might get into an exchange of complaints) then if A has made some complaint about B, B may make some complaint about A, and

it may be such a complaint as "You always interrupt me" or "You never let me finish what I'm saying," or whatever else. (Now when that's done, one tack is, "Give me a case," and one regularly finds that a case can't be found. If a case is found, that case can be met with, "Yeah, that was once, but I don't do it.")

When "You always interrupt me" occurs immediately on an interruption, it is treated in the first instance as at least noticing that prior interruption, and, e.g., apologies are regularly forthcoming. But there are other ways it can be dealt with. It can be that sort of thing that generates an exchange of complaints, and so gives us our other case. A says "You always interrupt me," B can then use that as an occasion for offering some complaint about A. But it seems specifically to be the case that generalized statements of the sort we're considering are – among whatever else they do – specifically ways of noticing an immediately prior case, which they characterize. That is to say, if you take as your task examining those statements, you will find that they are very precisely placed.

We will suppose that they're orderly. Are there, then, specific bases for their *not* occurring every time? If there are specific bases for their not occurring every time, then, on any given occasion that the violation may have occurred and the noticing doesn't, while one may not be able to say that the noticing didn't occur because of the bases, one is at least in a position to say that there will be such occasions and this may be one of them. That is, the theory allows for such occurrences.

There is one kind of thing that seems to be involved, that constitutes a control on the noticing event. And here I will talk about it in a general form. It's a matter that, in that general form and with specifications, I will come back to and back to and back to. Suppose somebody makes an utterance that has as one of its doings that it names an action done in a prior utterance. For example, "You just interrupted me," "Quit agreeing with him," whatever else. Utterances like that are capable of themselves being scrutinized for what action they're doing, and that can be announced in two sorts of ways, parallel to what I earlier said i.e., 'You just did X,' of 'You always do X.' So if you say "You just interrupted me," then one thing I can do next is say "You're always complaining."

So the point is, first: Given an utterance that names an action done in a prior utterance, a speaker may name an action done in the utterance that names the action done in the prior utterance. Why is that of any consequence? In the following way: If one option for speakers is to treat the action named in some utterance as something they're going to tie further utterances to – which is the aim in, say, complaining; i.e., "You interrupted me" intends, among other things, that somebody then talk about that interruption, e.g., apologize, deny it, etc. If one option, then, is that when that occurs it can be turned into a topic, then, if when that occurs the other can occur, i.e., if an utterance that names a prior action can be followed by an utterance that names the action of *that* utterance, then the second can be used to tie discourse to. So that, for example, if you say "You interrupted me" and I say "You're

always complaining,'' then the next move might turn on a discussion, not of my interruption, but of your complaining. That is to say, it's not guaranteed that if you make a complaint your complaint will be the topic. It is perfectly well possible, systematically, that if you make a complaint, your complaining will be the topic. And if you don't want your complaining to be the topic, then you may have to avoid making things which are formulatable as 'complaints.' And in that regard, if somebody does something routinely which is capable of being complained about, and you complain about it each time, you're in a good position to be treated as complaining.

Roughly, you could put it this way: In an imaginary society you could figure that if A names an action that B did in a prior utterance, then what A was doing would only be treated as naming the action the B did in the prior utterance, and not throwing out an utterance that was subject to just the sort of consideration that B's was. What we have is a parallel with respect to actions, to what I proposed about the Burundi. There's no room in the Burundi system to go about definitely correcting the order or precedence. Pointing to its violation can be a violation. In that sense there's also a similar situation with respect to noticing violations with respect to the talking rules in English. There's no free room to do that. If you do it, it can be done on you.

There are a series of other matters involved. I've kind of assumed them in what I've said, but let me state them more explicitly and draw their consequences. If you're talking and somebody interrupts you, one of the things you may want is to regain the floor, so as to be able to continue, for example, what you were saying. If, instead of trying to bring the interrupter to a halt, you notice their violation, then you do several things. First of all, in saying ''You just interrupted me'' you select them as next speaker after you're finished, and you do not guarantee that upon their completion, what they will do will be to give you back the floor. They can do various things. They can say, for example, ''I didn't, did I John?'' to somebody else, who has a comment on that. If what you want is a chance to continue, this is an automatically ineffective way, at least directly, to get the floor back. One thing you're definitely going to do is to give them the floor in the first instance. In that regard, then, if what you want is to tie your utterance to some immediately preceding utterance, for example, then, insofar as what you're doing is producing an utterance that can itself be tied to by that of another who may then select another, you're putting a lot of room between what you're in the first instance interested in, and your next possible chance to talk.

Now, there are other means for dealing with the sorts of violations we're considering, and they're very curious sorts of things. Curious because without an extended consideration of why those rules should be so important, it's hard to figure why such a big deal is made of violation of them. It's the 'big deal' that I'll now talk to. One of the things about, say, violations of 'one party talks at a time' is that there's a name for some sorts of those violations – 'interrupting' – and that name is the name of a case of a class of violations – 'being rude' – and that class of violations has specific ways of being dealt with, which are quite interesting.

With respect to that apparently fundamental technique of social control which we call 'gossip,' 'being rude' is one routine component of matters that can be gossiped about, i.e., reported to another by one who has collected it directly himself, or heard it on good authority. 'Being rude' is, then, with respect to that biography that gossip organizes, disseminates, etc., one putative item. It can be used. When people are talking about people – people they know, people they don't know – one of the things that can come up, can be filed, can be reused, is that 'he's rude.' Insofar as one is concerned or is led to be concerned about what that biography contains, and insofar also as one knows what it can collect, i.e., what will go in it and what will not, then, controlling action by reference to not having such items, is one thing people go about doing.

That the item gets into that mill, and gets used that way, is of considerable importance. For one, by virtue of the fact that there are a relatively small group of items that are eligible for consideration. And for another, once they're in there, their treatment is something that is not governed by how they got in there. That is to say, if on some occasion you interrupted somebody and they noticed it (whether or not they said so aloud) and were later asked about you, or were engaged in a conversation and your name came up, they might say, "Well, he's rude." Then, both those people thereafter have that item for reuse. And the reuse does not require, for example, keeping how they came to get it.

Let me make a remark about that sort of thing – how they came to get it. It's a curious fact about a bunch of things – a class of things sophisticatedly called 'apocryphal,' though nobody figures they're apocryphal I guess, as they're telling it to you. Somebody telling you a story will say, "You know what happened to a friend of mine?" and they'll tell you the story. If you go ask the person you were told it happened to, he may well say that it didn't happen to him, but it happened to a friend of his. And who it happened to is just unknowable. That is to say that the chain of reports consist only in 'somebody told me' or 'it happened to another guy,' and one can't often retrace the item so as to get to a position so as to have it expunged. Like, the lady who originally said that I was rude now retracts her statement and if I can find all the people who have heard it from her, and from the people she told it to, they will remove it. But nobody knows. And it's no condition on its use that anybody know.

And it would be one thing if it was only your own state that you were dealing with when you did something that somebody is going to pick up as 'rude.' But it isn't that way, either. You might not care about your 'reputation,' but not caring about your own, you might care about somebody else's. And when an item gets into these sorts of structures, the kind of transformation of the actor who originally allegedly did it or does it, is subject to manipulation. That is to say, it can turn out to be, not that *you* did it, but 'Mary's brother did it,' i.e., it can be brought up when Mary is brought up. Her brother is rude. The whole *family's* rude. It's a tough neighborhood. In that regard, then, insofar as those techniques, i.e., gossip, is operative and is

oriented to, it's not merely that you want, then, to be not rude so as to avoid having a reputation of being rude – if you care about your reputation – but you want to avoid being rude so as to avoid having your neighbors or your sister or your kid having a reputation of being rude.

Look, then, at what happens to 'rude,' and look at the base it could have. Now the question is, why should anything as 'minor' as that be so momentously consequential, and get treatment by virtue of the massing of this apparatus? Maybe it's quite important. In any event, one thing we can begin to do is look at the items that get mentioned in gossip – that you mention in gossip, that you hear others mention in gossip – and see how we could figure out what makes them of such concern. Their stability is of course fantastic. If you were to read, say, reports on the Kennedy assassination you'd discover an enormous mass of information that's been sitting around waiting for such an occasion if it happens to come up. People who report what Oswald did – stole an apple from a tree when he was four years old, whatever else. All that is sitting around for whomsoever. The FBI man comes around, he gets told. And 'all that' is not all the information on someone, but relatively limited information. Now that's also, then, involved in how it is that occurrences of a thing like 'interrupting' are handled.

Next time I will talk to the issue of the occurrence of, say, interruptions. One tends to figure, or one reads in the literature that if you have some rules then of course violations are going to occur. You name the rule, some violations will occur. Randomly. That is routinely not the case. It's routinely the case that there are specific systematic means, bases for what counts as a violation to occur. And I'll deal with that with respect to this rule, 'Not more than one party should talk at a time.'

Lecture 3
Bases for 'interruption'

I'll begin off this time by considering some bases of the occurrence of talk for which the rule 'not more than one party should speak at a time' is not a correct characterization. I put it with that awkwardness of phrasing so as to avoid for the moment calling such situations 'interruptions.' They may not be interruptions. For some of them, all one has is that more than one party is talking at a time; one doesn't have a situation of being able to attribute that to A's interrupting B. The question is, can we construct some grounds for their occurrence? Some of the grounds I'll offer, I'll just sketch now because they'll be given fuller treatment when the particular topic they apply more closely to will be considered.

I'll begin off with a class that may seem a bit esoteric, but I'll mention it because it has some interesting parallels to it, and also because it has some intrinsic interest to it. It's a case which would probably be called 'interruption.' What's involved seems to be this: For some sorts of activities that are brought off properly by reference to some set of rules, to bring them off properly is direct evidence of having had a plan. Now that sort of fact provides, as a correlate to it, that for some activities, to show them as unplanned involves producing an action that could be, should be, produced by a rule by violating the rule. To do such an action can then permit you to evidence, in the way that you do it, that you didn't in the first instance plan it.

Let me give an instance from what would be among the strongest, clearest cases of having a planned action, i.e., producing a grammatical sentence. Now it's sometimes the case that whatever class of actions some grammatical sentence might be a case of is one sort of thing if it's planned, and not quite the same sort of thing if it can be shown to be unplanned. Here's the sort of data I mean: A conversation is going on between a young psychiatrist and his supervisor on the psychiatric case he's handling. The patient has killed himself the day before. The meeting between the psychiatrist and the supervisor is occasioned by that. The meeting is roughly hostile in more or less subtle ways, and at one point the supervisor asks "Well why did you take this case?" There's some juggling around about that. The young psychiatrist answers eventually with this sentence: "I thought I could help him, with supervision."

This last word, 'supervision,' makes the sentence come off in the end as a kind of violation. That is to say, what one would correctly say in English is, e.g., "I thought that, with supervision, I could help him." A strict grammatical analysis of "I thought I could help him with supervision" would come up with an action that the young psychiatrist was providing the patient,

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e.g., "I thought I could help him with intensive care," etc., the 'correct' way to indicate "I thought that, with your supervision, I could help him" not having been produced.

Now the kind of rebuke that this involves, to the supervisor, could have been overtly the subject of the utterance. That is to say, there are many utterances, e.g., 'If you had helped me . . . ,' 'I thought you would help me . . . ,' 'If you'd given me supervision you would have helped me and I could have helped him,' etc., which could be dealt with in one or another fashion by the person who receives it, as the plan of the utterance being to make a rebuke. The sentence comes off as in the first instance not having such a plan. It turns into a rebuke; unintendedly a rebuke slips out. It could be said about such an utterance, "I didn't mean it." And also, it's hard to say about it that what he comes off with is what he in the first instance meant to do. To be in a position to say that's what he meant to do in the first instance, involves having to treat possible ungrammatical sentences (or sentences which are perhaps grammatical, but if grammatical mean something different than they intend) as the thing that he was designing his actions to bring off – not to say that one couldn't do that.

These are the sorts of things that one can immediately 'take back,' apologize for as not having been meant, etc. Things that slip out in a moment of anger, whatever else. The claim that they were meant from the first involves a theory that deals with such sorts of 'errors.' And there are attempts to construct such theories. Obviously Freud makes large attempts to do that; to account for 'slips of the tongue' as orderly phenomena, really expressing intention. But with respect, say, to situations in which such theories are not employed or are not convincingly employed, there are specific actions that are doable by use of other wise 'erroneous' production. And furthermore, one can't do the same action by a non-erroneous production. And what seems, in part, to be involved is the way in which an action can be seen to be planned by virtue of its following some set of rules that order its elements, for example.

Now in the case of 'interrupting,' there seem to be parallel sorts of phenomena, such that if, for example, you want to show that something that somebody is saying really angers you, then placing your utterance by starting while they're still talking seems to be more effective than waiting and placing it after they've finished. Where placing it after they've finished is something we would talk about as 'keeping under control,' 'not really being bothered that much,' etc. And there are all sorts of ways of showing somebody that you're doing that, also, e.g., clenching the fists, tightening up, as the prior utterance is going on.

This is not to say that you can't show that you're angered by what somebody says while allowing them to finish and then starting up, but one specific way of doing that involves talking while they're talking. In that regard, then, if you're going to do what is taken to be expressing anger, annoyance, great amusement, etc., then the option of placing the beginning of your utterance in the course of theirs constitutes one technique for showing that.

And it's not only rather negative emotions, but it seems also to be specifically a criterion of a 'lively conversation' that in its course persons talk severally at a time. That is to say, when persons will be reporting on the liveliness of a conversation, they will use as a specific criterion, which is intendedly recognizable as evidence of that, that everybody was talking at the same time. The quotation I started off with, from Albert's report of Burundi conversation, ends with:

> It is not unusual for the formal order of precedence to be abandoned in the latter part of a protracted discussion, and for loud voices to be heard even among upper-class individuals.

I take it that she is referring to and using this as we use it in our society, i.e., competitive talking or everybody talking at once, as a criterion for evidencing liveliness.

And in that regard, if one wants to show that one is involved in a conversation, then starting to talk while someone else is talking is a means of doing that. Talking while others are talking will, on its occurrence, be specifically recognized as a means of exhibiting such emotions. If you do it, people will say, "Calm down," "Take it easy," "Don't get so annoyed," etc.

Now, although these may be frequent bases for the occurrence of interruption, they don't specifically turn on the techniques of conversational sequencing. And the central bases for the occurrence of interruption are those sorts of situations where 'not more than one party talks at a time' is not a correct characterization, by virtue of the operation of rules of conversational sequencing.

And here I'll just sketch some things that I would like to deal with at length later on. We're going to see eventually that the notion of 'utterance' that we acquire by living today – that is to say, that turns on the state of research – has very serious inadequacies. It can and should be replaced with such sorts of notions as 'complete utterance' and 'incomplete utterance.'

Given that the rule 'not more than one party talks at a time' makes *transition events* a key phenomenon, then, insofar as a 'complete utterance' is recognizable and locates a place for another to start talking, one sort of 'more than one party talking at a time' would be produced by virtue of how the rules that provide for transition work.

Suppose that we had only the rule 'one party talks at a time.' The first person to start talking on completion of a current utterance has rights to talk next. Independently of what a current speaker has just said, we have a battle for next, which battle is winnable-out by, say, the one who gets going first. Under such a situation one would expect very careful attention – insofar as persons cared about when they spoke – to the occurrence of endings. And also a jumping-move right around that, in which, say, a bunch of people would start up, and quit once they had found that they had lost.

Now that's not the only rule for becoming a next speaker in this society, but it's apparently one rule. And insofar as it seems relevant, roughly, for one,

that the current speaker hasn't selected anybody in particular as a next speaker – which is something he can do – one does find regularly that several people will start up at what they figure to be the end. Regularly enough all but one will stop, and that one will continue.

When that sort of rule is combined with possibilities of equivocality with respect to endings, then one can find that even if there's no competition between next speakers, persons will start up in what may turn out to be not the end of the current speaker's talk. And one will find that two people will be talking, i.e., the one who has been speaking and an intended next. If one is at all puzzled by how that's possible, given conformity to, say, 'not more than one party speaks at a time,' then one must be thinking of what is not at all a necessary condition, and that is that the person who is speaking is making a sound. It's perfectly routinely the case that a person is seen, said, known to be talking while he is currently silent – pausing in the middle, for example – and others will not start up.

One kind of equivocality with respect to utterance endings arises in this sort of way: Suppose, for example, that for some of the things you can do in talk, a sentence completion signals an utterance completion. I haven't at all dealt with how it is that persons are going to go about recognizing that an utterance is over, and I'll be dealing with that. But suppose that a sentence completion can serve. And also suppose that a sentence completion can be detected. And detected on its occurrence, not detected via a pause that follows – because we'll see that it can be detected on its occurrence; we'll see, indeed, that it can be detected as up-coming. If that's the case, then somebody who wants to talk can be ready to start up when it seems that the utterance which is about to be ending by virtue of its sentence ending, does end. And they may start up. But it's perfectly possible, given the way sentences are constructed, that you can make a sentence you started 'not a sentence at all, yet' by, for example, various sorts of parallel constructions: "I went to the movies" plus "and I saw a double feature" plus . . . . "I called Harry yesterday" plus "but he wasn't home" plus . . . , etc. And people do that all the time, so that what happens is there's an utterance, then there's what looks like what can be a sentence end, next talk starts over continuation with 'but,' 'and,' and things like that.

In some of these it's quite transparent that the continuation is done by virtue of something that happened after the utterance ended. That is to say, that option of continuing the sentence need not have been something planned by the speaker. Routinely, a person may intend to bring an utterance to a close, find that nobody starts up, and then carry it on. And carry it on, furthermore, without an explicit sentence break by starting a new sentence, but by 'continuing' with 'and,' 'but,' etc. And in that regard, their continuation can evidence that they figure that nobody saw that they were finished. What they may do, then, is bring off some more adequate completion, rather than, say, doing what people rarely do – announcing throughout their talk, "Now I'm finished." What they do instead is bring off a more effective end.

The kind of case I have in mind with respect to 'continuing' is this: A guy asks a question. The next speaker doesn't answer the question but starts something else. It's obvious from the first two words that he's starting up something else. The first speaker then 'continues' by adding a second part to the question; making, then, the person who talks after him, not merely not an answerer of his question but an interrupter of his utterance. In the case I have in mind, when he finishes the second part of the question he in fact gets an answer. An example might go something like this:

    A: Is she coming?
    B: I went // to –
    A: – or should we start without her.

So there are some where you can give very clear grounds for saying that the addition is specifically an addition begun after no answer came. And in that regard, then, you can turn somebody into an interrupter though they had, say, perfectly good grounds to have figured they were speaking when you had finished.

That is then to say generally, that the way in which techniques for bringing off an ending are employed can be criterial to the occurrence of two or more parties talking at a time.

Here are a few additional points on 'no more than one party talks at a time.' First of all, it might seem that you could use pretty much any case of more than one party talking at a time, as evidence for the non-operation of the rule, if you wanted to claim that it doesn't very much operate, or operates less than we might suppose. For example, you might, say, not listen to the talk, but use a recording technique which simply picked up the fact that there were more than one voice at that point on the tape. Now there are at least some small ways that that might fail you, in that there is some talk that's done which is first of all done when two parties are talking at a time, and is specifically done with an orientation to the operation of the rule 'not more than one party talks at a time.' Things like, e.g., "Wait a minute," "Shut up, I'm talking." There are, then, specific utterances done so as to bring off that the rule is, will be, in operation, and in the doing of which the rule is being violated, is not in operation, is not characterizing the event. But they're done with an orientation to the operation of the rule.

And let me mention some senses in which the rule is a basic one in conversation. It's operative independent of the n of parties to the conversation. Note in that regard that one does not find that as the number of parties increases the number of co-speakers increases. What can happen is that the number of speakers at any given moment in *a* conversation is preserved, and the conversation will break up into different conversations.

Nor is it apparently the case that the amount of talk so far, or the fact that a conversation is coming to a close, constitutes a basis for ending the operation of this rule. But it is at least sometimes the case that people take it that when everybody is talking at the same time, then it's time to end the conversation.

Recall that I went through that peculiar argument about how, among the Burundi, if there was a violation of the rules of precedence, then, in attempting to enforce the rules of precedence, you might generate further violations. In that regard, one may notice that just about the most widely used techniques for dealing with violations, i.e., non-operation of 'not more than one party talk at a time,' is that some people stop and make the rule operative. Put it this way: If that's a rule that some given person wanted to have systematically broken, they could be constantly foiled in their attempts. They would need others to keep talking when they started up, whereas routinely what will happen is that even if others have had it happen before, even if they figure they have rights to talk, they'll stop talking. That is to say, you have got to get them to collaborate extensively, to get more than one party talking for anything more than a very brief time.

And, that they are stopping talking is something you can give a characterization of. It does seem that there are distinctive features to talk stopped by virtue of another's starting while other talk is in progress. It may even be the case that people talk about interrupting as 'shutting somebody down,' though you might have to bring yourself to notice that it's quite a different thing to stop somebody's talking by talking, then, e.g., to stop their car with your car, and things like that. The power to the rule is such that people feel that they're 'shut down' when another person starts up as they're talking, though nobody has 'done anything' to them.

Lecture 4
Utterance completion; Co-producing an utterance; Appendor clauses

I'm going to talk about utterance completion. I'll begin by picking up something I mentioned at the beginning of the second lecture, where I said that one relevance of the 'not more than one party at a time' rule was its relevance for there being a research-productive notion of 'utterance;' a notion that turned, in part, on that rule. To start off, then, I'll be talking to the issue of (1) the productivity of the notion of 'utterance,' and (2) the implication that the rule 'not more than one party talks at a time' and other rules, have for the notion of 'utterance.'

I say that the notion of 'utterance' has been very productive for research, for the following sorts of reasons: If you look at pretty much any study in descriptive linguistics – in, for example, the classic research manual, a book by a guy named Zelig Harris, and pretty much anything else – you'll find that they propose that the utterance is the basic unit for linguistic research. And linguistic research has undoubtedly been enormously productive. There are few who would claim now that that is not the most advanced social science.

A first question concerns why the unit 'utterance' is key for linguistics. Several sorts of things are involved. First, a prominent fact is that it's very extensively the case that even in natural conversation, what you get when you use the usual notion of utterance – and the basic definition is 'that string of speech that a party produces between silences on his part; from when he begins to when he ends.' What you get when you use that to locate data to be analyzed are integral-numbered sentences: One sentence, two sentences, three sentences, etc. But by and large, not one and a half sentences, one third of a sentence, etc.

That's important for several reasons. It's important, for one, because before any such unit as the 'utterance' was adopted, the interest of linguistics in the 'sentence' had been well established, and the sentence had been shown to be a tremendously interesting, if not the basic, unit for linguistic research. We can say, then, that the use of the notion 'utterance' permitted preservation of analytic interest in the sentence while allowing for linguistics to become an empirical field, in the sense that it studied actual linguistic events, particularly talk as compared to, say, studies of written texts – in which of course it's also the case that the sentence is a very basic unit. That is to say, you could perhaps take care of complaints that linguistics did not study 'real' language, i.e., talking, while preserving what had been gained from the study of written

speech, i.e., the focus on the sentence and the great amount of research results that came from that; for example, the parts of speech, the conceptions of grammar, and various things like that, which were directed to such things as the unit, 'sentence.' Adopting the notion 'utterance' as key, even with respect to natural conversation, didn't have, then, revolutionary consequences – or apparently didn't. Much of the earlier results could be retained, and furthermore the focus on the sentence could be retained.

Now I say 'even in natural conversation' because, for one, natural conversation is very limitedly used in linguistic research, and the procedures that are used would tend even more than natural conversation to give you as the product, sentences. Such procedures as involve, for example, interrogation of an informant, where one is engaged in a kind of conversation with him; a conversation in which his production of sentences is in part controlled by the fact that, for example, he is asked to do things which end up as sentence packages, and, further, he's uninterrupted while he's still talking. Whereas, say, in natural conversation, insofar as it's the case that the starting up of a second person in the course of talk of the first can involve that the first will stop, and stop wherever he happens to be, natural conversation may be found to regularly have more beginnings of 'incomplete sentences.' Again, that can be somewhat modified by the way in which one deals with an informant.

There has been some considerable tendency to move away from any empirical unit like that, as a basic unit for linguistic research. It's not difficult to see why that has occurred. Linguists who used the notion of an 'utterance,' and used it with respect to either natural conversation as their data, or their ordinary knowledge of talking, found that it isn't exclusively the case that if you use that notion you get integral numbers of sentences occurring. And one is then faced with various sorts of directions to proceed. One can, for example, propose that the sentence as an analytic object remains the unit for study. Insofar as actual speech doesn't produce only those sentences, then forget about natural speech, or forget about natural speech for now. Or, one might see whether there are means of accounting for the production of these various sentence-parts which constitute complete utterances. That may involve having to give up the notion of a 'sentence.' Or it may involve turning the sentence into one important analytic object, but not necessarily the only one. Or one might propose that the sentence is a special case of some other unit.

One procedure we might use in order to assess a direction that should be taken from among possible directions, is this: We could ask what it is that provides for the occurrence of integral cases of sentences as composing utterances. That might give us certain sorts of rules. You could call them discourse rules, talking rules, etcetera. Then we could turn to that class of rules of which you would have some members, and see whether, if we fill it out, we will not be in a position of also accounting for the other things that happen in an utterance. Things like part-sentences, things that are not part-sentences but are not sentences either, like the utterance 'Yes,' the

utterance 'Ok,' etc., which are perfectly clearly, regularly adequate utterances, complete utterances, and nonetheless not sentences. Perhaps also, you could account for incomplete sentences which were incomplete utterances. Then you would have a way of, on the one hand, having established that perhaps the notion of 'sentence' is important, and on the other hand, that it is itself to be handled by discourse considerations which also handle other things than it.

We could begin by asking whether there are some discourse bases for the occurrence, say, of a single sentence equalling a single utterance, and then move from there. That is to say, we hope to find how come it happened that an utterance is regularly composed of one sentence, rather than treating that as a lucky possession that we're going to hold onto whatever, and which we damn well better not investigate as a social phenomenon, because if we investigate it, it may disappear. Or, we'll hold onto it regardless of whether it happens to happen with the sort of empirical regularity that we would like.

One solution of course has been to treat the sentence as a normative production, which does not occur in all cases by virtue of various of the incapacities that one can assign to occasional events, i.e., things that happen at some time to somebody. They faltered, or they forgot what they were going to say. Things like that are used to account for some reasonable statistical amount of variation in the relation between what persons say in fact, and the kinds of units you'd like to have them be using by virtue of the fact that you already had very nicely dealt with how those units work.

So it's from that sort of line of inquiry that we proceed to consider, in the first instance, utterance completion. Now, the rule 'not more than one party talk at a time' is obviously relevant to what I've so far said. If a given non-speaker wants to be a next speaker when someone's talking, and wants to do that while satisfying the 'not more than one party talk at a time' rule, then one thing that such a non-speaker would attend – if such attention could pay off – would be the state of completion or incompletion of an utterance in its course. And if there were also bases for a speaker to so produce his utterance as to allow for that determination to be made, then we could have an orientation to such things as evidence a complete utterance, or an incomplete utterance, by a speaker, and a monitoring of those things by non-speakers.

Now as it happens, one feature of sentences is that their possible completion can be determined. You can look at a sentence and see that it is 'possibly complete.' While that's a very important fact for research, it's secondary to an empirical fact that doesn't follow from it directly, but which we'll later see can also be shown, and that is that persons can tell that a sentence is possibly complete, directly on the occurrence of that possible completion. That is to say, there are ways of producing and attending utterances such that if a sentence form is used, people can be listening while it's happening, to see such things as: It's not yet complete, it's about to end, it just ended. They can do that while it's happening. This is very very fundamental. You could perfectly well have a structure that could be found to be complete if you had a week to investigate it. The key thing about the

use of sentences in actual talk – and it's something quite independent, say, of the use of sentences in written material, though to some extent they merge – is that completion can be determined on its occurrence.

That gives us such a fact as: One person can start up talking within one tenths, two tenths – that order of speed – of a second after another has done what is, upon much later reflection by an analyst, something that seems to be a sentence. There are not, routinely, large gaps between a current speaker's end and a next speaker's start. Where, furthermore, it can be shown that the next speaker, who starts up a tenth of a second after an utterance which turns out to be complete is finished, has employed in his next utterance structural analysis of the prior one. It's not merely, then, that he happens to position it right, but also we can see from what he says that he's done an analysis of the prior utterance. That is to say, we don't have to rely on what is in any event an impressive fact – that persons start up talking very rapidly as the sentence finishes – we can also look to what they say, to find that it's not happenstance that they do so start up.

In that regard, then, both speakers and hearers can apparently use the fact that a sentence's completion is determinable on its occurrence, in order to produce consecutive talk between several speakers which turns out not to violate the 'not more than one party at a time' rule.

Then, one can regularly enough find that it's not merely integral numbers of sentences, but single sentences that are used, and they are used somewhat independently of the size of the piece of talk one happens to produce. That is to say, one of the ways that one can keep the floor, keep talking, is to produce an utterance using the sentence form in some rather structurally complex and extended fashion, such that it's easy enough to rewrite that piece of talk so that, not one rather elaborated sentence, but several shorter sentences are used. There are particular techniques for systematically doing that, i.e., building what is observably a non-complete sentence. I'll eventually get to some direct instances of this sort of thing, but what I want to point out now is a rather useful distinction, and one that has had in other areas, a considerable amount of confirmation. If you're going to build rather elaborated sentences, where one thing you can fear is that when you've done what can be heard as a complete sentence you will be stopped by another starting up, so you want to produce what can't be heard as a complete utterance, then you don't use *clause* construction, you use *phrase* construction. That is to say, you can pile up phrases in such a way that it's seeable that you haven't yet got a sentence, where it's not so easy to do it with clauses, which often tend to be fairly parallel structures: "I went to the movies – and – I saw the picture – and – I had a good time." You could rewrite each clause and have a sentence. Another sort of thing you could do is to use built in dependencies, i.e., 'if' will preserve until a 'then' clause is completed.

Now I say there has been research on the clause/phrase distinction, because one thing that some structural analysts of poetry have seemed to have found is that that sort of poetry that involves the use of extended sentences for its

units uses phrases, and that sort that doesn't involve the use of extended sentences uses clauses. And it seems that both techniques are used in talk. That is to say that the poet has explored what's a natural resource for gaining or not needing extended possibilities in the sentences used. And in the data I've studied, the most extended utterances, which do not often tend to be series of sentences but tend often to be single sentences, tend to have a lot of phrases. Now the phrase phenomenon has other interests than for the issue of how one goes about building an extended utterance under the circumstance that at any sentence's completion one may be cut off and another start up, and I'll get to that in a bit.

If it's the case that non-speakers can listen to an utterance in its course for issues like completion, and can, for example, see completion forthcoming, and they can do that with the use of more than, say, intonation contour – where intonation contour is a way of producing a question such that you can produce just the sound of a question without saying any question, and persons can hear that you're making a question, or, say, producing a question accompanied by a rising intonation at the end, such that at the end of that rising intonation the utterance may be over, etc. – if, that is, persons aren't only using that, but are using, e.g., analysis of syntax, then one thing that wouldn't be puzzling at all is that they might find themselves in the position of doing such things as completing a sentence that somebody else began, when, e.g., that person stops 'at a loss for words,' or whatever else.

Such a fact as that persons go about finishing incomplete sentences of others with syntactically coherent parts would seem to constitute direct evidence of their analyzing an utterance syntactically in its course, and having those results available to them during the production of such a sentence, so that they can use that to complete it.

When I first came across that phenomenon, of completing as-yet-incomplete utterances with syntactically coherent parts, I was rather surprised about it, and I figured, well, it must be quite rare, even though that they do it at all is an extremely important fact. But it turns out to be an extremely frequent and routinely doable thing. I'll give some instances of this, but I'm not going to go into great detail on it now since I'll probably spend a good deal of time on it eventually.

A: You were // trying to be –
B: (I hid my anger,)
A: You were trying uh
B: –to play along with us.

That is, "You were trying to play along with us" is produced by two persons. The instance that I have largely used is a combination of that and something else – which I'll also talk to – and goes like this:

A: We were in an automobile discussion
B: –discussin' the psychological motives for

    C: –drag racing on the streets.

And in that case we get three persons producing a single sentence. There are several things I want to note about it. One of them is that the first person's piece of talk is a possibly complete sentence. And it's routinely the case for some of these sorts of things that a second speaker produces a completion to the sentence another did, where that sentence is already possibly a complete sentence.

    That people do that has as one of its relevancies that apparently non-speakers can take it that the actual completion that the speaker of a sentence does, is merely his proposal, i.e., it's one possible ending, and it needn't be definitive. But, having already analyzed the syntax of the utterance, another can continue it, if they have some reason for doing that.

    In that regard, what one routinely gets as the product data is an utterance which is a whole sentence followed by an utterance which is not a whole sentence, but a part sentence that is, however, syntactically coherent with the prior, and the two of them constitute a sentence. Now we'll develop grounds for doing that sort of thing eventually, and when we do, we'll be in a position to account for some of the incomplete sentences that persons produce, i.e., those 'completers.' That consideration will provide a kind of transition between the issue of utterance completion, and the techniques of selecting next speaker. And just let me give an instance of what sort of things we'll make of it. What you get is a sentence plus the next utterance constituting a prepositional phrase, where the prepositional phrase makes the sentence, plus it, a question.

    A: They make miserable coffee.
    B: –across the street?

Now those things are neat because these 'appendor clauses' have as one of their businesses that they are specifically a technique for reselecting the last speaker as next speaker. They're routinely treated as producing a question that the person who started that sentence should answer, and routinely such a person does answer. They can be requests for clarification, various other stuff. But we can see that the prepositional phrase, as a unit, has enormous usability at the end of an otherwise adequately complete sentence.

    One point of the consideration of these units, where a party produces what could be a sentence and another speaks and produces a completion to that sentence is, apart from the certainly important issue of the fact that somebody is able to produce a completion, where what's required is some sort of syntactic analysis of the prior clause in order to fit a clause or a phrase to it in such a way that you get a whole sentence – apart from that, what this sort of thing means is something that one can consider by just engaging in a little imagination on the matter. Suppose it were more heavily used. And there's no reason why it couldn't be more heavily used. Suppose it were routine that in half the utterances people produced, what they were doing was finishing

somebody else's sentence. In that circumstance the otherwise obvious one-to-one fit between utterance and sentence, and also the idea that one sentence is somebody's property, would be considerably weakened. Even with the way sentences are built in our system of English it's perfectly conceivable to have a discourse within which sentences only occasionally turned out to be located in one utterance, but were heavily located in two or three utterances.

That could happen because things like the appending of a prepositional phrase for any given sentence is an analytic possibility, i.e., that given a sentence form, one can attach a prepositional phrase. And there are others, as well. For example, given a sentence, one can make an independent clause out of it and add another sentence that turns out to be, now, a clause, with the two of them being a sentence. For example, here's a peculiar one in its fashion, but if you didn't know it was two speakers it would be a perfectly ordinary sentence:

A: I gave him an inferiority complex.
B: And I got him to shave.

Now there is a play on the 'him's that is of interest – A is talking To C about B, and B is also talking to C, about A. But the sentence "I gave him an inferiority complex and I got him to shave" is otherwise a perfectly routine one, and take pretty much any sentence, add 'and' plus another sentence, and you get one sentence. That is, the sentence's extendability in systematic ways, is perfectly well a fact of it.

It is of course the case that by and large discourse doesn't proceed that way. But it isn't by virtue of the nature of the sentence, as a piece of machinery for building talk, that it doesn't proceed in such a way. The sentence unit is perfectly accomodatable to such a development. And furthermore, speakers' and hearers' capacities seem perfectly well accommodatable to such a development. And when I use the notion 'productive' what I mean is that we don't have just a bunch of instances, but there are ways of building indefinitely new instances. Here's an instance. I was once giving a presentation of this phenomenon, and somebody said, "Would you give me an example." and I said, "– of appendor questions?" and he said "Yeah," and everybody else laughed and said, "He just gave you one!" But he'd figured that I had two or three cases and that was about the limit of it, and I was making a big deal of two or three, and they were very special. They may well be empirically special, but their structural possibility is a feature of this language. That is to say, you can routinely generate new ones.

And in the light of that sort of fact, the relation of sentence and utterance – particularly that sentences occur in single utterances and compose the whole of a single utterance – needs other considerations than reference to what English grammar can do. A grammar of English that will account for sentences that have prepositional phrases at their end, can have its data located in more than an utterance.

And I want to emphasize again and again, the various possibilities, i.e., putting a new completion on an otherwise possibly complete utterance, completing another's incomplete utterance, building an appendor question, those sorts of things all are direct evidence of the fact that hearers are engaged in analyzing syntactically, utterances in their course, and have that analysis available as something they can use 'immediately.'

In this regard we can begin to see that the occurrence of such things as, for example, an utterance that contains an incomplete sentence – one that could be a completion of an utterance that contains what is now to be seen as an incomplete sentence but that on its occurrence could have been complete – such occurrences are not grounds for saying, 'Well, we're not able, now, to study natural conversation because we're not getting sentence units.' One may regularly find that we do have that unit, it just doesn't happen to reside in the utterance of one speaker, but consists of this incomplete utterance completed by this other fellow, or that utterance that this next one turns out to be a completion of, as a sentence.

Now, with regard to utterances that turn out to have incomplete sentences as their whole piece of talk, what's to some extent involved in such things – not in every case, but in some – is this sort of thing: In considering, say, is an utterance a complete sentence, one tends to treat a grammatical sentence – as a *product* – as your item to be looked at. You look at a list of things that people said, and you ask whether each one, looking at it now, is grammatical. Now that will give you repairable data; i.e., data you could repair if you looked at them otherwise – where, instead of a product sentence, we talked of, say, a *process sentence*. And we can find as grounds for doing that, that hearers, studying an utterance are studying it as it is produced.

Then, what we find is that persons will, for an utterance that is so far grammatical, figure they've heard enough, and cut it off. But, now, not cutting it off so as to start up anything next, but to deal with what it has proposed. So we could find a question that is cut off before some grammatical part of it has been produced, by something that is an answer to it. Here's a case, a rather elaborately interesting one, and it contains both this phenomenon, and that of completing another's incomplete utterance.

A: What's the matter with you, huh?
B: With me? Not much. I was wondering whether or not you were feeling angry about uh
A: I'm not happy.
C: –about Roger selling you a car that blew up.

What we get there is, A answers B's question before it is finished, and C then goes on to complete B's question. And we have in that body of talk, two incomplete sentences: "I was wondering whether or not you were feeling angry about uh," and – "about Roger selling you a car that blew up." With regard to the answer that is an answer to an incomplete sentence, we can note

that an answer like that involves that the speaker is in a position to see what the question 'would have been,' and cuts it off then, and we thereby get what turns out to have been 'a product ungrammatical sentence,' though only by virtue of the tremendous adequacy of it so far. Though we'll also see that that sort of thing can't be accounted for, I think, by reference only to the analysis of the structure of that question, but that what's needed is to see the locus of that question in a more extended body of talk.

Lecture 5
Utterance completion; Action sequencing; Appendor questions

I'm going to finish off the introductory consideration of utterance completion and move on to some transitional material between utterance completion and next-speaker selection techniques. And what I'll particularly be dealing with there is that stuff which I briefly mentioned, on appendor questions.

There are a series of ways in which we can move from considerations of utterance completion. That is, next-speaker selection is just one direction. We can move from utterance completion to tying of utterances – and we'll pick up completion again when we start dealing with tying techniques. We can also move from utterance completion to what is partly an independent type of way that the structure of utterances are sequenced – what I'll talk about as 'action sequencing,' where action sequencing is also related to next-speaker selection. Each of those sorts of things can be transitionally developed out of considerations arising with respect to utterance completion, so we're not finished with the issue of utterance completion. Furthermore, later on I'll spend some time on case by case considerations of various ways in which several utterances are used to make single sentences.

Let me give a piece of data, a very common occurrence, very minor in its apparent import, but which can be used instantially to see some *relationships between utterances and actions*. This comes from a huge pile of materials collected in the following way. What was overtly, intendedly being done was to study comparatively how children who were physically disabled in one or another fashion were treated in their family and in school, and how children who were not physically disabled were treated. The technique involved going into the home and school environment of some group of disabled children and some group of non-disabled children, and following the children around for extended units of time – three hours, a day, things like that – and writing down a description in ordinary English of what was observed, including, insofar as it could be done, conversation. And this is all collected for the purpose of statistical analysis so as to see, e.g., whether more positive interactions took place between parents and disabled children than between parents and non-disabled children. In any event, they assembled about 50 bound volumes, 300 pages each, and they happened to give me a set of them, and occasional pieces of my data will come out of that. It's filled not only with conversation, but with reports on the conversation.

Mrs Dix turned to her husband and, speaking intimately yet with a definite tone of command, tells him to begin passing something around the table.

Mr Dix turns towards his wife, their faces close together, "Please," he prompts her in a mild tone of reproof.

"Please," she repeats after him. She draws the word out as if to indicate her unwillingness to be corrected, and yet says it in a tone which agreeably admits that it's necessary.

Which is to say, you get things like:

A: Pass the salt.
B: –please.
A: Please.

and B passes the salt.

What's of interest there is that "pass the salt" could be a perfectly good complete sentence, and insofar as 'complete sentence' was a sufficient criterion for ending, "pass the salt" could be a sufficient criterion for ending. But insofar as some located *sequentially relevant action* is involved in an utterance, then it appears that regularly enough, until the action is complete the utterance is incomplete. And what is being proposed is that the action, e.g., the action of 'making a request,' is not complete and sequentially relevant until 'please' is appended to it.

So, orientation to the utterance doing the action is not simply orientation to the possibility that the sentence in which it's packaged is complete, but that the sentence brings off the action. Where, then, it might not bring off the action and you can get such 'corrections' as requests for finishing properly. In that regard, then, we could begin to deal with *action sequencing* with regard to utterance completion, and to talk to the issue of what makes an utterance complete, by reference to its doing some action in an appropriate fashion.

Now, insofar as you can say that an utterance has brought off some action, that will immediately have as its consequence, for a whole bunch of things, that action completion does not simply involve that the speaker of the utterance that brought off that action stops and now let's see what happens, but that on completion another action should be done by another person. And we can very regularly state the alternative possibilities. So that a 'request' can be followed with 'acquiescence,' a 'denial,' various other things which are specifically sequentially tied to there having been a 'request' in the first place. So that you get, for the unit 'action,' that it is involved not only in issues of completion, but also in sequences of utterances. Now that's one sort of thing, and we'll take up that line eventually.

Another sort of thing which may be introduced as evidence on the issue of persons attending utterance completion, doesn't involve a hearer of that completion starting up after it such that we can take it that, e.g., perhaps he figured it was finished, but involves another sort of data, where what goes on

is this: If you attend to the stories and jokes you hear, you'll routinely find the following sorts of things occurring: Suppose there are two or three characters talking in the joke or story. One may get a description of each. And one may get, at the beginning, when they're first introduced and their first utterances are introduced, some specific indication that a quotation is being presented, e.g., "The first guy said." One may then get something hearable as a quote, and then indication that he's finished by, e.g., "Then the second guy said." Now you'll regularly find that in the course of the story or joke the 'he says' will be dropped out, and nonetheless you can know that the guy who spoke first is now speaking again, now he's finished and the guy who spoke second is speaking back. Here's an instance from my data, a hypothetical story; all the talk is by one speaker:

> Yeah and you c'n also go into some of these millionaires' hou–homes. And they've bot–boughten some of these uh art works from different places in the world? You c'n look at 'em and– I mean I don't know anything about art, I can't– I can't draw that well, I can draw cars, and junk like this when I want to, but uh:: go into some of these houses and they– it looks like somebody took a squirtgun with paint in it an' just squirted it. Just a buncha <u>lines</u> goin every which way, an'

Now we hear the next part of this thing as a series of quotes.

> "Oh isn't that terrific?" "Yeah. What is it." Y'kno(h)w? "Didjer child have a good time when he was drawing that?" "Whaddiya mean? That cost me–" y'know hhhh

So we get a sequence like "Did your child have a good time when he was drawing that?" "What do you mean? That cost me–" as a conversational fragment in which there's first a question and then an answer to the question by somebody else. We can see when the question is finished and when the answer starts up, and that it's an answer by somebody else, and an answer to that question. And we don't need for that, such indicators as, 'You ask a question: [Question], and he answers it: [Answer].'

That persons are able to monitor talk presented as it is in this instance is, then, evidence that they're able to see, e.g., a complete quotation, make breaks between several quotations, etc. And they do that in part of course not only by complete utterances but in this kind of case, by complete action, i.e., something heard as a question, and then something heard as an answer. One can then look to see what sort of quotations can be brought off so as to indicate to a hearer, and to have a hearer see, that this or that was a complete utterance, this or that was an utterance by another in sequence to it, doing something to it. That is to say, there's a body of material which also permits exploration of the issue of utterance completion; specifically, materials where one doesn't get an identification of each speaker, of which one is doing it, that he's finished, another one is starting, and the rest.

It pays to add to this that such matters are not necessarily only done by virtue of persons' ability to detect that from listening. If you watch stories being told, there are ways that, when persons tell a joke, or report a conversation like this, they go about acting them out. They may use different ways of talking for each party, and they may also facially indicate that one party or another is talking, and of course indicate what sort of a party it is. But that they can use their faces, intonation, etc., solves nothing in principle. The question is just as much, Well, how did that help?

Again, then, there's this other body of material wherein exploration of completions can be done. These materials also regularly exhibit that hearers expectably can detect completion, can use orientation to actions – e.g., to a question, an answer – to determine completion and to assign speakers.

Now, here's one kind of neat thing, if it's true. I'm not sure. I have a suspicion that something like it occurs. I'll probably deal with this sequence at great length later on, because of other issues. I only want to make a particular point now. If you've been given a first "How are you?," you typically give an answer, and a return "How are you?:"

A: How're you feeling?
B: Fine. How are you?

As it happens, if you give an answer other than "Fine," particularly an answer like "Lousy," "So-so," things like that, then it's the business of the person who gets the answer from you to ask, "What's the matter?" Now it seems to me that when "How are you?" is given the answer "Fine," there's essentially no break between "Fine" and the return "How are you?," i.e., "Fine, how are *you?*" Where, however, somebody says "Lousy," then, while they may go on to "How are *you?*" they pause after "Lousy," and provide, then, a noticeable space wherein you can start up the questioning, like "Why? What's the matter?"

That is to say, the two answers, "Lousy" and "Fine" seem differentiated with respect to which one is treated by a producer as a complete utterance – though, if the person doesn't pick up and start a question after that, the producer can go on: "Lousy. [pause] How are *you?*" I think if you listen to that sort of sequence, you may find that you will get a noticeable pause after "Lousy" which you will not get after "Fine." (This of course is for first answers, because you don't get "How are you?" "Fine, how are you?" "Fine, how are you?") We are saying that the pause is criterial of an intended completion. But again, it's criterial via the fact that the utterance 'Lousy' is proposed as sequentially adequate to something else; i.e., given its occurrence, an action by another, e.g., 'What's the matter?' should be done.

I'll go on now to some materials on appendor questions. If it's the case that there is not some order-of-speaker regulation of speaker selection, but the issue of who speaks next is something that is up for grabs utterance by utterance, then it's no big surprize that one class of basic ways that who speaks next will be determined is via some action done by a current speaker. That is

to say, the absence of some systematic regulation ordering speakers can involve as a routine possibility that you get a bunch of people starting up at the end of every utterance, i.e., more than a speaker speaking at a time. That class of techniques which will permit preservation of 'not more than one speaker at a time' in the absence of some order-of-speaker regulation would involve, of course, the current speaker doing something that selects the next. And it happens that there's a basic set of techniques for getting a next speaker, that involve a current speaker selecting a next, and everybody else pretty much conforming to that – both that the selected one speaks next, and the others do not. Now, there are plenty of instances where a current speaker does not select a next. That's another issue.

The transitional materials I'm offering now are between completion and next-speakership. I'll give a couple of cases of the appendor question phenomenon to bring it back into focus. Then I'll go through some consideration of it.

> *A*:   They make miserable coffee.
> *B*:   –across the street?

> *A*:   . . . and it turned out very good.
> *B*:   –from the old man's viewpoint?

> *A*:   Gimme another lifesaver I'm about to drown.
> *B*:   –in your own humility?

I first want to make a bunch of points about these things, then I'll try to locate some of their interest – and they have a very large interest.

First, I'm defining 'appendor questions' as prepositional phrases. That is to say, there are lots of other intended completions that are done; we're talking about a set of them that are prepositional phrases. And they're prepositional phrases which have question intonation on them.

There's another bunch of stuff quite similar to these, but we're not talking about them now, which are prepositional phrases, and they are appended to sentences, but they don't have question intonation. Here are a couple of instances:

> *A*:   Uh well there was a certain amount of– as far as I could see anyway
>   there was a certain amount of uh discontent between you and Louise.
> *B*:   –to begin with.

> *A*:   And this is something fearful, y'know.
> *B*:   –to you.

I'm not talking about those.

What we have, then, is a situation where a first person starts an utterance that can be a complete sentence. The second appends a prepositional phrase to

it. The prepositional phrase is syntactically coherent with it – except in special ways that I'll mention – and the prepositional phrase has question intonation.

Now, they seem to select as next speaker to them, the last speaker, i.e., the one who did the sentence to which this is appended. That one talks after it, talks to what the questions was, says "Yeah," "No," etc., and nobody else seems to talk into that spot. Though it could of course happen that others will talk into that spot on grounds other than having been selected. But these appendor questions seem to select, and are recognized as selecting, the last speaker, as next speaker to them.

They're used for a variety of kinds of different work. They can intendedly qualify something. They can apparently be used to request a clarification, i.e., in the case of "They make lousy coffee" there are systematic grounds for that being an unclear assertion – unclear in the following way:

A: So we lack feminine attendance.
B: Does seem so, unless we can get some more in.
C: But the girls– any girl that comes in here has to take all those tests and stuff, don't they.
   (3 second pause)
B: Won't be for several weeks now.
A: They make miserable coffee.

Now, they're drinking coffee in the course of this conversation. The utterance is 'unclear' by virtue of the fact that an utterance that has 'they' as its subject is in the first instance to be heard as tied. One seeks, back into the sequence of talk, a first subject for that 'they.' In this case, 'girls' is what it could be. And it could be a kind of statement with respect to them; say, having doubts about bringing them in, here's one basis for not bringing them in: They make lousy coffee. Alternatively, it has a possibility of being heard as an untied utterance, not tied to something other than girls, but untied altogether, i.e., an ostensive use of 'they' pointing to somebody who hasn't been mentioned. In this case, 'those people who make the coffee we're drinking.' That is to say, its unclarity is characterizable. And under the circumstance of an unclarity of that sort, what we get is a proposed location of who 'they' might be, i.e., the people "across the street" who make the coffee we're drinking. And these phrases are regularly used to propose a possible clarification, or what might be being meant by some part of an utterance it follows.

As it can be a tying problem that generates this sort of phrase, so, too, is the use of this sort of phrase requiredly very carefully placed. You must put it right after the possible sentence that you intend it to be attached to, if you're going to do your request for clarification in that form. In that regard, then, they're occasionally done interrupting an utterance that is composed of more than a sentence. That is, you don't wait until an utterance composed of many sentences is finished and then use one of these appendor phrases, because it will then be heard as attempted to be tied to the last sentence of that utterance. Here's a case where that sort of thing is present.

A: And I can't read a calendar. (My–)

and at the point of "My–" he gets overlapped. He goes on anyway,

A: (My– // My private life is sorta hung up.)
B: –only the picture on top?
A: hehYeah hehh

At the end of "My private life is sorta hung up," which is overlapped by the appendor question, A answers that question; he laughs and says "Yeah."

Now there are ways of doing, e.g., a request for clarification which can wait until an utterance is finished. You can say "What did you mean by 'they'?" or whatever else. But the technique of latching onto the prior utterance's syntax seems to require placing it directly after that item. Now that 'directly after' can come in the course of somebody's utterance – interrupting him, then, or on the occurrence of the last sentence of an utterance, or the only sentence of an utterance.

I want to add also that, so far as the ones I've seen, they always constitute a complete utterance. That is to say, the speaker who does one of those does not present more after the appendor phrase. In that regard, he's going to get, for his own utterance, a not-complete sentence.

Now there's a bunch of things that are quite interesting about these things. First of all, with respect to the issue of next-speaker selection, it is typically, routinely, overwhelmingly the case that the techniques that involve selection of speakers do not involve some speakership which the selected person has had. You can select somebody via any technique you happen to use, but those techniques are not designed to locate somebody by virtue of, e.g., their having been 'the speaker before the current speaker,' or 'the speaker before the speaker before the current speaker,' etc. You may say, "John, what did you mean when you said a while back . . . ," in which case you're using, for one, the fact that everybody knows who John is to select him, but not the sheer fact that John was the speaker in the third utterance before last.

So far as I know there's only one phenomenon whereby somebody is selected by virtue of having been a located speaker, and that is the case of a prior speaker being selectable by using a technique which simply selects 'prior speaker' without regard to who that is. That is to say, all you can select on purely formal 'speaker' – 'speaker' – 'speaker,' etc., considerations is 'the prior speaker' as next. There aren't, so far as I know, ways of selecting 'the speaker before the last speaker' except, as I said, by selecting that person who happened to be that speaker. But that's quite a different issue. It's one thing to say "John, what did you mean?" or whatever else; it's quite another to have a technique which is general, in the sense that it only selects some 'speaker.' Again, the only person who can be so selected is 'prior speaker.' And that technique can hold for anybody who happened to be 'prior speaker.' The techniques of speaker selection are not, then, by and large, means for selecting persons by virtue of what speakership they happen to have in the course of a

conversation. That's not what's done. By and large, people are selected, or categories of people.

Is there any interest in the fact that, so far as I know, the only person who's selectable by such a means is 'prior speaker'? There is. Perhaps it's something like this: What should somebody do after he's just spoken? Perhaps he's selected another speaker, perhaps not; perhaps he's talked for a long time, a short time, whatever. Just the fact: A guy has spoken. What should he do thereafter? Should he take a bit of a rest? Or should he become a hearer, immediately? Upon completion, is it his business to immediately, for the next utterance, become a hearer?

I'll eventually show that it's generally the case that there is a machinery which requires persons to listen to any utterance, i.e., if a person is not a speaker, there's a machinery which serves to make him a hearer, and also deals with what being a hearer involves. But that's rather abstract in its operation, and it would be interesting if there was not only that kind of general machinery, but also some specific means whereby on the occurrence of having been a speaker, one was obligated to become a hearer on the next utterance – to make that transition for the very next utterance.

Note that for an appendor question to work, what's involved is that the prior speaker see as a possibility that something would be done after his own utterance which needs to be considered by reference to it. And whatever is to be done in the next utterance is something that he specifically should attend regardless of what anybody else does, since there are specific techniques which involve just locating him. And they aren't announced as techniques for locating him. It's not that, John having finished an utterance, Bill starts up and says "Hey John," announcing that John should listen. He simply does an utterance which turns on John hearing that, having just finished, he is the person located by that utterance to speak next.

This phenomenon of the appendor question might, then, be such a thing as has a very very nice importance. That is, it is one way to see that there is a specific machinery whereby the transition from speaker to *non-speaker* is made a transition that ought to be from speaker to *hearer*. Where being a hearer involves, for one, having available to you an analysis of the syntax of the utterance after yours, and its possible relation to the syntax of your own utterance. That is, you have to see that this prepositional phrase is not the beginning of some puzzling utterance, but that it can possibly be latched onto your own. (I leave aside the issue that it involves you in having listened to what you yourself said.)

The appendor question is, then, a rather neat piece of material. And in the course of its consideration we come up with some of the ways that 'being a hearer' is a phenomenon, and that being a hearer is required, and being a hearer involves attention to such a thing as the syntax of an utterance, and also its syntax related to the syntax of another utterance. And furthermore that there are few places where some formally located person is specifically required to be a hearer, and one of those places is on the completion of your own utterance.

Let me just note a couple of things. When you start out with a piece of data
that goes like some of these pieces of data went, e.g., "They make miserable
coffee" "–across the street?," the question of what kinds of findings it will
give you should not be any consideration whatsoever with respect to what you
do with it. That is to say, it's a nothing. There's nothing exciting about it,
nothing obviously of direct theoretical interest about it. Furthermore, starting
a consideration and developing points on it does not require a hypothesis. It
just involves sitting down at some point and making a bunch of observations,
and seeing where they'll go. The things in the world that are going to count
theoretically – and this one does count theoretically – will not necessarily
come with labels on them: 'Look at me, I'm really important.' And in that
regard, what we are taught in sociology seems to have that character. That is
to say, we are taught that when some phenomenon is presented to you, you
will *know* in the first instance that this is something you'd better damn well
listen about because these phenomena count. We *know* that politics is
important. That's a very very sneaky way of developing the importance of
something.

Now there's been many attempts in sociology to undercut such a claim.
The work of Durkheim, for example, had as one of its big attempts – though
it completely failed in that attempt – to say that just because something is a
problem in the world doesn't mean that it's a problem for sociology. Just
because it seems to be an important problem doesn't mean that it's a problem
that's sociologically important. And the question – what makes a thing
sociologically important – is quite a different kind of issue. And in this regard,
a thing like these prepositional phrases and their use can gain us some rather
important results.

Another thing I want to emphasize is, one needn't be in the slightest afraid
that one would never see these sorts of considerations in that sort of
phenomenon. Sometimes with respect to somebody's exposition of a poem,
you realize that if you read that poem you wouldn't see the point they made.
Now this is not that kind of thing. It isn't as though, having glanced at this,
I saw this point. It's a matter of having started with a thing, looking at it for
one sort of reason, leaving it lying around until materials added up such that,
e.g., the issues that I've been talking to – next speakership, hearer
regulations – became, themselves, ripe. This permitted the materials to be
used to see such a phenomenon.

Now that's routinely the case in all sorts of scientific work. One can have
studied the properties of radium as a rock, add the points up, and when a
scientific apparatus got rich enough, it could locate what kind of a thing that
rock was all along, while preserving a lot of the points that were known about
it. So it isn't something that one has to give up because in the first instance
you couldn't imagine that if you put the thing up on a blackboard, or carried
it around on a piece of paper for an indefinite period, that you would have
seen that that's important. It is not that sort of order of issue involved.

Lecture 6
Next-speaker selection techniques; Paired utterances

I'll be making some general comments about a variety of next-speaker selection techniques this time, and next time I'll discuss in extended detail another phenomenon that's related to next-speaker selection, which will be a parallel study to the one I offered last time on appendor questions, and which will be on what I'll call 'floor seekers.' These are some things that people use to have themselves, hopefully, selected as *next* next speaker, where they are current speaker. They're things like, for one, an offer to tell a joke, e.g., "I heard a good joke," or a request to tell a joke, e.g., "You want to hear a good joke?," and there are a lot of others.

In regard to next-speaker selection techniques, the most commonplace sort of technique for selecting a next speaker involves the use of address terms and address positions in an utterance. For example, [Name,] [pause] [utterance]. There are lots of grounds for saying that that's a way of directing an utterance to somebody. For one, it works even if you don't intend it that way. The sheer occurrence of a possible address term in a possible address position will itself work to get somebody to speak. So you get an interchange like this:

Dan: Well, Roger uh
Roger: Hm?
Dan: – introduced a kind of topic when he uh . . .

As the utterance turns out, Roger is not being selected specifically as the next speaker; the 'he' involves that he's not being so selected – though it's not that he's being stopped from speaking next, necessarily. But the very use of the name 'Roger' in that position seems to serve to involve him in seeing that he has been selected.

The thing I want to bring up about the use of address terms – and for now I'll just use names – is that when people talk about conversation that involves more than two persons as parties to it, when they get an utterance like "Roger, why don't you go home?" or whatever else, they'll say "Dan said to Roger." One has to make a very sharp distinction between selecting somebody as next speaker and using such an idea as 'speaking to him,' 'directing your remarks to him.' They're quite independent things. In a conversation in which more than two parties are present – and throughout this discussion I'll be talking about such conversation – it's not the case that an utterance which selects a given party as next, is properly to be heard as

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directed to him, talking to him, etc. The selecting of a party is quite independent of the issue of who you're in fact talking to, in some sense that would be seen by participants as being 'talked to.'

That is, for one, it's not the business of others to the conversation to not listen if a name has been placed in an address position and it's not their name. It's not the case in such conversations that, e.g., if Louise and Al and Roger are there, and Al is talking and says "Roger," that Louise should now tune out. She's not an over-hearer. That it's not heard as making the not-addressed party an over-hearer can be seen via data in which we get this sort of thing:

Dan:	Jim
( ):	hhh//hh
Dan:	This is uh Al,
Jim:	Hi.
Dan:	Ken,
Jim:	H//i
Ken:	⌈Hi,
Dan:	⌊– an' Roger.
Roger:	Hi.
Jim:	Hi,
Dan:	Jim Reed.

There, for Ken to see that he's been addressed, and to see what it is that he's being told to do, he would have had to attend the utterance that said "Jim, this is Al." "Ken," itself, doesn't say 'I'm now introducing you to Jim.' It's that it's part of that sequence that says it. And that both Ken and Roger see those items as part of that sequence, involves them as having attended the prior utterance, "Jim, this is Al," and hearing it as 'open.' And they perfectly well do.

That's one sort of consideration. Another is, in its full status, terribly complicated. But an instance of it is quite clear. Suppose there's two guys and a girl present. Or two girls and a guy. But taking the first situation, two guys and a girl. The girl is possibly the girlfriend of guy A. And she does an action in an utterance which can be seen as flirting with B. Now any party to the conversation will be perfectly able to see that the action done overtly as 'flirting with B' can be seen by A as 'teasing A;' that is, as also specifically directed to A. It may be a different action for A seeing it than it was for B seeing it. But the issue of who's selected to do something can be one way that you control what it is that still another person will see being done to them. And they ought to be monitoring an utterance not only to see that 'he said something to somebody else,' but what it is that, that he said that thing to that person involves for what he's doing to me.

As I say, I'll get into that sort of thing. Because apart from the particular kind of example which is, I take it, intuitively graphic, the issue itself is much more complicated. But I take it that that sort of thing is sufficient to make the point that talk like 'A is speaking to B' is much too gross. The issues of

'selection,' 'talking to,' 'doing an action to,' are rather independent of each other, and one may be able to say that 'A selected B as next speaker' without it being the case that one can say that the only action, or the most interesting action that A did, was to B. And I'm not going to leave the determination of those things as something that we're going to argue psychiatrically. I think that a lot of these action structures can be laid out fairly coldly.

Now, another basic group of techniques for selecting next speakers involves the perfectly obvious phenomenon of various sorts of utterances coming in pairs. Where what a speaker does is to use a first member of one of those pairs. For example, one pair is question–answer, and a speaker uses, then, a question. And there are various things akin to questions in that sense. A non-exhaustive list includes things like: Greetings, challenges, threats, warnings, offers, requests, complaints, invitations, announcements. For each of these there is some group of alternative classes of appropriate next utterances done by some other person. I say 'alternatives,' e.g., if you make an offer, then somebody can do an acceptance or do a rejection, as an action made relevant by the fact of an offer.

It's this group of *paired-utterance classes* that I'm going to be dealing with. And I'll be dealing with it non-specifically, i.e., I'm not especially going to talk about one or another. One can study them non-specifically by virtue of various features of them; for example, one can find questions and answers used in conversations where there's two parties, three parties, any number of parties. They're non-specific for topics, i.e., it's not the case, apparently, that questions arise when particular topics are discussed. So it's not the case that the use of questions is to be handled by virtue of locating some set of topics, or some number of parties, or some place in a conversation. Their sequential import is independent of those sorts of thing.

Let's talk mainly now about first members of pairs; those things that I mentioned earlier, i.e., questions, complaints, offers, requests, commands, demands, etc. For such first members of pairs, one thing about them is that they can be used to select a next speaker. They can, in that sense, be said to be 'done to somebody.' Not all of them need to be 'done to somebody,' i.e., a question can be done in a conversation without selecting a particular person to speak next and answer it.

It may be noted that regularly enough in conversations of more than two persons, if one of these first pair members is used, and is used without selecting a next speaker, whoever it is that self-selects himself as a next speaker will do an appropriate next utterance. So, for example, when a question is asked in such a conversation without selecting a next to answer it, it's regularly enough the case that a person who chooses to speak next will, in his utterance, do an answer. That is to say, the action sequence set up can operate independently of selection of a next. That an action sequence can operate independently of selection of a next is something that can be seen also by considering the fact that all of these classes of first pair members occur in two-party conversation, in which selection of the next is not an issue – the 'other party' is next – and when questions, complaints, commands, requests,

etc. are done in two-party conversations it's again regularly the case that the other party will come back with the second member of the pair.

Now, that they can serve to select and that they can work without selecting, has one sort of interest for us. Insofar as utterances in multi-party conversation can, in part, be occupied with selecting a next speaker where utterances in two-party conversations are not so occupied, or utterances in multi-party conversations may not be so occupied – then it would seem obvious that insofar as we're interested in saying what an utterance means, that would be one issue that a statement of its meaning would involve, and therefore: A given 'same' utterance occurring in two- and multi-party conversations could mean something different. And that is then to say that if one were interested in building a semantics, it might be relevant to such a semantics that any given sentence that was analyzed would have to be differentiated as to occurrence of the utterance in two- and multi-party conversation. "What do you think?" as a question in a two-party conversation, would not be occupied with selecting a next. It would be occupied with occasioning that the other should speak now, and perhaps locating what he ought to do. In a multi-party conversation it might also be engaged in selecting who should speak next.

That would then be to say if you were interested in a semantics that could deal fully with, e.g., sentences, you would not feel free to operate on sentences which did not have retained as information about them, what sort of conversation they occurred in. In that regard, then, you could not deal with sentences that you just had as sentences that happened to occur somewhere. So then, when one picks up a study in semantics and it has the semantic analysis of a given sentence, one thing to inquire into is whether there is information about the occurrence of such a sentence in two- or multi-party conversation; that involving, possibly, issues of the kinds of business that such a sentence would be doing.

Now I've said "regularly enough a second member of the pair will occur," "given a question, regularly enough an answer will be forthcoming." I take it that one issue that we would like to address is finding ways of determining the effectiveness of various of the next-speaker selection techniques. How would that be handled? There are, I take it, some rather obvious procedures that someone who didn't study conversation especially, and didn't figure they needed to study conversation to do the job, would use. Given first pair members, one might, for example, attempt to determine who was selected by them as next speaker, and then do a statistical study of the rate of the occurrence of such proper next speakers so as to measure the rate of effectiveness of this next-speaker selection technique. One might find, for example, that in 20 percent, 40 percent, 60 percent, whatever percentage you like of questions which selected a next speaker, that next speaker spoke next. If it appeared that next speakers spoke at a rate above what they randomly might speak if they were not speaking by virtue of selection, you could say that next-speaker techniques had some effectiveness.

There are various ways that such an approach might not be what we want.

I'm not going to develop that fully right now, but I want to mention one sort of matter that such a technique might not show up. Suppose, now, an utterance seems to select a particular next speaker. For example, I have one in which one fellow says, "Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you." As it happens, the person so addressed doesn't speak next. I take it that in that case we would assess the speaker-selection technique as ineffective. We would be wrong. We would be wrong by virtue of the following sort of phenomenon, which is quite regular. It does not necessarily cover all cases, but it's quite regular. We have an utterance that apparently selects a next speaker. Somebody else speaks in that position. One thing you will regularly find when somebody else speaks in that position is that what they do, among other things, is preserve as the next speaker after them, that speaker who has been selected by the one before them. For example:

> *A*: Tell us all about yourself so we can find something bad about you.
> *B*: Yeah. Hurry up.

That is, although B talks 'instead of C,' he preserves that C is the next speaker. B's utterance is oriented to the fact that A made an utterance which selected a next speaker other than B. Now, that persons who 'intervene' in a sequence preserve as next speaker after them the one who should have spoken when they spoke, is then evidence that would be of use in determining the effectiveness of next-speaker selection techniques. It's been effective in that the one who happened to speak orients to who was selected to speak, addresses that one also, and preserves his position as next speaker.

And that has a parallel in the case where, as another way we would go about deciding the effectiveness of next-speaker selection techniques, A asks B a question, and B indeed speaks, but doesn't make an answer. If B speaks and doesn't make an answer, then we might again say, 'Under that circumstance the next-speaker selection technique is ineffective.' And again, there are instances which occur and provide that indeed it was effective, though the *test* was ineffective. Here's an example of that sort of thing:

> *A*: Did you tell Mary you moved down to the beach?
> *B*: Why? Is she here?
> *A*: Yeah.
> *B*: Yeah.

What you get is, A directs a question to B. B comes back with a question. That question provides that the asker should speak again, and that the answer will come in B's subsequent utterance. So, for example, A asks a question and B says "What did you say?" That returns the floor to A. In those cases, B has not done what you're expecting, but nevertheless has done something which seems in part to be controlled by the technique used to select him.

These things then suggest that such a question as 'How do we go about determining the effectiveness of speaker-selection techniques' should involve

study of those techniques and how they work, and should not be done by constructing some test without respect to how speaker-selection techniques work in detail, but which seems to provide what looks like a measure of them.

If we go back to that very early discussion of the order of speaker solution to speaker sequencing, we had a situation where the issue of a speaker speaking at a given point was specifically relevant. The rules were oriented to regulating where a given speaker should speak. Now it's at least conceivable that such a question is not a question everywhere. That is to say, we would want to determine, for each given conversational system that we were dealing with, whether speaker-at-a-point was relevant. Now in the case of the paired-utterance phenomenon, and particularly in the case of second pair members, the notion of a-speaker-at-a-point is specifically relevant. And it's formed as: The 'point' is the utterance after a given sort of utterance. That is to say, with respect to the pair techniques, all the ordering we have available is that after a given utterance by A to B, B should speak. That's the way we would deal with order-of-speaker with these resources.

Even that, while it's apparently much weaker than the initial situation, has some extended interest. One such interest is this: One notion it would be terribly nice to be able to use is that of 'absence.' But to be able to use a notion of absence in a discriminative fashion is not altogether simple. If at some point you want to propose that 'A didn't do something' or that 'nobody did something,' or that 'something didn't occur,' then you have to be able to show that that something didn't occur discriminatively, i.e., that there's not a class of things, whose size you don't know, which also didn't occur. X didn't occur at point Y. B didn't occur there either. C didn't occur there either. D didn't occur there either. How, then, do you go about discriminating X from these others? If you can't, then the proposed observation that X didn't occur is trivial.

A way, perhaps, to develop a notion of 'absence' involves looking to places where such a notion is used and attempting to see whether there are various sorts of relevance structures that provide that something *should* occur. Parenthetically, I'll give as a rule for reading academic literature, that whenever you see somebody proposing that something didn't happen – and you'll regularly find, e.g., sociologists, anthropologists, or historians particularly, saying that something didn't happen, something hadn't been developed yet – that they're proposing that it's not just an observation, but an observation which has some basis of relevance for it.

Now in the case of the pairs, where an utterance provides, specifically, the relevance of a second, the second's absence is noticeable and noticed. One regularly gets – now, not a vacuum, but somebody doing something, but something else, and the first saying, e.g., "I asked you a question." "You didn't answer my question." You'll get persons reporting that they said 'hello' to somebody and he didn't say 'hello' to them. That is to say, the places where such absences are reported are a located group of things. In that regard, then, what we're saying is: The relevance that a first member of a pair sets up for a second, constitutes one locus for talk of absences by Members. When

they talk about 'absences' they're regularly talking about second pair members, and they're talking about them by reference to the occurrence of first pair members.

Again, let me emphasize that we can say that talk about absences is itself orderly, and can have its orderliness characterized. And the notion of sequencing pairs is specifically such a notion as can provide for what this talk about absences occurs about.

Another sort of issue. If it seems to be so that utterances are assessed by reference to the actions they seem to be doing, and are so assessed whenever one comes to think about, rethink about, re-encounter an utterance, a week later or whenever, as one mulls over a conversation, then one question that needs systematic consideration is whether there is some sequence in which the various actions that utterances might be a case of, get dealt with. Any given utterance might turn out to be an A, a B, a C, a D, inclusively. Is there some way that persons go about, in sequence, determining what it is? And further, is that sequence itself done within some sort of temporal constraint?

One big fundamental thing about the sequencing pairs, question–answer, greeting–greeting,and the rest, is that the first pair members are a first class of things an utterance is scrutinized for being a case of. That is, a first class of things one seeks to find about an utterance is, 'What sequentially relevant action might it be a case of?' The remark itself you might consider a week later or a year later, revise your views about, decide that it was part of a pattern of other utterances, etc. But the class of actions you assess it by reference to in the first instance are these sequentially relevant actions. And the result is directly used to produce a second pair member – if some sequentially relevant action is found – and to produce it in 'conversation time,' i.e., to produce a next utterance. Whatever else it is, its a 'question,' whatever else it is, it's an 'insult,' whatever else it is, it's an 'offer.' Determine that first, and then make an utterance that fits it. When you get around to it, you can figure out whatever else about it. It's if you can't decide what sequentially relevant action is being done that you can't make a move.

I want to raise one interesting sort of ambiguity that's systematically present for these utterances, relevant to the issue of 'what should you do next?' Now when I talk of 'ambiguity,' there's some special attention needed to the way I want to use it here. One tends to think about 'ambiguity' that, e.g., a word could mean this or that, or a sentence could mean this or that, or it could mean this, that, or God only knows what else. The sort of ambiguity that I'm interested in specifically is 'sequentialized ambiguity,' where the issue is what sort of thing should go next, turning on what this thing might have been. Now the curiously interesting thing is that for at least a lot of the first pair members there's a same sequential ambiguity present, and that is, the alternatives 'Is it serious or is it a joke?,' 'Is he serious or is he joking?'

For pretty much any such first pair members you can find, either directly on the occurrence of it or after a response, "You're kidding." "Are you kidding?" "Are you serious?" And what that utterance is specifically attending is the issue of what *sequence* that first utterance should generate. Are

you doing an 'insult' to which I should do a 'return insult'? Are you doing a 'command' which I should accept or reject? Are you making an 'offer' that I might accept? Or are you joking? Do you want me to marry you or are you just kidding?

We are not, then, talking about the issue of the sentence having an ambiguity of meaning in the sense of this term or that term, but, does it have this sequence appropriate after it or that sequence appropriate after it; a possible acceptance of the proposal, or laughter? For a whole range of those classes, then, one has as systematic alternatives the appropriate second member of the pair for that first, or laughter. And there is available a whole lore on how do you decide that somebody is really doing an insult or they're joking, etc.

But it's one criterion of an utterance being a first pair member that it can be followed with, not *only* the second pair member but *either* the second pair member or laughter – or, alternatively, the question "Are you kidding?" or "Are you serious?" And that is to say that the occurrence of that sort of phrase locates for you that you have one of these first pair members having been uttered. For example, a person makes an 'announcement' – "I'm getting married," "I'm getting divorced," "I flunked my course," whatever else – there's an appropriate second to it – "Congratulations," "I'm sorry," what-ever else. In alternative to those you can say, "You're kidding." "Are you kidding?"

On the one hand, then, statements like "You're kidding," "Are you serious?," etc. are themselves orderly-located. And on the other, you can look to see where they go, to see that what you've had was seen to be an 'announcement,' a 'command,' a 'question,' whatever else, i.e., they can be used to find cases of these first pair members. And what they are directed to is specifically the issue of this sequentialized hearing phenomenon. 'Kidding' means effectively: Whatever sequence this thing might generate if it were a first pair member does not apply. It's a 'joke' done with the use of a first pair member.

One rather small issue with regard to selection: One of the big possible gains of the examination of things like these speaker- selection techniques is that we can make, of the phenomenon of silence, something. There's a lot of talk going on in conversation. There is also a lot of silence going on. How can we turn silence into a thing that can show something; for example, that somebody has seen that they were not selected, i.e., they don't just happen to be not talking, they're specifically 'being silent' while another talks or gets ready to talk. I'll have a couple of things to say about that, particularly when I talk about the 'floor-seeker' stuff. Here I want to mention that one thing that would seem relevant to dealing with the ongoing silence of various people is that the speaker selection techniques are public phenomena.

You can, in various games, select somebody to be 'It,' or you can select somebody to receive an award; you may know it and they may know it, but nobody else may know it. All anybody else might know is that they were not selected. Then, one might have a situation where they don't do anything so

long as they are not selected. Now, in the case of the use of speaker selection techniques, they're done in public and they require that an analysis of an utterance be done, where that analysis can be done by anyone or everyone. And furthermore, it's not the case that every utterance will guaranteedly contain some speaker selection. Lots of utterances don't select anybody.

Some of the techniques involve for their operation, not merely that one hears what was said and analyzes what was heard, but all sorts of other attention. For example, in a multi-party conversation it's perfectly possible to use, as a term that indicates that somebody is being selected, 'you.' "What are you thinking about?" Now, 'you' may mark that *somebody* is being selected; it doesn't tell us *who* is selected. How do we go about determining who's selected? There are obvious sorts of things that are involved, which the fact that 'you' can work in multi-party conversations makes relevant. Like, for example, that the speaker looks at a particular person at some point in their utterance. Now, that somebody looks at a particular person at some point in their utterance and uses 'you', is something that can work to have others not talk and that person talk, only if eye-monitoring is something that's going on with some regularity. If A looks at B in the course of the conversation, as he's making an utterance in which he says "What are you thinking about?," then if B is looking at A he may well catch that he's being looked at; if he's not, he won't. But also, C and D and E need be attending A's looking, to see that also. Otherwise they might well talk. In that regard, then, it might well be the case that some technique for speaker selection might provide some of the bases for the kind of eye-monitoring that seems to be used in conversation – particularly in multi-party conversation.

Now let me mention what seem to be the main features of these pair techniques. I'll put it this way: On the one hand, one does not give somebody a free move when one selects them, and on the other, one does not use a free move for selecting. That is to say: (1) All the pair techniques constrain the action that the selected speaker should do. It's not that he's selected, and now he can go through whatever performance he likes, i.e., 'I've talked enough, now you talk'. Rather, he's selected to do a particular action from some class of actions. He doesn't have to, e.g., accept the invitation; he can refuse it. But he should do one of those things. (2) The person who does that selection, in order to do that selection, constrains his own actions. That is to say, if you're going to get somebody to answer a question, then your utterance has to be occupied with making a question.

One doesn't find, that is, that the selection techniques are used as independent parts of the talk – you make an utterance and then you say "Johnny next," he does whatever he wants and then says "Harry next." Rather, these sets of techniques constrain the selectee and constrain the selector. They generate not only a sequence of actors, but they generate a sequence of actions.

That being the case, one needs to focus on things like speaker-selection and action-selection as utterly intimate parts of the talking that people do. They're not, first of all, delivered as separate parts of, or appendages to, an utterance.

If, in our language, you attempt to separate those parts out, then you can't normally produce a whole utterance that contains each thing. That is to say, if you try to separate out 'addressee,' 'name of action,' and 'case,' then you find that the addressee doesn't wait until the end: "John, I want to ask you a question, where were you?" What happens is when you say "John," he'll say "Yeah?" or when you say "John, I want to ask you a question," he'll say "Yeah?" or "Go ahead." You cannot readily produce a whole utterance in which the particles are separate in that sense. They are parts of whatever it is that one does.

These various sequentially relevant utterance pairs are building blocks of conversation in a series of different ways. And we'll be tracking some of those ways as we go along. There are things like the kinds of expansions that are built around some of the pairs. For example, you can make an invitation and get an acceptance or rejection; you can make a request and get an acceptance or rejection. But there's been developed around those two pairs, for example, sets of 'pre structures;' i.e., 'pre-requests' and 'pre-invitations.' And the elaboration on some of these pairs – and I'll consider a series of elaborations – are rather important sorts of things themselves.

Lecture 7
Intentional mis-address; Floor seekers

Before going on to the issue of 'floor seeking' I want to touch on a couple of other matters.

Let me first make an introductory comment on *pronouns*, with respect to speaker selection. I'll talk at some length about pronouns later on; I want here to point out a perfectly obvious sort of thing: One way that grammarians regularly talk about pronouns is that they are substitutes for nouns. That has as one basic interest that it reveals that pronouns are initially – perhaps exclusively in that regard – studied as words that occur in written texts. Anybody who looks at talk at all, could not come away with such an idea about pronouns.

In the first instance, for example, the pronouns 'I,' 'you,' and 'he' as used in talk, including the plurals 'we,' 'you,' and 'they,' are not at all substitutes for nouns. Consider that the personal pronouns are specifically used, for example, as terms of address. And as such, if anything, nouns are substitutes for pronouns. That is to say, for example, names are substitutes for pronouns in talk – and in some cases, extremely peculiar substitutes, if they're used at all. So that 'I' is the way I refer to myself in talk, not 'Harvey saw it,' 'Harvey did,' etc. You don't use your own name in the first instance, and a pronoun is not a substitute for it. Nor for that matter is 'you' a substitute for the name of the person you're addressing. If anything, again, it's the other way around. Furthermore, if you're doing directed talk, then you can hardly do it with just the name of the addressed person. You have to do it with the name of the addressed person and 'you,' most likely: "Ken, face it, you're a poor little rich kid," not "Ken, face it, Ken's a poor little rich kid."

Furthermore, with respect to 'he,' in talk, 'he' can first of all be used with reference to a person present. It's not to be seen as exclusively a way of referring to that person, but given that you can refer to him either with 'you' or 'he,' you can choose 'he' when you're not specifically selecting him as the next speaker while making some reference to him in discourse. You're not necessarily excluding him as the next speaker, but you're not selecting him as the next speaker.

Those facts are so obvious that they ought to initially bring home the point that anybody who would propose the pronouns are, say, by and large used as substitutes for nouns, could hardly be thinking much about talk.

Now let me go on to briefly notice one way in which the unit character of the utterance pairs can be seen. One area which has gotten some considerable investigation in the field called socio-linguistics is that of 'language shift.' That is to say, bilingual persons will now and again, at some time, in some

environments, shift from one language to another. And the questions of when they do it and for what sorts of units they do it has been a matter of interest. One thing you find for these utterance pairs is that they are an environment for at least dialect shifts of sorts. If a first pair member is delivered in some sort of special English dialect, or in another language, then regularly, second pair members fit that. And they may just be exchange-length shifts. Here's an instance:

    A: Bitchin school, isn't it?
    B: Kinda groovy.

As the talk goes on there's no particular retention of that sort of terminology; they 'shift back' into their usual ways of talking. Terms like these, 'bitchin,' 'groovy,' etc., fit to each other, are used with respect to each other, and are used with respect to utterance pairs. If you're given a first pair member, you not only answer, but you answer with – if you can – a dialect term. And it's regularly done for other sorts of dialects than this kind of kid version of hip.

And now I want to get into some quite important sorts of issues. One thing we ought to notice is that second pair members are specifically things that needn't be done in whole sentences. Answers are regularly not done in whole sentences, acceptances aren't, rejections aren't, etc., and nonetheless they are perfectly well understood and understandable by virtue of seeing them as produced by reference to the first pair member. A nice sort of case, involving also some sorts of syntactic linkage, is:

    Q: Are you fed up?
    A: To the neck.

Second pair members are in general interesting things, and interesting in just that way, i.e., that the ways they are tied to the first, involve the use of the first for their understanding. There are several ways in which that can be strongly shown and seen. One sort of thing which is relevant to such a matter, I'm going to talk about as '*intentional mis-address.*' Those are things like this: Given various sorts of firsts – insults, commands, and things like that – one gets a second which is seeable as a second, and contains an intentional mis-address. Such a thing as:

    A: Ken, face it you're a poor little rich kid.
    B: Yes, Mommy, thank you.

    A: You're not old enough. Leave the room.
    B: Yeah, Daddy.

There are others which involve the same sort of thing, e.g., "Bring that over

here." "Yes, Boss," "Why don't you make those arrangements out of here." "Yes, Teacher."

Let's try to consider the interest of those things. We can proceed by first considering a way that one might imagine that persons go about determining the reference of address terms, i.e., who is being addressed by such a term. You could imagine that for some set of parties to a conversation, if a given name was used in an address position in an utterance, then the parties scrutinize the set of persons to find who it is that has that name. If they find a person who has that name, then that's the person being addressed. If they don't find such a person, then they can find that, say, an error was done, or they can look around in puzzlement. What would be operating there is that the known meaning of the term is used to find the person being referred to by it.

That's a very conventional, widely used conception of how it is that one finds what somebody is referring to. It seems obviously applicable in the case of objects; it would also seem obviously applicable in the case of named persons. It obviously can't handle the case of intentional mis-address, in that it would end up with people being puzzled, feeling that an error was made, whatever else. In any event, it gives you a characterization of a sequence they would use in coming to be puzzled. But you don't want to throw it out as absurd, by virtue of its importance for all sorts of other accounts one would like to use.

Now there's another possibility, and most people will find this one not obvious as to why it's proposed, though it will partially capture one important recent development in anthropology. You could imagine that the following would be done by a hearer of, e.g., "Yes, Mommy:" 'Mommy' can be considered as a term; the name of a set of components. Those components can be extracted from it, and now one can find somebody who doesn't have that name, but who satisfies those components. For example:

'Mommy'
female
older generation
etc.

While there may not be somebody who's the 'mommy' of this person, there may be somebody who satisfies the set of components, and that's whom they may be addressing.

That thing can be useful in some environments; if, for example, you're standing in the subway station, or a supermarket, and you see a kid yelling "Mommy!" you may well be able to locate some set of people who are eligible as possible persons being addressed, by reference to such an analysis. And you can, then, get some considerable gains from such an analysis. Again, however, it won't give you a result when, say, the group of eligibles contains no person who satisfies this sort of formulation. And there's the simple fact that these intentional mis-addresses do work.

We get a big help in dealing with them when we consider their locus: They occur specifically as a second to a relatively limited set of first pair members. Or, if you want to hold off saying that they're first pair members, then, they occur second 'to a relatively limited number of cases of classes of actions.' For example, after an insult, a command, a request, and things like that. Then it may be that the detectability of the addressee turns on the fact that if the person who has been the recipient of, e.g., the insult, talks, and does what could be a return insult, then treat the name he uses as one way of making an insult to the person who has done it to him.

What that then seems to mean is that at least to some extent and in some places, such a thing as the sequencing pairs operate, as you might say, 'prior to' the use of reference considerations in locating the person. One looks to see who it is that may be addressed by the given utterance, and sees how the name used serves as a possible return to the prior utterance. And in that regard, then, one can see how there is no initial search, given, e.g., "Yes, Mommy," "Yes, Boss," "Yes, Teacher," and things like that. One can see, furthermore, that not only can terms be used that have specific recipients in general i.e., there are mommies, bosses and teachers in the world, but various terms which have no such proper recipients, e.g., "dope." "clod," etc.

And the foregoing relates to what I said last time about those actions that are sequentially relevant being a first order consideration in determining what action, of the possible actions, an utterance might be doing. A determination of the action an utterance is doing, e.g., an insult, provides the relevance of some specific others. One may then scrutinize what has occurred next, to see whether it is among those specific others, e.g., a return insult, and use that to locate, for example, what reference an address term might have. Rather than starting the 'natural' way, using the supposed reference of a term to find what it might be talking about – what object it locates, what person it addresses.

The question of the scope of such a procedure, i.e., of a procedure where in the first instance sequential considerations provide the environment for referential considerations, I can't answer. But it has to be left open as a possibility, and it seems clearly to operate in some environments, and operate perfectly effectively. There is a parallel to intentional mis-address, which is intentional mis-reference, but it isn't a matter relevant to our concern now, which is sequencing pairs.

Now, one of the cases of intentional mis-address I gave, was the return insult, "Yes, Mommy, thank you." It is with some regularity the case that insult returns will have as part of them, 'Thank you' or 'Thanks.' Sarcastic thanks to be sure, but thanks. And they serve as insult returns. I want to give a possible characterization of that.

Insults, unlike lots of other paired actions, seem to be things that are akin to what an anthropologist remarked about letter-writing behavior in America – one thing about letters being that they don't operate such that if you send somebody a letter then they owe you a letter, and if they send you a letter then that's the end, as we tend to think about, e.g., debts operating. Instead, if you

send somebody a letter then they owe you a letter. If they send you a letter then you owe them a letter. In some societies, gift-giving is that sort of a thing. And again in this society, at least for various sorts of persons in it, if you give an insult you're owed an insult, if the insult is returned, you now owe one. It used to be claimed that this was a specific feature of Negro kids, but it's at least also so for white high school kids. There is a whole literature on this thing; it's called 'sounding,' 'playing the dozens,' various other names.

Now is there a way of doing a return insult which doesn't involve setting up such a sequence? 'Thank you' seems to be such a way. Why? Because on the one hand, 'thank you' need not be returned to. And if it is returned to there is a return to 'thank you' – 'you're welcome.' And that closes it off. So if you want to cut off such a sequence, 'thank you' is a nice way to do it. It indicates that you acknowledge that you got an insult, the sarcasm provides for doing a return insult, and it effectively closes the sequence.

The following consideration is also concerned with second pair members. What I want to be initially considering is one apparently used procedure for doing 'sarcasm,' which turns on the use of second pair members. Then I want to deal with what that procedure for doing sarcasm shows us. With some regularity you'll find things like this: You give an announcement which should properly be followed with 'Congratulations' and you get 'Gee, that's tough.' I have one that goes:

A: By the way, I just got engaged.
B: Who's the unlucky bitch.

Alternatively, you give something which you should be commiserated for and you get 'Congratulations,' 'Oh, wonderful.' Both cases involve sarcasm, and in both cases what seems to be being done is that the term chosen is seen to be a member of some *contrast class* of terms. For all anybody knows, these terms may be members of dozens of contrast classes. In this case, it appears that the relevant contrast class is found by reference to there also being a contrast class for the initial action that was done. One fits the two together and picks the remark that would be appropriate for the alternative action to the one that was announced. There's a positive announcement and a negative announcement; if I make a positive announcement, pick the return that would go with a negative announcement, and vice versa – where you locate two contrast classes to get the return you come up with.

That phenomenon has the following sort of relevance: First of all, there's a lot of talk going around about 'contrast sets' in the anthropological and psychological literature. It would be nice to have some ways of locating contrast classes as naturally oriented-to phenomena, i.e., where persons know them and use them as contrast classes, and not just that these are alternatives, one of which excludes the other in some logical way, but it is not known whether they are known as contrast classes by parties – other than that they perhaps say 'Yeah, that's the opposite of that,' whatever that might mean.

If you can find some activity which turns specifically on their use, then you have a rather nice warrant for claiming their existence. As it happens, it seems generally to be the case that if you study those things which are sorts of verbal play, you will come up with various, otherwise un-obvious, analytic phenomena which are available to Members. That is to say, e.g., kids' play with language involves specific attention to what are otherwise called 'the formal features of a language.' And verbal play may be somewhat analagous to the relevance of the analysis of games for the study of other activities. It's a very powerful research tool.

Now, it ought again be pointed out that the inappropriate use of 'congratulations' in such an environment as is provided by a first pair member does not generate puzzlement. Also, it's not the case that, say, *any* utterance you could make in that place would be seeable as controlled by the relevance that the first utterance set up. And furthermore, it's not the case that, distributionally, 'congratulations' goes anywhere. And in that it's not used just anywhere, and also, not just anything is used where it's used, its use as an alternative is, as I've been saying over and over again about other things, an orderly phenomenon.

Let me turn now to these 'floor seeker' phenomena; things like "I heard a good joke," "You know what happened to me last night?" – and if you're going to be dealing with cases that can be used by anybody, then you'll come up with cases like those. There are lots of specific sorts that work in a given environment but couldn't be offered in the form of a sentence, as 'general.' If somebody says, for example, "I was at the police station this morning," in some environments that will be heard as a floor seeker, in others, something different.

One way in which they're interesting – and the grounds for my introducing them at this point – is that they seem to be utterances which have as their feature relevant to selection, that they are attempts to have their speaker selected as next speaker after the next. They normally do not select a next speaker – anyone might answer – but what they seek is to have the person who says them reselected by whoever happens to be the self-selected next speaker.

And one thing that we can notice about them is that like various other first pair members – sometimes they're delivered as other first pair members, e.g., questions, "You want to hear a joke?" though they don't have to be delivered as questions, they can be delivered simply flat out as "I heard a good joke" – but like other first pair members, if they're not responded to, then they're repeated. So there's a sequence that goes like this:

A: I was // at the police station this morning,
B: Didja bring the Healey last week?
C: Yeah.
B: Was it smashed up? Dja get it fixed, an' painted, an' // all this crud?
C: The insurance had it repaired.
B: Yeah.

A: I was at the po<u>lice</u> station this morning.
B: Big deal.

That's one regular thing about them, they get repeated. And when they get repeated, if they get picked up at all, that's an acquiescence. The one who produced the floor seeker now gets the floor. So even if you say "Big deal," that's a good enough take-off point.

What I'm going to be getting at is that floor seekers are specifically seen to be ways of getting an occasion to tell a story or a joke, but I don't mean to say that after they get picked up in whatever way, one then launches into the story or joke. It's not that anything said as a second to such a first can provide that you just go on from there. But you can take pretty much anything said, and use it to go in a controlled fashion. So, in this case:

A: I was at the po<u>lice</u> station this morning.
B: Big deal.
A: "Big deal," yeah. Somebody stole all my radio equipment outta my car.

And he goes on from there. However, one regularly gets, "You know what happened to me last night?" "No, what happened."

As I said, floor seekers are repeatable. That they are repeated is itself relevant by virtue of the fact that lots of things that are otherwise known as first pair members are also repeated when they are not returned. For example, if you say 'Hi,' and the person you say 'Hi' to doesn't say anything, you say 'Hi' again. If you ask a question and the person doesn't say anything, you repeat the question.

There's one rather neat thing about the repetition of floor seekers. It wouldn't hold for 'Hi,' it might hold for questions. I'm not sure that this is so all that much, but in any event in some cases it does occur. And that is, the repetition can be examined for where it's placed. And if you look to the repetition for that purpose, you can come up with some at least mildly nice things.

Consider the case I just quoted. The utterance that overlaps with the first occurrence of "I was at the police station this morning" sets up a sequence itself. It's when that sequence is finished that the repetition is placed. Now that can involve, for one, attention to some sequence and its possible completion, such that not at just any pause in the talk is the repetition inserted.

The placing of the repetition is, then, relevant to such things as: If you attend the way utterances follow each other, select next speakers, etc., then you may not get a chance to put in an utterance you want at the place you want. You may not get a chance to put it in anywhere. That is to say, the allowing of the other sequence that got started between two other people to end, could involve that there wouldn't be another chance to stick in that announcement. Those two might keep reselecting each other, or keep talking

to whatever they're talking to in such a way that if A uses that as relevant to where he places his utterance, he may not find a place.

But also there is some possible gain in awaiting the end of any sequence before placing your repetition, and that's such a thing as: If you stick your utterance in between, say, a question that's been asked and the answer that might be forthcoming, then you have another occasion to be ignored. And then you may have to either do another repetition, or drop the matter. You want, then, to fit these floor seekers into a space that is unoccupied, in the sense that no sequence is open at the point that the floor seeker is placed. In any event, all I'm suggesting at this point is that where there are items, like floor seekers, that do get repeated, if you look to the placement of those repetitions you may find out some interesting things. Don't just suppose that they just happen to go anywhere.

There is a sort of problem raised by the phenomenon of floor seekers: Why does anybody use such a thing? Why, if they want to say something, don't they just say it? Why do they produce an utterance directed to getting the floor after a next utterance, rather than, having the floor to produce an utterance, producing the utterance they intend to produce? Are there any reasons for going through such a procedure? They're terribly widely used.

If you simply began to tell the story you wanted to tell, you might face the following sorts of problems: Routinely, utterances come in single sentence packages. If they don't come in single sentence packages then it's routinely the case that they don't appear to be planned as, e.g., 'a four-sentence package;' they kind of run on. Now one feature that makes the sentence a very nice package for utterances is that its completion is detectable. Then, at the end of any sentence in that ongoing utterance, the speaker may be cut off by somebody else starting up and treating that as a complete-enough utterance.

If you are specifically going to build an utterance for which the sentence is not going to be a signal of completion, how do you go about doing that? Where it's specifically going to be a multi-sentence utterance whose length is not in the first instance to be announced. Well, there are other structures that persons know of, for which they are able to recognize the completion. Jokes and stories are such sorts of things. If you say "I heard a good joke," then you can thereby be informing them that they should attend what comes after by reference to 'completion of a joke' or 'completion of a story.' That is to say, you signal that the forthcoming utterance is not to be constrained by its sentence structure – its being a sentence, or two sentences, etc. – but is to be attended by reference to these alternative units that have routinely recognizable completions.

There are occasions when one knows that an utterance is not going to be one sentence long, and doesn't particularly know how long it's going to be – but knows also that its structure could be found. At least on some of those occasions, announcing that 'a story' is coming may be a way of getting people to listen, if they will, to a structure that they can find a completion of, apart from listening to its syntax. And you may find, e.g., that it isn't harder – at least in the sense of it taking any longer – for persons, once they know that

a joke is coming, to see the end of a joke than it is to see the end of a sentence. That is, they respond to the end of a joke as rapidly as they respond to the end of a sentence. Indeed, in the case of a joke, the speed at which they see the joke is over is a specifically attended issue. It's criterial of whether the joke is good, or the hearers have a good sense of humor, how fast or slow they are, etc.

There may well be some basis for announcing that a joke or story is forthcoming, as a way of telling persons how to listen to the stream of speech one will next produce; where the usual procedure is not to be applied in this case, but another well-known procedure is to be used. That may give us some clues as to why in the world they make an announcement. It doesn't, perhaps, give us information about why they make an announcement and then pause for somebody to give them an invitation, and then go on to tell the thing. They could say "Here's a story," and go on and tell it. And regularly, of course, under some circumstances, people do just that.

Let me just mention one of those circumstances since it raises another issue that's of interest. If A says "Want to hear a joke?" and B says "Yeah, tell us a joke," and A tells the joke, and they all laugh, then somebody else can say "Here's another," and just launch into the joke. One interesting thing about that is that the 'here's another' is not named as 'another joke.' And in that regard, seconds to such sorts of matters don't have to announce what they are second to, to bring off that they are seconds. And furthermore, in such environments they are not operating by reference to last utterance, e.g., the last utterance may have been laughter. The 'here's another' turns on that structure that was previously attended. It is the case that second jokes, second stories, third jokes, third stories, are just delivered.

Now, one thing that can be involved, perhaps, in the request for starting, is that jokes are things that come in rounds. I'll consider this eventually in more detail, but jokes are things that set up a round of talk as an appropriate universe in which any party can tell 'another.' Indeed, there's some sense of an obligation to tell another, and if three or four people are together, A tells a joke, B tells a joke, C tells a joke, D is liable to say "I never remember any jokes," and not just pass it up.

And having said that floor seekers are used to bring off, say, the intended forthcomingness of a story or a joke, it isn't the case that data like the 'here's another' to start a joke disconfirms that position. The 'here's another' will be a second, an n, in some round of jokes or stories.

But the question we're asking now is, why do persons 'ask permission,' so to speak, to tell a joke? I don't know whether this is an answer, but it's interesting anyway, and something like this may be involved: One wants to make a distinction between having the floor in the sense of being a speaker while others are hearers, and having the floor in a sense of being a speaker while others are doing whatever they please. One wants not merely to occupy the floor, but to have the floor while others listen.

And in the case of doing an extended piece of talk, the usual guarantees that others will listen – and specifically in the case of something like a story

or a joke – are absent. They're absent because of this: The usual guarantees that others will listen turn on the fact that they may then be involved in producing a piece of talk that fits some last piece, i.e., that's made an analysis of it, that ties to it, etc.

In that regard, then, the built-in motivation for hearers – that they may be a next speaker, and being a next speaker may involve them in handling a last utterance – are absent in a story or joke. When you tell them you're going to tell a joke, you're telling them that a structure will be presented that is coherent, which they need not produce utterances attached to parts of. And when you signal that, then – at least with respect to the structures built into conversation as mechanisms involving persons in listening – one of the things they can perfectly well do is turn off.

One wants some means of getting assurance that they will listen. And in that regard, that people interrupt in a story, make comments, queries, sarcastic remarks, etc., are not evidence of their trying to heckle down a story. They're evidence of the fact that they're listening. It's their silence that is constantly the problem, i.e., silence doesn't give away very much under the way talk is regulated, shown to be heard, etc., for this society.

Lecture 8
Pre-sequences

In the next couple of lectures I will be considering two further issues with respect to these utterance pairs that I've been talking about for a while. The first thing I'll consider concerns the sort of implicativeness that given pairs have. The second consideration is directed to the fit between two members of any given pair.

In regard to this issue of the implicativeness of an utterance pair, what I want to bring out is the kind of involvement in larger sequences that given pairs have, i.e., that various things turn on given outcomes of an utterance pair. And that is to say, in the case of, e.g., a request, an acceptance or rejection may have different consequences of another sort of sequential character. For example, if you make an invitation to somebody and they turn you down, then apparently it's the case that you don't keep doing that indefinitely. You count, in some fashion, to find that after a series of rejections you're not going to get an acceptance, and you stop making invitations. The pairs themselves are located, then, in more extended and different sorts of chains of actions.

It turns out that all sorts of structures are built up around those pairs to deal with some of the alternative chains that are involved in any one of them. One such buildup involves what I'll talk about as an '*expansion*' of some pair sequence, where that pair gets a '*pre-sequence*' before it. So you have request, acceptance-rejection, you get a sequence built before it which has pre-requests. There are pre-request sequences, pre-invitation sequences, pre-warning sequences, pre-offer sequences, etc.

Now one of the features of many of these pre-sequences is that there's not going to be a case of a sequence unless the right return is gotten to the pre-sequence. So if, e.g., you do a pre-invitation, then, unless you get the right return you don't do an invitation. That's nice in the case of invitation, since you haven't wasted an invitation. In the case of pre-requests, one thing a pre-request regularly elicits is an offer. If you get an offer you need not make a request.

Here are some pre-invitation type things. 'Are you doing anything?' 'What are you doing?' 'What are you doing tonight?' 'Are you doing X?' Now, 'Are you doing X?' is nice. 'Are you studying?' for example. Then, 'No, I'm just reading.' Now the use of 'just' in the return to 'Are you doing X?' is rather frequent, and has generated some interest. 'Just' is this sort of a thing: The

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This lecture consists of the original Fall 1967, lecture 8, pp. 14–16, and Fall 1967, lecture 9, pp. 1–9.

question has been heard as a pre-invitation. 'Just' says 'give me the invitation, I'll accept.' If you have 'Are you doing X?' 'No, I'm just doing Y,' then you get an invitation, and that is then accepted. For the question 'What are you doing?' you get 'Nothing.' That's a big environment for 'nothing,' where 'nothing,' equivalently to 'just,' says 'give me an invitation and I'll accept it.' If you want to ask a question like, 'How can people say they're doing nothing?,' then you don't want to give it semantic interpretation in the sense of 'What does "nothing" refer to?' What 'nothing' is, is a *sequence object* saying, 'I hear your pre-invitation, give me an invitation' – if you like that kind of translation.

While the 'justs' and the 'nothings' and things like that seem to indicate that the person who received the item figures it's a pre-invitation, there are other ways that pre-invitations can be located.

A: Are you studying?
B: Yes.
A: Oh, 'cause I was gonna say there's a good movie . . .

where 'I was gonna say' signals a pre-something. It can signal a pre-warning, it can signal a pre-request, it can signal a lot of other things. It is produced by reference to a return to the pre-utterance which says 'Don't come out with whatever you're going to come out with.'

Ken: Hey, are you gonna drink that coffee now Roger?
Roger: No.
Ken: Oh. I was gonna say it would taste good with the ashes in it y'know.

Joe: Hello,
Jack: Yeah is Judy there?
Joe: Yeah. Justa second.
Judy: Hello?
Jack: Judy?
Judy: Yeah.
Jack: Jack Green.
Judy: Hi, Jack,
Jack: How ya doin'. Say, what're ya doin'.
Judy: Well, we're going out. Why.
Jack: Oh, I was just gonna say come out an' come over here and talk to the people. But if you're going out you can't very well do that.

And that's the way they go.

Let me turn now to one sort of fairly technical interest these pre-sequence phenomena might have. And here I'll be dealing with those which occur in the first instance as 'questions,' e.g., 'Can you fix this needle?' 'What's chocolate filbert?' 'Who took the toys out?' and things like that.

Their technical interest arises in this way: One attempt to conceive some sorts of questions – and particularly questions such as the above – is as 'incomplete statements,' where the answer can be combined with the incomplete statement that the question is to be formulated as, to make a statement. So you get:

Q: What is chocolate filbert?
A: Chocolate ice cream with nuts.

Q and A can be combined to make a statement-sentence, 'Chocolate filbert is chocolate ice cream with nuts.'

Q: Who took the toys out?
A: John.

Statement-sentence: 'John took the toys out.' Where the 'question term' – 'what,' 'who,' etc. – is replaced with the answer, and perhaps syntax is adjusted.

Now one of the authors who's involved in such an attempt is a logician, David Harrah, and that attempt to deal with 'questions' of that sort has not only logical interests, i.e., to turn some parts of actual conversation into formally logically describable language games, it also has a quite strong empirical basis. And that basis is perhaps something like the following: If somebody is asked, "Are you going to the movies?" and they answer "Yes," then it's routinely the case that persons feel perfectly confident when, e.g., they're reporting on the conversation in another conversation, to say "John's going to the movies." The point being that a person feels confident that a paraphrased quotation which partially transforms the question, is an appropriate quotation of what it is that the answerer said. Given the question "Are you going to the movies?" with the answer "Yes," then, what they said can be said to be "I'm going to the movies," and can be reported as "John's going to the movies" or "John said he's going to the movies," and things like that. Or, for example, after the interchange "Who took the toys out?" "John," John could be confronted with "So-and-so said you took the toys out."

That is to say, a paraphrase of question and answer, in some reasonably easy to formulate combination, is treated as saying what the answerer said, though of course – and that's what the problem is – the answerer only said 'Yes,' 'John,' etc. And persons are routinely able to use those combinations, and say "But you said you were going to the movies" after a person has answered "Yes" to "Are you going to the movies?" So that phenomenon is a very important one.

The technical interest of the pre-sequence phenomena is this: That's one place where you regularly get returns to questions which do not permit such a transformation. And that you get such non-transformable returns, hinges on an answerer's orientation to the status of a question as 'a pre-sequence question.' Let me give you the original questions again, and some answers:

Q: What's chocolate filbert?
A: We don't have any.

Q: Who took the toys out?
A: Why do you ask me?

Q: Can you fix this needle?
A: I'm busy.

In each of those cases we have what is apparently seeable as a pre-sequence question, e.g., a pre-order in the case of "What's chocolate filbert?," a pre-request in the case of "Can you fix this needle?," and a variety of possibilities in the case of "Who took the toys out?" such as a pre-command, "Put them back," a pre-complaint, "Why didn't you put them back?." etc. What one regularly gets, then, in the case of pre-sequences is – I guess you could call it a 'collapsing' of sorts. The sequence that the question is a part of is specifically attended in the production of an answer to it, which is an answer of the question that might follow. For example:

Q: What's chocolate filbert?
A: It's chocolate ice cream with nuts.
Q: I'll take a pint.
A: We don't have any.

Q: Can you fix this needle?
A: Yes.
Q: Would you fix it?
A: I'm busy.

The suggestion then is that in some places we have what looks like a question that would qualify as that sort of thing that could be called, say, 'an incomplete-statement type question.' But where they are pre-sequence questions, one will regularly get an answer that is directed to the sequence of which the question is seen to be a part, and the answer then does not serve as the completion of the 'incomplete statement' that the question might have been formulated as.

Such a fact has, as a second technical interest to it, that if one is, for example, engaged in doing scientific interviewing, one feature you would like to have present is, ideally, an independence between answers, so that you could say any given answer was independent of any other. Perhaps one ought, then, to carefully attend to not using questions which can be seen as pre-sequence questions, since pre-sequence questions can regularly be seen to be that sort of thing for which there is not an independence. In such a case, an answerer may, for example, choose his first answer by reference to the expected next question that follows a given answer he might make. There, the seriality of questions is one oriented-to property. We are of course already

aware that the seriality of questions is oriented to; by reference to the sorts of things I talked about to begin with; by reference to, e.g., the use of 'just' and 'nothing' and things like that, for pre-invitations.

Now, one of the cases I mentioned involved as an answer. "Why do you ask me?" And insofar as there's an interest in the occurrence of, not Q-A but Q-Q, the pre-sequence domain is one place where one gets with some regularity questions as returns to questions. That the question "Why ask me?" or "Why?" occurs in these places, doesn't seem to have as its appropriate interpretation that the person who answers with those doesn't know that the item is a pre-sequence item. Instead, it seems to involve that they see it as a pre-sequence item, see the particular sequence it's part of, and are beginning some sort of rejection. So:

Q: Who took the toys out?
A: Why do you ask me?
Q: Well, they should have been put back.
A: I didn't take them out.

That is to say, when you have "Why?" or "Why did you ask me?" in the first place, I think you regularly get denial as the eventual answer. That's by virtue of the fact that in the case of a question like "Who took the toys out?" all the answers aren't equivalent, in several ways. If you say "I did," then the person who asked may well then say, "Put them back." If you say "John did," then it's not so much that they may go over to John and say "John, put the toys back" but go over to John and repeat the question. That is to say, the sequence is setting up a 'confession.' And it's not that whatever name comes out as the one who did it, "I did" or "John did," they're equivalent, but you have an accusation where, "Who took the toys out?" "John," is not the same thing as the confession, "I did."

Now these things are particularly used with respect to kids. One is, in using the pre-sequence, setting up the grounds for a request or command by virtue of the pre-request or pre-command. And it is perhaps by virtue of, e.g., in the case of demands made on children, that they are delivered after a pre-sequence, that kids seem to be rather well attuned to the pre-sequence phenomenon. I offer as a neat instance of such an orientation the sequence that I have partially given:

A: Can you fix this needle?
B: I'm busy.
A: I just wanted to know if you can fix it.

Where, then a sort of thing that regularly occurs is: Given the use of a pre-sequence which has been dealt with as the item itself, e.g., the request itself, one can deny that it was a pre-sequence item. The kid who came back with "I just wanted to know" is something like five years old.

Here's a small point, although I'm not sure that it's so. I've seen it in

operation but I don't know that it always operates, or even that I correctly formulated what was happening. Suppose we have two couples present, A/B and C/D. A says something like "Hey there's that parade tonight" or "X is playing at the movies tonight." Then, one way to see that it's seen as a pre-invitation is that the next speaker to that will be a member of the alternative couple, i.e., C or D. Now it's not necessarily always the case that if A, a member of one couple speaks, then C or D, a member of the other couple will speak next. But since, say, invitations go from couple to couple without regard to which member of the couple makes them, when things we think are pre-invitations are done, the next remark does come from the other couple and seems to involve an orientation to its pre-invitational status, which would of course be directed to the other couple. And in such circumstances you get sequences consistent with such an analysis. For example:

> A: X is playing at the movies tonight.
> C: Oh, we saw it already.
>   or
> C: Yes, but Y is playing too.
>   or
> C: Oh great, we'd love to see it.

If anyone figures that that's more or less correct, they can perhaps check it out if they're ever in a two-couple situation and the person they're with makes such an announcement, by speaking themself and saying something like "Oh let's go," and seeing if there's at least some minor troubles that occur with that. That 'Let's go' will probably be heard at least in the first instance as excluding the others. So we can say that perhaps it's the case that the use of a possible pre-invitation in a scene where two couples or more are present, selects some speaker from the other or an other couple as next speaker.

Let me give you a case of a pre-request which has perhaps some relationship to something I talked about in lecture 3, i.e., the analyzability of a non-grammatical sentence. It goes like this:

> A: What is – what are those, cigars?
> B: Yeah, me and Al are gonna smoke cigars.
> A: Oh. Lemme have a cigar.

One thing I find neat about that is, given the initial start, "What is . . . ," we have an account of the announcing of that pre-request question which exhibits that the speaker from the start did not know that those were cigars, whereas the question that he ends up producing, i.e., "What are those, cigars?" evidences that he knows they're cigars – in part via the fact that he says 'cigars,' but also in the difference between 'is' and 'are.' In doing the thing that gets corrected, i.e., "What is – ," he shows that perhaps in the course of his utterance he learned what they were, came to see better. And it is shown in that shift from singular to plural.

The matter is relevant since, had he not known what they were, he might have grounds for asking, independent of doing a pre-request. Had he known, then a pre-request is all that he could be doing. And since pre-requests are, as I said earlier, cautious ways of proceeding, then the kind of caution involved may specifically be by using such a thing as, not even offering an overt pre-request but something which turns out to be a pre-request but is merely a request for information in the first place. Though routinely with an item like cigars, if that pre-request has occurred, then what one should get is an offer:

A: What are those, cigars?
B: Yeah. You want one?
A: Sure.

Let me just mention again that what I've been doing is taking these utterance pairs and examining their implicativeness for extensions into the conversation – before or after. The different returns to a first pair member have different consequences. One way that those consequences are dealt with is building these pre-sequences on, such that, given an outcome to a pre-sequence, you do or do not get the sequence with intended guaranteed results.

In that case what we have is that a first speaker, one who might make a request, controls his actions by reference to the outcome by, e.g., in this case, building a pre-request. Now there are for these utterance pairs, two different sorts of ways that those things are regulated, by reference to the kinds of implicativeness they have. There is on the one hand the pre-sequence stuff which involves the first speaker employing techniques to deal with outcomes by doing things other than the utterance pair in the first place. There are also, for others of the utterance pairs, ways that a second speaker operates, where the controls are his to handle. I have massive materials on a set of cases of that second-speaker type, which I'm not going to give as a lecture, but the material will be made available, and it would fit in at this point.[1]

I'll just give a couple of instances of second-speaker phenomena. In some societies there are rules which say 'An X should not do Y.' For example, here's one I take from a book on some Greek mountain culture by a fellow named Campbell called *Honor, Patronage, and Family*. And there's a rule in that group that goes: 'Unmarried opposite-sex persons from different families should not speak to each other.' There are obviously two ways that this could be enforced. Either no such person would start talking to such another, or some such person might start talking to such another but it's the business of the other not to talk in return.

And that's the way it's dealt with there. For example, it's reported that unmarried males, upon passing unmarried females, will greet them. It's the

[1] This refers to the phenomenon, "Everyone has to lie." The materials Sacks mentions are not included in this volume, but an earlier consideration can be found in the Spring 1967 series, lectures 8 and 9.

business of the unmarried female to not reply. If she does reply, it's her violation. She'll be gossiped about. Or, for example, there's a rule that goes: 'Sex relations between married persons who are not married to each other, is improper.' In a book by Davis and Gardner, they report such a rule and then say 'It's perfectly ok for men to make advances on other men's wives; it's the business of the wives to reject those advances.' Those are but two instances of second-speaker techniques with respect to possible outcomes, where the second speaker controls the sequence.

A 40-page draft of "Everyone has to lie," inserted into the lecture series at this point, is introduced with material linking it to this lecture. The draft is not included, but here is that introductory material:

I want first to make a prefatory remark about the placing of this lecture at this point. Although the burden of the lecture will not seem to overtly – at least in the main part of it – deal with the sequential implicativeness of the utterance-pair unit, I place it at this point because the materials being analyzed do seem to show a technique alternative to that which has just been considered, i.e., the pre-sequence materials. In those materials that are going to be presented here, what we'll have is a situation where the implicativeness of an utterance-pair is dealt with by its being the business of a second speaker to produce utterances which control – or can control – what further sequences develop. That is to say, in contrast to the pre-sequence material where what we had was a situation in which a first speaker, i.e., one who might do the first part of an utterance-pair (a request, an invitation, etc.), could be found to deal with the implicativeness of that pair-sequence by using a pre-sequence. That is to say, they could be found to be using, e.g., a pre-request or a pre-invitation or a pre-warning as a technique such that whether the request, invitation, warning was done, turned on the outcome of the pre-sequence pair.

So we have, then, two sorts of controls on the implicativeness of an utterance-pair sequence: First, the one we've considered, first-speaker techniques. And now, the one we're going to consider, second-speaker techniques. As I said before, that the materials to be presented will, in core-part, be dealing with this problem will only become evident well into my presentation.

Lecture 9
Paradoxes

This time I'll be talking about the fit between two members of any given pair. I'll make it a general suggestion that one could look to pretty much any case of some utterance pair and find that an examination of the detailed ways that, e.g., the second utterance of the pair fits the first, will pay off very considerably. What I'll basically be doing is considering a particular case and examining some of the ways that its consideration pays off, as an illustration of what kind of relationships one can find between two parts of an utterance pair. In the course of that, a variety of other issues that the particular pair brings up will be more or less dealt with.

Here's the sequence – from page 5 of the excerpt.[1]

Roger:	Ken, face it you're a poor little rich kid.
( ):	((cough))
Ken:	Yes Mommy. // Thank you.
Roger:	Face the music.
Al:	Ok, Now you've got that er outta yer system. Now yer a poor li'l rich kid. We've toldju that.
Roger:	An' we also decided yer a chicken shit hheh hehhehh hehh hh
Ken:	I decided that <u>years</u> ago the <u>hell</u> with ya. whhh

I will be dealing with the particular sequence, "And we also decided you're a chicken shit," "I decided that years ago the hell with you." What I want to deal with is how nicely "I decided that years ago the hell with you" fits to the particular critique offered.

The first utterance is obviously an 'insult,' 'derrogation,' and the first question is, what sort of a thing is the second? In some fashion it looks like it's an 'agreement,' i.e., "I decided that years ago" looks like an agreement. And yet it doesn't look like an agreement. It looks like some kind of return, not a return-insult particularly.

Now let's introductorily consider the situation with respect to negative matters about somebody, e.g., about their personality, that they're stupid, have bad breath, don't get along with anybody, ugly, etc. About that sort of

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This lecture consists of the original Fall 1967, lecture 8, pp. 1–13.

[1] No copies of the excerpt are available, but it probably was a slightly modified version of the Spring 1966 handout. The sequence is shown as it probably looked in the Fall 1967 handout.

thing, when somebody proposes it about themselves, on the one hand they may propose it in the following fashion: 'It's been a struggle to accept the fact that I really am X,' and when it is said to somebody without the indication of the struggle it was, they will recurrently treat it as a courageous recognition. It takes work, its' hard to face, etc.

The above is for the class of those things, independently of whatever the thing is particularly. To arrive at it yourself and to acknowledge it is an act of courage – or can possibly be such an act. Certainly people can see that other things are involved, e.g., they can see that you 'don't mean it,' that you're only asking for the utterance's denial. And regularly it happens that when somebody says one of those things people will say 'No you're not.' They may also say 'Don't expect *me* to deny it' or '*You* said it not me.'

Now if, for that class, asserting a case about oneself is a case of doing 'being courageous,' then with respect to the particular item we're dealing with now, being a 'chickenshit,' we have an interesting situation. If you have arrived at the determination that you're a chickenshit, then you're not a chickenshit – at least to the extent that arriving at that class of determinations provides that you're courageous.

And that sort of situation is quite interesting because of a series of large classical issues in Western intellectual history that it implicates, and interesting for rather more particular considerations with respect to the fit between first and second utterances. Statements which have the property that if they're true then they're false, are among the things which the name 'paradox' refers to. 'Paradox' refer to other sorts of things, and also, a 'full paradox' involves both that if it's true it's false, and if it's false it's true. In this case what is operating is that if it's true, it's false. That is to say, if it's true that he 'decided he was a coward years ago' then it's false that he's a coward.

I will come back to two issues about this thing: (1) Why would he say it? and (2) How could we come to figure that somebody like him would say that? But I want first to consider the phenomenon of paradoxes, and some related methodological issues with respect to making a determination of what somebody might be doing.

Paradoxes have been very important in the history of logic. The basic reason is that if a language contains paradoxes then the language harbors inconsistencies and one cannot construct logical proofs in that language. It's then a very important thing for logicians to know about a language, whether it contains paradoxes or not. Knowledge of the phenomenon of paradoxes is extraordinarily ancient. With the birth of logic came the discovery of paradoxes; that is to say, the knowledge of paradoxes came into being with logic. It's long been thought – and within the last 30 or 40 years intendedly proven – that English or any natural language contains paradoxes. That being the case, no natural language can be used, e.g., as an instrument of logic, or for building proofs. Now that might obviously have consequences for various fields other than logic. It might have consequences for, e.g., sociology, insofar as sociology attempted to build proofs in some natural language.

The area in which that issue has had considerable interest is philosophy.

Philosophy is routinely done in a natural language and the question is, can any strong development be achieved? It's in that environment of thinking, that the concern for paradoxes is lodged. Now I'm going to quote a fragment of an article entitled 'Is everyday language inconsistent?' by Professor Avram Stroll of the University of California at San Diego Philosophy Department, published in the British philosophy journal called *Mind* (1954). His problem is to show that either everyday language – as they talk about a natural language vis-à-vis its 'ordinary use' – is not inconsistent, or if it harbors the possibility of inconsistency, then those possibilities are never actualized and would never be actualized in ordinary uses of English. The aim being to show that if those things are so, then philosophy can proceed to be done within a natural language, like English.

The paradox that he gives is perhaps the most famous of the ancient Stoic paradoxes; those that were discovered and used by the Stoic logicians. It's the one that goes, 'All Cretans are liars,' uttered by Epimenedes who was a Cretan. The usual interpretation is, if it's true it's false. Let me quote what Professor Stroll has to say.

> I know of no way of proving the assertion that self-referential (e.g., a statement like 'I am a liar') and hence self-contradictory tokens do not or will not occur in ordinary language, but I do not think that the assertions needs proof. It seems obviously true, when one reflects on the use to which common language is put. But the point can perhaps be seen more quickly if we ask ourselves the question: Why would anybody use a self-referential expression of the paradoxical sort in ordinary life? Why would anybody write the sentence, 'The only sentence written on this blackboard is false' on a blackboard? What conceivable everyday use could such a sentence have? I am of course assuming that the use of it by a teacher to demonstrate the paradox of The Liar does not count as the everyday use of language.
>
> As I indicated above, when tokens of such a sentence are used to refer to some other sentence, then they do have a usage in ordinary speech. But there is no everyday circumstance in which such tokens are used to refer to themselves. This is why I say that although it is logically possible that such circumstances could exist, in fact they do not and will not.

Then he goes on to an extended consideration of some of the circumstances which must hold if the paradox of the liar could be interpreted in such a way as to reveal the paradox.

> It is easy to see that many of the so-called paradoxes can be developed from ordinary English sentences only by the most far-fetched distortion of the ordinary interpretation of these sentences. Consider for instance the famous example in which Epimenedes the Cretan is reported to have said 'All Cretans are liars.' Now it seems to me that considerable manipulation with the ordinary uses of language is required before we

can turn Epimenedes' remark into a paradox. To begin with, it should be noted that the sentence-type 'All Cretans are liars' is not formally self-contradictory as it stands. For if I, a non-Cretan, utter tokens of the sentence-type, those tokens may well be true about Cretans. It is only if we make some reference to the circumstance; to the situation in which the sentence-token is uttered, that it begins to appear paradoxical. This reference is to the effect that Epimenedes uttered the above token and that Epimenedes is himself a Cretan. The truth of this empirical statement is necessary for the production of the paradox. But is this reference again sufficient to show that Epimenedes' remark is paradoxical? It is not. For it still depends on how we interpret what the words 'All Cretans are liars' mean, before we can develop a paradox from it.

For example, Epimenedes may have meant by those words, 'Every Cretan, including myself, has uttered a lie at some time.' It does not follow from the fact that Epimenedes utters a sentence-token expressing the above meaning that the sentence he is now uttering is a lie. He may have lied at some other time.

And he goes on to deal with the possibility that Epimenedes intended 'every sentence,' or 'some sentences including this sentence,' etc.

The most important thing to get from Stroll's item – and it's terribly characteristic in its fashion – is that we ought to consider it as more a conversational matter than a research technique when he says 'What use would this have?' That is to say, what he is specifically not doing is, having asked the question, then going out to see what use it could have. But it's the kind of thing where, if you're in a conversation and you say 'What use could it have?' then the moment before they might answer, they have to try to think of a use. And the sort of use one would have to think of are things like 'known uses of X,' e.g., 'known uses of English sentences,' rather than, having asked the question we should adjourn for whatever time it might take to do such an examination of English to find out whether there is anything there.

It is an extremely poor sort of argument in its fashion, though the argument form would be very interesting. That is to say, it would be very interesting to pose as a problem the discovery of what the use might be of such a thing as 'What use could it have?' On the other hand, as a routine matter, if I encounter somebody saying 'What use would X have?' meaning 'It couldn't have any use,' then it's simply an occasion for filing X as something one would like to look for the uses of.

In any event, Stroll should have considered that in the first instance the best evidence for there being 'a use' to the ancient paradoxes was that what's known about the Stoics is that they were interested particularly in constructing a logic that dealt with actual argument. The early history of logic was by and large of that sort. Anyone who reads whatever is available of, e.g., Aristotle, or the Stoics, could not but come away with the impression that these were attempts to formulate rules of good argument, constructed by reference to actual argument. And in that regard then, the Stoics must surely have

encountered materials like this. That is to say, its sheer existence should suggest that it had some empirical reference. That might not be definitive of it, they might not be discoverable, they might have been quirks in ancient Greek. But then, they might not.

One of the tasks that we could have would be to try to rediscover what the everyday uses of the Stoic paradoxes were. We might specifically engage in looking around to find what they might be. I'll begin off with two more quotations. The first comes from a famous anthropology treatise called *Black Byzantium* by S. F. Nadel. Here's the context. There was a tribe, the Nupe. They were conquered by another tribe, the Felani. The Felani became the kings of the Nupe and became assimilated into the Nupe, but remained a partially separate group in the sense that their separate heritage was known, and they were the ruling group. Now Nadel tells this anecdote:

> The following is a significant anecdote. The Etsu-Nupe [the king] once confided to me his grievance against a certain rather unruly relative of his, whom he believed to have intrigued against him. He added, "All Nupe are bad people, you know." [Intending that, for that statement he was a Felani.] The said relative, himself as much Felani as the Etsu-Nupe, retaliated by informing me that all Felani are liars.

Now the interest there is not that it's a paradox, but it's perfectly plain from the ingenuity of those exchanges that people who could do things like that could do paradoxes if they needed to. That is to say, it doesn't seem beyond the capacity of even these savages, to handle such things.

Here's a quotation from the *New York Times*, an article on Marc Chagall:

> Between 1923 and 1939, may less perceptive critics and art lovers, even in Paris, tended to confuse Chagall and Mané-Katz, who was a painter also, because of the superficial similarity in their choice of Russian– Jewish subjects. One day in the early thirties, one of the Left Bank's most notorious gossips asked Mané-Katz what he thought of Chagall's work. The answer came without hesitation: "He is a great artist." The same busybody then hastened to ask Chagall what he thought of Mané-Katz. "He is a very bad painter," Chagall replied. His opinion was promptly relayed to Mané-Katz who shrugged his shoulders, and perhaps unconsciously paraphrasing an ancient Cretan sophist's example of paradoxical ambiguity, wittily disposed of the whole matter: "Well, all painters are liars."

What he's done, then, is to undercut both his earlier comment about Chagall, and Chagall's comment about him. Now, one use, apparently, of the Cretan paradox, is that in bringing down your own statement – that is to say, if it's true it's false – you may be in a position to bring down some other statement. It may be, among other things, a way of attacking another statement.

In the case we have, just such a use might well be involved. "I decided that years ago" is apparently an agreement, but if true, it's false. And then the statement asserting ". . . you're a chickenshit" is also false.

It is particularly the case that the sort of thing involved in the anecdote about Mané-Katz is perfectly well reproducible, i.e., situations in which, e.g., compliments are not reciprocated frequently occur. Furthermore, that compliments are not reciprocated is routinely, if not always, something that the initial complimenter may discover and have an occasion to comment on. Now, would he have a technique for undoing not merely, e.g., the uncomplimentary remark made to him, but also his initial compliment? That's such a thing as 'I'm a liar' or 'We're all liars' can do. And it may well be, for all we know, that it was in precisely such a situation that Epimenedes came up with his remark. It involves perfectly ordinary motives and perfectly ordinary sequences of talk. It isn't because it was a good way to deal with such a thing that it was preserved, but by virtue of its logical interest. But, that it occurred in the first place as a routine part of conversation is something that's not at all puzzling.

Another relatively famous Stoic paradox is the paradox of the bald man, or the heap. 'Would you say that a man was bald if he had only one hair?' 'Yes.' 'Would you say that a man was bald if he had only two hairs?' 'Yes.' 'Would you . . . etc.?' 'Then where would you draw the line?' The characteristic comment on that sort of thing is, 'That paradox reveals the essential vagueness of some of our common expressions.' It does nothing of the sort. And it's perfectly well a graspable paradox, and one for which it's extremely peculiar that a professor who were to look at it would not see what its ordinary basis was.

The case of the bald man or the heap would seem to involve the following situation as the routine circumstance in which it could be arrived at: Two measurement systems are being used to measure something. The first involves arithmatic features (1,2,3, or 1 to 100, etc.), and the second, which is fitted onto that, involves the use of categories (fast–medium–slow, bald–hirsute, etc.). The initial results are given in arithmatic terms, the products of whatever the operation, are formed as categorial products. Grading, for example. Grades might be from 1 to 100. They are handled in the end by some operation which gets them into letters; A, B, C, D, F. It may be perfectly is plain that 97 is an A. Would you say that 81 is an A? No. How about 82? etc. That is to say, in these circumstances it routinely happens that persons will take it as an issue that their letter grade stands in some crucial relationship between two number grades. Why is it that if 70 is a C, 69 isn't a C? Why is it that if 80 is a B, 79 isn't a B? People will argue to that issue and not to other issues of B-ness or C-ness. And in any situation, perhaps, where you have those sorts of systems used in that sort of way, you're going to get just those sorts of complaints. Grading is not at all the only case of such a thing.

What shakes us up a bit about accepting what will then be seen as a claim that, e.g., the features of possible paradoxes within English were employed to

produce the perfect retort, is perhaps that it's hard to believe that, e.g., a 16-year-old boy who's not terribly bright has such wit. maybe some Polish intellectual had the wit, but even he wasn't inventing a new paradox, he was probably merely using one that he knew of. Now when we have to figure that somebody who's intelligence we don't have available to us, did something that looks as striking as this may look, we are in a situation equal to that of believing the possibility of it happening, as we were in the first instance, or as Stroll was in the first instance, with respect to the issue of 'Why would anybody do it?' Now we know why anybody would do it. There are perfectly simple grounds why anybody would do it. The question is, how could they come to do it?

In an attempt to consider how – given what we've said about the paradox – its user in this particular sequence could have come to do it, where we're using the problem of knowing how its user could have come to do it so as to decide that he may have done it, what we have to do is to locate what population of statements it's a case of. Once we begin to look for a population of statements, we free ourselves considerably from the problem of determining what sort of wit this person has, for one possibility is this: The given statement, "I decided that years ago the hell with you" – which is in this particular context working as a paradox – is such a statement as *routinely* occurs for such a statement as occurred before it. Anybody can do it. The class for which it's done ordinarily has no interesting consequences of the sort I've been suggesting that this case has. That is to say, if somebody says "Face it, you're ugly," the recipient might say "I decided that years ago." For each of the cases of it, it's a little redeeming to say "I decided that years ago;" it shows that you're aware of the problem, and furthermore it partially deals with the critique by saying it's no news. In all of the cases except this one, no paradox is present. In this case the paradox is present. That may accrue only to the fact that in this case we get a special relationship obtainable, i.e., one of the things that is a possible negative fact about somebody can concern their courage, and that general recognition-statement also implies courage. Then, when we get the paradox it's simply a matter of that case having been picked, and that answer-type having been picked. Nothing at all remarkable about its doer.

The issue of taking off of a statement that seems striking can have rather general kinds of interest. Here's a case which I'm not going to deal with, but simply make a suggestion about: One prototypical 'striking statement' is verbal humor. You can get a reputation for being terribly witty, or the statement itself will be focussed on as something very striking. Things like puns, sometimes, if they're good ones. And in fact, studies of humor have been heavily concerned to ask what does this particular utterance reveal about this person, or why did they choose to say that, or what's funny about it, etc., rather than, e.g., attempting to locate an ordinary population of statements of which this is one, where those things are routinely said, but given some particular piece of material about which this thing is said, you get something funny. And in that regard, you get something funny to the surprize of all – including the one who said it. That is to say, the various combinations of

things going into certain routine utterances, contain for some cases the possibility that if they go together you get something funny. And that's all that is involved.

Now we want to notice that for such questions as 'Why in the world would anybody have said it?' or 'How in the world could they have come to do it?' what's held in abeyance is whether we're going to accept that it occurred. Persons typically treat the acceptance of an explanation as one grounds for accepting the facts. And over and over again, for good ample reasons, people have refused to accept some fact by virtue of the fact that they wouldn't accept the explanation. That can hold, say, for flying saucers, but it also can hold for lots of other things. It's a famous story among anthropologists that when Fortune came back with his manuscript on the Dobu, his professor, Radcliffe-Brown, who had a theory of possible conditions under which a society could exist, which turned on issues of the amount of hostility that was around, conflicts, limitations, etc., saw the manuscript and said 'It's impossible. No such society could exist.' He checked it out further, found that they unfortunately did exist, and said 'They don't *deserve* to exist.'

These are both extremely serious issues: (1) Determining that something could conceivably happen, where you ask 'How could it conceivably happen?' and you suppose that you know how anything could conceivably happen, rather than, that it happens means that your task is to find out how it could happen, for one, and also how anything might happen – because you can learn about that. Why people do things is not necessarily given to us, now, as something we know. (2) The question 'Who could ever do it?' is also an issue that requires extended consideration for any possible case. And, as I have suggested, the issue of 'who could do it' can be destroyed sometimes by determining that it's not the sort of problem that you thought it was. Only you asked the wrong question.

Lecture 10
'Everyone gets a chance to talk'

I'm going to talk a bit about the long excerpt from Gans' *The Urban Villagers* that was attached to Assignment One.[1] In it, Gans has noted that over the course of an evening's conversation among the West Enders, everyone gets a chance to talk. Two prefatory qualifications might be offered: First, we ought not to assume that 'everyone' and 'each one' are equivalent. 'Everyone' might be some smaller population than, say, 'each person present.' Comments on the notion 'everyone' will be found in the lecture I'm not giving here, but which will be distributed.[2] Second – and this works in a contrary way to the first observation – not anything anyone may say may constitute 'saying something over the course of an evening.'

That is to say, there may be some things that persons say, which can be found, e.g., on a recording of a conversation, which will not count as talking in that conversation. Persons may say, some time later, "Joe didn't say anything." What those things are remains to be considered, but I take it it's perfectly plain that 'didn't say anything' can be used with respect to, e.g., a lecture, a book you've read, a remark somebody made, etc., even though undoubtedly words have been produced by them. I'm not telling you what 'saying something' is, but the notion of 'saying something' does not in the first instance appear to be equivalent to 'making an utterance,' or even 'making a sequential utterance.'

So on the one hand, then, 'everyone' may be a smaller group than 'all participating' so that 'everyone' may have talked when not each person has talked. And on the other hand, 'saying something' may be narrower than what could count otherwise as talk during conversation.

Now in the first instance, Gans' observation is interesting in contrast to the situation among the Burundi. There, that everyone would have a chance to talk is guaranteed by the overall sequencing rules operating within the society. So far as we know, sequencing in conversation among the West Enders does not operate in terms of rounds. And it is in part by virtue of that fact, that how it is that 'everyone gets a chance to talk' is distinctively accomplished. That is, there is not some such mechanism as will, in its routine operation, involve everyone getting a chance to talk. So it's in contrast to, e.g., the Burundi situation that, that everyone gets a chance to talk is of interest. Given the sequencing techniques that seem to be employed, it does not follow directly that everyone will get a chance to talk in the system we're studying.

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[1] The excerpt is appended to this lecture.
[2] "Everyone has to lie." See Spring 1967, lectures 8 and 9, for a lectured version.

Let's begin by considering the relations between some of the possible facts noticed by Gans. Two things he notices are, for one, that the group's composed to some considerable extent of 'kin' and 'friends,' and second, to some considerable extent conversation is occupied with 'news.'

It's not an incidental fact that conversation between kin and friends will be occupied with offering and exchange of 'news.' And if it's not incidental, then some of the ways that at least some people will come to talk in a conversation may be accounted for.

Now, without prejudicing a consideration of what, for any given set of participants, stands as 'news' – what kind of event, when an event happens, etc., which is itself a matter of considerable interest – we can take up Gans' observation that 'family events' – the occurrence of a wedding, the future occurrence of a wedding, engagements, deaths, funerals, births – stand as 'news.' It just doesn't *happen* that such matters, being 'news,' are eligible for talk between any participants. Given the occurrence of certain events, and particularly that subset that I've just mentioned, if you are in the presence of, e.g., 'kin,' announcing them is *obligatory*. So, e.g., roughly for now, the first occasion on which, upon something like an engagement of your sister having occurred, you meet another relative, it's your business to tell them that it happened. Witness that it can be a 'complaint,' it can be a 'doubt,' if such a person hears it from somebody else. They may say, "How could that be? I just talked to Lil yesterday and she didn't say anything about it." Then they may encounter that person and say, "How come you didn't tell me?"

The announcing of such an event is obligated, for one, by virtue of the fact that, as between kin, when such an event occurs, the kin-members should get it from each other; i.e., they should hear it from you, if it's your son who's engaged, and not from their neighbor. In that regard, then, if you come into their presence, such matters ought to be presented. And if they're not, they're complained about. An exchange of news, then – where news consists of such matters, and a conversation has as its participants kinsmen and friends – does not incidentally get done, but is obligatorily done. And in that regard, then, if such an event has occurred, then somebody will specifically 'have something to say' on a next occasion that they gather.

Such matters, then, can provide some person's talking. And they can provide some person's talking other than the person who announces them, by virtue of other obligations that obtain, given their announcement. Exchanges of congratulations, condolences, requests for information, etc., also are obligated utterances, given an announcement. If you say, e.g., to a cousin, "Grandpa's in jail again," he ought to inquire of you about that. "What did he do this time?" "Can we get a lawyer?" "When did it happen?" "Where have they got him?," etc., etc. Thus, the announcement of news generates further obligated talk in the same sense that the announcement was obligated. In that regard, then, news generates conversation; conversation including various of the present participants. And there is some news that *each* participant present ought to make a specific remark to the announcement of. If, for example, you come into a group and say "My father died" or "My son

got engaged," then each participant will feel obligated to individually make a remark – offer a condolence, offer a congratulation.

So there is this issue of 'obligated utterances,' and the partial conjunction of 'obligated utterances' and 'news' as between, say, kin and friends. And in that regard, there are further obligations *not* to announce something even if someone whom you ought to tell it to is present, when others who ought not to hear it are also present. The fact of group composition such that, say, *only* kin and friends are present is, then, criterial for an announcement. If it were the case that kin and friends were present but also others, then that would constitute an adequate excuse for not having said something which stands as news to be disseminated among kin and friends. Group composition can then be criterial to the occurrence or non-occurrence of some utterances and their returns. And therefore, group composition is intimately related with respect to the occurrence of 'news' talk. Note that while Gans points to these sorts of things, i.e., that there is talk of 'news,' and kinsmen and friends are present, how it happens that those things *produce* some or any or all talking is not at all stated. And our question was, 'What are the techniques?'

Here's a second consideration. Gans mentions that there's a separation into sexes, and that there is then talk which is specific for those sexes. How is it that such a matter as 'separation of the sexes' is relevant for anyone or everyone coming to talk in a conversation?

One obvious way that's relevant turns on the fact that there are rules of conversation which operate, given the presence of 'mixed company,' to provide things that persons ought not say. That doesn't only involve what males should not say given that females are present, but also what females should not say given that males are present. Furthermore, there may be issues with respect to actual sequences, given that mixed company is present. For example, if the parties to that mixed company come in pairs, e.g., husbands and wives, suppose A speaks. There may be constraints on what B, his wife, should then say. Things, for example, which involve 'arguing in public.' Husbands and wives shouldn't argue in public. If A says something that somebody might disagree with, somebody may disagree with him if that somebody is not his wife. In that regard, then, the fact that husbands and wives are present may be relevant to how it is that each should participate with respect to the other's participation.

Alternatively, there can be issues with respect to, e.g., 'cross-sex conversation' between persons not married to each other. For example, if A speaks and B is not his wife, then if B speaks and markedly agrees with A, that may also be a sanctioned occurrence, i.e., it may generate gossip as to how come she so strongly agreed with him. And that can hold for various paired utterances: How come when A speaks he always speaks to B (female, not A's wife)? How come B always admires the remarks of other men and not her husband's ? etc. So, with respect to conversation in which, e.g., married couples are present, their co-presence can provide for events which then provide for other observable matters on the part of various persons present as to, e.g., how the marriage is getting along, who flirts with who else, etc.

It's not, then, just that men like to talk about sports and women like to talk about children, but that there are rules with respect to what males can say in females' presence, and what females can say in males' presence. And then there's the issue of what various persons can make of the utterances of parties, given that those parties involve married males and females talking amongst each other and not only to each other, given that persons can notice such matters as the pattern of a given woman's remarks to other men than her husband, etc. Again, then, sex composition and everyone getting a chance to talk are not unrelated, and are not-unrelated in systematic ways, and need have nothing to do with 'favorite topics of talk.'

Then there's the case of the paired-utterance phenomenon, with regard to either the selection or non-selection of a next, i.e., asking a question which selects a next, or one which doesn't select a next. While the paired-utterance phenomenon can involve some people getting a chance, its use does not guarantee that everyone will have a chance. One some occasion of the use of a first pair member, e.g., a question, without the selection of a next speaker, then it may well be that we can say that 'anyone gets a chance to speak.' But that 'anyone' is only one person. That is in contrast to such a thing as exchange of greetings and whatever else that might come in rounds such that the first having been done, every other has a chance to speak and do 'another,' e.g., tell a joke, perhaps tell a story. Doing things that come in rounds can then be a way that not merely 'anyone,' but each one gets a chance to talk. And one might examine the structure of conversation for determining what sorts of things seem to come in rounds.

Just as we differentiated a situation where anyone but only one may get a chance to speak, and a situation where anyone and everyone may get a chance to speak, so there's also a kind of parallel situation with respect to such a thing as noticing that persons haven't spoken. The conversations reported by Gans take place in someone's territorial place, e.g., someone's home. By that fact, there are hosts and hostesses. That they are hosts and hostesses is not only evidenced via the event occurring in their home, but various other behaviors that they might engage in, like preparing food and drink, etc. But also, in situations where there's a host or hostess, then there is thereby apparently an official with the business of surveying the conversation to see that everyone is getting a chance to talk, or everyone's having a good time, or everyone's participating. That is, there may be a person or two people who have as their specific business checking for such a thing, and using what they discover so as to find ways of changing it if someone seems not to be having a good time, is 'not getting a chance,' whatever else. (The classic presentation of the role of a hostess is to be found in chapter 1 of *War and Peace*. Absolutely fantastic discussion of conversations, and the hostess at work. And there are many places in particularly 19th-century literature where such matters are presented.)

Now the situation of host or hostess stands in contrast to those sorts of matters which obligate, perhaps, each one. It may not be anybody else's business but the host or hostess to check whether everyone's having a good

time. But there are some rules that go under the name 'politeness' which may be each participant's burden. And politeness rules can be relevant to 'everyone getting a chance to speak' in various non-incidental ways. For example, politeness might dictate to each participant that if someone has been selected to speak, let them speak. If someone started to speak before you, let them finish – whoever they are, whoever you are. That is to say, such rules don't hold only for a host or hostess.

But there can be other things that 'politeness' can be said to provide for on the part of 'anyone.' For example, by reference to issues of politeness, a speaker may determine that nobody else is interested in what he's saying and thereby have good enough grounds to stop, or that some topic that he, amongst others, is talking to seems to exclude some particular others, and thereby bring that to a stop. Or that he's talking too much, or that he's talking too little. What's important in this regard is that it's not a given person's conformity to the rules of politeness that will involve everyone's getting a chance to talk, but perhaps everyone's conformity to the rules of politeness, as contrasted to the situation of the host.

The scope of conformity, i.e., whether everybody conforms to whatever the rules of politeness are which have implications for everyone getting a chance to talk, is relevant by virtue of the fact that, for a given conversation in its course, violations of politeness may have, as one characteristic way of being brought to everyone's attention and sanctioned, that another violation of politeness is done. If A interrupts B, then it may be that in order to bring A to a halt, A himself will have to be interrupted. That is, pointing out that somebody has been impolite may itself be impolite. In that regard, it may not be an incidental fact that when a conversation begins to become unruly, it is generatively unruly. Somebody, e.g., has to yell louder than everybody in order to bring everybody to stop getting louder. That means that the rules for enforcing politeness in conversation can be quite ineffective if the sanctions have to be done *in that* conversation – as compared to, e.g., doing it afterwards, for the next conversation. It's important, then, that persons routinely conform, and that each conforms.

Issues with regard to politeness are relevant to anyone's getting a chance to talk in another way. For one, it may be impolite to notice that someone has not spoken, i.e., to announce it. It can, for example, be a complaint about them, or a complaint about others who are present. And one of the things about rules of politeness is that while one may complain about non-present parties, one ought not to complain about present parties' current actions. That's in part why, for some things, one regularly cannot tell the person one wants to complain to. Not only not in public, but not in private. Systematically, one tells somebody else who may then tell them – not as something they're saying, but as a 'report:' "Someone told me that with respect to you." In that regard, then, techniques which involve specifically announcing that someone has not spoken can be variously gauche. They may not have spoken for reasons that others know and you don't know. For example, that they have very good reason to be unhappy, where to get them to speak is to get

them to evidence their unhappiness directly. So one should not make too much of the availability of a technique for getting a person who has not spoken to talk by announcing that he hasn't talked. To be sure, it can work. To be sure, noticing of that sort takes place; people say "Something must be wrong with John, he hasn't said a word all night." "Yeah, he and his wife are breaking up."

Let me now mention some other sorts of features of conversation generative with respect to the talk of others than the one who has just spoken. It's mentioned by Gans that there's a great deal of talk about people known by some, all, etc., participants. And talk about known people is specifically talk that generates talk by others. If, for example, you mention in conversation somebody you know but you don't know if anybody else does, "There's this guy John Smith that works next to me in the factory," then you'll find that if others know him they'll say so, "Oh I know that guy!" and say something about him. It appears that it's almost an obligation to announce that one knows somebody when it's not known that you know them, whereas, if someone mentions "my father" among kin, then nobody has to say "Oh I know him!" But one consistently finds that with persons whom others might not know, if they do know them, they say so. It's a kind of good thing in its fashion, since, for one, if what it is that persons might say about another can implicate their relationship (i.e., "Watch out, you're talking about his sister"), then announcing that one knows someone will present a constraint on the speaker with respect to what he might say. Again, then, mentioning of persons can generate talk via the fact that others then announce that they know them.

If you mention a person and say something that happened to them, e.g., in the 'news' format, "My aunt had an operation" or something of that order, then one systematic way that conversation can proceed involves preserving the thing that happened, and some next speaker offering that it happened to another standing in such a relationship to them as the one you just mentioned. Or if you say, e.g., "My mother said the following this morning" then you'll find that people will say "My brother said something like that." That is to say, one can retain the topic and generate talk, by presenting another item via another person, so that talk about a person can generate talk about other persons. These are the ways that the idea that 'given the telling of a story, other stories may be forthcoming' can have actual application. That is to say, such things can tell us what a next story will look like. It won't be any next story, but a *characterizable next story*.

Let me mention a couple of things about the way that the unit 'conversation' seems to be used for the kind of monitoring of talk that takes place in it. It would seem to be that the possibility of noticing that another person hasn't talked in a conversation is something that could only be effective after that conversation, since at any given point in the conversation, it may well be that they are going to talk eventually. How is it that the conversation so far is usable? Now here I only have altogether speculative things to say. But first of all, I take it that it's clear that the conversation so far is, at some point,

usable to see that someone 'isn't talking for this conversation.' That is, to see that apparently not only have they not spoken so far, but they aren't going to, so that measures can be taken.

Now, I doubt that, that they haven't talked, involves, e.g., that they've been utterly silent. That they 'haven't said anything' may well be noted even though, e.g., apart from saying 'Uh huh,' 'Yeah,' etc., they've answered any question that's addressed to them. That is to say, a notion of 'saying something' in a conversation may turn on speaking at a point when no one has been selected; taking an 'anyone's chance.' It's my guess, then, that persons will be noticed to have not spoken even though they answer questions, etc., where what they haven't done is volunteer remarks, i.e., talk upon utterance completions which are non-selective of next speaker.

And I take it that in a two-party conversation you can be said to be not participating, 'awfully quiet,' etc., though you answer every remark addressed to you. You simply don't, e.g., make a question yourself. It's something one might try. Answer any question they give you, and I think you'll find they'll complain or figure that something's the matter.

Furthermore, I don't think temporal length of a conversation has anything to do with it. What I think has to do with it are things like the amount of interchanges that have occurred. So that if somebody in a conversation, e.g., talks for 40 minutes and the conversation is an hour long, then we will not notice that A did not speak, what we would notice is that B dominated the conversation and never gave anybody a chance to speak. We have the same set of facts, i.e., that B spoke and A didn't, but on the one hand we may say that A was silent in the conversation, and on the other hand we might say that nobody got a chance to talk. And it's by virtue of the fact that we sometimes say 'no one got a chance to talk' that I'm led to say it's not a matter of length of the conversation that provides for the observation that A was silent, but that there were interchanges of a routine sort, maybe a lot of them, in which A did not voluntarily participate. That is, that A 'got a chance,' but didn't talk. Whereas, if one person at the beginning of the conversation launched a 40-minute monologue and the conversation ended shortly thereafter, we wouldn't have a situation in which we would have as a puzzle, 'How come A didn't talk today?;' we could have a situation in which we would have the problem, 'How come B never shuts up?'

Now, here's one thing about Gans' point on 'non-controversial topics.' Various people seem to take it that they talk about non-controversial topics so as to keep everybody talking. That's certainly not a general rule for conversation. It is regularly the case that the way that one gets people participating is to have an argument. Argument may not shut down conversation, it may make for 'the best conversations.' The circumstances under which, when arguments occur others talk, and when arguments occur others don't talk, may have to be differentiated. And it may well be that various characterizations of who the participants are, is specifically relevant to the usability of argument as a technique for generating happy conversations.

Let's note that when, for example, a host or hostess is putting together an evening intended as an evening of talk, one way they go about, e.g., guaranteeing that it will be lively, involves an orientation to selecting 'people from different groups' or 'people with different opinions.' If you're intending to have, say, an evening of political talk, then the way to make it lively is to have some representatives of each of various opinions. That will not only make for 'lively talk,' but arguments. It will make for arguments not only by virtue of the fact that of course these people will disagree, but that such people are obligated to produce talk which disagrees. If, for example, A is a Communist and B a Republican, and B says something political, then if A doesn't talk it may be heard as, e.g., that he agrees, or that he 'doesn't have an answer.' A may then feel obligated to talk, given that what is made of his silence will be assessed by reference to 'how Communists feel on such a matter,' given that he is in the first instance known as, and present as such a one.

In a group selected such that specific differences of that sort are not used, but persons are, instead, 'all alike' – all liberal Democrats or, e.g., all 'kinsmen' without respect to their holding some political position – then argument can be more troublesome. If such persons do get into an argument, then what specifically may arise as a problem is their co-membership, i.e., that such persons can feel that they know what 'people like us' feel about some issue or another.

And in that regard, we can notice this sort of thing: There was a sit-in at the University of Chicago campus a few years ago. 5,000 people showed up. Ten people stood outside with placards saying 'Don't let a tiny minority of Americans give you the wrong view. The vast majority of us feel otherwise.' It's routinely the case, say, after something in which 100,000 people do one thing and five do another, those five can nonetheless feel comfortable in saying that they are the great majority. Now that sort of feeling turns on the fact that they know how 'people like us' feel, and that it's 'people like us' who are in the majority. And as long as everyone feels that everyone else feels as they do, then it's quite irrelevant, for example, what numbers show up on some other kind of measurement.

If that is the case, then the intimate conversations among friends are terribly important, and argument is troublesome, since, if it turns out that 'people like us,' i.e., my neighbors, my friends, don't feel the same, then how 'people like us' feel can become specifically problematic. And the sense of being in the overwhelming majority can disappear. The toleration, then, of some undifferentiated groups for certain sorts of arguments may be quite limited by virtue of the kinds of implications that the various kinds of arguments can have.

H. Gans, *The Urban Villagers,* pp. 77–9

The peer group meets regularly in the kitchens and living rooms of innumerable West End apartments. There are no formal invitations or advance notifications; people arrive regularly one or more evenings a week. Generally speaking, the same people come the same days of the week. Certain evenings are thus reserved for being with the peer group, and the gathering is called off only for unusual events.

While a few people may come for dinner, the gatherings usually begin shortly afterwards and others may drop in all through the evening. The talk goes on for hours – often past midnight – even though the men have to be at work early the next morning. As noted earlier, the sexes remain separate most of the evening, and even when they gather around the kitchen table for coffee and cake, the men often sit at one end, the women at the other. Some people bring their children, especially if they do not have older ones who can stay at home with the younger ones. The children sit and listen until they become sleepy, and then are sent off to the bedrooms until their parents leave.

The peer group conversation covers a relatively small number of topics: Accounts of the participants' activities since the last gathering, news of people they all know, plans for special events such as weddings, showers, and other celebrations, current topics of interest, stories and anecdotes, and memories of younger days or highlights of the more recent past. Quite often a current happening will set off talk about the past, and people contribute stories of parallel events that took place earlier. From there it is easy to drift into talk about the good old days. The conversation also may turn to reports – and judgements – of deviant behavior. In addition, advice is exchanged, but there is little systematic attempt at problem solving. Usually, people discuss problems encountered by others, especially those who are not present at the gathering. Problems common to the group as a whole also enter the conversation. I was always surprised, however, that what I thought to be the most pressing problem – redevelopment and relocation – received relatively little attention. Most West Enders felt that as there was not much they could do about this, there was little sense in discussing an unpleasant reality. This principle also covers the discussion of problems in general. The men talk about current happenings at work, in sports, in the area, and occasionally in the city and the country. But there is little concern with politics, except when events have occurred that illustrate once again the West Enders belief that politics is corrupt. The women talk about housekeeping, child rearing, and other subjects relevant to their occupational role.

Much of the conversation is devoted to the exchange of reportage – and gossip – about people known to the group. As noted earlier, every peer group is tied, through kinship, friendship, or other connections to many other groups and individuals in a giant network that extends far

beyond the West End. Thus, someone may have a report about someone else, even if he does not know the individual personally. For example, one evening the conversation concerned a woman who had recently had a child, many years after having the last one. One of the women at the table reported that she had heard about the blessed event, though she had never met the mother, and did not know that she was the hostess' neighbor. As it turned out, she was friendly with a relative of the new mother, and had heard about it from her. That she did not know the mother personally was irrelevant; knowing her sister and some other relatives was sufficient.

The exchange of news has a number of functions. It keeps people up-to-date on what is going on among present and potential peer group members, and defines or redefines the place of the reporter and his audience in this large group. It also provides for social control, since deviant behavior is reported and evaluated quite fully. And, at the same time, it considers new ideas that might be useful to the group. Moreover, it supplies information about services and 'experts' in a culture that suspects or rejects the professional expert provided by the outside world. Thus the constant flow of news holds the network of peer groups together and makes it easier for West Enders to do without formal community organizations – either their own or those of the outside world. Finally, the reportage and gossip provide entertainment and drama about one's own group, of the kind that is available about other groups in soap operas and similar mass media fiction.

As the hours pass the talk shifts back and forth. And while there are people who dominate the conversation, and others who contribute little, there is generally an opportunity during the long evening for everyone to talk, either to tell a story or to deliver an opinion. Conversation is interspersed with discussion and argument, although the arguments are generally over matters of current or past history rather than over opinions. Should there be a radical disagreement about a substantive topic, say race relations or birth control, the conversation comes to a halt and the subject is changed. For reasons that will become apparent, West Enders are not attuned to the give-and-take of discussion, and since the expression of highly diverse opinions on important issues could split the group, this is thus avoided by changing the subject.

The conversation therefore is cued to topics that will keep exchange and individual contributions flowing; those that do not lend themselves to this social function are quickly dropped. Midway in the study, for example, we spent two weeks in Puerto Rico, and after our return, were invited to tell about the trip. As it turned out, however, there was little interest either in the trip, or in descriptions of Puerto Rico; West Enders were more curious as to how it felt being back in the group. The story that my wallet had been stolen on the last day of the trip did arouse great interest, and for more than an hour afterwards, people talked about thefts which they had experienced or heard.

Lecture 011
Pronouns

What I'm going to do now is one part of a discussion which will be our business for quite a while now – *tying phenomena.* I'll be talking this time about *pronouns*, and I'll present some extremely brief investigations of curious pronoun phenomena, which I find to be neat kinds of things.

The first is a problem I got from a fellow, Mathew Spier, who was studying children's interaction with parents, and it seemed to him that this was a peculiar usage – regular for those interactions, but otherwise peculiar. A kid comes into the parents' bedroom in the morning and says to his father, "Can we have breakfast?" His father says, "Leave Daddy alone, he wants to sleep." There we have somebody talking about themselves using third person singular. That's not a usual pronoun usage. Can we account for it? Let me quote part of a telephone call between President Johnson and ex-President Truman. I'm not tapping their wires, this was reported in the *New York Times.* It occurred on the occasion of Truman's birthday; the phone call came at a party that's held for him every year.

Johnson : On behalf of Ladybird, Lindabird, and Lucy and I, we want to say happy birthday. We speak for 190 million other Americans. Last night I read that a politician thinks a nation belongs to him, while a statesman knows he belongs to a nation. That is the way we feel about you.

Truman : You're as kind as you can be. And that is the way I feel about you. I don't think we have had a better President in a hundred years than we have right now, and I am tickled to death with him.

Johnson : And I wanted you to come by and see me when you get back here.

Truman : I'll make the first call on you when I get back to Washington.

Johnson : Happy birthday again.

Truman : I will do that because I think I ought to report to the President. He might want me to do something.

Okay: ". . . President . . . I am tickled to death with him," and ". . . the President . . . He might want me to do something." Here what we have is not third-person use by the one who's proper usage is 'I,' but third-person use by the one who's proper usage is 'you.'

This lecture consists of Fall 1967, lecture 9, pp. 9–18.

Why 'he' in these cases? Explanation: 'You' is the usual term of address, or at least the usual pronoun used to address another. As such, it stands in no special relationship to any other term other than a pronoun that has been otherwise used in the conversation. That is to say, in the case of 'you,' and 'I' keeping in mind the first piece of data, it does not specifically involve linking a pronoun with a noun. It is locating a person being addressed or referred to, but not particularly locating any noun, e.g., a name, a title, things like that, that has previously been used.

There may sometimes be a problem of the following sort: What one wants to do is, while, e.g., talking to somebody or talking about oneself, to focus on some relevant identity category as, now, that categorial aspect of a person (yourself or another) that you want to fix on. You may have already used it. If you've already used it you can perhaps reuse it, though it's regularly not easy to reuse it, e.g., "I will do that because I think I ought to report to the President. The President might want me to do something." Nouns referring to the same person are simply not repeated directly; they are replaced with pronouns, e.g., "John went to the movies and he saw Cleopatra," not "John went to the movies and John saw Cleopatra." If you want to indicate that what you are referring to is that identification of the person that you've just used, 'you' or 'I' probably will not work. But 'he' may well specifically do the job of linking the pronoun and a noun without causing any trouble, since it's perfectly plain who you're referring to; you're doing it now with 'he' which is not a term of address, and should have who it refers to found via finding the prior noun that the pronoun refers to, where 'he' refers to 'the President.'

Now that's perfectly routine if you're not addressing somebody or if you're not referring to yourself. In the case of a two-party conversation where you've already named an identification of the other party, what such a use as 'he' may do is specifically focus on that prior identification as being critical. You're not invoking, then, any of the other identifications you may have of them, any of the other things you may know about them – or none in particular. You're trying to reinvoke specifically that one that you've used, i.e., in this case, the President. Now I don't think it's restricted to talk about presidents, but that that's a way to bring off such an utterance as has its import that the pronoun fixes specifically on the last identification used – which the address pronouns won't do.

In the cases I gave you, that seems emphatically to be so. That is, that Truman is trying to bring off that it's Johnson's status as President that is the subject of his utterances, and he finds a way to do that by an exploration of the possibilities of English. It may not be something doable in three- or four-party conversations. In such conversations if you use 'he,' then it may well be that you're necessarily heard as not talking to that person. In two-party conversation there's no problem of who you're talking to, unless, e.g., in a phone call you suddenly start talking to somebody else. In any event, what we perhaps come up with is a relationship between address and reference here, and an attempt – perhaps unsuccessful – to solve a problem of focussing on a specific identification of the person you're talking to; a focus that you can

set up by first mentioning that identification, and then using a specific technique of re-referral which would involve the third-parson usage.

Here's the second problem. People regularly say things like, "I went to Bullock's to get X, but they didn't have it." It always puzzled me why people use 'they' in that. And if we reconstruct the interaction as perhaps relevant to the usage, then it's regularly the case that it's a two-party interaction. You go into the store and ask somebody, "Do you have X?" and that one says "No." So then, you might say "I went to Bullock's to get X and she said there wasn't any." But if you say "she said," people will say "Who?" If you say "they," they don't say "Who?"

It's a first rough fact that 'they' is the organizational pronoun used in referring to an organization or its personnel. Now exactly why that's so, I don't know. But a partial explanation may be something like the following, in the case of the example I just gave. If you ask "Do you have X?" the answer regularly will be "No we don't," not "No I don't." Now, 'we' and 'they' stand in a systematic alternation to each other. It then may be that if somebody uses 'we' to refer to themselves, then in reporting that action you can use 'they.' Here's some data. It's a continuation of a fragment I gave a while back.

A: I was at the <u>police</u> station this morning.
B: Big deal.
    (/ /)
A: "Big deal" yea(hh)h. Somebody stole all my radio equipment outta my car. Outta my Jeep. Every//thing.
B: You expect the cops t'do sump'n about it?
A: Yeah! I thought they <u>would</u>.
B: Tell your old man to go down there an' complain, then they'll do some//thing.
A: No. They said, they said "We're sorry"

Now you can bet anything that that was a two-party interaction. Whoever it was the kid spoke to, *he* said, not "I'm sorry," but "We're sorry." When he says "We're sorry," you can say "They said 'We're sorry'." And even if you're not saying what 'they' said, you say things like "They don't have it."

So it may be that in part what accounts for those 'they' uses is that it's not just that the organizational reference pronoun is 'they,' but in the first instance the organizational pronoun of *self*-reference is 'we.' There is that set of persons who, when you ask one of them a question, e.g., to an airline stewardess, "You got a cigarette?" she says "No, we don't supply them anymore" irregardless of whether she herself has a pack of cigarettes. So, some usages of 'they' may turn on a transformation of 'we.' It is still an interesting matter that if you use a singular, you get questions about 'who.' In that regard, one often specifically gets a use of 'they' as a means of signalling that the person you're talking about – where it's a single person – is being referred to categorically, organizationally, and the like. If, for example, you're in a scene

where, e.g., *a* woman driver does something stupid, you can say "They always do that." You, not having in the first instance located what you were talking about, your recipients will see that you're referring to *that* action, and to *that* person driving as a 'woman driver.'

There's a nice case in those group therapy session materials, part of which is in the data handout, which is related. The patients know that there is somebody watching them through a two-way mirror. It's 15 minutes into this session and one of the patients walks in, late. She hadn't been informed beforehand that there would be an observer. She sits down. Somebody says to her, "Hey you can't sit there, they don't want to see your back." She says "Oh I didn't know there were people looking." Now I'll bet anything that in that case if the kid had said "He doesn't want to see your back," she'd say "Who?" In this case 'they' is terribly interesting because the patients know for sure, only that there's one person watching. There may be more, but they don't know that. They've been told one person is watching. And it is uninteresting whether there is one or two; the key thing is that that will signal 'somebody is watching,' and 'they' is regularly used for a single person, indicating some status.

Now we've got several different things on uses of 'they:' 'They' as a transform of 'we;' 'they' for single persons intended categorically. There's one use of 'they' which I don't have an answer to at all; a striking thing. You regularly get things like this: "They don't make 'em." That is, there's a use of 'they' which is 'nobody' so far as anybody knows. They're not referring to anybody. "They don't make 'em" means 'nobody makes them'? What does it mean? "They didn't put the lights on." I suppose if you were terribly picky about grade-school English, you might explain such a thing by reference to the fact that kids are taught to use active versus passive constructions. So that instead of saying, e.g., "Those things don't exist," they say "They don't make them." Or instead of saying "The lights aren't on," they say "They didn't put the lights on." But that doesn't seem to handle it – for me, anyway.

Here's another. I'm regularly puzzled by the following kind of usage – let me give the context for one case. A kid announces "I got a good job." They talk about "How did you get the job?" "I just went in and asked him." Then comes, "Does he know your father?" "Yeah he knows my father but my father's got nothing to do with it." So, focussing on "Does he know your father?" In this case it's being used to suggest that the kid didn't get the job, he got the job because the guy knew his father. But people say things like "Does he know your father?" "Does he know your sister?," etc., when somebody is being talked of.

Now, e.g., 'your father' is an extraordinarily collapsed kind of reference. It involves things like: Does he know that man? Does he know that man and you? Does he know and have as relevant that that man is your father? etc. That is to say, it's perfectly plain that routinely the person being talked of as possibly being known by some person, is not in the first instance known by that person as 'X's father.' He's 'a guy who buys beer in my store,' 'some rich guy who lives up the block,' etc. He may also be the father of that little kid,

but that isn't the identification used by the person who is now being referred to as 'knowing your father.' And why isn't it, then, that the knowledge is referred to in the way it's carried by the one being referred to as carrying it? "Does he know Mr Jones?" or however 'he' might know that person.

What I'm trying to suggest is, "Does he know your father?" is a most intimate, familiar object to us. But it's not at all obvious why, of all the ways that such a person referred to as 'your father' might be known by another person, *that* one should always be used. Now first of all, in direct address, if somebody is referred to exclusively as "This is Mary's father," that can be a rather embarrassing reference. The most obvious cases are the husbands of famous female movie stars who are referred to as 'Mr [female movie star's name],' and not their own name. It's a kind of joke, or a kind of derrogation. Also, kids complain that "people always call me Johnny's little brother. I'm not Johnny's little brother, I'm me." That is, there can be quite a non-coherence between that usage of 'your mother,' 'your brother,' etc., and the way a person is otherwise known and referred to. Why, then, do we in fact have the problem: 'How come this usage is so universal?'

For one, there are certain features of the use of possessive pronouns. They may specifically be the most generally usable terms that permit combinatorial reference, i.e., reference to two pronouns. That is, it's regularly key that two persons are being referred to. It's not merely that you're trying to find a good way to refer to that guy who happens to be his father and other things, but you're trying to find a way to refer to two persons – him and that guy. That's because, for one, discourse is involved, and somebody is, e.g., being addressed by the utterance, or some person who's just been referred to is being re-referred to. The possessive pronouns will allow that use, and then the question is, what's combinable with the possessive pronouns – 'your,' 'his,' 'their,' etc.? And those are specifically things like 'brother,' 'father,' 'sister,' 'mother.'

When I began to try to deal with this question of the uses of 'your brother,' 'his sister,' etc., it was because, for one, it was obvious that the person being referred to was known by lots of ways, so why use this one so universally? Now I batted my head against the wall on this problem: 'Why should this person be referred to in this way?' When, however, you see that the task is not to find a way to refer to *this* person, but the task is to find a systematic way of referring to *two* persons, one of whom is perhaps being addressed by that utterance, then you're in a different position. Then you ask, 'What are the general ways of referring to two persons, one of those persons being, say, a recipient of the utterance?" Well, a possessive pronoun plus some other term, that other term being of a fairly restricted group, will do that reference to two persons. And particularly will 'your' preserve address for one of those two persons – either of them as you may have them – 'your father' or 'your son,' whichever it may be.

Lecture 11
Tying techniques

I'll begin, now, our consideration of tying techniques. They comprise an ordering technique which is at least as important as are the sequencing pairs for ordering the parts of a conversation, and which has a variety of extended consequences for the organization of conversation. There is a very large range of tying techniques, and a very large group of specifically tying terms, where the presence of such a term in certain positions in an utterance signals that the utterance is tied to some other utterance.

I'll get into some listing of these, and into some consideration of them over the course of the next several lectures, but for now, for example, one group of prototypical tying terms are the pronouns. Another prototypical group are things that have come to be called 'pro-verbs.' One doesn't ordinarily think of there being such a thing, and there's apparently only a small number of them, but they're very widely used. Characteristic pro-verbs are 'do,' 'be' (and the other variants of 'be,' e.g., 'is' and 'am'), and 'say.' Various combinations of pronouns and verbs, pronouns and pro-verbs, nouns and pro-verbs, etc., are characteristic 'tied utterances.' Another widespread tying technique involves conjunctions, e.g., 'and,' 'but,' 'so,' etc., and also some set of terms that, when they occur appositionally in front of an utterance, are operating as tying terms, e.g., 'Now,' 'Well,' 'Then,' etc.

In starting off the consideration of 'tying' I want to immediately fit it to the sort of ordering of conversation that we are left with when we have, say, only the utterance pairs, and then to trace some implications of the combinations that we get when we have tying plus the sequencing pairs. Insofar as we had those utterance pairs as an ordering technique, we had the possibility for some pair and then an adjacent pair, e.g., Q-A, Q-A. There need be no relationship, so far as we now know, between these two pairs. So that insofar as conversation is composed of, say, adjacent utterance pairs – it's of course composed of other things as well – then it's composed of pairs that can be disordered. It doesn't affect the paired order if you put Q-A_2 in front of Q-A_1. The pair parts need to be retained in their order, but with regard to the relative placing of pairs, they can be placed in any order. So what you have is strings of pairs, where you can pick out a pair and examine it, pick out a pair and quote it, etc., and it will be – ideally – understandable, and not affect anything.

That is one sort of ordering, and it's obviously quite a weak sort of ordering. Such a situation would have various implications for the tasks of speakers and the tasks of hearers. So, for example, if we had a situation in which the basic techniques were these pairs, then if a person, say, were willing

to speak when he was addressed with a first member of a pair, he need only listen for such a first member of a pair, and, having listened to nothing else that went on before, he could be able to, e.g., answer the question he was asked.

Now tying techniques are, among other things, fitted to the pairs. They can be fitted within a pair, as in, e.g., an interchange like, "Did John and Lisa go to the movies last night?" "They did." There, via 'They did,' we have tying within a pair. But it's perfectly conceivable to have tying across pairs. So that, e.g., a question can tie to the answer of a prior pair: "What happened last night?" "John and Lisa went to the movies." "What did they see?" where, via 'they,' 'What did they see?' is tied to 'John and Lisa,' thereby tying the second question to that last answer of the prior pair. If that is possible in general, then one can immediately see that one could have a situation in which, say, a conversation composed of sets of pairs would have the possibility that one part of each pair at least, would be tied to a part of a prior pair. In that way there would be techniques present whereby the whole conversation was tied, part by part.

We can develop one sort of implication of this possibility if we assume for now that understanding a tied utterance requires having available not just that utterance but the utterance it's tied to. I'll say why that's so in due course. With that assumption, we can develop grounds for showing that hearing requirements are radically extended from what we initially supposed them to be. Suppose we take as one restricted constraint of a party to a conversation, 'willingness to speak,' i.e., that if he is addressed with some first pair member he's willing to do some second pair member. Otherwise, so far as we're concerned now, he's not going to talk. Under that constraint, what kind of listening is required of him, so as to be able to produce a second pair member when a first pair member has been addressed to him? Given the possibility of tying across pairs, he may need to listen to every utterance in the conversation. The requirement to listen to every utterance in the conversation would work as follows: Suppose some utterance is addressed to him. It's a first of a pair. It's tied, as first pair members regularly are, e.g., "What do *you* think of that?" In order to answer that, he has to find what utterance it's tied to. And *that* utterance may be tied, and the utterance it's tied to may also be tied.

This possible extensiveness of tying, and the sorts of requirements it poses, have tremendous resource-consequences for an analysis of conversation. One such resource-consequence turns on just the sort of argument I just gave. The problem could be posed: A makes a question to B, B makes an answer to that question; there are also in the conversation, C, D, and E. How could we ever know that C, D, and E listened to that answer? The ways we can come to know involve tracking from this particular question and answer, their tiedness 'forward,' such that we came upon an utterance which C spoke, which was a first pair member of a pair tied to a prior utterance, and which may then be found to have been tied to B's answer.

That is to say, then, that the fact that one party at a time talks, and, e.g., only one party answers a given question, doesn't mean that we're prevented

from seeing that others are listening to, e.g., that question. But the operation of the tying structures will involve us in seeing throughout a conversation that persons were listening to utterances they didn't speak directly after and show thereby that they were listening to. In just the way that they show by some utterance that they listened to a last, they show by some utterance that they listened to a last-minus-n, i.e., an utterance which occurred, e.g., five utterances ago.

Since it's apparently also the case that no given utterance that has just occurred contains a signal of a sort that no further utterances that occur after it can tie to it or that which it tied to, there is no way for a participant possible hearer to treat a sequence of tyings as closed until, say, that sequence of tying has been ended by virtue of some next utterance not tying to it – though even that is equivocal because there are ways of doing what I'll call 'skip tying,' i.e., tying to an utterance before a given utterance.

The upshot of this sort of argument is that some motivations for any participant's listening to each utterance of a conversation are taken care of by the rules for structuring conversation. The techniques for structuring conversation have as a consequence of them that in order to possibly speak in some next utterance – that is, speaking in that next utterance to something done in the last – one may have to listen to some indefinite sequence of prior talk. And that provides for a kind of self-containedness to the rules of conversation. Such a motivational structure doesn't require, e.g., necessary reference to class position and other sorts of motives. It's an abstract structure in that regard. And it holds for any conversation and any participants in any conversation.

One of the things I've said so far is that in order to understand a given utterance that's tied, one needs to have available the utterance or utterances it's tied to. We can ask why that's so, and generally the answer is something like: A given tied utterance contains the product of some operation on an utterance it's tied to. Such that to deal with it, what's required is to have that utterance it's tied to available so as to see what the operations are that were performed, where it is reference to the performed operations that tells you what's been said, in the sense of, e.g., what question is being asked when somebody says "What do you think about that?" One wants to find, e.g., what 'that' is. One will have to locate the utterance that contains those terms that 'that' is the product of an operation on.

One thing we could then ask, perhaps, is why is tying done that way? And when we ask that, we may follow a line of consideration like the following – again, generally speaking: Tying an utterance to an utterance is the basic means of showing that you understood that utterance. The elaboration of tying then means that one can, in due coure, have a way of showing that you understood any given utterance that went before. But it's showing that in a very special and interesting way. Indeed, the only workable way.

First of all, let's note again that while showing that an utterance is understood via tying is a 'local operation' – i.e., done in a next utterance – and therefore done by only one person, the tying involvement means that at any point in a conversation someone else may also get a chance to show that they

understood the initial given utterance. So that, given that question answered by B, he's had a 'first chance' to show that he understood that question. If he ties to it with his answer, and then somebody else ties to his answer with a next question, then somebody who's answering the next question will be showing that they understand it; to understand it they would have had to understand the utterance whereby B answered that first question, and in order to understand that, they would have had to understand the question. And therefore, that person three utterances down, has had his chance to show that he understood the initial utterance. So, while the showing of understanding via the production of a tied utterance occurs locally and by one person, that doesn't mean that no one else is involved in showing in their talk that they also understood that given utterance. In due course they may be so involved.

Now, one way tying is done involves presenting the results of some syntactic operation on the given utterance. Those syntactic operations require some sort of analysis. What such an utterance as 'They did' shows is that 'John and Lisa' are seen as a plural unit, such that this third-person pronoun, 'they,' is the product of an operation on 'John and Lisa;' and 'did,' as a pro-verb, can then be the product of an operation on some verb that 'did' can be a pro-verb for. The operation could always, of course, be wrong. If you said "It did," then that you understood would be questioned when 'John and Lisa' was said. If you said "They were," where 'did' should go, then that you properly understood what was said would also be questioned. I'm not, of course, proposing that any and all senses of 'understanding' are involved. For one, seeing that some utterance was, e.g., a 'question' was exhibited via producing an 'answer.' So 'understanding the action' is one sort of thing, and 'understanding the syntax of an utterance' is another. Normally they're combinedly present.

One great beauty of this technique of showing that you understood an utterance is this: In order for any given hearer of your utterance to see that you understood that prior utterance, they have got to reproduce the operation you performed. In that regard, each demonstration requires such an analysis of *it* to see that that's what it is. And a hearer of your utterance will show that they have performed such an analysis on it by tying a next utterance to it. That is to say, for it to be seen how your utterance shows that you understood the last utterance, the analysis you performed has to be re-performed. And the way it's shown that your utterance was, e.g., understood to be showing that you understood the last utterance, is to produce a next which ties to yours. That others see that you understand an utterance is something that they can show via a next utterance. We can then see that while tying proceeds locally, not only will a person eventually have a chance, say, to show that *they* also understood some utterance you showed you understood, but in doing that they will show that they understood that *you* understood.

Now what's among the most interesting things about that is that if the basic mechanisms for showing that you understood an utterance consist in doing something in speech, in that very same conversation, then, what one might think of as the ideal procedure, i.e., say, 'an explication of the utterance

in question,' is impossible. If, for example, somebody produced an utterance and you figured that a way to show that you understood it was to produce an explication of it, then that explication would pose exactly the task that the initial utterance posed. And one can see how rapidly that would become an impossible procedure, and in any event would involve some sorts of constant, and possibly indefinitely extended 'time outs' in a conversation.

In the tying techniques we have what amounts to an automatic procedure. I say 'automatic' with full seriousness in this sense: You can't *not* tie in talk. That is to say, if you tried to, e.g., remove pronouns from your talk, first of all you probably couldn't do it. Even if you thought you were getting good at it, if you looked over your talk you'd find they were still there. Second, in order to do it, you'd find an enormous slowing down of your talk. You would first produce a tied utterance, say, sub-vocalizing it to yourself, and then try to extract a non-tied utterance from it.

And in that regard, that talk proceeds at a pace, so that you have to produce your demonstration of understanding via a next utterance, doesn't only pose a problem such as how an analysis could be done so rapidly as to have its demonstration in the next utterance. But, having to do it in a next utterance, given the way one seems to learn the language, you can't but show that you did in fact understand, i.e., you can't but tie an utterance, and thereby show that you understood the last (or that you didn't understand).

Now that's an absolutely fabulous machinery. Without regard to whatever it is that linguists or others tell you about the work of pronouns, the work of pronouns is just this sort of thing. They re used elsewhere; they're used within a given utterance that hasn't, say, nouns. However, their basic use is this. Without this use, it's not only that they wouldn't have a place, but you can envision the incredible complicatedness that ordinary talk would have to have.

Now, I said that as a way of showing that one understood, explication would be an in-principle unusable procedure. Let me deal with some materials relevant for that sort of consideration. The following sort of thing is involved: When a person is doing 'explication' there are specific ways of signalling that that's what's being done. And one characteristic way that's signalled is via something like [pronoun + 'mean']: 'I mean,' 'You mean,' 'He means,' etc., where the way the pronoun works is to locate the last utterance of the person named by it. If one begins an utterance, 'I mean X,' what that X is, is the explication of something said in my last utterance. If I say 'You mean X,' it means that I'm now going to explicate, or clarify, etc., something said in your last utterance. 'He means' works in the same way.

Note that if explication is being done, then in the first instance, tying is done to locate what's being explicated.

A: It's not hard enough
B: Age before beauty?
A: −I mean <u>strong</u> enough.

A: You were sort of a marginal man.

B: Yeah. I had my own group of friends.
C: Marginal <u>kid</u> you mean.

If one attempts to do explication without doing tying, one systematic problem we can find is that the parts are heard *additively*. Here's a case:

A: How has Fido across the street been treating you.
B: Oh you mean Bitch Hazel?
A: Yeah heh
C: Who's Fido.
A: 's Hazel.
B: Bitch Hazel across the street a waitress. An' I– an' I go back an' forth with her on –– she's always kiddin' me an' I'm always kiddin' 'er. She wasn't there today,
C: She gives you rides here?

   .
   .

B: No I mean well over at the restaurant whenever I go over there.
C: Oh // she waits on you.
B: She's always ribbing me.
   (/)
B: So I always rib her back.

Now what's happened is, first B says "And I go back and forth with her," then he says "she's always kidding me and I'm always kidding her." That's an intended explication of "I go back and forth with her," i.e., that it's the idiom. What was heard, however, was 'I go from home to here and back again,' i.e., 'she gives me a ride here.' Then, "She's always kidding me and I'm always kidding her" is heard *in addition* to that.

If one wanted to claim that 'explication' was an alternative procedure to 'tying' for insuring, exhibiting, etc., understanding of some utterance, then the sort of case that I just gave, where, in order for it to be seen that 'explication' is being done, 'tying' is required, is one way of seeing that explication is not such an alternative procedure – where there are already other grounds for seeing that tying itself might be an adequate proof of understanding, via the proof procedures that I sketched earlier.[1]

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[1] The discussion of 'explication,' pp. 720–1 above, is taken from Fall. 1967, lecture 12, pp. 13–15

Lecture 12

Repetition tying; "A green?" "Who's Wayne Morse?"

This time I'll begin a consideration of some particular tying techniques and their particular implications. A first technique could be called 'repetition tying' or 'partial repetition tying.' I'll start with a case in which the fact of repetition is relevant to what is being done. I presented part of this sequence earlier:

Ken:	What i– what're those, cigars?
Roger:	Yeah, me an' Al's gonna smoke // cigars.
Ken:	Oh.
Ken:	Lemme have a cigar,
Roger:	<u>You</u> don't smoke cigars,
	(/)
Roger:	Yer a si–yer a cigarette menthol m–man.
Al:	Lemme have a <u>cigar</u>!
Roger:	You gotta drink <u>yer</u> coffee first.
Al:	Ok,

Then, a series of lines later:

Ken:	Hey lemme have one, please?

Now this "let me have one" poses the sort of problem that a term like 'one,' the pronouns, etc., pose for a hearer, i.e., determining what it refers to so as to, e.g., be able to do a next action. How is it that, in such a case, the reference of "one" is found? In some cases, a technique for showing what the reference is of a term that is a tied term, involves a *partial repetition*. In such a case one can use the prior occurrence of "let me have" to locate the referent of "one." That is to say, the reference of "one" is found via its phrase "let me have" paralleling the phrase "Let me have a cigar," such that "one" is 'cigar.'

   In such a case as a 'request,' the doing of a request via an utterance like "Let me have one," has as one specific feature that, that the request is a repetition is not something which needs to be gotten at by, e.g., remembering that he already asked once, but by virtue of the fact that in order to deal with this one, one has to find what the first request was. Thereby, that this is not just 'a request,' but has as a feature of it that it is a 'second request' is achieved. By virtue of the use of 'one' in such a form as this, 'one' can then

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be found to be 'that thing asked for in the first request, being asked for *again*.' If he had said "Hey let me have a cigar please," then it might well be the case that this is a repeat request, but *that* it is a repeat request is not part of how it's done. And of course there is a distinction between 'a request' and an indication that 'I asked you already.'

In this regard, bringing off that you're doing a 'repetition' can be a specific thing done via the tying technique of a phrase-repetition plus a tying term. The sheer fact that one has what might count as the repetition of parts of sentences doesn't mean anything. It is not obvious that one could say that if at any given point somebody happens to use a phrase or clause that has been used before, that they're 'repeating' that speaker. That's a rather difficult thing, in general, to show. They're using something which another has used, but it might not be such a thing as would be said, at least routinely, to be 'a repetition.' In the case at hand, that it's brought off as 'a repetition' is key to one aspect of its being a request, i.e., a 'repeat request.'

Leave aside this sort of case, in which you're trying to show that you're doing something 'again,' one of the basic uses of the partial repetition form as a way of doing tying, is that it serves to locate something which, e.g., one didn't hear. A very characteristic way to go about locating what somebody said that you didn't hear, is to use the partial repetition format. Here's some cases:

A: I wanna fast car so bad,
B: You wanna what?

A: God, any more hair on my chest an' I'd be a fuzz boy.
B: You'd be a what?

A: Yeah, we used to live on the highway, too. And when we first moved up there it was terrible sleeping because of all these semi's going by at night.
B: All the what?
A: Semi's.
B: Oh.

What we get, then, is the repetition of a phrase plus the use of 'what' at the point where some not-heard or not-understood word occurs, as a way of locating for the person who has just spoken, what part of what they said you didn't hear or didn't understand. You repeat a 'bounding phrase' on it, and place a term like 'what' in the place that the word you didn't hear occurred. The 'what' ties somewhere. Where it ties is not to be determined by the existence of the 'what;' where it ties is found via the phrase that precedes it being used to locate such a phrase which has been produced before, where the word equivalent to 'what' within the structure of the prior phrase is the problematic word.

Given such a usage as, e.g., "All the what?" we can begin to play with the question, did they not hear? or did they not understand? and what's involved

in not hearing and not understanding? We can ask how come they didn't hear, and perhaps get some gains beyond 'Well, they didn't hear because they weren't paying careful attention,' or 'because it wasn't said clearly.' We can begin by raising a question for one's observational determination of the matter: Is there any order to the occurrence of such words that, say, 'what' looks for? That is to say, is it the case that we could get any word as a problematic word that 'what' asks for? Or is it that, if not that asking for some words is restricted or sanctioned, then that only some sorts of words are ever asked for in that way? For example, nouns may be asked for, verbs may be asked for. Are prepositions ever asked for? Conjunctions? If conjunctions don't turn up in that sequence does that mean that conjunctions are really easy to hear or easy to understand? Or does it mean perhaps, if you don't hear them but you hear the rest, you can figure out what they were?

That is to say, insofar as the issue of hearing and understanding may involve some sort of contexting for the given word, then what sorts of words have least informative context and what sorts of words have most informative context? If, e.g., you have the full context of some word, then even if you didn't hear definitely what was said, you might well know what was said, whereas for others you may perfectly well have the context, but that doesn't tell you what word occurred via considerations like what could have or would have occurred in that position.

That there is such an operation of context telling what somebody said, is perfectly plain in some ways. If, for example, you're passing somebody on the street and you bump into them, then there's a place for saying "Excuse me." People regularly do not say anything like 'Excuse me.' They say "Sk'm." They can say pretty much anything that has the approximate configuration of 'Excuse me.' And people who go in for such things often pass obscenities and get "That's okay" as the appropriate response. And they can feel assured that nobody's going to pick it up, either. It won't be heard as other than what it ought to be.

Then there are certain peculiarities of the following sort: Everybody knows – if I may put it that way – that if you're introduced to somebody, you regularly re-ask for their name. And in the case, say, of our doing transcription of tape-recorded conversation, or transcriptions of these lectures, then the one predictable thing that will be wrongly transcribed are the uses of names. Names are the prototypical sorts of things for which you may know 'it's an X,' but *which* X it is, you can't be assured via what you heard.

Now that ought to give some pause for consideration as to issues of 'adequate pronunciation determining that someone understands a thing.' On the one hand, a great deal of what is said is not pronounced in radio English, but in such a way as to signal that 'the thing that goes here has just been said.' So that, e.g., people don't say "Did you," they say something like "Dju." And there is no pronunciational issue involved. On the other hand, even when one attempts an 'adequate pronunciation' with respect, say, to a name, it still may not be hearable correctly. That is to say, in principle, pronunciation is no guarantee.

What we want in the first place to be moving toward is to be in a position to not be saying, when somebody says, e.g., "All the what?" that what happened was either the person who said the thing that is now queried didn't pronounce it carefully enough, or the person who's doing the query didn't listen carefully enough. To be sure, I'm not saying that no such problems may be present, but as an in-principle explanation they are, I think, surely inadequate. What we want then to be asking is, what would it take to determine what word somebody used? Perhaps while it indeed needs context, all it needs is, e.g., the terms bordering it for that context to be satisfied. But perhaps, at least sometimes, a much more extended context is relevant for hearing it. If that's so, then again what we come back to is the way that extended speech sequences may be operative, even, now, for the hearing of a single word.

A first way to get at it is suggested in a paper called 'Animal categories in verbal abuse,' by the British anthropologist E. R. Leach, in Lenneberg (ed.), *New Directions in the Study of Language*. Leach is dealing with the fact that some number of unsayable obscenities of English are homonyns with perfectly ordinarily-used words. Now that doesn't mean that the perfectly ordinarily-used words are therefore unusable. What is interesting is that in much of speech, that the word uttered may be either the one or the other, is just not heard. There is, in that regard, a kind of taboo on hearing that an obscenity has possibly been uttered. That there is such a taboo is in part seeable by considering the following familiar circumstances: Suppose, e.g., talk has been going on, and someone has overtly made an obscene pun via some word that can be both the one and the other. Then what we find is an immediate chain such that for some period thereafter, each word that could be obscene or non-obscene is heard as obscene. And that sort of pun turns out, to everyone's surprise, to multiply, I won't quote cases of that sort, but I take it that one can see that it's so.

That again suggests that the question of pronunciation for the determining of what word has been said, is in part insufficient, since the peculiar case of homonyms is that they're pronounced exactly the same. But it may well be that on the one hand, routinely one hearing is so preferred that the other is not even considered or heard, and on the other, that in special circumstances the usual preferred hearing is rejected. And that's done in chains. And the very problem of the chaining of obscene puns turns on the fact that speakers will not be seeing that what they are saying contains such a word until it's out. They will not be seeing it by virtue of the fact that they're not routinely listening for that possibility for each word they use. Now that's an extremely powerful sense of a 'taboo,' on hearing or understanding what has been said.

Let me turn now to a sequence from the transcript excerpt, in which one fellow is being subjected to a set of questions: 'First of all you must be crazy, secondly you're an underachiever, you hate your mom and dad, fourth you like to drive cars fast, fifth you like wild times, sixth you like booze, seven you like to smoke, eight you give lip back to everybody, nine you cut classes, ten you've been kicked out of school once.' Then comes:

Roger: Are you just agreeing because you feel you wanna uh
Jim: Hm?
Roger: You just agreeing?
Jim: What the hell's <u>that</u>.
Al: J'st–
Al: Agree//ing?
Roger: Agreeing.
Jim: Agree::n.
Roger: <u>Yeah</u>
( ):   A//<u>gree</u>:n.
Al: –with us. Just going along with us.
Jim: No.

We want to come up with some sort of answer to the question, how come he couldn't hear the word 'agreeing.' In some ways it's not a matter of pronunciation, since as it happens, leaving aside the fact that it comes off perfectly clearly on the tape, the other parties to the conversation perfectly well hear the word 'agreeing.' They each, indeed, volunteer it. But he doesn't hear it. How can we go about dealing with there being some basis for his not having heard it?

Let me start off by giving a simpler but perhaps parallel case – some people may not figure it's a parallel case, so I say 'perhaps' so as not to prejudice the argument by saying it's definitely a parallel case. The conversation is between two people and one of them is reporting on Saturday night activities for some period:

A: I went out a lot then. One weekend I went to hear Pete Seeger, the next weekend I went to hear Joan Baez and the next weekend I went to hear Wayne Morse.
B: Who's Wayne Morse.
A: <u>Wayne Morse</u>. The <u>S</u>enator.
B: <u>Oh</u>. Wayne Morse.

Now that's a very regular kind of thing. An obvious sort of answer to the question, Why wasn't 'Wayne Morse' understood, though the person knows the name, is that 'Wayne Morse' wasn't heard because Wayne Morse is not the name of a singer. And given the series that had been set up so far, one was looking to see 'some other singer,' such that the name Wayne Morse was unrecognizable.

That is to say, there may be ways in which the position of an item on a list is relevant to hearing what that item is. In the case at hand, i.e., that long list of 'questions,' there is a specific listing going on, and there are properties which are perhaps characterizing of the items on that list. They are, for example, introduced as things that would account for this person's being a patient at this place. Some of them are specifically nouns: 'An underachiever,' etc. Other of the things are specifically characteristic actions: 'cut classes,' 'give

lip,' 'drive cars fast,' etc. That sequence may then set up the task of decoding – if we may call it that – "Are you just agreeing."

But that question is in its character specifically distinct from the prior questions by virtue of, for one, that what it's oriented to is the pattern of answers to those prior questions. It isn't about, roughly, 'your past behavior.' That is, *if* it's understood. But what could it be heard as that would be a puzzle, and that, as a puzzle, would be coherent with what so far has been done? Well, 'agreeing' is a verb – or a participle anyway – but it has one interesting sort of possible confusion as to its word class. That is to say, it can easily be heard as a noun. The way it could be heard as a noun is by the separation off of the 'a' in "agreein": 'Are you just a green?' What ever *that* is. Like, as occurs later in this excerpt, "Are you a hood?" 'A' is a way a noun is located. As such, there might well be a specific puzzle, i.e., 'What is a green?' A green something? A green *what*? Or is it some technical term that these kids use? 'A green,' which could be a thing in English, as there is 'A fuschia,' 'an orange.' Either way, it could then be specifically a puzzle; the word could be the name of 'a something.' And that he might be trying to hear 'a something' is at least possible if persons do attend sequences via such similarities as, 'the sort of thing that has so far been produced is the sort of thing that a next will be like.' That is to say, in this case, the list is not incidental. The case is very strong by virtue of the fact that, for one, everybody else hears that word as 'agreeing' and this guy doesn't. And when he finally gets it, it's under a change in what is said: "Just going along with us," rather than the repetition of "Agreeing."

We're in no position to say he mis-heard 'agreeing' by virtue of his orienting to a list which it isn't an obvious member of, but which told him what the form of its members would be, such that he found a formal member, 'a green,' but he didn't know what that was. But we can at least figure that perhaps a list can serve to tell you the sorts of things a next thing will be. In the 'parallel' case, i.e., that of Wayne Morse, it seemed quite plain that orientation to a list generated a puzzle.

I had the aim to now present data which exhibited mis-hearings, where we had that mis-hearing announced, and where that mis-hearing is specifically tied to something just said, so that we could move from the conjectural character of the 'agreeing' case, to situations in which it seems clear that not only was there a mis-hearing, but that the mis-hearing turned on a sequence. The only thing is, I've forgotten what the data is. So let me see if I can, for now, give a fairly close case.

> *A:* And my grandfather finally stepped out. Came home from Europe, and he wasn't home two hours and he called my father up and said I'm not comin' in anymore. My father // started hollering he s–
> *B:* What happened in Europe?
> *B:* He got married–
> *A:* He was gone for–
> *C:* He got mixed up with//Christine Keeler.

A: Ten–

A: No, no he was gone for ten weeks,

D: That's something to get//mixed up with. hehhehh

A: And he came home and decided he was gonna play with his orchids
     from then on in.

D: With his <u>what</u>?

B: heh heh heh heh

A: With his orchids.

D: ⌈Oh. heh hehheh

A: ⌊He has an orchid–

B: ((Through bubbling laughter)) Playing with his organ, yeah I
     thought the same thing!

A: No he's got a great big//glass house–

D: I can see him playing with his organ hehh hhh

Now there isn't any particular mispronunciation of 'orchids,' but again,
prior to that "playing with his orchids" the sexual orientation has just been
raised. And I take it that in part it was such a phenomenon that, although
'play with his orchids' and 'play with his organ' are reasonably closely in
parallel, the mis-hearing was not merely by virtue of that parallel. Note the
tremendously interesting feature of this sequence which is, D says "With his
what?" and later on B says "Playing with his organ, yeah I though the same
thing," though what D heard was not announced. All he said was "With his
what?" That was enough to exhibit not only that there was a possible
mis-hearing, but specifically what that mis-hearing was, such that B could feel
confident in knowing what D mis-heard.

We can at least take it as something worth looking at, that sequencing, in
the sense of list features, may be operative to provide puzzles, mis-hearings of
things which might otherwise be perfectly clearly hearable, or even to provide
for non-hearings – where the list can be a cross-utterance phenomenon, as in
the case of the ten questions followed by "Are you just agreeing." Position on
a list can then be context relevant, not only to whatever else such a context
would be relevant to but also to such a matter as what word is heard. That
matter then turns out to be altogether relevant to the initial program I set out,
which was determining the ways in which the sequential features of
conversation operate to provide requirements on dealing with any given single
utterance or single sentence. We've now reached a point where, at least to
some extent, what we see is that the very determination of what it is that
somebody said in a given utterance, i.e., hearing what they said, may turn on
an analysis of other things that have been said, perhaps by others, before that.

One way to check that sort of thing out is, supposing you're e.g., in a
restaurant, and now you're hearing snatches of conversation by other people.
You can find until you catch on to what the conversation is about, how it's
proceeding, it will be hard to hear what any given sentence says. That is to say,
fragments of conversation are 'more difficult' to catch than when you get the
sequence of what they're doing.

I can put the matter methodologically. For the sheer doing of the transcription of such a conversation as one is going to analyze, or the talk one wants to study, having available for any given utterance other utterances around it, is extremely important to determining what was said. If you have available only the snatch of talk that you're now transcribing, you're in tough shape for determining what it is. If you know, on the other hand, that they're, e.g., talking about cars, then you can decide what that noun was, or that verb, etc.

Lecture 13
Tying-based mis-hearings; Locational tying; Pro-verbs and performatives

I've given some brief consideration to usages of 'I mean' and things like that for doing tying; particularly for signalling that a correction was being made of something said earlier. Now I want to consider one sort of occurrence for which 'I mean'-type corrections are made; specifically, cases of discovered *mis-hearings*. What we'll focus on is the source of such mis-hearings, where those mis-hearings have a tying basis. We'll start off with some data.

This sequence follows a nine-second pause.

Louise :	heh -- Great.
Roger :	hehh Somebody better make some noise or we'll all fall asleep.
Louise :	⌜heh
Ken :	⌞hehhehhh
	(3.0)
Louise :	He's already made the grade.
Ken :	"H(hh)e's already made the grade."
	(2.0)
Roger :	He's asleep mentally only.
Ken :	⌜heh
Louise :	⌞heh
Al :	Alright // group,
Louise :	Or–
Louise :	Is that all the time or just today?
	(3.0)
Al :	It's my nash– natural state.
Roger :	He's just bashful.
Ken :	⌜heh heh heh
Louise :	⌞That's what you think.
Dan :	Well that's a little different from last week.
Louise :	heh heh heh Yes. Last week we were in hysterics.
Dan :	No I mean Al.
Louise :	Oh he was uhm
Roger :	Well you gotta remember he's crazy

I want to focus on:

Dan :   Well that's a little different from last week.
Louise : heh heh heh Yes. Last week we were in hysterics.
Dan :   No I mean Al.

Here's another:

Roger :   Y'getta discount. For all kidnapped people un//der twunty one.
Louise : hmhh hmh
Ken :   heh
Louise : heh heh heh heh hh
Louise : That's // cuz we're minors.
Roger :   hh!
Ken :   Right
Louise : Half – half fare.
Roger :   I don't see the–the–d–idea a'kidnapping old people.
            (2.0)
Roger :   Or who gives a da(h)mn
Louise : heh!
Roger :   hh!//ah hhh!
Louise : hehhehhh
Louise : Well fer some a'these kids.
Roger :   ehh//heh
Dan :   You wouldn't mind if that happens?
Dan :   Is//that it?
Roger :   ehheh! hhhh
            (1.0)
Roger :   I wouldn' mind gittin kidnapped, it'd be // fun.
Ken :   Fer instance? hh
Louise : I // hate t'tell you but cher never gonna come back ali//ve.
Dan :   No I mean you wouldn' mind if yer uh
Dan :   –father? mother? got kidnapped, // 'r–
Roger :   Well I couldn't pay the ransom anyway so why worry about
            it.

Here I want to focus on:

Dan :   You wouldn't mind if that happens? Is that it?
            .
            .
            .
Roger :   I wouldn' mind gittin kidnapped, it'd be fun.
            .
            .
Dan :   No I mean you wouldn' mind if yer uh father?
            mother? got kidnapped. // 'r–
Roger :   Well I couldn't pay the ransom anyway so why worry about it.

In each of these cases we have an attempted tied utterance. In the first, "Well that's a little different from last week" and in the second, "You wouldn't mind if that happens? Is that it?" Then we have an utterance tied to that attempted tied utterance. In the first case:

Dan :   Well that's a little different from last week.
Louise : heh heh heh Yes. Last week we were in hysterics.

And in the second:

Dan :   You wouldn't mind if that happens? Is that it?
Roger :   I wouldn't mind gittin kidnapped, it'd be fun.

Then, in each case, a correction signalled by the person who made the original attempted tied utterance:

Dan :   Well that's a little different from last week.
Louise : heh heh heh Yes. Last week we were in hysterics.
Dan :   No I mean Al.

Dan :   You wouldn' mind if that happens? Is that it?
Roger :   I wouldn' mind gittin kidnapped, it'd be fun.
Dan :   No I mean you wouldn' mind if yer uh father? mother? got
          kidnapped,

Then, after that attempted correction, we have another utterance tied to it, which acknowledges the correction:

Dan :   Well that's a little different from last week.
Louise : heh heh heh Yes. Last week we were in hysterics.
Dan :   No I mean Al.
Louise : Oh he was uhm
Roger :   Well you gotta remember he's crazy.

Dan   You wouldn't mind if that happens? Is that it?
Roger :   I wouldn' mind gittin kidnapped, it'd be fun.
Dan :   No I mean you wouldn' mind if yer uh father? mother? got
          kidnapped,
Roger :   Well I couldn't pay the ransom anyway so why worry about it.

So we have a sequence consisting of:

1 An attempted tied utterance by A
2 A tied utterance to (1) by B
3 Signalled correction by A
4 Tied utterance by B, acknowledging correction, among other things.

Recall that one of the things I proposed as fundamental to the working of the tying structures was that the operation of tying machinery serves as a basic means for showing understanding. If it's going to work to show understanding, it would seem obvious that one thing it ought to also turn up is misunderstanding. For one, then, in a person's talk involving tying, they show what their understanding is of some utterance they've tied to, thereby exhibiting the possibility that they misunderstood that utterance. Furthermore,that they may have misunderstood can then set up the possibility of corrections going on. One of the things we want to focus on is: Are there special places where mis-hearing will occur, or tying failures will occur? Let me emphasize that the fact that it's a last utterance that's tied to, is important to there occurring a simple chance to do correction.

Suppose, then, a situation where A produces an utterance that may or may not be a tied utterance. Somebody attempts to tie to that utterance. Now the question is, what sorts of tying techniques generate the possibility of mis-hearing, and what sort of mis-hearing is generated?

The tying technique I initially considered – the partial repetition tying – involved two sorts of things in an utterance. One was a signal that this is a tied utterance; the other was some information in that very utterance of what utterance it was tied to, via, e.g., the use of a phrase that occurred in that prior utterance. So, for example, in "All the what?" the 'what' signals tying, and 'all the' produces the phrase which preceded the problematic word, in "All the semi's."

There is, then, a class of tying techniques which not only involve the signalling of tying, but also give information about what utterance the tying utterance is tied to. Those sorts of tying techniques have one big virtue: In contrast with a bunch of other tying techniques – indeed the most prominent sorts of tying techniques – they have some considerable freedom of where they're placed. For many other tying techniques, roughly all we have in an utterance is a signal that this utterance is tying, via some term. In "Well that's a little different from last week" and "You wouldn't mind if that happens?" the 'that' may signal that the utterance is tied. Or with things like 'He did?' both terms are signalling that the utterance is tied. But there is nothing in these sorts of tyings to indicate to which utterance it's tied; nothing contained within the utterance.

In those cases, which utterance it's tied to is essentially found by the *position* of the tying utterance. In many cases, to be definitively effective it must go right after the utterance it's attempting to tie to. It might go several utterances later; if, e.g., one says "He did?" then you can use 'he' to rule out the immediately prior utterance if there's a female mentioned, and show that it's the utterance before, where a male was mentioned, and things like that. But here you might have problems with those rules which provide for the possibility of intentional mis-address, mis-reference, etc., i.e., the tying is not guaranteedly definitively effective. So, for many tying techniques, placing is crucial for their effectiveness.

We know from earlier discussions that the chance to place an utterance exactly where you want it is by no means always guaranteed. If, e.g., no one

has been selected, there is then the possibility of a race for next speaker so that
if you want to tie to a given utterance you may find that a series of utterances
have intervened before then. If you eventually do get a chance to tie, and you
still use a tying technique that does not signal in the utterance itself, which
utterance it's tied to, you systematically get chances of tying failure occurring.
And one wants to note that a tying failure does not necessarily provide that
the person who speaks after a tied utterance will see that they did not
understand it. It is the character of the abstractness of the ways that these
placed tying techniques work, that they can seem to be tied to some utterance
though they're not intended to be tied to that utterance. So, e.g., 'that' can
tie to lots of utterances, and if you intend to place it after (1) and place it after
(3), it may well be heard as tieable to (2) just as well as to (1), and a person
who hears it can figure that they heard what you intended. And they'll
produce an utterance which shows, among other things, that they heard and
understood what you intended.

Now, in order for that demonstration of understanding to be corrected, a
technique is needed for tying not only to it, but to it and to another utterance.
And that's, then, a specific virtue of these tying techniques which signal which
utterance they're tied to. They can skip utterances. That's, then, the beauty of
having 'No, I mean . . .' available, because 'No, I mean' signals 'in *my* last
utterance,' i.e., skipping whatever has intervened. It does have to be done in
specifically the first utterance that you make after your tying failure, since it
locates 'last utterance by same speaker.' That that last utterance can simply be
invoked, i.e., that you can know it's available to the other parties, is in its way
guaranteed by virtue of the fact that the last speaker has tied to your prior
utterance, i.e., performed an analysis of it – a wrong one, but nevertheless an
analysis of it.

What we're saying then is: One routine arena for the occurrence of tying
failures, involves the use of some tying technique for which placing is crucial,
in such a way that it can be seen to have been tied to another utterance than
the one intended, by virtue of its being placed, say, too far behind that
intended tied-to utterance. Nonetheless when that happens it doesn't mean
that understanding is down the drain, for you can check out whether such an
attempted tie has been brought off by virtue of the fact that others may then
tie to it, and in tying to it exhibit understanding or failure to understand, and
you can then insert a correction if they've failed. And their grasping of the
correction exhibits that they see that you're tying to their utterance. It also
shows that they're able to allow the use of a skip-tying technique, i.e., the 'I
mean' skipping back to your last utterance.

The tying-correction procedures are, then, also tying techniques, and
employ techniques similar to ordinary tying techniques. That is to say, you
don't have an independent structure of machinery dealing with 'corrections.'

So: Tying signals understanding. For that to be a reasonable finding we
have also to find that it can signal misunderstanding. Otherwise it's merely a
proposal that any tied utterance should be shown by the analyst to be a way
that somebody shows understanding. So, it also signals misunderstanding,

and misunderstandings are discoverable and discovered, and remedied. But one message of the foregoing discussion is: Here's another way that utterance placement is crucial, i.e., that utterances using some tying techniques must be properly placed. To see what an utterance is doing, particularly in the case of utterances that can be doing 'tying,' one may, then, need to determine its place. And that is to say, the sequential features of conversation are again operative in the analysis of a single utterance.

Now we'll move on to some other considerations. I want to talk about what I'll call 'locational tying techniques.' Here's some data:

Roger: Hey I shaved this morni– I mean last night for // you.
Al: Yah, I-I'm glad,– I <u>no</u>ticed that today Roger,
Ken: Ye(hh)s! I did too,

We'll focus on "I did too." My initial interest in it arises because I wondered why does somebody say "I did too," since 'I did' can perfectly well tie to "I noticed that," and thus be clear, in the sense of what it is he's asserting. When we raise the problem, either as Why the 'too'? or What's the difference between 'I did' and 'I did too'? we get some rather interesting developments.

'I did' is an utterance which has limited action possibilities; that is, what actions 'I did' will be heard as doing. The action possibilities turn on emphasis, i.e., whether 'I' is accented or 'did' is accented. If you say "*I* did," you seem to be making some sort of claim. If you say "I *did*," you seem to be dealing with some sort of disbelief. So that if somebody says "I noticed that today Roger," and then someone else says "*I* did," it would seem that they were saying 'You didn't notice it, *I* did,' i.e., that it's intended as exclusive. If one said "I *did*," it might be heard as dealing with doubts which no one has expressed – yet.

I mention those things since it seems that all 'too' does in "I did too" is mark that whoever says "I did too" is speaking after someone else, saying the same thing. It doesn't intend that the action referred to was done after the other person's action, i.e., 'too' has no semantic connotation with respect to the action that's announced. That is to say: You have an action, 'noticing.' You have the announcing of the action in the utterance 'I noticed.' Now one would tend to figure that 'too' is a term which has something to do with the action announced. But it doesn't. It has to do with the announcing of the action. And what it specifically has to do with is the *positioning* of the announcing of the action, i.e., that it is positioned after another has announced such an action. The 'too,' then, locates that utterance – "I did too" – as tied not only to a prior utterance, but to an utterance, roughly, for now, 'like it.'

The kind of consideration I've just offered raises another order of issues with respect to the features of single utterances and their discourse relevance, and that is the use of accent. Where in an utterance is the accent – if there is an emphasis in the utterence? I come by this sort of consideration via a paper by Richard Gunter, 'On accents in dialogue,' *Journal of Linguistics* (1966).

The dialogue is hypothetical for the most part, but it's a rather pioneering work in focussing on the possibility that the accents for given utterances serve discourse features – which is again roughly to say that one thing that accents can signal is that an utterance is tied. Which is then to say that the intonation contour of an utterance can be a discourse phenomenon and not only an utterance phenomenon.

That sort of matter is strikingly clear for certain terms. If you have an utterance in which you have a possessive pronoun, e.g., 'mine,' 'ours,' 'your,' 'their,' etc., if that possessive pronoun bears the heaviest accent in the utterance, that is a pretty sufficient signal that the utterance is tied, and tied via a *contrast* of that possessive pronoun or the speaker of it, and some other: "Let's take my car." "No, let's take *my* car." The emphasis of the second 'my' is a way that the tied character of that utterance to the prior one, and the contrast involved, are done.

There are lots of ways in which the distribution of accents in an utterance turns out to be a matter of signalling such things as the tiedness of an utterance. So, in parallel to an earlier discussion in which it was proposed that sometimes 'hearing' a word – making out what word was said – would be a matter not merely of pronunciation of that word, or its location in a sentence, but also its location in discourse; so also is it the case that the accent a word is assigned may be a feature not only of its position in an utterance, but also the position of that utterance in discourse. Which is to say that one can't account for accents comprehensively without studying more than a single utterance.

This consideration of accent came up in the course of a discussion of 'locational tying techniques,' and I want now to return to that issue. It's a rather large theme, and one can collect various elaborations of the ways that tying techniques are used to place an utterance relative to a series of utterances. One typical sort of locational tying technique, simple in its way, is 'Well,' and things like it. 'Well' will often be the apositional term signalling that what's coming is a 'disagreement.' One speaker takes a position, a next speaker says 'Well' and goes on to say something that stands as a disagreement with the other.

One very nice, simple case of another sort of locational tying technique occurs in our data excerpt. It goes like this:

> Ken :   I <u>still</u> say though that– If you take, if you take uh a big fancy car
>   out'n the road, -- an' yer hotroddin' around, yer– yer <u>bound</u> to
>   get– yer bound t'get cau::ght, and yer bound t'get <u>shaft</u>ed.

"I still say though" is a very neat way of doing rather elaborated direct locational tying. It seems to do the following: 'Still' seems to provide that this utterance is at least a second by the given speaker. And that between his first utterance and this one, someone else has spoken, and spoken to what he initially said, and now he is going to speak to that. That is, it's at least a third in a sequence – now, not only in the sense that there are two utterances before

it, but it specifically invokes at least two utterances before it as *relevant* to what it's doing.

I say 'as relevant to what it's doing' because it would be one sort of thing, say in an argument, to simply repeat what you said. But with this apparatus used, you're specifically dealing with the fact that you're reasserting your position in the face of some divergence on the part of another. The tying terminology serves not only to locate your utterance as following at least two prior ones, but to assert, e.g., your stubbornness, or the failure of someone else's argument. You said something before, and your mind hasn't been changed. In that regard, what follows "I still say though" can be monitored for whether in fact you've held to your views or not. So somebody else can say, "But that's different from what you said before," i.e., can see that you've changed your mind even though you claim you haven't. Which is to say that "I still say though" also makes claims about the relationship between one's initial utterance and what's going to be said now.

In the particular case at hand it's kind of neat, in that it's used after a new person comes into the conversation, as a way to reintroduce an argument that had been going on before. In that regard, it lets them in on the fact that an argument has been going on, that various have spoken, that this fellow spoke before, that he's speaking again, and that he's speaking again in a controversial position. Occurring as it does here, as a first utterance after a newcomer has been told what's being talked about, it gives a lot of information as to what to watch for.

I don't want to deal in much detail with 'I say,' but let me just make some notes about it. We can start off by noticing that 'I say' and 'I said' are altogether different kinds of things. It's not simply that the one talks about the present and the other talks about the past, as is the case with lots of verbs in which the tenses name the same sorts of actions. If you say 'I said X,' then you're doing 'quoting;' if you say 'I say X,' you're not. In that regard, 'I said' and 'He says' are much more alike than either 'I say' and 'he says,' or 'I say' and 'I said.'

'I say' has nothing to do with quoting. It is this sort of thing: There's a bunch of first person indicative sentences that have been studied by the British philosopher J. L. Austin, which he considers in his book *How to Do Things With Words*. He calls them 'performatives.' 'I bet,' 'I promise,' and things like that. For those sorts of things, when you do the first person indicative, the action done by the utterance is that action it names. 'I bet' is a way of betting. 'I promise' is a way of promising. In that regard, then, the first person is altogether different than, say, third person. 'He promises' is an announcement of a promise made by him, but is not his action of promising. Similarly for the tenses, 'I promised' is an announcement that a promise took place, whereas 'I promise' is the doing of a promise.

Now, 'I say' is a pro-verb for a performative. Instead of using terms like 'I promise' or 'I assert,' you can use 'I say.' 'I say' does whatever a performative in that position would do. It is doing some action, e.g., doing an 'assertion,' a 'promise,' etc., turning on the context in which it is used. And

the use of 'I say' has to do, in part, with one feature of things that are 'performatives:' They're ways of, e.g., signalling commitment. 'You can call me on this.' 'I've done some action that has consequences.' 'This is my position.'

Let me just mention, in regards to 'I' in 'I say,' that if you're performing some action with this utterance, then it's important who that action is on behalf of. And the pronoun used can announce who it's on behalf of. So, e.g., you could say 'We say,' where you're speaking on behalf of some 'group.' And 'we' is perfectly routinely used in this sense. For example, here it is in an article on Yugoslavia in the *New York Times*:

> Yet Communist officials appear to be optimistic. "We haven't had good roads since Roman times, so why should we worry if the highway to Belgrade is not finished tomorrow," one said.

When you say 'I say,' it is only 'on behalf of myself' that what's asserted holds. Nor is it relevant whether anybody else agrees, disagrees; 'I'm claiming this.' If they say something similar, they're possibly 'agreeing with me,' which would be, say, a victory in argument. 'I,' then, can be a variable for such things.

Lecture 14

Paraphrasing; Alternative temporal references;
Approximate and precise numbers;
Laughter; 'Uh huh'

This will be a rather meandering lecture. One of the things I'll do is provide illustrations of the sorts of things that could be done to deal with the problems posed for the final paper. Problem 1 concerns someone tying to an utterance that's already been tied to by someone else, or ways that someone can show that he heard an utterance that's been tied to by another that wasn't directed to him. One sort of case is something I mentioned briefly in lecture 6, pages 2-3, the introduction sequence. I pointed out then, that for Ken and Roger to see that they were being introduced, and that a greeting was appropriate, involved them in attending "Jim, this is uh Al," as something yet open, and to which the utterance addressed to them were to be heard as tied. That's one sort of thing; it probably can be generalized in various ways, beyond introducing a person to what turns out to be a group.

Now, one area with respect to conversation that's terribly important, and has some relevance for Problem 1 but has many other relevances, is that of *paraphrasing*. People paraphrase. There are many reasons why paraphrasing is terribly interesting but I won't go into them here, since they're not essential to the point. I would note, however, that it is a curious fact that kids learn to paraphrase, i.e., to do various sorts of grammatical transformations which preserve sense, very very early. In a book called *Children Tell Stories* you can find an item like the following by a kid who's under three years old:

His mommy came home and told him to get out of the road.

Since mommies don't say 'To get out of the road,' but 'Get out of the road,' that involves some rather sophisticated grammatical knowledge on the part of a kid under three, i.e., to engage in various sorts of transformations required to make that paraphrase. Paraphrasing, then, is one interesting way of studying the sorts of grammatical information that kids, and others, have.

With respect to Problem 1, paraphrasing turns out to be interesting in the following way: It is regularly the case that when someone is proposedly paraphrasing something that another said, 'You said . . . ,' 'He said . . . ,'

they will include not only some version of what that person said, but if that person's utterance is tied, or is, e.g., the second member of a pair, they will also include features of the utterance to which it is tied or to which it is second. For example, A says 'Do you agree?,' B says 'Yes.' Later on, C may refer to that by saying, 'But you said you agreed' to B, where what B had said was 'Yes.' In that regard, then, the paraphrased quotation involves inclusion of, awareness of, use of, things that another said. That would constitute the sort of thing one could focus on in a solution to Problem 1. And the fact that paraphrases normatively have this feature, so that you can't routinely say, 'I didn't say I agreed, I said yes,' is one way in which things like utterance pairs and various sorts of tying are treated as natural phenomena by those who deal with them.

A related sort of thing is that regularly when someone names an action another did in an utterance, the name they'll use will be the name of the second part of the pair. And the sense of that will have involved that they attended the first member of the pair. Somebody might say, "When you answered Jack you were rude," thereby saying something about, not only the utterance they're calling an 'answer,' but the utterance that, it being a 'question' involves this one being called an 'answer.'

Those are very routine, mundane matters, indeed. But they're the sorts of things that will permit us, once we have extended considerations of them, to see that these tying machines not only implicate some large number of utterances as going together, but it's available to people encountering them that those utterances 'go together' as classes of phenomena. Such a fact as that utterances, when named, are named as second pair members, is material on that point. In that regard, then, when examining a given utterance, one wants to look at it by reference to what other utterances it's dealing with, to see what it is that would be needed in order to come to terms with some single actual utterance. What other materials would you need, and what would you need to say about those other materials? Put some flesh on the notion of 'context.'

Let me talk a bit now about Problem 2. I'll give various sorts of ways it could be developed. I'll start off with a fabulously bland utterance from the GTS materials:

Q: When did you have the cast taken off?
A: Tuesday.

I want to kind of open your eyes to the interestingness of "Tuesday" as an answer.

First of all, such an answer as 'Tuesday' (or Wednesday, or Monday or Thursday) is, for that question, the right sort of answer. Whereas there are many things which might be considered to be obviously also correct things to have said – in that sense, equivalent to 'Tuesday' – which are altogether wrong, inappropriate, sometimes even crazy. To the question, "When did you have the cast taken off?" If somebody answered "The eleventh," or "November eleventh," or "November eleventh, 1967," then, while under

some circumstances some of those might be okay, there are circumstances in which, if one is okay, the other is inappropriate or crazy. That is to say, a list of equivalences is not to be made by virtue of such a thing as, 'Pick a correct answer; get a list of correct answers; any one of them is okay by virtue of being correct.' That's just not the way it works. And the beauty of the whole thing is, it's not merely not the way it works, but in circumstances where 'The eleventh' is okay, or 'November eleventh' is okay, one doesn't get 'Tuesday,' and where 'Tuesday' is okay, one doesn't get the others. There are very strong relevance constraints involved. It's a matter of great social-order importance which one has no knowledge about. One never sees that the choices matter a great deal.

It's easy enough in the first instance to pose social control problems by reference to such things as 'why do people stop at street lights?' 'Why don't people rape their nieghbors?' You are only at the point where sociology is interesting when you can see that 'Tuesday' is the right sort of answer to the question "When did you have the cast taken off?" under certain circumstances, and 'November eleventh' is an answer that would get you committed. And you don't produce the appropriate one by reference to an avoidance of somebody thinking you're crazy, and nobody notices that you have done 'something which a normal person does.'

Now some of these things, e.g., [day of the week], [date plus year], [recently, the other day, etc.] may overlap, but they may be quite separate possibilities. And in order to see when one class of these things is appropriate, one has as one's task locating various things about the given question –answer sequence. Such things as, for conversants, when was the last time they encountered each other. The selection of the order of answer, i.e., that 'Tuesday' is used and not 'November eleventh, 1967,' is a sort of thing one can focus on with respect to attention to a fit between a question and an answer, [1] in which the circumstances are, that the 'who it is' and the 'what they're doing by asking that question' seem deeply relevant to what passes as an appropriate sort of answer. And it's altogether independent in some senses, of what's a 'right answer.' So that if you said 'Wednesday' and it happened Tuesday, nobody would be disturbed; they wouldn't necessarily see anything the matter, whereas if you said 'November eleventh, 1967,' although it was correct they might be extremely puzzled.

One could go through various sorts of questions and consider this sort of issue. Like in a telephone call announcing that somebody died, what sorts of answers would be appropriate, and how would they vary? It isn't a matter of the 'style' of a person, or a free choice of which one to pick. And there are clearly things that seem hardly different, which one just wouldn't dream of doing. They might be polemically similar, but not at all equivalent. I say 'polemically' in this case with respect to 'Tuesday' and 'November eleventh, 1967'. A logician would propose that 'November eleventh, 1967' is, e.g.,

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[1] Sacks doesn't say just what Problem 2 is, but may have been to do some consideration of the fit between the members of a pair. See, e.g. lecture 9.

'the clearer answer,' and can replace 'Tuesday.' To be sure, there are places where it can. But there are others where, if we're talking about developing a notion of 'synonyms' that captures how conversation must proceed with respect to equivalences, then they're just not equivalent.

One interest of such a matter is that, say, a program for a kind of ethnographic semantics might consist of, 'Ask a question repeatedly, you'll get an answer on each occasion. Treat the set of answers as defining a domain, and then you can see, e.g., what is an eligible answer to that question.' That would be clearly absurd in certain senses, since those answers would not be equivalent in the sense that on the occasion that answer A came, answer B could also come and be accepted. The *location* of a question might well be quite a crucial matter with respect to the eligibility of an answer. It would be quite crucial in a series of ways. It's not simply that somebody will or will not understand it or accept it, but the criteriality of such little items can be enormous. People will make a great deal of what you might consider to be a minor failing, such that, e.g., it's a most routine thing in psychiatric hospitals when, say, a doctor is going around in the morning after a weekend in which people have been picked up to decide whether they should be committed, held for observation, released, for the whole procedure to take place by the exchange of one question–answer sequence. He'll come in and say "What day is it?" Some answers are enough to have him walk out and say "Keep that guy." We must come to see that what's involved is that the relevancies are so powerful and so extensive, that it's a perfectly good way to decide. It's not something to get shocked about. It's that if anybody could make a failing like that, i.e., pick the wrong order of answer, then they're just not normal. And such procedures are routinely used. A hostess can decide whether somebody's an eligible upper-class fellow by rather slight matters, seen once. There is that order of redundancy in social organization. There are millions of items that are perfectly criterial. It's not that you can go up the street any way you want, as long as you stop at the red light, but that you will proceed properly with each detail. Each item, e.g., each answer, might well be something upon which someone could take you apart, or figure that you're joking. The answer "Tuesday," to the question "When did you have the cast taken off?" is not just, well, that was a good answer.

Let me give another sort of thing of this order. I have a big fascination with something related to things like 'Tuesday' and 'November eleventh, 1967.' It concerns uses of numbers – among Americans, though apparently it's the case for other places as well. The use of numbers seem to be divided into two sorts, 'approximate numbers' and 'precise numbers.' Now all numbers could be considered equally precise, I suppose, but if you want to do something approximate you use 15, and if you want to do something precise you use 19. And they're received that way. If you say 'I'll be there at 9:00' or 'I'll be there 9:30,' it's a perfectly acceptable thing to say, and if you arrive at 9:40 it's unnoticeable. If you say 'I'll be there at 9:32,' people will ask you why you've given such a precise number, and they'll figure that you're going to be there something closer to 9:32 than they would expect if you'd said 9:30, though

9:30 is just as good a number as 9:32.

In the GTS data, Louise is 'always late.' She's late this time and somebody has made a prediction about her arrival. She comes into the room and he says "19 minutes right on the nose!" and someone else says "You're 13 seconds late today Louise." First of all, the guy who said "19 minutes right on the nose!" didn't have a watch. But that's irrelevant. The thing is, the way he deals with the fact that he made a prediction, and that her behavior is predictable, is to choose as his way of characterizing the time of her arrival, a 'precise number.' Whether or not she was precisely 19 minutes late is not the issue. But the way that you make something 'precise' is by using 'precise numbers.' And the other fellow picks up just that feature to show how little she had to be off to be noticed in this place, by his "13 seconds."

And in that regard, then, it's also the case that number selection for various purposes is not random; it involves various other sorts of matters. 9:00 and 9:01 are not very far apart, but they're quite different sorts of numbers. The occurrence of things like 'Tuesday' and 'November eleventh, 1967, and 'Nine o'clock' and 'Nine oh one,' in talk, are matters which you'd never get at a way of focussing on if you were looking for something exceptional as a handle. For one, there are few errors made about these things. And also, the sheer appropriateness of such an answer as 'Tuesday' beguiles you into figuring that there could be nothing interesting present in its being done.

What I'm saying, then, is that one of the things you can look to with respect to the issue of, say, the fit between a question and an answer, is the order of object an 'answer' is. Then take the given answer, consider it as a case of some sort of class, consider other sorts of classes that have more or less obvious relations to the first, as, e.g., 9:00 and 9:12 have obvious relations, 'Tuesday' and 'November eleventh, 1967' have obvious relations, and see whether they're routinely alternatively usable. If they're not, but it's that in one place one is usable and in another place another is usable, you begin to go somewhere. And not only somewhere which deals in particular with, e.g., the fit between a question and an answer, but which also gives you a really direct intuitive sense of the tremendous amount of regulation that's just unavailable in the first instance. But once you see it, it's like two computers talking to each other; it just doesn't fail. And the failing, when it happens, is very very shocking. You can get a rise by just making a slight variation.

So that's another area of research; roughly, non-equivalences between obviously related and polemically equivalent objects. Then, of course, we have to try to get at what it is that controls the use of one or another of the non-equivalent items in any given case. For example, in the case of "When did you have the cast taken off?" "Tuesday," they meet every Saturday; last Saturday he had the cast on his arm, now he doesn't, etc. Now these are lay observations. The issue is to extract from them such things as relevancy constraints, etc.

You could also begin to ask, e.g., why does he ask the question in the first place? And that could be terribly relevant to the sort of answer it gets. Now, following that Q-A exchange, the next question is, "Feel a little better with

it off now?'' and the answer is "Mm hm! C'n write 'n everything." That's a more accessible case of a thing about which you can begin to ask why in the world was that question asked, after all, he perfectly well knows what the answer is; it isn't that he's looking to see whether the guy's going to say "No I don't feel better."

For one, there's a matter of fit here; that is, if somebody says a thing like "Feel a little better with it off now?" you're not going to get as the answer, "Yes" period. You're going to get 'yes' plus something.

And something that's kind of curious about that question is that there's a nice relationship between asking it and knowing the answer. There's a relatively short period, let's say, for talking about a broken arm, where you can ask the question "Feel a little better with it off now?" and get an answer. If he waited three weeks, while he might be certain that the guy feels better now, the guy wouldn't be tracking how he feels now, relative to the period when he had the broken arm. There's a limited period in which he has available to him how he feels relative to when he had the cast on his arm. Later he'll surely feel better, but he won't be having feelings relative to how he felt then and how he feels now. In that regard, it's important to place the question at such a point at which the answer is obvious. It's not that later the answer is unobvious, it's that later there's not an answer.

The question is being used as, e.g., a way of showing interest or various other things like that. And one way that you show 'interest' is to, upon the occurrence of a change, ask a question which turns on the fact that you noticed that, e.g., last week he had a cast and this week he doesn't. And not just any question which would involve that noticing is equally eligible, like "What happened to the cast?" could be heard as proposing he'd done something wrong, took it off too early, etc.

One thing I'm leading up to is that the question form, while it can be sequentially relevant, can select a next action, can provide for an 'answer' as an appropriate next action, it can be used to do a large number of other actions that are also sequentially relevant for next pair members, etc. And by locating which other actions, besides the 'question' are being dealt with, you can regularly deal with the sort of answer that occurs – not merely that 'an answer' occurs, but some features of the sort of answer that will occur. For example:

A: Anyone want a piece of gum?
B: No thanks.

Now, if B were 'answering the question,' we could ask where does B come to know that nobody wants a piece of gum? B clearly isn't saying 'Nobody wants a piece of gum,' he's clearly not 'answering the question,' he's 'declining an offer.' That is to say, the question *form* is used to make an offer. The class of answers is not located by a semantic formulation of 'yes' or 'no' as possible answers, but by what it is that are appropriate actions, given that an offer has been done. For an offer, each person can decline by themselves; 'No thanks'

can mean just that. You don't get into arguments in which B says 'No thanks' to A's question, and C says 'What do you mean, no thanks, *I* want one.'

That sort of situation in which some other class of actions besides the fact of the question, is involved in the use of the question as a form, can be, of course, a great arena for making jokes. There is also the possibility of confusion. I have some data in which a teacher in class says "How many people don't have paper?" Some people stick up their hands. One kid sits there, looks around, and says "Five." That is to say, the question, "How many people don't have paper?" provides for an answer, but the question isn't intended as that sort of a thing.

So one of the things one wants to do is to locate what other actions besides 'a question' is being done, so as to deal with the fit between the question and 'its answer.' One can, of course, also use the answer to deal with what sort of thing was seen to be done via the question. So, at one point we have a question, "What are you getting at Roger?" and Roger says "Nothing " and then goes on, "He just keeps telling us how much he owns . . . etc ." Now, 'What are you getting at?' is of some interest, but it seems that the answer 'Nothing' can be used to firm up one's view that the question is heard as an 'accusation.' 'Nothing' is one of the prototypical accusation returns, i.e., denial. Then there is that stuff I mentioned in an earlier lecture: "Are you studying?" "No I'm just reading," where the work of 'just' turns on an orientation to the question as a 'pre-invitation.'

Now I don't mean to say that the only way one can deal with the fit between such things is by reference to these also-actions that are done via the question form, but that's one way one can often get a handle on it. And of course this is just the beginning of what an analysis of these sorts of things would look like. It can be seen as an illustrative start.

I've been differentiating between those things for which, to be effective, placing is crucial for a tied utterance, and those things for which it's not as crucial. There are a couple of sorts of utterances for which the definitive feature of them is their placing. And they have some interesting consequences, given that placing is so crucial for them. The first is *laughter*. Laughing is the sort of thing that, when it's done it will be heard as tied to the last thing said. In that regard, if laughing were the sort of thing that, as is the case with most other sorts of utterances, you had a race to get it into the conversation, then, unlike other things, you couldn't do it at all if you'd lost, i.e., you can't postpone the laugh, and laugh after the next utterance.

And in that regard, laughing is the most widely occurrent sort of thing which one can do without regard to 'one party at a time.' If somebody is laughing after a joke, you can laugh also. You can laugh if somebody starts up talking. And of course, not just after a joke, but after any utterance for which laughter might be appropriate. Laughing is one prototypical thing that people can be doing together at the same time, making sounds without violating the 'one party at a time' rule. Affiliated to it are considerations like, to bring off the effectiveness of a laugh, it has to be done directly after the utterance it's laughing at. It will always be heard as that, such that if you

laugh after the next utterance, then, if that utterance didn't have laughter as one of the alternative appropriate next actions, people will ask why you're laughing, assuming that you're laughing at that one, and you have to name the utterance you're laughing at and, e.g., indicate that you just now got it, etc . And if there was nothing available that people figured to be laughable at, and you laughed, then they would take it that something needed accounting for.

That is to say: Whereas for lots of tying techniques, if you say 'he,' and in the last utterance there is nothing that 'he' could tie to, then a search procedure will be engaged in. It's a fundamental feature of tying techniques that people will search for the items that a given tying utterance can tie to, and can search very far to find it. They don't do that for laughter. There may be slight possibilities, but regularly, if you laugh and others don't figure the last thing said to be laughable at, they don't go back into the conversation to find some utterance five lines back that was laughable, and take it that that's what you're laughing at. And you'll specifically get things like, "I didn't intend that to be funny," and somebody else will say, "I wasn't laughing at that, I just got what Harry said," or "I just thought of something funny," or whatever. In any event, you don't just laugh. You laugh at something that happened *here,* and it's that you're laughing about. And again, the fact that someone else is laughing doesn't exclude you from laughing. Also, somebody doesn't select who can laugh. And if they've selected a next speaker, that doesn't effect laughter.

It is then interesting that on the one hand, laughing is that sort of event which has no possibility or very limited possibility of effectively occurring with delay. But then there is also the feature that you don't *have* to delay; i.e., laughing is a prototypical case in which the 'not more than one party at a time' rule is specifically not in operation.

Another sort of utterance for which placing may be definitive, is '*Uh huh.*' It's such a tremendously used thing and it's obviously a tying term, i.e., it would be heard that 'uh huh' ties to some last utterance, clause, phrase. Now, it would be difficult to say that 'uh huh' exhibits understanding. Is there *anything* that 'uh huh' does show? One thing at least, is that the placing of 'uh huh' is important. 'Uh huh' is carefully placed at things like grammatical units – after clauses, after phrases, after various intonation sequences – and they show that sort of attention, anyway. Indeed, it's very hard to misplace 'uh huh,' to delay it or shoot it out ahead of a clause-completion, etc .

If they are placed at things like grammatical stopping points within larger units, then that sort of attention is non-trivial, and their marking of those sorts of things could be of interest with respect to the analyses that persons are doing of utterances, that they later show via, say, some more extended kind of utterance. But you don't say that when somebody says 'uh huh,' they understood the point of some utterance. There are ways in which, e.g., 'He *did?*' shows something which 'uh huh' does not, since 'He *did?*' would have had to involve attention to the named actor being male, and the action being such that has 'did' as its pro-term. So you can go wrong with 'He *did?*' for

sure. But you can also go wrong with 'uh huh.' The way you go wrong with 'uh huh' is to not have been listening, and the person is setting you up for the classic cartoon joke in which the wife at the breakfast table puts in a question that 'uh huh' is not an answer to, gets 'uh huh' and puts it to him that he's not been listening.

Part VII

Spring 1968

Note

The Spring 1968 quarter was done as a seminar. Now and then Sacks would present something, and some of those presentations were transcribed. And while some of those were lengthy, on one occasion Sacks spoke for a few minutes and then seminar activities were taken up. That is the May 22 lecture in this set, which is very short.

April 17
Topic

I'm going to talk about 'topic' in conversation. Rather than focussing on the current state of the reasearch, I'll try to give some idea of the sorts of ways the thing got going. I'll be making some points, where the sorts of things I'll be saying could be very much extended in all sorts of ways, i.e., I'll only be picking at bits and pieces of a thing that is massively present.

In the first instance I was leery of beginning to do work on the phenomenon of 'topic' by virtue of its seeming to be that sort of thing in which direct content considerations would obviously be involved, and where I couldn't proceed in my usual fashion, which would be to try to extract relatively formal procedures which persons seem to use in doing whatever they are doing. I suppose I had that leeriness about 'topic,' not by virtue of the phenomenon itself, but by virtue of that 'topic' would be that thing about conversation which, say, lay persons, beginning researchers, psychiatrists, etc., would feel most at home in talking about and, looking at a piece of conversation, could feel that that's something they could start right off talking about, i.e., the 'topics' in it – their logic, their stupidity, the ways they were discussed, and things like that. That is to say, it would be prominently in terms of 'topic' that, say, 'content analysis' would be done. So I suppose it was for that reason, and not by virtue of looking at a 'topic' and seeing, e.g., 'Well, here you'd certainly be involved in content considerations,' that I avoided it.

Dell Hymes said something like "It's a curious feature of particularly linguistic history, that at each point where work has been done, what had previously been thought to be content considerations turned out to be formal considerations. But the next area looked like it was pure content consideration." And when we get into it, we find out that it's an area in which the structure was, e.g., invariant to some extent over various sorts of content considerations. So, had we used that sort of a guideline, perhaps 'topic' wouldn't have been such a thing that one tries to avoid.

I got into it in the following way. One day, looking at a telephone conversation where the caller wants to rent a house from the callee, I found thise sequence:

A: When can we see it.
B: I'll tell you, uh the woman who lives there now, uh will be there for a while, and I haven't arranged with her yet to show it . . .

Focussing on ". . . the woman who lives there now . . . ," what kind of a characterization of a person is that?

I feel reasonably confident that in a variety of papers I've shown that characterizations of persons, for example, are in principle selections from alternatives, where the issue is to see for any given characterization of a person, what sort of techniques, considerations, were involved in that particular selection or that class of selections. Now that leads me routinely to focus on characterizations of persons as a place to see if I can make points. When you look at "...the woman who lives there now...," then it seems that it is obviously such a characterization of a person as would refer to somebody being talked of in a discussion of a house for rent. That is to say, it's perfectly nicely fitted to characterizing a person when they live in a house for rent. We note of course that this person could be referred to in a variety of other ways, and indeed in other places in the conversation she's referred to in other ways. So that, e.g., when it's being explained how come she's moving, she's called a 'widow.' At other places she's called a 'tenant,' and she could be called numerous other things, were other sorts of 'topics' up in the conversation.

Now if we ask the question how do persons go about doing topical talk – that is to say, what in their talk involves the accomplishing of that they are 'talking topically'? – one perhaps general suggestion that can be made is, look to the identification of – at least in the first place – persons that they make, and see if they don't use those identifications as specific means for doing their topical business. That is, identifications may be – among other things of course, since identifications are selected in lots of other ways and do lots of other things – 'topic carriers' so to speak; places in an utterance where a person puts in their attention to the topicalized character of the conversation. And furthermore, one can specifically see that if you take such pieces of talk, you can put in perfectly good identifications of a person which are nonetheless strange by virtue of not fitting the topic. So identifications of persons specifically bear this use, and are one locus in an utterance where, that you are doing topical talk is shown. And one may see more or less ingenious, elaborate techniques used to identify someone which involve, specifically, attention to the topic at hand. So it's at least a research clue.

Many other types of characterizations, i.e., of other than persons, also have the feature that the given thing can be characterized in a series of different ways. And one might then see if, say, other nominal parts of an utterance also bear specific topical use. And it seems to be so. One extremely lovely sort of area for topical use is the naming of places. Looking at the naming of places, one can get very strongly brought home that persons select characterizations by reference to the topic at hand. Here's a piece of conversation, a phone call.

A: Hello,
B: Jeanette,
A: Yeah.
B: Well I just thought I'd better report to you what's happened at Bullock's today.
A: What in the world happened.
     . . .

> B: Well I got out to my car at five thirty I drove around and at first I had
>   to go by the front of the store,
> A: Yeah?
> B: And there were two police cars across the street.

That the police cars were parked "across the street" from Bullock's is a
characterization fitted to the discussion's being about "what happened at
Bullock's." Were the discussion about, say, what happened at Campbell's,
which is across the street from Bullock's, then it might be that 'there were two
police cars parked out in front.' And the police cars could have been parked
'around the corner' from some other place. That is to say, the phenomenon of
being parked 'across the street from' is obviously one sort of characterization
which turns not only on where you are, but what it is that's being talked
about, and where that is.

Where a place is is a great vehicle for presenting an orientation to a topic.
So, for example, you can find that if you're invited somewhere, then 'where
a place is' may be characterized in terms of "it's not too far from you." If
you're offered a job that you don't want, 'where a place is' may be "much too
far away," "a very long drive." If a place is for rent, 'where it is' can involve
that it has nice neighbors, that it's in a given school district, and the like. That
is then to say, roughly, that when place characterizations are done one will
often find that the details of those place characterizations are illuminatable by
consideration of that they are selected by reference to a topic. Same place,
different topic, different characterization in detail. One sees, then, that a
phrase like "across the street" is doing some neat business. It's not a nothing
in talk, just thrown in, what other way could you talk about it, stylistic, etc.,
but it is one thing that is used by persons to go about doing 'talking topically.'

Another sort of thing which I think will turn out to be in its fashion rather
generalizable, is the relationship between ages and age classes. And the way
I figure it will be generalizable will be by reference to other items and their
class locuses. In the case of age and age classes, one finds that in some
independence of the age, the age class a person is in turns on the topic with
respect to which they're being talked of.

> A: She's quite a young woman, only in her fifties.

In this case, that characterization is sensible by virtue of that she just died.
She's in her fifties, a young woman. The topic is her death, not that she just
got married. What would then seem to be the 'topic vehicle' is the age class.
That is, the age itself may well not be subject to selection – the person has an
age. But one way you can exhibit attention to the topic at hand is by
presenting such an age class for that age that, given the topic, involves there
being a distinctive relationship. For that age, for that occurrence, select X age
class as an appropriate way to characterize a person. "Quite young" (15 years
old). "Quite old" (6 years old). Both of which are perfectly usable sorts of
statements turning on what is being talked of. "It's quite old" (1960). "It's

quite old" (1840). "It's quite new" (1712). Whatever combinations. These are ways of exhibiting attention to topic.

With this at hand one begins to see conversational materials chock full of technical topical features, i.e., ways of doing an orientation to topic which are actually present, descriptively available; where seeing them involves seeing things about the details of talk. Let me now draw a consequence, i.e., show a piece of data that is directly illuminated by such considerations. The fragment I'm interested in goes like this:

> *A*: Uh my number is uh here at the store is five seven four one oh::
> *B*: Five,
>   (3.0)
> *A*: –seven, four, one oh and just // ask–
> *B*: Five seven four one oh.
> *A*: Uh huh, and just ask for Audrey.
> *B*: Audrey.
> *A*: And if I'm not here, just leave a message you know, don't say that it's for Avon, just leave a message for Audrey to call or sump'n.

What would seem to be involved is Audrey taking it that when a message will be left for her, the topic of the message will be used to select the identification involved. That topic might lead to the presentation of the identification 'Avon,' and she doesn't want the boss to know that she works for Avon in her spare time, or on her company time. What we see, then, is an instruction generated by reference to suppositions about how the identification will be made, for an identification not yet made. This suggests that Members suppose that there is some generality to the use of topics for the construction of identifications.

Let me give a long quotation which is relevant at this point. This is from an article entitled 'The language of Achilles,' by Adam Perry in G. S. Kirk (ed.), *The Language and Background of Homer.*

> I wish in this paper to explore some of the implications of the formulaic theory of Greek epic verse. In doing so I shall take the theory itself for granted. Let us first consider a famous passage from the end of the eighth book of the *Iliad*, the one describing the Trojan watchfires . . . .
>
> These lines can be shown by an examination of parallel passages, to be almost entirely made up of formulaic elements. That they are so amazingly beautiful is of course the consequence of Homer's art in arranging these formulae. But I wish to speak now of the quality of their beauty. Here's a straight English translation:
>
> "And they with high thoughts upon the bridges of war sat all night long. And they had fires burning in great numbers. As when in heaven the stars around the splendid moon shine out clear and brilliant when the upper air is still. And all the lookout places are visible in the steep promontories and the mountain dells. And from heaven downward the

infinite air breaks open. And the shepherd is delighted in his heart. So many, between the ships and the streams of Xanthis, were the Trojans burning shining fires before the walls of Ilium. A thousand of them were burning in the plain. And by each one was sitting fifty men, in the light of the blazing fire. And the horses munching white barley and wheat stood by the chariots, awaiting the throne of dawn."

The feeling of this passage is that the multitude of Trojan watchfires is something marvelous and brilliant, that fills the heart with gladness. But this description, we remember, comes at the point in the story where the situation of the Achaeans is for the first time obviously perilous. And it is followed by the ninth book, where Agamemnon in desparation makes his extravagant and vain offer to Achilles if he will save the army.

The imminent disaster of the Achaeans is embodied in these very fires. Yet Homer pauses in the dramatic trajectory of his narrative to represent, not the horror of the fires, but their glory. I suggest that this is due precisely to the formulaic language he employs. There is a single best way to describe a multitude of shining fires. There are established phrases, each with its special economical purpose, to compose such a description. Homer may arrange these with consummate art, but the nature of his craft does not incline him, or even allow him, to change them or in any way to present the particular dramatic significance of the fires, in the situation. Instead he presents the constant qualities of all such fires.

Then he has a footnote:

A comparison with Alexander Pope's translation makes this strikingly clear. Mr Pope turns the bright and beautiful fires into a nightmare. The formulaic lines 562 and 563 for example, become "A thousand piles of dusky horrors gilt, and shoot a shady luster o'er the field. Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend, whose umbered arms by fits thick flashes send." Pope's lines are not to be despised. His turning the description to dramatic account is in full agreement with modern literary standards and is very appropriate to an art that is unlike Homer's.

That is to say that the difference there is that, given for some particular noun, some adjective or group of adjectives which invariably go with it by virtue of metrical considerations, one wouldn't have an adapting of the characterizing phrases (e.g., the adjectives) done by virtue of, say, the topic at hand. So these selectional features can be deeply relevant and deeply discriminative.

Having turned our attention to identifications – of persons, objects, places, etc. – we've seen that an orientation to topic will permit us to see features of the details of those things which were not available, which show us how, that one is talking topically, is attended and exhibited. We can now move on a bit

from considerations about single identifications, single characterizations, to strings of them. Here's a little fragment. They've been talking about cigars:

A: An' yer supposed to light it off yer boot.
     ((laughter))
A: If yer gonna be a politician, you better learn how to smoke cigars.
B: Yeah that's an idea Rog,
C: I heard a very astounding thing about pipes last night.

The general point I offer is that one basic way that 'topical talk' is exhibited involves the use of the following sorts of things: A given part of an utterance can be analyzed to find that it has some (actually many) class statuses. Having found some class status for that given item, one may in the next utterance present such a term as stands in co-class membership with a term used in the last. So A talks about cigars, B can talk about pipes.

In fact, one of the most general ways that attention to topic is done is via the use of co-class membership. It's a perfectly obvious sort of thing, once one sees it, by virtue of reasons like: The various objects that are members of lists of classes can have co-class membership as the most obvious way in which any given items may be related; where, then, presenting a second after a first, one shows some attention to the first. Now it really isn't very discriminative to say that, e.g., pipes and cigars are co-class members – cigars and horses may be co-class members also. One would like to do a lot better than that though it is not to be doubted that some strong co-class uses are utterly prevalent ways that persons go about doing topical talk. So, how to go about getting some sharper sorts of findings than merely to say that co-class membership is used? While there are lots of 'natural' classes, such that if I gave a class, someone could give me a list of members, I could give members which I suppose could be a puzzle, at least until I named the class – and that class would turn out to be a class for a topic. That is, some items are co-class members by virtue of being members of a class for a topic, and it's when that topic is up that they're used sequentially:

A: I have a fourteen year old son.
B: Well that's alright.
A: I also have a dog.
B: Oh, I'm sorry.

Where the status of kids and dogs as co-class members may turn on that you're renting an apartment; otherwise they may be a strange pair. There are lots of strange bedfellows in that way, which are produced as routinely topically related items for given topics. In this case, kids and pets are possible disqualifiers for renting an apartment. And one may get a sequence like:

A: What's your name?
B: My name is Mrs Smith, my husband is Dr Smith.

Why is "Dr Smith" in there? That stands in alternation to the 'possible disqualifier' as a possible extra qualifier for renting a house. And notice we have "I have a child, fourteen," not just 'a child,' but 'a child fourteen,' in that for some rentals, where young children are disqualifiers, teenage children are not. So there are, it seems, more specific relationships between items than just that they are co-class members for something. They can be co-class members for some topic.

I don't have anything very good on ways of doing discrimination; what I want to present are some sorts of materials which suggest that persons are attentive to making rather discriminative class uses. A guy will say "I was at County Line yesterday" (County Line being a place where people go surfing) and not, e.g., "I went surfing yesterday." There's a big difference between "I was at County Line yesterday" and "I was surfing yesterday." If a hearer does a class analysis of "I was surfing yesterday," then he can produce as a *topically coherent* utterance, "I went for a ride yesterday" or "I didn't do anything yesterday."

Apparently when one says "I was at County Line yesterday" – where of course it will only be said to colleagues; people you figure are also surfers – then one gets specifically a discussion about what surfing conditions were like over the weekend along the Southern California coast: "I was at County Line yesterday" "Yeah, I was at Malibu" "How was it?" "Too low tide," etc. It appears that the place focus doesn't provide for the generation of other activities as topically coherent next utterances whereas an activity name might be treated as 'one activity' which could suggest that one would be talking topically if one presents another activity. Routinely if you say, e.g., "I went to the movies last night," then the other person can perfectly well say what they did last night without it having any relationship to what you said, except that they did it last night. But some characterizations, like "I was at County Line yesterday" – and there may be others which have similar properties – don't seem to have that sort of generative character, but seem to provide for talk about, in this case, surfing. That may turn on the fact that in the first instance that analysis of "I was at County Line yesterday" involves discovering that it's 'surfing' that's the topic.

The problem in part is that any given item naming a class can also be a case of another class. So that, whereas you name the class of activities you were doing when you say "I was surfing," you also set up as a class, activities that anybody was doing, of which 'surfing' is but one case. And it may well be that there are ways that persons go about attempting to focus on some topic. I'll give another thing suggesting the same sort of issue, in very different data: Putting somebody down, people regularly say things like "I like her but she's an awful nag." One thing that may be involved there is that if one say "Mary is an awful nag," then one may be setting up things like 'someone else is an awful nag,' 'other rotten things about Mary,' etc. If one wants to focus on that Mary's an awful nag, then it may be that one indicates by such a thing as "I like her but..." that that's what's being proposed and not, e.g., that you don't like Mary and now a list of rotten things about Mary is up.

But I'm focussing on asking what properties names of places might have for topic discussions, which can perhaps serve to make names of places peculiarly usable sorts of things, and which perhaps give a different direction to a conversation than a name of an activity might. I'm interested in that because in the first instance I've wanted to puzzle over one crude sort of fact – that lots of intended announcements of activity are not done via activity names but via place names, e.g., "I'm going to the bathroom." Then there are certain eerie attributes of place names, turning on place names and memory. It's relevant to at least bring it up now because topic and memory will turn out to be deeply related matters. And one of the great things about the topical organization of talk is how that is fundamental to the operation of our socialized memory.

Places and memory are really terribly interesting things. Here's a story from a book called *The Art of Memory* by Frances Yates. The book is interesting for the following sorts of reasons. The art of memory was a major discipline educationally, until writing became the phenomenon it did. (In that regard, one of the big arguments about Homer has been, could that possibly have been an oral presentation, i.e., could anybody have memorized 30,000 lines so as to spiel them out? The idea was that if anybody tries to do it nowadays they can't begin to do it. But investigations were done on those oral poets who exist now – they're dying out – and it was found that particularly the Slavic oral poets could indeed memorize enormously long poems, under one condition – that they didn't know how to read. If they learned how to read, they couldn't do it thereafter.)

But there were many treatises on memory and attempts to teach memory, up until the 18th and 19th century, but particularly in Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages. And all that knowledge about the technology of memory has been lost; a whole literature is unknown to us. One has to be jogged into realizing that for everybody until recently, pretty much all of knowledge was stored in their heads and not stored in books, and that might have been a fact about which they developed technical knowledge. In fact, I should imagine that any sociologist who brings himself to a moment's thought about the matter would figure that for most people *now*, almost all knowledge is still stored in their heads, and therefore techniques of memory are fundamental things. One could figure that you ought to turn to modern psychology to find work on it, and that might be so, but apparently the phenomenon of memory has been just forgotten.

Frances Yates discusses this classical literature on memory. She's an art historian, and the reason why an art historian should be studying memory is that the major textbooks on memory in those days dealt with, as the major technique for doing memorizing, the use of places as memory objects. The idea was, roughly, that a building, say a church, could be conceived as a space for storing memories. You would to into it and examine its contents from left to right, setting up relationships between the statues, pictures, etc., or the various rooms, and memorize a set of things by reference to the architecture. And lots of places were built specifically for mnemonic purposes.

One of the more astounding things that emerges from the study of this stuff is that, where memory involved things that are sinful to do and things that you ought to do, then the way you remembered commandments and sins was to associate with each an appropriate image. And these images were constructed. Something awful for sin, something beautiful for a commandment. A consequence of that is that it was only after a while that anybody came to believe in a place like Hell. In fact it was a mnemonic technique devised with a specific knowledge that nobody believed that there was such a real thing. It was constructed to store the sins in a spatial way; a way that could be remembered. And that would then lead to an interpretation of Dante as someone who devised the most elaborate, efficient mnemonic technique. His presentation of the horrors of Hell affiliates each person in each place with a given sin, etc. It's kind of interesting because it's a view that doesn't make people out to be blind superstitious idiots, but treats them as having technical problems to be solved.

Now the story in this book has it that some poet was at a dinner. He got into a fight and was kicked out. There was a fire and everybody was destroyed. And now they wanted to know who was there, and they asked him. He found that if he pictured the dinner, he could find at which place each person was. And he went down around the table to remember who was there, by remembering how they were arranged. That theory of memory was taught by Aristotle thereafter, but this poet is treated as the discoverer of the art of memory, and the phenomenon of the relationship of places and memory is treated as crucial.

It still is crucial, there's no doubt about it. The mention of a place can specifically evoke – directly, immediately – memories tied to that place, where mentioning an action that took place may not give you anything. When you say "I was at County Line yesterday" you often get people coming up with occurrences at County Line that may have occurred a long time ago. That is to say, they're stored by reference to, or are available by reference to having occurred at County Line. We might consider whether this is at all relevant to things like alumni meetings, where common experiences at that place are up, and those memories turn out to be available over rather a long time with no particular reinforcement over the intervening period. And if you've had any experience with young children you've seen support for the idea that places and memory are very strongly related. That is, very young kids will routinely say, when you're driving around with them, "Weren't we here before? There was a man standing there with a dog." The kid is four years old and you passed by that spot six months ago. Kids have strong, immediately generative (i.e., not having to be thought out) place memories. For the natural power of the relationship between place and memory, nothing is better than little kids, who are really awesome at it. In this regard I should think that memory is not that sort of cultural variable which involves that people can do it at one time and can't do it at another, but perhaps is something which is naturally available and could be improved.

In any event, the relevance of place in conversation has, as I say, this kind

of eerie interest. One is dealing with something neat, and when addressing oneself to it one should do so with proper respect.

I want now to deal with two more issues related to persons engaging in class analysis of terms and using that class analysis of terms in producing their next utterance. The first is what I'll call 'touched-off' utterances and the second concerns the phenomenon of sub-topical talk. Both of these are involved in the class-status phenomenon for terms. Now when I talk of '*touched-off*' *utterances* I'm talking about those utterances which are signalled as such. People have ways of signalling that, e.g., "Hey!," "Oh by the way," etc. Such things are not used only to signal touched-off utterances, but they are used for that.

What's interesting about many of these signalled touched-off utterances is not that they're signalled, but why they're signalled. And that is, they would many times pass, perhaps, as 'topical talk.'

> *A:* Hey. Putcher shoes back on, c'mon I c'n smell you all the way over here.
> *B:* It's good fer // yuh.
> *C:* It's <u>yer</u> problem. --(1.0)-- It'll grow hair on yer chest.
> *A:* God any more hair on muh chest an' I'd be a fuzz boy.
> *B:* 'D be a <u>what</u>.
> *C:* A // fuzz boy.
> *A:* Fuzz boy.
> *B:* What's that.
> *A:* Fuzz mop.
> *C:* Then you'd have t'start shaving.
> (1.0)
> *B:* Hey I shaved this morni– I mean last night for you.

In the touched-off utterances we regularly have that some content word from the last utterance recurs in the next. C mentions shaving, B says "I shaved." Where that could be, it seems, perfectly well heard as topically coherent. But the speaker produces it as topically non-coherent.

Apparently what's happening is that they're analyzing the prior utterance, "Then you'd have to start shaving," in which, say, 'shave' will play a role, but in which it will be analyzed to find some class it's a case of, so as to use that result to generate a next item which contains another case of that class. But before they've gotten to that point, the word they're going to use to produce the analysis has produced a thought for them – where we seem to have a case of remembering, where memory is touched off by the word. Now, they see both that they have 'a thought,' i.e., a thing that they can say, and that it's nonetheless not such a thing as stands in the appropriate topical relationship – by virtue, in part, of their not having completed the appropriate analysis. Where stopping before the analysis involves a straight retention of the term that would have been used in the analysis but that now simply recurs, with some 'thought' attached to it. That is to say, they seem to be signalling that they've done something 'not fully right,' and that might be that they've

merely taken off with a word that they should use, but should use in a more elaborate fashion.

So then, in the case of 'touched-off' utterances, one seems to get, not co-class members for some item, but the same item. And, that one is giving back the same item might be the source of one's sense of not doing right vis-à-vis topical talk. It certainly isn't at all a matter of such things as you're 'talking about yourself.' People seem, then, to discriminate between touched-off and topically coherent utterances, specifically signalling touched-off utterances where they might not present such a signal with topically coherent utterances. The question is why do they do that, where it's not the case, say, that touched-off utterances stand in no relationship to what was just said, they stand in perfectly obvious relationships to what was just said. Nor is it that touched-off utterances are signalled because they're thoughts you get by virtue of what somebody else says, since almost everything anybody says in conversation is by virtue of a thought they get by virtue of what somebody else says. But it's something you say by virtue of what somebody else says which is perhaps not the thing you should say. And my suspicion is that it has to do with this gross empirical relationship between the two utterances, i.e., that it's a same key term being used.

In that regard, let me just note that talking topically and talking about some topic chosen by another are not the same sort of thing. Talking topically constitutes ways of talking which involve attention to 'topical coherence.' But one could perfectly well have a sequence of talk in which each person talked with an orientation to talking topically, in a topically coherent way with the last, in which nonetheless one would find – if one were engaged in seeing what the topics were, that each person 'talked on a different topic.' That is to say, 'talking topically' doesn't consist of blocks of talk about 'a topic.' And when you present a topic, except under rather special circumstances, you may be assured that others will try to talk topically with what you've talked about, but you can't be assured that the topic you intended was the topic they will talk to. Things like co-class membership are not strong enough phenomena to have that sort of control.

Turning now to *sub-topicals*; if we're not wanting to say very much in terms of 'content,' i.e., about 'what the topic is,' how are we going to be able to say anything about some talk as a 'sub-topic' standing in that class of relationship to 'topics'? It may be that there are formal techniques for doing 'sub-topical talk.' Where one relevance of that could be this sort of thing: There may be ways of introducing a sub-topic which permit the preserving of that thing as a sub-topic for the course of the talk about it, so that it needn't become 'the topic.' Now this may be way off, but let me toss it in:

A: How is Missuz Hooper.
B: Uh oh, about the same.
A: Mm, mm mm mm. Have they uh th–uh Then she's still continuing in the same way.
B: Yes, mm hm.

A: Well, I hope uh he can con– uh can, carry on that way, be//cause–
B: Well he wants to make a chay– a change,

Focussing on "I hope he can carry on," there's no 'he' being talked about; no person that could be referred to via 'he' has been introduced. Who's 'he'? Obviously in this case 'he' is Mr Hooper. The topic is Mrs Hooper's illnes. If that's the topic, Mr Hooper is introduced via Mrs Hooper's illnesss. The introduction of him in such a way as requires the use of Mrs Hooper to find who 'he' is, may be one way that, that Mr Hooper is being talked of 'sub-topically' is done.

Here's another. I'm not sure if it's the same sort of thing, but they're talking about a house for rent:

A: Okay, then we'll just walk down and have a look at it.
B: ⌈Yes.
A: ⌊We'll call you ba//ck.
B: Now I don't know how– uh about the yard, because– she's been alone the last few months.

Focussing on the "the yard," you get uses of object attributes which involve that they don't have to be introduced via some technique that specifically indicates, e.g., it's the yard of the house that's being talked of. There needn't be indication that the house has a yard in the first place. This may be another use of sub-topical techniques.

tape runs out

April 24

Second Stories

A: Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday,

B: Mm hm

A: And on the way home we saw the:: most gosh-awful wreck.

B: Oh::::

A: —we have ev— I've ever seen. I've never seen a car smashed into sm— such a small space.

B: Oh::::

A: It was smashed from the front and the back both it must've been in— caught in between two cars.

B: ⌈Mm hm uh huh
A: ⌊Must've run into a car and then another car smashed into it and there were people laid out and covered over on the pavement.

B: Mh

A: We were s–parked there for quite a while but I was going to listen to the local r–news and haven't done it.

B: No, I haven't had my radio on either.

A: Well I had my television on, but I was listening to uh the blast-off, you know.

B: Mm hm.

A: The uh ah— // astronauts.

B: Yeah

B: Yeah

A: And I–I didn't ever get any <u>local</u> news.

B: Uh huh

A: And I wondered.

B: Uh huh,

B: No, I haven't had it on, and I don't uh get the paper, and uhm

A: It wasn't in the paper last night, I looked.

B: Uh huh.

B: Probably didn't make it.

A: No, no you see this was about three o'clock in the afternoon.

B: ⌈Uh huh
A: ⌊Paper was already off the press.

B: Uh huh

A: Boy, it was a bad one though.

B: Well that's too bad.

A: Kinda // (freak)–

B: You know, I looked and looked in the paper– I think I told you f–
for that uh f–fall over at the Bowl that night. And I never saw a thing
about it, and I // looked in the next couple of evenings.

A: Mm hm
        (1.0)

B: Never saw a th– a mention of it.

A: I didn't see that either.

B: Uh huh.

B: Maybe they kept it out.

A: Mm hm, I expect.

B: Uh huh, deli//berately.

A: Well I'll see you at– at–

B: Tomorrow // night

B: -at six at– hehhehh

I initially focussed on this piece of data via an interest in topics,[1] and also
via an interest in, grossly, the fitting of second utterances to firsts – though in
this case it's really the fitting of a *second story* to a first, the second story
beginning, say, with B's "You know, I looked and looked in the paper . . ."
What I was struck by was how finely the second story picked up at least one
sense of the point of the first. That was attractive, in that I could then make
a series of points about how that story was fitted to the first.

Another sort of interest which made this fragment something I could focus
on, involves seeing how it is that a speaker goes about attending to, orienting
his talk to, some co-participant. Now so much any particular co-participant,
but that the talk is directed to a co-participant. In that regard, the beginning
of the first story seemed particularly attractive, i.e., it begins with a 'request
for information,' "Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear
anything on the local radio . . . ," and the story, in this light, is told to permit
the request for information to be satisfied – or if it can't be satisfied, to at least
be educatedly rejected.

So right off we don't just get a story told, or, e.g., "I saw an interesting
thing," but the story is introduced via a request for help, where the other is
then put into the position of one who might give help. The story is told, then,
at least in part by virtue of such a request's being made to that other; it's not
just the telling of a story. That is to say, we have the idea that 'making a
request' is more specifically interactional than 'telling a story,' where telling a
story can be done to an audience which needn't attend it by reference to their
producing a next action specifically directed to that story when it's finished.
Telling a story can be done in a newspaper, it can be done over the radio, it
can be written, etc. And we wouldn't feel that, e.g., it wasn't properly a
'story.' But a 'request' is a more specifically interactional phenomenon. And
this story is, then, introduced via a request.

[1] See Winter 1967, March 9 lecture, pp. 536–7.

That the story is introduced via a 'request' has several secondary interests. One is a common feature of story beginnings – or 'pre-beginnings.' There are ways to begin, which inform a hearer – and intendedly inform a hearer – how to listen so as to find when it will have ended, in such a way that when it will have ended they can signal that they see it has ended, in a way that is related to the way it began. That is to say, roughly, somebody can say, e.g., "I heard the most wonderful thing yesterday." Now, one can apparently listen to find what in the following talk will turn out to have been a candidate 'wonderful thing.' When you've heard what you figure to be the candidate wonderful thing you can then say "How wonderful!" The beginning clues you into what sorts of things you should watch for so as to recognize the end, and also what sort of thing you should announce, having recognized the end.

I have said such beginnings intendedly inform the hearer, and I say 'intendedly inform' for the following sorts of reasons. Regularly the hearer of a story will go through the following sort of sequence: They have, placed 'within' the story, i.e., what turns out to be within the story, utterances recognizing that the story is yet going on; things like "Uh huh," "Mm hm," "Yes," etc. So they get a string of "Mm hm"'s. And then there will be a thing like "How nice," "Oh that's too bad." Now something like "Oh that's too bad" seems to signal that some sort of different ending than the "Uh huh"'s mark has been recognized to have occurred. And indeed, when at some point you get another "Uh huh," then you'll get from the storyteller, "Isn't that nice?" That is to say, the storyteller apparently figures that they've finished the story and it should have been seen as finished; and not only finished, but finished as to the thing that it should be recognized to be, i.e., something that should be followed with "Oh, how nice."

That can be rather subtle sometimes, in that sometimes the hearer picks up one part of a story and not another, and will say "That's good" when the teller will apparently have intended that they pick out another part of it. For example, a lady is renting her house. Now the story she's telling can be heard to be, not that she rented the house within a day of putting an ad in the paper, i.e., so quickly, but that instead of turning it over to a rental agent she put an ad in the paper so as to have some fun and see what would happen. She finishes the story with the fact that the house has been rented, and the hearer says "That's good." She says, "Isn't that *surprizing.*" Where what she had wanted, apparently, was a comment on her experience, and not the efficacy of the transaction. That is, although the other had recognized that she had come to the end, her comment "That's good" was in some sense wrong.

What I'm saying, then, is that one should watch the distribution of "Uh huh"'s and things that are not "Uh huh"'s within a story sequence, by the hearer of a story, and see that things like "That's good," "Isn't that surprizing," etc., seem to be discriminative, not only from the "Uh huh"'s, but between members of the class to which they belong. That is, one of those – "That's good," etc. – will get selected, and will often pick up a pre-announced feature of the story. And that is then to say: How it is that you should talk when you see the story is finished, is told to you at the outset;

where your task is then to see from what was presented, (1) that the story is finished, and (2) that it makes the point it proposed to make. Such procedures are heavily present in story structures, and make things like "That's nice" as compared to "Uh huh" interesting. They also make the relation of the "That's nice"'s and the pre-story information relevant to each other; make them interactionalized phenomena.

You can also attend what sorts of characterizing adjectives are used between what sorts of people. It is apparently the case that some characterizing adjectives in a story can, for some people, be sufficient to tell them what the story is. Such that if you say to somebody "I heard the most terrible thing today," they can say "I heard it too." Or they can come up with the item which properly comes at the end, i.e., one can get interchanges like, "I heard the most terrible thing today." "Oh, wasn't that awful!" This can work for some combinations of people; for others it won't. I take it that this means we can get a grip on the use of characterizing adjectives for stories; that they are socially distributed, and that a story one tells to A as "I heard the most terrible thing," can be told to B with quite a different adjective. That is to say, the adjectives seem to be normative phenomena between groups.

So then, one not only has the pre-beginning to focus on, but also the characterizing adjectives with that pre-beginning, as a possible clue to what the story is, or at least as something that permits monitoring the story so as to see when it will have been over. To support at least part of the point, let met note that if you wanted to be a wise guy you could use these rules in the following sort of way:

A: Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday,
B: Mm hm

Replace "Mm hm" with "Gee no, I didn't see it in the paper." That is to say, that kind of comment is placed when something is presented that suffices as a thing that would have been in the paper, on the radio, etc. And you can misplace it to bring off, e.g., being sarcastic. Or you can fail to place it, to indicate that you don't see that what they take to be a 'news story' is such, i.e., such a thing hasn't yet been presented, 'something terrible' hasn't yet been presented, etc.

The pre-beginning, then – or the beginning, I don't know which to call it – is an interactionally integral part of the story. And it will vary considerably, turning on the participants, i.e., I take it one selects the characterizing adjectives for the pre-beginnings in ways which attend fitting it to who it is you're talking to.

Earlier I said that the *second story* very nicely picks up the point of the first story. I said it via an orientation to the fact that one doesn't listen to a story for what can be treated as 'the topic' of any such story and extracted as the topic of this story, but one listens for the issue of how is it that A is telling this

story to B, where 'topics' should be an interactional phenomenon. That is, it's
not 'a story about an automobile accident.' Rather, we want to ask: What is
it a story about, by virtue of the fact that it's between those two? Stories are
'about' – have to do with – the people who are telling them and hearing
them. That's my orientation.

Now, I have a quotation which I love very dearly, and I'll give it and we'll
take off from there. It's from *Principles of Intensive Psychotherapy* by Freida
Fromm-Reichmann. It's for training therapists, and at some point she says:

> What then are the basic requirements as to the personality and
> professional abilities of a psychiatrist? If I were to answer this question
> in one sentence I would reply, "The psychotherapist must be able to
> listen." This does not appear to be a startling statement, but it is
> intended to be just that. To be able to listen, and to gather information
> from another person, in this other person's own right, without reacting
> along the lines of one's own problems or experience – of which one may
> be reminded, perhaps in a disturbing way – is an art of interpersonal
> exchange which few people are able to practice without special training.
> To be in command of this art is by no means tantamount to actually
> being a good psychiatrist, but it is the prerequisite of all intensive
> psychotherapy.

The idea is that a psychotherapist should be able to listen, and listening
involves hearing and not being reminded of "one's own experiences." And
she says that's something that's very hard to teach people. I was fascinated by
that quotation for the following sorts of reasons. Leaving aside the issue of
being reminded of one's own problems, etc., but just talking about being
reminded of one's own experiences. Is it so, that it's something you have to
teach people? To listen and *not* be reminded? If so, why should that be? Is it
just a matter of 'human psychology' or are there other sorts of things
involved?

It seems that there are other sorts of things involved, and particularly that
listening, in non-psychotherapeutic conversation, involves as its appropriate
task that one listen in such a way as to *be* reminded of one's own experiences.
Why that should be, might be developed along the following lines. One
routine task of participants to a conversation is to be able to show that they
understood something another said. In doing that, what they do in part is to
analyze what the other said so as to then find something to say which can
exhibit, to one who will analyze what this one says, that he has understood
what the other said. And one large source of things to be used to show that
one understands are 'things you already know about,' i.e., things that you are
reminded of.

Now, how do you come to be reminded of them? Apparently you come to
be reminded of them by virtue of your analysis of what it is that the other has
said, which serves to provide for a search for things you know so as to come
up with things that can be analyzed in the same fashion as the thing you

analyzed. That is to say, in hearing what another person says, one is 'reminded of' not just any experiences, but such experiences as an analysis of whatever they say yields. And there are some utterly extraordinary features of this 'reminding' phenomenon, but we want in the first instance to give some flesh to that sort of structure. Can we come up with any of the ways that one does such a hearing?

Here's what I mean: Supppose a story has A, B, C, and D as characters in it. And the teller of the story is one of the characters. And now one is listening to the story, engaging in an analysis of it in such a way as to have oneself reminded of some story. Now let's fiddle with how it is one goes about finding a story that stands in some relation to the story having A, B, C, and D as characters. We could imagine, for example, that all one needs is to find a story in one's memory in which some character occurs, which also occurs in the other's story. And these are not person's names, but character-types. Say, they're characters like 'my neighbor,' 'myself.' 'a man down the street,' and 'a little girl.' And now you tell a story you've been reminded of, in which something happened to a little girl. That's a possibility. We can also add strong constraints: Tell a story which has the characters that the story you're told has. If his story has four such characters, you come back with a story about four such characters. That is to say, your natural search might yield a story which has precisely those characters.

However, it might be that there's some ordering of the characters, which is relevant to the search. If it's a story in which you play some part, then what part is it that you play? You could play any part. Let's say that of the characters A, B, C, and D, the prior storyteller is B. If you consider as a possibility that you can then be any of the four characters in your story, it turns out to generate real possibilities of disruption. If you tell a story about the time you saw an automobile accident and went over and looked at the people who were injured, then if the other guy tells you a story about the time he was in an automobile accident and all these idiots crowded around to look, then that's kind of embarrassing. And it doesn't work that way. People don't, apparently, get reminded of stories that way. What seems to happen is that the character that the teller was in the story they tell you, is the character that you turn out to be in the story that you tell them. So that in the first story here, the teller of it was somebody who saw it, saw it as news, and looked to see if it occurred in the paper and found that it didn't. And in the second, she is reminded of a story in which she is exactly the same character. That then gives us a method of search: Search for such a story as involved you in playing an equivalent role to the storyteller in his story.

Now what's marvelous about that is that in, say, a bland reading of the story, A plays the most minimal role – she was somebody who saw an automobile accident. But by and large you'll find that people don't then come back with stories about some automobile accident they heard about, or that they were in, i.e., they do not just come up with 'another automobile accident,' they tell a story about an automobile accident that they saw. That is to say, the role of the teller is something that is specifically criterial for the

search. Or in any event, that is one procedure of search that generates results, that provides for a story that shows that you understand the point of the prior story. And the point of the prior story is what it is that the co-participant was telling.

It has to do, then, with the ways in which the teller is, in this case, making the automobile wreck into something in her life, via attending it as something she's going to look for in the newspaper, etc. We can see that also in the following sort of thing. The accident occurred somewhere, e.g., on Highway 101 between Oxnard and Ventura, It turns out to have occurred "on the way home." Which is to say, it occurs' in the course of her actions. And that's a rather variable phenomenon, in the sense that had she gone to Los Angeles, the accident might have occurred "on the way back from Los Angeles." You get, then, a lot of business involved in it being her story, part of her life. And that aspect of it is apparently the thing that is extracted from it, that is used to generate the search, and that produces a case in which just such a thing happened to the next speaker. So that being "reminded of one's own experience" can have a rather nice procedural content to it. I don't at all mean to say that there are no other ways to search stories and use the searches to generate memories which are then tellable. And of course it would be nice to find those other ways.

Now to build a story in the way the second one seems to have been done here, is to do rather particular actions. For one, it is to warrant the other story. It is not to make the other lady out to be a nut, which I suppose one could easily enough do, e.g., "Why would you want to hear it on the radio, didn't you have enough just seeing the accident?" Or, as I said before, one might be reminded of an accident one was in and was laying on the pavement and all these people are standing there gawking at you. Again, the selection of characters seems to be a very key sort of thing, considering how disruptive it could be were you to pick another character in the story. And it can be important to the storyteller that they can figure you're such a person as won't pick a disruptive character. It may be crucial as to what stories to tell, i.e., you don't tell one in which the hearer could expectably be the opposite number, in their story. A story about "this nigger comes up to me and says X and I says Y, and where does he come off," is not a story perhaps to be told to such a one as might come up with a similar story from the other side.

And in that way one can see how it is that the second story involves doing an action, e.g., doing 'agreeing,' saying 'you did the right thing,' etc. Notice in this regard that the second story here is delivered with "I think I told you," and that is perhaps not at all incidental. One of the issues may be whether the first should have told that story to the second – not in the sense that she'd be horrified by it, but whether she'd be interested in it. She can confirm her interest by saying another story just like it happened to me, and when it happened to me I told you. Thereby, it was perfectly proper that you tell me this story.

So my case for 'showing understanding,' 'searching experience,' 'seeing the point,' etc., turns on the fact that the second story involves the hearer of the

first turning up a story which stands as an analysis of the other, crucially by virtue of that story involving the teller of the second playing a role, say, precisely similar to the first's, for a story which is similar to the first's. In short, that the teller's place in the story is a key thing for searching one's experience, providing a strong clue as to the sort of search one should do. And if you watch this sort of thing being done, you may well find that a 'similar' story told with the teller playing different roles on different occasions, will generate rememberings differentiated by virtue of which way the story is told. If somebody tells you a story about the time they were in an automobile accident, you may remember the time you fell down the stairs; somebody tells you a story about the time they saw somebody fall down a flight of stairs, you may remember the time you saw an automobile accident. So, of a stock of stories, you'll turn out to remember the one that 'agreed with' what they are telling to you. And with this, we really see that storytelling is an interactional business.

I'll make a parenthetical remark with regard to Fromm-Reichmann's quotation. If it turns out that one is 'naturally reminded' in this way, and, furthermore, that being naturally reminded in this way is a way you show you understand, then it's obvious that you can't merely teach therapists not to be reminded in this way, but you have to give them other sorts of tools for showing that they understand. Here I refer you to the fact that patients – at least beginning patients – in therapy, have as a routine complaint that their psychiatrist doesn't understand them. Now one wonders about the relationship between psychiatrist's 'not understanding' and their not doing these kinds of things. Also, certain sorts of troubled people; e.g., the ones I studied at the suicide prevention center, had as a specific aim that they didn't want psychiatrists, but people who have had similar experiences. The issue seems to be, not that psychiatrists might not have had similar experiences, but that psychiatrists wouldn't tell them about their similar experiences. And I've seen patients go through things like, "Well, you may be healthy now, but tell me, when you were younger did you have experiences like mine?" The offering of a similar experience can, then, be a way of confirming various features of the told experience: It's not unique, you're not alone, you're not crazy to have done it, etc., etc. i.e., you look at the world right. So there's the issue of the normative status of such a search technique as I've offered, and what might be substituted for it if it weren't to be offered.

Let me emphasize that remembering in this specific way is not a task that you get exhausted from. I talk of it as 'work,' I talk about 'selection,' but it's taking place in a way in which the story just 'pops into your head.' You don't look for a story in any conscious way. The story occurs to you, and you speak it out. That is, you naturally produce a story which is like the first – if you have one. Now, if you want to do 'misunderstanding,' or indicate that you have not understood when you have understood, such things seem to take time to do. And one of the things you have to deal with are very powerful time constraints. Where a time delay is often sufficient to signal that you're doing something peculiar.

And of course there is the whole questions of the import of 'pacing' in talk, as a basic set of structures that prevents screwing around. I haven't considered it that much, but just consider the case of 'lying,' where one can in the first instance expect a lie when, having asked someone a question, they pause in a noticeable way before they tell you an answer. And apparently the notion is if they just say something right out, it's not expectably a lie; if there's a pause then it may be a lie. So at least as a methodological rule, I take it that any time you have to screw around with the pacing of talk in order to bring something off, you're in trouble. The pacing requirements of talk are such that they insure a lot of things happening that exhibit routine normative features. For one, sheer pacing variation will disturb others – without regard to anything else. Pauses before answers are annoying. Pauses in the course of stories are annoying. What I'm suggesting, then, is that the pacing rules might constitute quite powerful normative techniques on their own.

May 8
Reason for a call; Tellability

I'll start off talking about the phenomenon 'reason for a call' – having a reason for a call, announcing one has a reason for a call – and move from there to wherever it might lead. The interest is specifically in how we get to take off from it, and the sorts of issues that arise out of consideration of it. I'll begin with some small observations. First, there are some relevance considerations with respect to announcements of a reason for a call.

> *A:* Well of course uhm you known we've had special calls from the girls' club, asking for <u>more</u>.
> *B:* Uh huh
> *A:* Isn't that nice?

For one, there's the matter that might be seen from this first bit of data, that the fact that a call was made with a reason for a call specifically announced in it, may serve as providing for the re-usability of that matter in another call. That is, if A calls B and says something delivered as the reason for the call, then B in talking to C can say, not only that A called and said this and that, but that A called "specially to say" that. So, that there was a reason for a call is a *preservable feature* of a call, in other calls. That doesn't, I take it, hold only for telephone calls. The phrase 'preservable feature of a call in another call' is one to be marked as a sort of thing that one ought to be particularly interested in, i.e., what features of an interaction are preservable features of that interaction for other interactions. We drop into one small corner of territory, of a very large and important issue when we say that the phenomenon 'special reason for a call' is a preservable feature of a contact.

There are some obvious enough features which I'm not particularly going to deal with here, e.g., that announcing that one has a reason for a call can be part of the ways in which one warrants bringing off the contact beyond 'greetings,' i.e., getting to talk to somebody. It's transparent enough that there are situations in which people feel that they have to give a reason, or, if they don't give a reason then a reason may be elicited, and the reason is used and known to be used, to determine that the call will be continued beyond that. So, harking back to things I've talked of in the past, the reason for a call can serve its recipient as grounds for acceptance or rejection, and asking for a reason can then serve as a pre-acceptance or rejection.

One related matter that is worth a bit of attention, can be gotten at via the following interaction.

Passenger: Do you have a cigarette?
Stewardess: No we don't. They don't provide that service anymore.

What interested me in this case was, how is it that the stewardess comes to formulate the particular sort of answer that she gives, given the question that she was asked. Where the answer has as one of its features that whether she has a cigarette or not is irrelevant to her saying "No we don't." That is, it's none of the asker's business whether she has one or not, in the way she makes the answer. But also, the answer doesn't come off as, e.g., a sheer rejection. One rather nice aspect of her answer is that she goes about providing for the legitimacy of the question by virtue of the fact that once they had cigarettes and gave them out, and if the asker didn't know that the situation had changed, then it was a question he could ask under the expectation that he would have gotten a cigarette. So, in her answer she makes the question legitimate in a way, while refusing it in the same fashion that she makes it legitimate.

Now it's perfectly plain that she answers 'as a stewardess.' And my question was, how does she come to answer in that way; in that, if she was sitting next to me on the plane and we were just talking about something or other and I said "You got a cigarette?," if she didn't have one she might have said no, might have asked the guy sitting next to her, or, if she had one, she might have given me one. She didn't do any of those things, and her selection of identification might have been something like the following. She asks herself so to speak, "How is it that this fellow went about selecting me. There are, after all, available to him various people he could have asked for a cigarette. If I can find what involved him in asking *me* for a cigarette, then I can use how he selected me as my basis for selecting an answer. Furthermore, it is not any private issue of how this particular guy came to select me, but how he selected me in any way he could *claim* he selected me, i.e., using some legitimate procedure for selecting someone, how did he select me." That then provides her with a way of answering, i.e., via the identification that I used to get her. I could have asked the person next to me, etc. In that I selected her, and that she stands in contrast to others as a 'stewardess,' she can use that identification to produce her answer. And, in that she is talking 'as a stewardess,' the question is not whether *she* has a cigarette, but whether, as a stewardess she has a cigarette, which stands altogether independent of whether she has cigarettes in her purse. The issue is whether, as a stewardess, she provides cigarettes.

Having a reason for a contact may then serve the recipient of the contact as a way to locate the identification used of them to make the contact, and thereby provide a means for selecting a response. More generally, we may find that one usable procedure for selecting, say, an answer to a question or to a request, is that the formulation of the reason for the contact may permit location of what identification was used to make the contact, and that identification — in that it was used by the other to make the contact — can control, for the contacted person, how to formulate an answer which can be

seen as formulated by reference to the identification of the receipient, as selected. A rough rule is, then, if a person can detect how they were selected, i.e., in what identification they are being contacted, then they can produce a return – be it an acceptance, a rejection, or whatever – which is legitimate by virtue of that they use the same identification. There may be various ways of determining what the identification was that was used in selecting you. And that is perhaps one use of a 'reason for a call,' i.e., to locate an identification in terms of which an answer can be formulated.

Now, one matter to be considered at some length is the placement of the announcement of a reason for a call. One characteristic place is at the beginning of a call. When people announce a reason for a call they do it, if not in their first utterance (which may be "hello"), then often in their second. And when one announces a reason for a call, then apparently one is not simply saying – and is not treated as simply saying – that somewhere in the call this reason should be considered, but one is proposing it as what should be talked of now. A reason for a call, then, can be considered as something like a sub-class perhaps of the class '*floor seekers*,' i.e., it proposes a next topic. And in that regard then, there are various similarities between 'reason for a call' and other topic-beginners, which involve, e.g., that announcing a topic can permit a recipient to monitor when that topic will have been finished, and what should be said when it is finished, in the same way as I mentioned a while back about story beginnings or story pre-beginnings.

We want to note that: That something is a reason for a call for its recipient is apparently not controlled by the fact that it was announced as a reason for a call. It seems that people can report that someone called for X reason, without them having said that that was the reason. It seems plain, then, that some things which will be seen as the reason for the call at hand, are not announced specifically as 'the reason I called,' and others are announced as the reason for the call. Now what sort of difference is there between them? Is it the case, e.g., that for findable reasons for calls, which are not announced as such, it is a more equivocal situation as to whether they are the reasons for the calls? I think it's the reverse. That is to say, there are clear items which stand as reasons for calls and less clear items which stand as reasons for calls. And one makes a less clear item clearer by announcing it as the reason for the call, whereas for others there's no such issue involved. Their placement, say, at the beginning, can provide that they are reasons for the call. (We'll have to get at other ways of saying that some items are indeed independently recognizable 'reasons for calls.')

What we're saying then is, for one, an item which might not be recognized as a reason for a call can be claimed to be such by announcing, in combination with it, that it's the reason for the call. Which is then to say that, perhaps, for a possibly tellable item, that it is a reason for a call is a kind of status it might have. That is, 'tellable items' may have various valuations to them, where, say, a high valued one may be that it is a reason for a call, and there may be various lesser valuations. That may seem arbitrary, but it turns out to be a perfectly natural way of classifying such items, and very important in this

regard: For some sorts of items we can pretty much say that their total currency turns on their being tellable. Gossip is just that sort of thing. What makes an item a good piece of gossip is its tellable character. And what warrants an item's having that kind of valuation is that it's told and retold. (I'm leaving aside things that should not be told by virtue of, e.g., being scandalous or whatever. I'm just talking about 'tellable' in the sense of 'worth telling.')

In that regard then, the value of a piece of gossip can be, say, by reference to the fact that on some occasion it will be told, as compared to it being so good that it provides occasions for calling to tell. Where, that it has such a status is a claimable feature of it, and can be argued about. So that, e.g., if one says "I called to tell you that X had a date with Y," one may find that in conversation, the status of that item as 'callable about' will be dealt with by the recipient. They may say "No kidding! Wait'll I call Z!," accepting the callable-about character of the item. They are proposing that as it was used (as a basis for calling them), so they will use it (as a basis for calling another). Its status as 'worth calling about' is acknowledged. Or they may reject the 'callable-about' character of the item. So, for example, in one collection of calls I have, A specifically calls B about something. B loves it, says "Oh I'll call C right now!" B calls C. C says she knew about it and furthermore didn't think it was much; indeed, "I didn't even say anything to Teddy about it when I got home because I just thought it was so kind of silly." Which is to say, B treats it as A did. C, however, treats it as not only not worth calling about, but she didn't even tell her husband. It's nothing. So you get that kind of natural treatment of things on this kind of a scale.

Now in that case, C says she knew about it. Somebody knowing about it has these sorts of relevancies for some item treated as callable-about. For one, if you encounter a definite callable-about, you'd better call people about it, in that if they call you and you say you know it, then you're also saying that you didn't call them about it, where they called you about it. One relevance of that is, of course, the issue that they think it's a callable-about but you don't. Another is, they think it's a callable-about, and a callable-to-you-about, and you may think it's a callable-about, but not a callable-to-them-about. Now, in that we're dealing with classes of items, if they call you about something they think is a callable-about then they can figure that you'd call them about some such item. And if you don't call them about such items, and they find out that you don't, then they can stop calling you about them. We could figure, so what? So they stop calling you, what's the big deal? I think somewhere in it there's this big deal involved: Sometimes you meet a friend of yours, you talk for a while, then you say "Hey by the way, how's so-and-so?" and they say "He's fine." They say that though they may not have spoken to him for the last few days, weeks, months, whatever.

To put the matter more generally, how does one come to have feelings of assurance that people whom you haven't spoken to in a while are okay? One seemingly important thing involved in your feeling that you know how such a person is, is that you feel if there is a callable-about, you will have been

called. If you know that the other does call about callables-about, then if they haven't called, there's no callable-about. So that acknowledging a common sense for callables-about – i.e., allowing that others properly classify things for you as a callable-for – is something that is quite important for feelings of assurance about how persons are. It's not, then, that someone keeps in some order of contact with a friend – i.e., you speak to him every week – that assures you that you know how he is, but it's by virtue of the fact that callables-about with him will be called about. (A great item of gossip can be that such-and-such happened to so-and-so, and they treated it as not worth talking about.) And if in conversation with somebody it turns out that there was a callable-about and they weren't called, and they figure they have rights on callables-about, they may feel disturbed, puzzled, etc. These sorts of things begin to tell us that callables-about have a particular status with respect to, say, 'tellables.' Callables-about are special sorts of tellables. And subscribing to common views about what's a callable-about is important with respect to the relevance of silence.

So that's one quite extended place we go with 'reasons for a call.' Such considerations are much less transparent in the first instance than the business of "if you're calling the President you ought to have a reason for the call' – i.e., a warrant for that contact – in that, in these cases the 'reason for a call' is specifically done between people who, say, do not routinely need a reason for a call, to make a call. The interesting cases for the use of a reason for a call are not those where you must have a reason for each call, but those where you do not have to have a reason for each call, and indeed – we can make it more extensive – where you ought to make calls *without* reasons for a call. It's almost a functional parallel that for some calls, and between some callers, one announces a reason for a call at the beginning, and in others one specifically announces 'no reason for a call,' i.e., "I just called to talk," "I just called to say hello," etc. Those are also done right at the beginning, and they seem to be specific ways of indicating 'we're in such a situation that not only don't I need a reason for a call, but I think that I ought to call when I have no reason.' A kind of lay-apparent fact in this regard – and here I'm simply reminiscing on things that people have told me – is that one will find oneself hesitant to call somebody when one has a reason for a call, if you and they ought to be in a situation in which you call with no reason and you find that, say, recently – or always – you've called only with a reason. That is to say, you won't call when you have a reason by virtue of the fact that you ought to call when you don't have a reason and haven't been doing that, so that having a reason for a call can serve as preventing the call.

In passing, one obvious transparent use for the announcing of a reason for a call is to account for such a feature of a call as its timing. If you call somebody at four o'clock in the morning it may be that although normally you don't need a reason for a call, when you do that you offer a reason.

Another kind of thing is the relationship between announcing that you tried to call the person you're now talking to, and having a reason for a call. Telling somebody that you tried to call them is a way of providing that

something was known and used by you as a reason for a call though it hasn't functionally come off that way. We see these announcements most particularly, say, in the course of conversations where they called you; regularly you'll say "Where've you been! I've been trying to call you all week," and then produce a thing that serves as a reason for a call. It holds for timing considerations as well. For example, my best friend called me on Sunday and said "You're an uncle again." I said "Congratulations. When did it happen?" He said "Thursday. Where *were* you this weekend? I tried to call you on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday." So, then, one can preserve the status of something as a reason for a call, across the fact that the other is calling you, or that you're calling with a time delay – where either could undercut that you thought it was a reason for a call.

One other function of a reason for a call is that it can be used to close a call, as is transparently evident in the following.

A: Well listen Bea, I'll probably see you Sunday then.
B: Alright.
A: I w– I was <u>so</u> anxious to thank you, and I was // wondering Wednesday afternoon how you got along with the literature.
B: Yeah.
A: ⌈heh
B: ⌊Uh huh
B: ⌈Well–
A: ⌊And then I saw it all gone this morning.
B: Yeah. Well I'll check with you uh Sunday to see if you need help.
A: Alright dear
B: And thanks for calling
A: Alright dear
B: Alright // bye
A: Bye.

That is, when you reintroduce your announced 'reason for a call,' it's treated as an attempt at closing. The relevance of it is, in a way, that for some people the fact that you have a reason for a call is no constraint on the length of the call. A call can go on indefinitely after the reason for the call has been dealt with. The reintroduction of the reason for the call is a way to signal closing. And in general, the relationships between beginnings and closes are often rather neat.

As another order of consideration we might like to know whether, and for what, persons monitor their experiences for their tellable status. That they tell something to another doesn't establish that the thing they tell was, in the first instance, monitored for its tellability. That it's being told can have a different sort of explanation. This turns on the sort of thing I considered a couple of weeks ago: If A has told a story to B, B analyzes that story and uses that analysis to search their memory, and may come up with a story that is, say, closely parallel to the first, which they then tell. Where, so far as anybody

could know, that they told that story by virtue of having stored it by virtue of its tellability, certainly couldn't be claimed. Even if a story is told first, that doesn't mean it was monitored for its tellability, in that, having stored some experience, it can have been called up by another on some other occasion; that having established its tellability, one may then tell it on this occasion as a first story, having *learned* its tellability, but not, say, in the first instance having stored it by virtue of its tellability.

There is of course the whole general area of how persons learn the tellable character of their own experiences. But my point for now is, the fact that a story is told does not establish that the events it reports were monitored for their tellability. Now then, can we find some class of tellables which can indicate that there is a monitoring by reference to tellability? The hypothesis is that the reason-for-a-call items can be such, in that reason-for-a-call items should be announced simply by virtue of that they happened. In that persons are expected to, and do, make contacts by reference to something happening which stands as a 'reason for a call,' we can take it that they ought to be engaged in assessing the things that happen to them by virtue of whether they serve as reasons for calls, i.e., by reference to whether they're tellable. And with respect to, more broadly, reasons for making contact, it's clear enough that some of those things are specifically instructed matters; one is told to monitor one's experience by reference to things that serve as reasons for contact. And then there is the generic sort of learning to treat something as a tellable, by virtue of such tellings being requested. That is to say, I take it that the phenomenon of children's crying being treated by adults as an occasion to ask "What's the matter?" can then serve as a sort of primitive instruction as to tellability.

It may well be, then, that by reference to things like 'reasons for calling' as a subclass of 'tellables,' we can gain a position with respect to the issue of persons monitoring events by reference to 'tellability.' And then, that persons monitor events by reference to tellability, has some independent interest. One sort of interest is in the way in which, that the persons one is with are monitoring the events of the interaction by reference to tellability, serves as a kind of constraint on what it is one will do, can do, should do, in their presence. That is, one can assess what one may do by reference to the fact that if one does this or that thing in their presence, then it may be providing them with a something to tell others. Which is to say analytically that if you can establish by reference to the 'tellability' issue that one orients, in what one does, to one's co-participant, you can also establish how it is that one orients to possible future co-participants of one's co-participants, and the co-participants of the co-participants' co-participants, etc. Which is to say, we know that people in interactions engage in attending what they do by reference to what it is that those others they're with might tell some others who might tell some others. And this is not merely a negative constraint. It can be the sort of thing one counts on. And indeed, one can select a co-participant whom one feels assured will have occasion to tell somebody, when one wants something broadcast.

Now, one terribly important thing about monitoring for tellability is the way in which that introduces a feature into an experience, which can have marked consequences for how it is experienced. That is to say, an orientation to the tellability of an experience can make it quite a different sort of thing than it might be, lacking such an orientation. In living through, e.g., an experience of pain, one can, by virtue of attending its tellability, make it somehow more bearable, in that, in viewing the occasion of its tellability one can visualize one's survival at least until then. And, e.g., awful experiences can be amusing, apparently by virtue of the fact that one can grasp, in the experience, its tellable character, and in part be living in the tellability of it. And in that regard, the orientation to the tellability of an experience may help to provide the terms in which it's experienced, i.e., those terms are selected right then and there by reference to the stories one will tell, and thereby one experiences, say, a more selected set of events than one otherwise might.

A fabulous piece of data on this is a fragment of an account of a first day in a concentration camp:

> Little by little conversation sprang up from bunk to bunk. The rumors were already beginning to circulate. Luckily the news is good. We'll be home soon. We'll have an unusual experience to talk about.

This is from a book called *An Ordinary Camp*, by Micheline Maurel. And it exhibits a very, very common phenomenon, which is that at the beginning of such an experience as can be altogether destructive, such a thing as would leave one without hope, leave one without anything, apparently one natural thing that people do is to directly and immediately orient to what a thing it will be to talk of. With perhaps the notion that there will come a time when I will be available to be its teller – or someone will be available to be its teller.

Let me make some side remarks on the second case – that someone will be available to be its teller. Apparently that is important independently of whether one, oneself, will be available to tell it. So that, for example, 'dying like a man' and things like that are treated as relevant sorts of considerations by reference to the issue of its possibly being a tellable, controlling one when one is assured that one, oneself, won't be the teller. That it controls how one behaves turns on the fact that people do in fact at least sometimes, and are generally known to, give more or less realistic characterizations of how it is that someone behaved in a crisis in which they died, or might have died. And persons are able to orient to the possibility of such things being told. In one of the great books of the century, *Paideia* by Jaeger, in volume 2 he has a discussion of Socrates and he says something like, it's hard for us to imagine the impress that Socrates' personality made on his followers. Perhaps the way to indicate the character of that impression is to note that his followers invented the phenomenon of the biography in order to preserve that impact. That is to say, before Socrates there was no such thing as 'biography.' And the biography was invented by Plato and Xenophon and some others in order to preserve the image of Socrates. And of course they preserved considerably the

image of his way of dying; where, in his dying he was oriented to that he wasn't going to die, and could thereby die in a particular way.

This is apparently a historical matter, i.e., the idea that a personality or a death can be so commemmorated was not in the nature of man in the sense that it always existed, and it's a classically known fact that the pre-Socratics are not known in the way that Socrates is known. It's not that the idea of a biography was invented whole hog, that nothing like that had ever been thought of before Socrates existed. If that were so then there would be no information about the pre-Socratics. There's a lot of information about them, but it's a quite different order of information. I guess there are still current, books that talk about what kind of a fellow Heraclitus was, etc., by reference to the 'biographies' that existed about him. It turns out that that's nonsense. There was a standard format for writing about famous people, which might run something like this: Where he was born, who his teacher was, what kind of a person he was – nasty, cold, aloof, autocratic – and how he met his death – he contracted dropsy and thought it could be cured by being dried out so he buried himself in a dung-heap and it didn't work; he died and was buried in the marketplace. The pre-Socratic 'biographies' run just like that. Apparently the way they were constructed was that the sayings or writings of these people were examined for scurrilous sorts of things. Say, Heraclitus had said something like "Water is bad for you." That was used to construct, say, the dung-heap anecdote, which was passed on as a 'biography.'

There were other features of that sort, e.g., every philosopher, physicist, whatever they were, had to have a teacher. So a teacher was constructed though they may have had no relationship to each other whatsoever. A guy may have lived 100 years later, or in a different country, but if they had some characterizable similarity in what they said, then they were ordered as student and teacher. That is of course an utterly orderly construction. Geneologizing scientists is after all only one case of geneologizing persons, and, e.g., the Greeks geneologized their gods as well.

Let me go on to something else with respect to 'tellables.' I opened for consideration that an event can be experienced by reference to its tellability where that, in operating in the experienced event, can have import for how the event is dealt with. Now there's a reverse to that which is perhaps more important, and that is the way in which requirements to have certain sorts of tellables operate as sources of looking for experiences.

A couple of weeks ago I remarked on this business of the fit that goes on between a story A tells and a story B tells. I talked of a 'search procedure' where, what B wants to find as his second is not any story in which, e.g., there were the same characters, but such a story as involved B in being the same character in that story as A was in the first. One wants to find a story in which one is the same character so as to, in part, show one's understanding, and whatever else may be involved. That one has to find a story in which one is the same character turns out to be crucial to these other considerations. Specifically, one can regularly fail to come up with such a story, i.e., not have had such an experience. And apparently, failing to come up with such a story

is variously noticeable. It can be noticed by others and it can be noticed by oneself, and treated by oneself as a failure – that one never has anything happen to one such that one has something to say.

Suppose, for example, your buddy tells you a story about how he went out last night and got laid. Then it's apparently not a sufficient return to tell about how some other friend of yours did the same. I bring that sort of event up, because it can be kind of neat in its import. If, say, people are living their lives in a common set of experiences, such that if A tells a story then B has a story to tell also, then, insofar as that is a conversational rule, when some parties to a conversational circle begin to have stories to tell which others don't have, that may serve as one way in which, in coming to be able to satisfy the telling of such stories, sorts of socializational changes take place. At least one can imagine that people will come to do things that, say, they have in the first instance no experiential reason for wanting to do, but by virtue of that others are doing and telling – or telling and doing – and they are not, and are thereby failing as conversationalists.

I say that by virtue of the following considerations. One is just the sheer supposition with respect to some 'first experiences' that, as it's put, you might not know what you're missing until you've done it. And if that's at all so, then the question is, how would one seriously get motivated to do it, not feeling the sense of an absence in the way it might otherwise be felt? That is to say, one may feel some sort of absence. What sort of absence? At least one obvious sort of absence is an absence of something to say. For certain sorts of things, like teenage or pre-teenage sex, it seems to be – looking at it absolutely as a layman – that 'kissing and telling' is an item which deals with two deeply related things. That is, they are not just more or less incidental partners. I've been struck by, e.g., therapy discussions where people are 45 and single and they seem to sometimes have a feeling for a lack in their lives, the sense of which is hard to locate. How is it that they come to have such a discriminated sense of absence, when in a way you could say they don't know what they're missing? One possible way is that they know what they're missing by virtue of what it is they hear – which has as one kind of mildly interesting consequence that regulations on what you say to somebody, what you say in public, are important.

That is to say, it is a standard observation that things like kids' first sex experiences, people's marital circumstances, are talked about in rather different ways than they may be experienced. So, in literature and movies you get stuff about the awful embarassments, the failures of first sex experiences, whereas kids don't report it that way to their buddies. Or, for example, the sanctions on telling others about your marital problems – unless perhaps they are also married and expectably have the same circumstances – may serve in part to provide that people won't know those things until they're inside, and, hearing only the good, can have well built in a sense of what they're missing. Where it's terribly important that people orient to what they're missing. And it should be treated, by, say, psychologists or sociologists, as a special learning problem: How do you get people to spend their lives oriented to what they're

missing? Having nothing to say in the company of others who have something to say – but who have something to say only on certain orders of things – may be very important. In that regard, then, the things which are partly sanctioned in being talked of, but are also undoubtedly and importantly talked of – like the kissing and telling phenomenon – turn out to be very equivocal in that it may be that there's a norm saying 'Don't kiss and tell,' but the kinds of constraints that provide that you *should* kiss and tell may be much more important in, say, bringing others to kiss – if not to tell.

We get this really curious kind of thing; this rule that if A tells a first-person story then you should tell a first-person story, which after all doesn't seem like it should matter very much or have any elaborated consequences. But it may be gigantically consequential. If you could tell a third-person story and be perfectly okay, the world – and not only the world of conversation – might be quite different. And of course one wants to note that a lot is being preserved by that sort of a rule. It isn't a fragile one in the sense that it only holds for certain things. It holds for all sorts of things which you conform with, for which, then, the telling or not-telling of certain orders of first-person stories may be very crucial.

May 22
Pauses in spelling and numbering

I'll begin off with a little something I find enormously amusing. The issue could be, how what a pause does is a function of what sort of a structure is being produced or intended. Another way to see it concerns the question of *lists*, and the way in which, when we watch how people speak a list – say, what could be considered to be an ordered list of numbers or letters – we find that preserving the numbers and their order or the letters and their order is not all that goes on.

What 'not all that goes on' means is that the *pause distributions* are kind of important in those things; important in this sense at least: You can do them wrong. The case of letters comes up this way. We have some stuff in which people are spelling their names. It's not experimental study in which people are asked to spell their names, but occasions on which the spelling of a name comes up – these are from traffic court. Now, you listen to how people spell names and it's kind of amusing. It turns out that there are wrong ways to spell a name which have nothing to do with getting the letters wrong or getting the order of letters wrong. What it has to do with, I take it, is getting the pauses wrong, in the strings of letters.

So, for example, we have an instance where somebody's name is Mauer-han, spelled M-a-u-e-r, (pause) h-a-n. Now propose as a variation, e.g., M-a-u-e-r-h, a-n. It's just not the same thing. And they don't do it that way, either. I don't take it that it's only signalling syllable cuts, though syllable cuts are obviously involved in the use of the pause in cases of spelling a name. That is to say, spelling a name incorporates some features of how the name is pronounced when it's spoken, independently of its being spelled. I think that is fairly regular for name-spelling; it may be regular for the spelling of other words. I have the impression – though I need data on this – that if you spelled it right but put the pause in the wrong place somebody would think you did something wrong. They may not know exactly what you did wrong, but they'd think you did something wrong.

Now let's consider the case of numbers. Numbers really get interesting in this regard. If you have a number that you're reading out, how is it done, and what kinds or order are involved in the ways that it's done? Pauses are involved, but they aren't the only thing involved. In some cases it seems that you have a variety of possibilities. A person could read out a set of digits; so for 1236 you deliver it as "one two three six." Then there are other ways; e.g., "twelve thirty six." And that turns out to be nicely ordered in its variations, so that you only get certain combinations. And apparently the initial choices signal information about further items. So you don't get "twelve three." If

you get "twelve," then there's information that if there's more to the number, then it will be at least two digits, i.e., "twelve thirty six," not "twelve three." And the twelve can, among other things, signal where the commas go in, say, a five-digit number: "Twelve three fifty four," i.e., 12,354. And I'm not sure, but if you get 12 treated as a two-digit object, then you may not get the rest treated as anything less than also a combined number. That is to say, for 1234 you may get, not "twelve three four" but "twelve thirty four." For 12,354 you may get "twelve three fifty four" rather than "twelve three five four." The sets of numbers, then are relevant to hearability, independently of issues of correct digits, correct order, etc. And, leaving aside hearability, it's just interesting to see that it's done right, and if they're done wrong I take it that would be a rather noticeable thing. "One twenty three six" might involve somebody in waiting for further digits.

To some extent it may well be that some of these things have obligations of a sort; either you put in a thing like "twelve" when you have 12 plus a four- or five-digit number, or you put in pauses. This doesn't come from the traffic court data, but I had this problem once. I was using a telephone credit card number. I didn't have the card, somebody just gave me the number and I wrote it down. I found that when I'd give the number to the operator, if I just read it straight through she couldn't get the number. And I eventually had to try to figure out where the dashes went, in order to get her to accept the number from me. I take it that it's not, in that case, merely a matter of somebody figuring maybe I had copied somebody else's number. But in hearing a number there are sets of clues that tell you, e.g., what its minimal size will be.

There is, then, the general point on reading out numbers and spelling names, that we wouldn't want to be saying that a name consists, for the spelling out loud, of an ordered list of letters. For spelling it out loud it's an ordered list of letters with properly placed pauses. And for reading out a number, we wouldn't say it's an ordered list of digits, but that it involves choices of pauses, choices of various sorts of combinings, any one of which can go wrong. What that suggests, then, is that in order to know what a pause is doing, one is attentive to the structure within which the pause is being produced. A pause in a number series can be marking a comma at the thousand point. In a list of letters spelling out a name it can be marking syllable points, i.e., it can be information about the pronounciation of a name independent of the spelling of a name.

In that regard, then, any talk about, say, the pause as an item which locates the end of a sentence, is obviously over-specific. In the case of numbers and spelling names, pauses may be required within the sequence and not have anything particularly to do with its end – and certainly have nothing to do with the end of the sentence there. So that to hear a pause as the end of a sentence is to be attending 'the sentence' as the unit being produced. What that suggests is, if the pause is something that has – if it's going to occur – a normative place in some structure, then perhaps we have some information about why people go "uh" in the course of the production of a sentence, and

don't just pause. That is to say, we can see in the course of the spelling of a name or the presenting of a number that a wrongly-placed pause can be misinforming. A pause produced without "uh" might be syntactically or semantically informative, so that somebody might hear a phrase, clause, sentence where you had not such intention. "Uh" can preserve that such a break is not intended.

[end transcript]

May 29
Verb selection; Interactionally generated invitations; Adequacy of local environments, etc.

Now and again I've taken a position to the effect that the contrast class 'true–false' is not to be assumed to be relevant for some assertion that somebody makes. The question is, when does it turn out to be relevant, and how would we see that, for participants, it is relevant. One place where people put in materials to the effect that, e.g., the truth of what they're reporting is relevant, is in their use of verbs. Verbs seem to be one routine area for doing such a thing as 'showing an intention of the truth of some statement.'

The operation of that sort of thing has some interest for a consideration of *how verbs are selected*. If we take a sentence in which somebody says "I thought you wanted the *desk*," then we might figure that a verb is selected, 'to think,' and then it's tensed. In the above case it's about something in the past, so make 'to think' in the past tense. But you might, for some uses, consider it the following way. A tense is selected, and then by reference to various attributes, a verb is selected to fit the tense – and also satisfy other considerations, like exhibiting 'correctness.' I have a case in mind, and although it's the only case I happen to have, I don't think it's peculiar. It's from the *New York Times*, 11–2–67, headed "New Auto Fines System in Effect; First Public Reaction is Sour:"

> At about ten thirty a.m. yesterday an Adelphi College student parked his car at a meter on 78th Street between 5th and Madison Avenues, and went to pick up his girlfriend.
>   A half hour later the student, David Searles, returned to the street with his girl and found the car was missing. At first he thought it had been stolen. Then he realized it had been towed away by the police, and still later he realized that he was one of the first victims of the new higher parking fines that went into effect yesterday.

Focussing on ". . . then he realized it had been towed away by the police," in characterizing what he did as 'realized,' what's being said is that what he 'thought' turned out to have been correct. That is, in the use of 'realized' the correctness of his thoughts is proposed. Were the report to be delivered at the time that he did his considerations about where the car was, they wouldn't have used 'realize' in the present tense, "I realize the car must have been taken

by the police." What we would likely get is "I [guess, bet, wonder if] the car's been taken by the police," "Maybe the car's been taken by the police," and things like that.

So what we have is something like: 'I think' is the present, 'I realized' is the past, where 'thought' would be used were it the case that it turned out one was wrong. "At first he thought it had been stolen." And regularly 'thought' is used in just that way: "I thought you wanted the *desk*." Though it is notable that for this issue of correctness, it turns out that for such a thing as 'thought,' stress can make the difference. "I thought you wanted the *desk*" means it turns out you don't want the desk but something else, i.e., I'm reporting that, what my feelings were have turned out to be wrong. Whereas you can say "I *thought* you wanted the desk," which is to say, what I thought has turned out to be correct.

I think that sort of thing is a rather common matter. It makes it an issue that, particularly with respect to reports of past events, one wants to look to which verb is used, to see whether, besides, say, reporting an action, a feeling, etc., the verb is saying about that, that it was true or false. And that would apparently provide that that contrast class is used, in part, in selecting a verb. Whereas in the first instance it would seem that verbs would hold over tense changes, in some cases it appears to be not at all so. Rather, for a differently tensed event, one would have a different verb. And particularly, one would have a different verb which preserves correctness, i.e., at some point your situation would be "I think the cops took the car" – where, that is, one doesn't yet know what happened to the car. Then, the correctness of "I think" is preserved with "I realized."

You can sometimes do more complicated sorts of actions with such usages. We have in the data, "Oh she knows you're crazy hehh!" where that might be different from "She thinks you're crazy." The problem, I suppose, is that whatever is correct to say about what she figures, if I say "She knows you're crazy" it's hard for you to be in a position to say "No, she *thinks* I'm crazy. She happens to be right." That is to say, if some facts are assertably so, then, that somebody thinks that they're so can apparently be used in such a fashion as to say that they *know* that it's so – whether or not their thoughts turn out to have a correct basis. That can be a sticky sort of thing to handle, e.g., in argument. In any event, there's some fiddling around to be done with verbs, with respect to the 'truth' issue.

One kind of funny thing of another sort involves the way in which, say, one selects a verb to characterize what one is doing by reference to a distribution of responsibilities – without respect to what one is, in detail, doing. I have in mind something like this. In a conversation, A says "I have to be the hostess Sunday morning" and B takes it that A is hinting that she doesn't want to do that alone so she says "Well, can I help you?" A says "Sure." Now I take it that if B is asked what she was doing Sunday morning, she would say "I was helping A." That is, by virtue of A being 'the hostess,' B is doing 'helping' although B might have carried the hostessing burden, might have been, in effect, the hostess. So you get 'helping' as a thing reported, usable to

characterize a range of actions independent of whatever it is in particular that you're doing, by reference to its being somebody's business to be doing a something that you are then 'helping' at. And it's not only that that's what you're doing, but that's one thing that people go about proposing that they're doing. What's happening, then, is that the verb is exhibiting who it's being done for, and also that it's their business to be doing whatever it is. If you're doing what you're doing by reference to that you're doing it for them, then you're doing 'helping.' So, over some range of actions, one exhibits how come one is doing whatever one is doing, and that one is not responsible for what one is doing, by such a formulation as 'helping,' which is a not uncommon one.

Another place to look at, with the assurance that you'll find interesting interactional materials, is that of *comparing people*: 'X is like Y.' If you find comparing of people being done, with the added constraint that at least one of the people being compared is present, you can figure that other work than comparing is being done, and it's interactional work. Let me just give a couple of funnily orderly things on that. It's a rather general thing, I suppose, that somebody will introduce a new boyfriend or girlfriend to a member of their family. And one of the things that gets done is, the new boy or girlfriend is compared with someone, "He/she is just like X." And X is quire routinely a member of the family.

Apparently what goes on is something like this. If, for example, someone wants to say that the person is good-looking, they may not say that, but they'll say "She looks just like X," where X is acknowledged to be 'the pretty one in the family.' Where, from anyone else's perspective, looking at the two of them you wouldn't see any resemblance – one may be tall, the other short, etc. – i.e., about all that they have in common is that X is said in the family to be 'the pretty one.' And that can go for intelligence. If somebody is introduced who's supposed to be intelligent, then some criteria will be selected which involve an attribution of intelligence to a family member. These can be of such diversity that within some circles it would be laughable, e.g., that X who has a PhD in physics, is 'like' my cousin so-and-so who's getting an accounting degree at the local business college. The operant fact is that that person is acknowledgedly the 'bright one in the family.'

What seems obviously to be involved in this is that in some cases the giving of a direct compliment is an obscure matter. That is, e.g., in the case of "Gee she's very pretty," it's obscurely a compliment, in that it can be assumed that under such circumstances a compliment is due. Then what has to be done is to assess that compliment as one of a set of possible compliments, and they may be saying that only because they can't find anything else, or by reference to that she's X not Y, i.e., she's pretty but stupid. And of course you can make much more elaborate sorts of actions than just a compliment with the comparisons, i.e., you can, by selecting a member of the family in offering the comparison, make some sort of initial acceptance. That is to say, it's not

merely that you're engaging in praising the person by reference to somebody whom you surely value, but perhaps also you're indicating a place for them, i.e., you're also saying "You're like us."

You can also get, say, different sides of the family selecting different people named as the one 'you're just like,' which I suppose could be used to exhibit the fissures in the family. So, for example, before I was married, when I introduced my wife to my family, we got things like the following. I introduced her to a cousin, my father's sister's daughter. She selected as the person to be compared with, another sister's daughter, her– and my – first cousin on my father's side. When I introduced her to my mother's brother (and he knows my first cousin perfectly well, it's not as if they're strangers, they all live close by, etc.), he selected his daughter as the person that she 'looked just like.' The ages of the two persons being compared with vary considerably – one is 28, the other 16. And my suspicion, on remembering such things, is that there's considerable organization involved. In any event, it seems, in general, to operate for Members. Say X is introducing W to Y and Z. If X, Y, and Z happen to be co-members, then Y and Z regularly, when they make the comparison, compare W to another co-member. One such case in the GTS data is "He's not at all like Ken. He's more like Al and I."

When I was discussing the two stories awhile back[1] I made the point that materials are 'worked up' for the interaction in which they're delivered. One way the materials are worked up for the interaction is that how it comes to be done in this conversation is located. In the case of the two stories, we had the first beginning with "Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio," and then the story. Now that could be seen as, say, extrinsic to the story itself, i.e., the story itself may not be much being told by reference to the conversation in which it's told. But these things can be deeply embedded in the story. I want to add a case, in which the how-it-comes-to-be-told isn't terribly deeply embedded into the story, but it permits the point of the 'working up for the conversation' to be made, I think, rather strikingly. It's from one of the group therapy sessions, and it goes like this:

A: Hey you know I almost didn't make it here this morning.
B: Too bad,
A: I almost killed myself Thursday night. No, not suicide

and then he goes on to talk about having almost had an accident. Now that beginning, "I almost didn't make it here this morning," as a way of characterizing what it is that happened, needs of course be seen as a rather special characterization of what it is that happened to him. That is, it's only

[1] Spring 1968, lecture April 24.

by reference to this session, as something that he's participating in, that one would say that "he almost didn't make it here." There are a lot of other places that, having almost gotten killed, he 'almost didn't make it' to, and this might not be a very important one. In any event, the characterization of the consequences of his 'almost dying' as 'almost not making it here' – which can be done very widely – should be seen, I suppose, as something which, if not ironic – and I take it that it's not ironic here – is almost at the border of what might in literature be an irony, having to do with, say, the ways in which persons go about casting the things that they do or that happen to them, into forms for any interaction that happens to come up.

And for those interactions which turn out to be monumentally important, it is a principled rule of doing biography that they are construed in terms of 'things that almost stopped it from happening;' things which had nothing to do with them in their ongoingness. That is to say, "Had I not gotten on the bus I wouldn't have met you." I take it that every important man's biography will have such things. And of course, as a way in which, for relationships, the world is privatized, it's a major 'stylistic' way of showing that somebody counts. What I'm saying then is, it's not just that he tells the story that he almost got killed, but the story that he almost got killed is worked up for this occasion, as implicating this occasion. And there may be a rather large group of places, persons, etc., for whom some way of introducing a story as relevant to that interaction might be made.

I'm interested in a thing now, and this is kind of an offshoot thing, *'eating together'*. You could have an image of eating together which involves simply that people take their meals together. And I imagine you could go through a series of ways of arriving at the extensiveness of the social character of eating together. Like, suppose you had restaurants give tickets, and you started out by trying to see what sorts of price convergences there were within tickets. I suppose if you got a considerable price convergence within tickets you could say, well, people who can afford the same eat together. Then you might be studying, say, the ways in which sets of participants for same meals have costs alike to those with whom they are participating on that occasion, and vary them across occasions, etc. And you would want to begin to look at the circumstances of selecting a meal together. There, you have as obvious sorts of things that, e.g., a person's proposal as to what they're going to eat is treated in the same way a proposal about the car you're going to get is treated in kids' automobile discussions. That is to say, that other people figure that they have to come to terms with it for themselves. So it isn't just, well you'll eat X and they'll eat Y, but you deal with their choice as if they were proposing it for you. So you get things like, "I'm going to have X." "Well, I just had that so I'll have Y," or "I don't like that," or "The X isn't so good here." And I take it from informal inspection that, suppose you have a host at a meal – somebody who's going to pay and everybody knows he's going to pay. Then there's a

moving towards what somebody could spend. And if he says "Why don't you have the roast beef it's great here," then it's not that you have to have the roast beef, but you can treat it as setting what you shouldn't pay more than.

This initial interest got me looking for discussions on eating. And one sort of thing that happens in my data is where you have an invitation to somebody:

B: . . . he usually comes home but that doesn't matter,
A: Well you wanna come out and have lunch with me?
B: No, let me take you to lunch, some ⌈time.
A: ⌊OOOHHH! No.
A: No. Come on. Come out uh uhh say you get out here 'bout uh twelve
        thirty.
B: Twelve thirty. Don't fix very much though, I just I– uh I eat very
        light anymore, I'm tryina get slim.
A: Yea:h?
B: ⌈hehh heh hh hh hh
A: ⌊You get slim, my heavens. You don't need to get any slimmah.

I was interested in that "Don't fix very much." I have several things where somebody is invited, accepts the invitation, and with their acceptance will say "Don't bother much. A cup of coffee will be enough." And then that is dealt with by the inviter, and it is dealt with on its own terms, i.e., whatever proposal was used for "Don't make much," it was dealt with on its own terms, as in that interchange, "Don't fix very much . . . I'm trying to get slim," "You don't need to get any slimmer." Where what seemed to be operating in such an interchange was that instead of focussing on that pair by reference to the 'acceptance,' what one wanted to do was focus on that pair by reference to the invitation itself. With this 'don't make much' business, they seem to be dealing with the fact that they see that the *invitation* was *generated in that interaction*. That is, it's a 'spur of the moment' invitation. Now that seems plain, in the sense that if somebody calls up with an invitation as the reason for the call, then you just don't do that. To make it ridiculous, you wouldn't write back on a wedding invitation, "Don't make much, I'm trying to lose weight." Or if somebody calls you to invite you to a dinner, you don't offer proposals about the menu.

That suggests that a person is looking for some way to show that they see that the invitation was generated out of the interaction in which they are currently engaged, and that that's something different than calling to make an invitation; and the way they show that is via the 'don't bother' business. Once, however, the 'don't bother' business gets raised, then it gets dealt with on its own terms and not, e.g., by reference to how it came to be done, so you can get things that look kind of tangential to each other. And that has as its relevance that once a thing gets done, whatever gets done, it may have to be dealt with for whatever it is, independently of the sort of thing it's directed to accomplishing.

And when the issue is raised, that people take it that how the invitation came to be made is something that they should deal with in the interaction, there are other matters that seem to fall out. One of them is that in the same interactions in which one gets "don't make much," one also will have gotten, regularly, that the invitation will have been turned down, and not just turned down via "No," but turned down with a counter-invitation made. "Come over for lunch." "No, *you* come over for lunch." "No, you come here." "Okay I'll come but don't make much." So you have a series of ways in which the 'how' the invitation came off is noticed, is later dealt with, used, etc. And again, I take it that in the case of invitations that are the 'reason for a call,' "No you come over here" would not be a routine part of that sequence.

I want to pick up something that may be involved with 'reason for a call.' When something is delivered as a reason for a call – and it's sometimes a kind of compliment, e.g., "I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed your class this morning" and things like that, then you regularly get it delivered as an *indirect quote*, "I just wanted to say that I missed you." I found it puzzling, why compliments are often delivered that way, which isn't perhaps exactly the same as, e.g., "I enjoyed your class this morning." That leads me to a wonderment of the following sort. Is it perhaps the case that people deliver these things as 'the reason for the call' so as to have a way of delivering them in the indirect-quote form? At any rate, I'm suspicious of attributing the fact that the compliment is brought off as an indirect quote, to the fact that you're announcing it's the reason for the call. It seems conceivable that its delivery as a 'reason for the call' can provide a way of 'naturally' being delivered as an indirect quote.

The following sort of thing made me suspicious. I have a conversation in which, in fact, someone is having difficulty making a call. They try a couple of times and get the wrong number. When they reach the callee, they start off with "I had trouble getting you," and then go through a characterization of the trouble, and then, "I just wanted to say I enjoyed your class this morning." And once I was on the business of the indirect-quote reason-for-a-call matter, it also seemed as though some way of finding a history to the event was to be looked for, i.e., something which would allow you to present your statement as historical, e.g., something you were 'trying to do.' And I think you regularly get with compliments, e.g., "Where have you been I've been trying to get you all week, I wanted to tell you . . ." And now I'm wondering whether it's not that that historicalizing of the thing to be presented is perhaps a non-incidental feature to it; and perhaps non-incidental in that it permits, say, the compliment to be delivered in a particular fashion, i.e. as part of that course of affairs that had been attempted.

You might figure that in some case it 'just happens' that, if it hadn't been the case that you had some trouble making the call, then you would have

made the compliment 'straight out,' but as it happens you had some trouble, you tell them about it, and you then merely continue to say what you called to say, and you simply use the available linguistic resources and it comes out as an indirect quote, though it isn't anything you were trying to do, i.e., you weren't putting in the history so as to have a way to give this as an indirect quote.

Or, for example, take a case where one would have similar suspicions. At several places in the group therapy session data, the therapist is saying something which happens to be sort of tender. And he may get interrupted before he says it; somebody cuts him off and continues, or goes off on something else. Now is it that he just happens to be 'uh'ing, looking for the right word, etc., or is he fading out in such a way that he's *inviting* them to cut him off and take it somewhere else, or continue it, etc. Now in some cases you'd say they just happened to start up. It isn't that they started up so as to cut this off, or that he talked so as to provide that they should cut him off. What you want to focus on is, is that methodically done? Similarly, is it the case that part of the methodical way that one can go about producing, e.g., a compliment, is to find some way to construct it as an indirect quote? Where one such way is to be able to present it as taking place in the course of a history which now happens in this conversation, and is not then followed with the doing of the thing you've just said you wanted to do; e.g., "I tried to call you and couldn't get you, I just wanted to tell you how wonderful your class was." "Uh huh?" "Your class was wonderful." It isn't done that way. Now I'm just wondering if it's the case that this indirect quote is not just tagged on, but that the package is built to get it done that way.

Of course, in the case of compliments there are classical anthropological sociological reasons for having a suspicion of that sort. That is to say, it's a not uncommon thing in societies that making compliments is touchy. Ethnographies will contain rules that say 'If A compliments B, then B must compliment A back immediately or something terrible will happen,' and things like that. And there are regularly rules for how to do a compliment so as to avoid having the Evil One see that this is really a choice person to collect. I don't know much of the literature, but one place is a book called *No More Forever*, which has a little discussion of rules around compliments.

Another thing about meals, and also about the issue of the relevance of co-participants:

    A: That was a good suggestion, to come here.
    B: You made it.
    A: I <u>did</u>?

The thing I find fascinating about this piece of data is that one great way in which your co-participants are relevant is that whatever has happened,

whoever it is that's 'really responsible' for what's happened, it's your co-participants whom you praise and blame. If you've had a great meal, you don't, except under special circumstances, thank the chef, you thank whoever brought you, i.e., whoever you're eating with. And that kind of thing is very widespread, e.g., you compliment somebody who recommended a book, a movie, etc. Those sorts of things are actions by reference to who in your world is available for, e.g., praise about something. There's always somebody in your world who 'made it happen.' And this, then, is part of the big theme having to do with *the adequacy of very local environments*; you and your friends. You could imagine a tribe with very different circumstances, but among the natives here, if somebody in France makes a great movie you don't have to go to France to acknowledge its greatness, you can thank your friend. And that's a sort of thing that you really want to fix on. Then, if you reconsider the story about the police cars 'across the street from Bullocks,' the story of the accident on the freeway 'on the way back from Ventura,'[2] it happens in their lives. It happens in the life of the lady who is telling the story, and for the life of the lady she's telling it to. There might be societies for all we know, in which nothing like that takes place, and I suppose you can talk about the demythologizing of the world as involving finding that your friends are just as good to thank as the gods.

So, there are the ways in which praising-and-blaming is one aspect of how it is that you and your buddies are an adequate world to do whatever you need to do, and also, the ways events happen 'in somebody's life.' Along with those sorts of things, I used to be puzzled by the following sorts of things. When an accident happens, e.g., an airplane crashes somewhere and there are witnesses to it, they ask the witnesses, "What were you doing?" I started out collecting these things because people were always 'watching TV.' Six o'clock in the morning or four o'clock in the afternoon, some guy and his kids, "We were sitting there watching TV and all of a sudden we heard this crash outside . . ." But for now the issue is, why does it matter what these persons were doing? Nobody knows who they are, etc. The thing is, that the story happened in their life. They're telling the story to the interviewer as if they were telling it to a friend, and the interviewer is listening to it via 'a friend.' It is an absolutely natural part of the story, what somebody was doing when it happened. And it's not like it happened somewhere in the world and I now have access to it, but it happened in my life. And, that it happened in their life is built well into the various ways the events are described.

I picked up the following fragment in the first instance because it seemed to be another case of that hearing practice where a story told by A was returned

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[2] See Spring 1968, lecture April 17, pp. 753–4 and April 24, p. 770, respectively.

to by B, where B presents such a story as had him in such a situation with respect to participants, etc. as A's story had A.[3]

[BH, t.2., pp. 2–4][4]

Bob :   Oh, god! Christmas has gotten so damn painful! You know there's always this great no one likes what they're getting. You know what I mean? So you say "thank you" and like my mom, "shit, when's that guy gonna learn that I don't want an electric skillet, I wanna coat, or I wanna sweater," and uh–

Ted :   Well, doesn't she make any attempt to even hint, or even–

Kim :   What's even funnier is, his father said, "Well, after 25 years, I don't think we're gonna give presents." And that's just ridiculous!

Bob :   It's just that, becuz presents are so important to her, and so, he uh she was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources cuz they'd also my mother went to Florida

twice and my father had to go to New York. So jeez! They were pretty low! And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it. "Well you know we just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it, you know." So, the day before, Christmas afternoon, we were over there, and, Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim came out to me and said that my mother had gotten my father just scads and scads of presents. And she said that, uh, and Kim said that my mother was afraid that my father hadn't gotten her anything. So I was supposed to go out and feel out my father and see if he'd gotten her anything. ((laughs))

Kim :   We should've just left everything alone!

Bob :   No. I'm glad we didn't. But, my father'd gotten her a lighter. ((laughs)) a little Zippo. ((laughs))

Ted :   At least it was for her use.

Bob :   Yeah, yeah. She liked it, sure.

Kim :   ⌜So we went out–

Bob :   ⌞So we went out and bought her a bracelet. And then, we had this tremendous problem of how, now we don't want my mother to know that we did this, but how are we gonna give it to my father without hurting his feelings? Oh, shit! And we finally got it to him. I don't know, we spent about an hour and a half trying to figure out. "Now, how the shit are we gonna manage this thing?" I don't know how we did, but–

Jan :   He probably knew.

Ted :   I know just what you mean. We go through this thing every year. My father said, "No gifts." And we tried to analyze what–

[3] See Spring 1968, lecture April 24, pp. 769–71.
[4] Transcriber unknown

Bob : Does "no gifts" means no gifts, or does it mean more gifts?

Ted : No, he, he gave us one reason why "No gifts." And I was questioning the reason. I didn't think it was his legitimate reason. I don't think it was his real reason. He said, "Well you know how the Christmas, all the stores, uh well, make such a big killing over Christmas, killing, and Christmas is becoming commercialized, and therefore I don't wanna be sucked into this thing. I'm not gonna give gifts this year."

Jan : "You spend your money and buy something you really want. And I'll spend my money and buy something I really want."

Ted : But we figured there must be something deeper, because if a guy is aware of, that Christmas is becoming very commercialized. Uh must he submit to this idea and reject it entirely and end up giving no gifts, or is it because he really doesn't, he's not a person that likes to give anyway?

Bob : Yeah.

Ted : And this is just a phony excuse for not giving. And finally, I think we figured out it must be some kind of a, a combination, and he really isn't that stingy.

For the automobile wreck fragment, where it might not have been clear 'why' such a presentation would be done, in this case there's a nice addition. The second story is delivered with "I know just what you mean." This bears on the way in which a second story is in part engaged in exhibiting an understanding of the first, which was one sort of claim I am making about the use of that hearing practice.

The fitting in this case was kind of interesting, and one thing we can attend is the issue of whether the terms used to characterize the various parties are appropriate for the co-hearers of the story. It happens to be that he's "my father," but what has that got to do with the story? Where, that the other forms up his story in the same way may be one way of his proposing that the way you formed up your story was correct. We have one very neat situation where an incorrectness in characterization is proposed, in the data including 'the police at Bullocks.' In her story, the first lady says:

B: An' there was two– (0.5) police cars across the street, enleh– colored lady wan'tuh go in the main entrance there where the silver is an' all the // (gifts an' things),

A: Yeah

(0.6)

B: A:nd they, wouldn' let 'er go in, an' he hadda gu:n? (0.5) He was holding a gun? in iz hand, a great big lo::ng gu::n?

And the recipient of the story then tells that to the third lady who then says essentially "That was no colored lady, that was an employee!"

A: Well, she said thet there was some wo̲man thet–the–thet they were
      whh– had held up in the front there, thet they were poin'ing the
      gu̲n at, 'n everything, (0.4) a k– ne̲gro woman,
      (1.2)
C: No̲:::, no̲.
      (0.3)
A: What.
      (0.2)
C: Dat was one of the emPLOYees.
A: Oh.

And, in that she was an 'employee,' then forming her up as a 'Negro woman'
was misleading. And in that regard, then, the forming up of the parties in the
Christmas fragment as the parties in a 'family' – "my father," "my mother"
– may be appropriate, as compared with a set of people who happen to be
people in the family, but who also could be 'a stingy man,' 'a greedy woman,'
    One important issue involved in that is that it's a really non-incidental fact
in our society that troubles are formed up as 'things happening in a family.'
It's non-incidental in this way. A thing that happened to X can, in principle,
be formed up in a variety of ways. Each way it gets formed up can implicate
various other people. Major stresses and strains, changes in the society, etc.,
specifically turn out to have as their import that troubles get formed up in
different ways and thereby implicate different sets of people. And the ideal
way for many, many purposes of a stable social order is that it gets formed up
as 'troubles in the family.' Why? Simply this: If a trouble gets formulated as
'a trouble in the family,' then it has implications for almost nobody in the
world. That is to say, for most people it's not my business if it didn't happen
to me. It isn't that it didn't happen to *you* that makes it 'not happening to
you,' it's that it happened 'in someone else's family,' whereas if it happened
to 'a student' then it could be seen as something happening to you, too, in
that you, too, are such a one, or if it happened to 'a Negro' it could be
something that is happening to you, if you are such a one. In that regard,
then, it's really not a trivial thing that troubles happen in families.
    Now there's one explosive possibility in that, and that is if what happens
in 'a family,' formulated as happening in '*a* family,' can be turned into
'happening in a family but could happen in *any* family.' It could still have
happened to only one person, but the kind of impact it can have can be
tremendous. The data I'm thinking of in this regard is the collection of all the
letters sent to Governor Brown during the Chessman case, which Dr
Garfinkel has. Something like 40,000 letters, and I've read several hundred
of them. An impressive fact about the character of the crisis around the
Chessman letters is that you get one standard pattern of complaint: "What
would you feel like if that happened to your wife?" or ". . . to your
daughter?" Which is to say, it happened to somebody's wife or somebody's
daughter, but somehow the thing was turned from 'a thing that happened to
some family,' to 'a thing that could happen to any family.' And each person

could then see it as happening in *their* family, and that was apparently something that gets a rise.

So it's on the one hand a very strong isolating technique, that troubles are naturally seen as happening 'in a family,' and it also contains enormous possibilities of generalization. And in this regard, then, that another tells you that it happened in their family, too, is relevant to your seeing and their seeing that what happens is 'a function of family circumstances' and not person X or person Y. Then, that the second story involves identically formed up characters may not be at all a small matter. One wonders, for example, at how little exchange of such matters is sufficient for people to figure "It's happening everywhere." It only happened in a neighbor's family and somebody else's neighbor's family, but if that is so, then it probably happens in lots of other places. And that is a very substantial issue; what I treat as 'adequate examples' for persons to diagnose some troubles as non-local, as structural, whatever else.

Focussing on a small section of the data:

> . . . So, the day before, Christmas afternoon, we were over there, and Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim came out to me and said that my mother had gotten my father just scads and scads of presents. And she said that, uh, and Kim said that my mother was afraid that my father hadn't gotten her anything. So I was supposed to go out and feel out my father and see if he'd gotten anything.

I want to fix on ". . . Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim came out to me . . . so I was supposed to go out and . . ." i.e., the in-and-out business. It's interesting for several reasons. Suppose one could ask, about the notion 'contrast class,' are there ways that we can say that the attributed status of two terms, that they 'contrast with each other,' is a status that matters for Members? Not simply that they use the two terms differently, but that, that they stand 'in contrast to each other' is used. We could ask whether 'contrast class' was a real category; 'real' in the sense that it has features used by Members and isn't an analysts' construction. How would we go about finding ways of seeing that 'contrast class' was real, in the sense that features of 'contrast class' status were used? I think that materials like these are very neat on such a matter. For one, 'in' and 'out' are used here without any reference to the places that were, with respect to each other, 'in' and 'out.' Instead, it seems that their contrast relationship is all that's used, and that is sufficient to do some serious work for the parties. The talk is not in terms of anything 'in' and 'out' are specifically modifying, e.g., 'in the living room' being contrasted with 'out on the porch'; we just have 'in' and 'out' as doing a discrimination. The places are irrelevant. But some things that in-and-out can do, apparently are relevant. For one, wherever the conversations that are being reported take

place, what's important is that there's some population distribution – not merely for participating in those conversations, but for hearing those conversations directly. So in-and-out is locating a population distribution by reference to a conversation, and a conversation for which it may be important that those population distributions are as they are. That is to say, Kim and Mother are one place having a conversation and I'm not there, in the sense that the conversation is not available to me, which wouldn't perhaps be brought off with, e.g., "Kim was talking to Mother."

It's not simply that he's noting the fact that the first conversation, 'Kim and Mother,' and the second, 'Kim and me,' and the third, 'me and Father,' were among those participants and in different places, but for each of those conversations to be the sorts of conversations they are, that they take place with, as present persons, *just* the present persons, is key. In the case of what Kim and Mother said, it's important, for one, that Father not have heard that. In the case of what Kim and I said, it's important that both Father and Mother not have heard that. In the case of Father and I, it's important that Mother not have heard that. That is to say, the effectiveness of each of the parts turns on simply a separation of the parties, and it is absolutely irrelevant how that separation occurred. Did it happen in the kitchen? In the den? Was I sitting on the porch? It's irrelevant. It's only important – and it *is* important – that the parties were distributed in certain ways, and apparently 'in' and 'out' can bear that work of sheer population distribution. They apparently are used to locate some contrast, where the contrast that they locate turns on what it is that needs contrasting. In a way, it's the possible variation of the things that 'in' and 'out' can modify – if that's the term – that provides for this. That is, whereas under some formulations we were 'all in the same place', e.g., we were 'all in the house,' you can nonetheless make it that they were 'in' one thing and you were 'out' in another.

So you get a more or less pure case of the contrast use of in-and-out, where, for its working, the use of both terms is key, and where they can bear whatever sort of relevance that contrast has. The general point being that there may be ways in which we can see persons using that relationship between a pair of terms – that they stand in contrast to each other – and using just that relationship to do work for them.

Let me pick up another little thing, where Ted says "At least it was for her use," leaving aside the "at least," focussing on "it was for her use." What does that locate? In the beginning of the story we got a list of possible gifts: An electric skillet, a coat, and a sweater. They're partitioned: Electric skillet/coat, sweater. Electric skillet is not wanted and gotten, coat and sweater are wanted and not gotten. Now comes the Zippo. He makes a remark about the Zippo in which the criterion for assessing it is apparently selected by reference to the partitioning of the items in the prior list. Via that list and its partitioning he can find 'she wants this and she wants this, she

doesn't want this.' What is it about those things that would involve her in wanting these and not wanting that, and how does that provide a way for assessing the Zippo?

The Zippo has in common with the coat and sweater that it's 'for her use.' And it may also discriminate, then, the electric skillet from coat-sweater-Zippo. So it's really elegant in its way; the way in which he used what the mother was alleged to have said, to find a way of constructing criteria for assessing the Zippo.

Appendix I
'Introduction' 1965

0.0   For sociology, the most central findings of the two papers which are the body of this volume are: First, the detailed ways in which actual naturally occurring social activities occur are subjectable to formal description, and second; such description can permit us to see non-trivial ways that actual activities in their details are simple. These *findings* (the term is emphasized to point out that the assertions are the product of the researches that I shall report), have very large significance for what it is that sociology can aim to do, and for how it can proceed. In brief, sociology can be a natural observational science.

0.1   The papers contain a variety of findings: (1) The organization of categories in terms of which conversation occurs is deeply and describably related to the occurrence of non-conversational occurrences; (2) social activities, actual singular sequences of them, are methodical occurrences, i.e., their description consists of the description of sets of formal procedures which members employ; (3) the methods members employ to produce their activities are atopically relevant,[1] i.e., findings are generalizable in intuitively non-apparent ways; (4) it is in its methodical character that the simplicity of social activities resides; (5) formal description of singular occurrences does not only provide descriptions which are highly reproduceably usable, but also permits the specification of the bases of recognized troubles, and perhaps for the solution of recognized trouble.

This is marked as "draft one" of an introduction to a publication to be entitled THE SEARCH FOR HELP: *Two Studies in the Formal Description of the Details of Natural Social Activities* and was written in the period following the academic year in which the lectures included in this volume were delivered. As originally planned, this was to include "The Search for Help: No one to turn to" (later published as Sacks, 1972) and "The Search for Help: The diagnosis of depression." Sacks later reconsidered, and did not press an effort to publish this work in monographic form.–EAS.

[1] An intuitive basis for supposing the otherwise non-intuitively apparent notion that knowledge is organized atopically may be developed via a careful consideration of the working of proverbs. Social scientists have, however, used the proverb largely as a foil. Cf. e.g. Bruner et al., p. 3, Homans, SOCIAL BEHAVIOR, pp. 1–2. The initial results of some investigations of proverbs, their work and its relevance are presented in my *Lectures in Sociology*, Spring, 1965, dittoed. While such references to proverbs as are referred to above are not worth remarking on, the observation of the well-known results of the use of proverb tests on e.g. brain damaged persons, especially with regard to the abstract-concrete thinking dichotomy, may be commented on. Discussion here.

0.2   The papers permit us to clearly and sharply pose certain fundamental problems for sociology: (1) The availability to members of alternative category collections by reference to any of which any population may be classified sets for the sociologist the pervasive task of describing in each and every case where members make some categorization how they do it; i.e., what methods they use so as to provide the relevance and propriety of the category collection which contains the categories they employ. Only when such methods have been described can the sociologist other-than-trivially assert that some person X is "white" or "male" or "middle class" where, when he does so, he intendedly conveys some information relevant to his analysis.

0.3   My aim in the body of this introduction will be to offer the reader an argument, i.e., an intuitive basis for the understandability of our coming up with the findings we have indeed come up with. I shall, that is, offer the reader a foundation for a natural observational science of sociology. The construction of this foundation has several aims. It is in the first place directed to showing that the findings we have made can be seen to be not surprising, though to see them as unsurprising will probably require a drastic shift in the views sociologists hold about social activities. Secondly, the foundation is limited in its aims along the following lines. I shall consider the import of the fact that science (not including for purposes of the argument, sociology) exists, and shall aim to do no more than to show that if science exists then that is extremely strong evidence for the possibility of sociology.

0.3.1   I suppose that one can doubt the existence of science, but; if the reader is forced to doubt the existence of science in order to doubt the possibility of sociology then that is no bother to me. For, natural scientists and sociologists have engaged in supposing that natural science (as it has been heretofore delimited – i.e., excluding sociology) could be supposed as existent while the possibility of sociology might be comfortably doubted. The claims of those sociologists and others who doubt the existence of natural science as well are not to be considered here.

0.3.2   I am, that is, quite willing that the possibility of the existence of sociology be placed on no worse footing than the possibility of existence of any other science. Let me note again: I do not intend in this introduction to do more than argue for the possibility of doing sociology. Or rather, to do no more than no argue for that and suggest what a sociology thus found possibly might look like. The actual existence of a sociology depends on quite different procedures; it depends, in short, on research, and on the findings of that research. For those who think the issue of possibility is irrelevant, there is a quite simple course of action: they may turn directly to the papers which are the body of this volume.

0.4   Now then, how are we to go about showing that sociology is possible, as a natural observational science? We proceed in the following way: We may list certain facts which, assuming the existence of science, are unproblematic; and then we may consider their import, an import which I shall suggest is simply – the possibility of sociology.

0.4.1   Some years ago, before I had begun the researches I will be reporting here, I found myself considering the following problem: Was it possible that a description of the activities of humans could be stably done, where by "stably" I meant that it would not be seen to be an attempt to do that which could only properly be done by neurophysiological and other such descriptions? It seemed quite obvious that stable neurophysiological description could be done. The question was whether, if one wanted to describe the actions of humans, anything but that sort of description was condemned to inadequacy.

0.4.2   It was at least conceivable that the description of humans' activities, i.e., of their interactions and the like, might, instead of being a rough sort of biology, be instead a description whose accuracy and incisiveness might be useful to the posing of those problems which biologists might explore. Was there any compelling evidence for the possible stability of descriptions of activities; and, furthermore, if there were, what should such descriptions look like? It was these latter questions with which I was most concerned. It was not a question for me whether neurophysiological investigations could be done, nor whether they would be fruitful. I assumed that that was so.

0.4.3   My consideration of these issues led me to make an extremely simple observation: The doing of natural science, indeed the doing of biological inquiries, was something which was reportable, first, and second, the reports of the activities of doing science did not take the form that the reports of the phenomena under investigation took.

0.4.3.1   That is to say, sticking for the moment to the second point, biologists in reporting their researches to their colleagues could effectively do so without first casting their investigative activities into biological operations. They could report what they did in ways which were accessible to naturalistic observation, and reports so accessible were adequate reports. Such reports clearly were stable; such reports clearly were descriptions. They were descriptions which were stable because unless they were supposed as such then it would be hard indeed to see that there was indeed a science. I.e., if we are to suppose that science exists, then we must suppose that the scientists' reports of their own activities were science in just the sense in which their reports of the activities of the phenomena they observed were. Of course the former might not contain explanations. But that is a different question.

0.4.3.2   It seemed to me then that the ways scientists behaved was subjectable to stable naturalistic description, and that the fact that the scientists had done it themselves meant only that we could say about this animal that it could engage in self-description.

0.4.3.3   What is it, I then asked, that made scientists' descriptions of their own activities adequate? The answer to that is of course obvious. Scientists' reports of their own activities are adequate, i.e., they provide for the reproduceability of their actions on the part of themselves or others, by virtue of the fact that the action they report, and the form of the report, is the use of methods. This being so, could we not say that whatever activities of humans could be adequately described as methodical could be then said to be

adequately scientifically described? That seemed obvious enough.

0.4.3.4   The question that remained was: What scope of humans' activities were methodical? That question was a problem for research. It is the question which has generated the research to be presented and the further researches I have been engaged in. (I take it that if human activities are describably methodical, i.e., as methodical actions, it is quite irrelevant whether self-description is used or not – the latter would seem to be only a more elaborate possibility. Indeed many great scientists do not make adequate reports of their procedures; others do it for them. It is by virtue of such a fact that the notion of "proof" can change, as it has in mathematics, while much of its achieved knowledge remains stable.)

0.4.4   I took it then that the fact of science's existence in the way it does exist provided first a strong indication that human activities were describable, and that we might indeed say that the possibility of science guaranteed this possibility of sociology. I.e., science had naively explored a fact of life in this world. That we were the sorts of animals whose activities could be methodically described. Once we turned from the question of possibility to actuality we would of course see that there was already a great bulk of scientific descriptions of human actions, i.e., the body of reports of scientists' activities.[2]

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[2] Another, and not unrelated, set of researches which proceed from a consideration of the relevance of science as an activity of humans may be found in L. S. Vygotsky, *Thought and Language*, see esp. chapter 6.

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Part I
Fall 1968

Lecture 1

Second stories; "Mm hm;" Story prefaces; 'Local news;' Tellability

Hereafter I'll begin with some rather initial considerations about sequencing in conversation. But this time I'm going to put us right into the middle of things and pick a fragment that will introduce the range of things I figure I can do. I'm proceeding this way for this sort of reason: Basically what I have to sell is the sorts of work I can do. And I don't have to sell its theoretical underpinnings, its hopes for the future, its methodological elegance, its theoretical scope, or anything else. I have to sell what I can do, and the interestingness of my findings. So we've got this fragment of conversation, this thing about the automobile wreck.[1] I want to start picking it apart.

I'll begin off with what I initially found interesting; why I initially worked on this fragment. And that is, some relationship between what I'm calling the *'second story'* and the 'first story.' The 'second story' is:

B :   You know, I looked and looked in the paper– I think I told you f– for the uh f–fall over at the Bowl that night. And I never saw a thing about it, and I // looked in the next couple of evenings.
A :   Mm hm
        (1.0)
B :   Never saw a th– a mention of it.

Call that the second story.

I will have to make a case that there is some reasonable warrant for talking about it as 'second;' second *to* the first (the first being the thing that begins, "Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday, and on the way home we saw the most gosh awful wreck.")

I think it's kind of obvious that there are some similarities between the second story and the first. The second story, like the first, seems to be about an accident; involves a witness and victims. Let that suffice for now with respect to similarity. There seem to be more or less similar characters and a more or less similar topic; it's a different sort of accident apparently, but it's an accident. So we have these naively apparent similarities. We might be led to ask, "Are they happenstance?," i.e., it just happens that here's a story, and

[1] A more extended fragment was handed out. It can be seen in Spring 1968, April 24 lecture, vol. I, pp. 764–5.

here's another story that has some similarities to it. One can easily enough find many stories that are similar to other stories. If you pick a row of books out of the library and find a story in one, it wouldn't take you all day to find a story in another book that you'd find more or less obviously similar. Does the similarity here matter? Is there reason to believe that the similarity is an *achieved similarity*?

This might be a matter of lay observation. One would, I suppose, figure, "Sure. That similarity is not just happenstance." The teller of the second story is obviously telling her story in response to the other story. They happen in the same conversation. They happen as between the same people – A tells the first to B, and B tells the second to A. B tells the second shortly after the first, etc. Now we can develop a lot better reasons for figuring that the possibility of such a relationship exists. But just for now let's assume, on the basis of the fact that it's no jolt to our intuition, to our understanding of the world, that it may be possible that those two stories are similar for non-incidental reasons and therefore that we can figure that the similarity is an achieved similarity. Then we can ask, as the first real question, how is it that the similarity is achieved?

What I mean by 'an achieved similarity' is that B produced this story in such a way that its similarity to A's will be seeable; that is, in such a way that A can see that what B is telling A is 'a story similar to the story that A told B.' That is to say, the problem of achieving 'a similar story' is B's problem. And our question is, how did B go about doing that? What we now look to is, what would it take for us to have shown how B does it? What sort of a thing would be an explanation of that? Not an explanation of 'Why?' but an explanation of 'How?' We want, that is, a characterization of what B did; something which would set out, at least in gross terms, some of the parameters involved.

Presumably what is involved is that B listened to A's story in some fashion, and engaged in some analysis of what A was saying (what exactly such an analysis would be, needs be found out). Then, that B used that analysis in searching her memory, and found in her memory some story which she could offer, which could be seen as 'similar.' What we're asking, then, is "How is it that B listened and did her analysis and used her analysis so as to find a story to tell?"

Now we can approach that kind of a question in a series of quite different ways. Consider these sorts of possibilities. Suppose that B analyzes out of A's story its topic and its characters. It's about an accident, it involves as characters 'witness' and 'victims.' Having those features of the story at hand, what B then does is to see if she knows such a story. That is to say, she looks for a story which has an accident and a witness to the accident. That might yield the second story. Now is there anything manifestly or developably wrong or inadequate about such a possibility? What sort of stories would it yield? It might yield such a story as the following. "I remember reading about a wreck once, in the paper. Seven people were killed and it was three days before anybody noticed." That is to say, it could just yield any story about a wreck.

We can then ask, would such a story as would occur where this one does

be just any story about a wreck? When people tell a story about a wreck they saw yesterday, could somebody then, e.g., report on a wreck they read about in the paper? What we need to do at this point is to watch conversations hereafter and see. I don't say that we should rely on our recollection for conversation, because it's very bad. What I mean by that it's 'very bad,' is this: It happens to be perfectly reasonable for linguistics and philosophy to proceed by considering, "Well, let's take a certain locution, a sentence. Would anybody say that? If they said it would we figure it was grammatical? or a puzzle? or not?" And pretty much reasonably educated people feel comfortable with such a procedure. That is to say, they feel that they have control over what it is someone might say. They recognize something as loony or not loony; they recognize something as what they figure to be grammatical or not grammatical. One can invent new sentences and feel comfortable with them. One cannot invent new sequences of conversation and feel comfortable about them. You may be able to take 'a question and an answer,' but if we have to extend it very far, then the issue of whether somebody would really say that, after, say, the fifth utterance, is one which we could not confidently argue. One doesn't have a strong intuition for sequencing in conversation. So relying on recollection is not a procedure that I'm going to advise us using, nor will I use it.

Again, then, the possible analysis I offered as one that B could have used on A's story, will yield any which story. It seems to be that B's second story is not any which story. Furthermore, there are stories which would not be any which story, and they might be done, but they would be quite different from this second story. Consider this possibility: A tells a story about a wreck she saw. "I was driving along and I saw a car smashed up and I went over to see what happened. There were all these people laying on the street. I stayed there quite a while." Now B uses the procedure I initially proposed; find a story with such an event and with such characters, and tell it. And the story that B remembers goes like this: "I was in an accident one time and I was laying there on the street and all these people came over and stood around gawking at me. It was really awful."

Those two stories fit together in a rather different way than the ones we're considering fit together. That is to say, that shift as to who was who in the story may be something that matters. In this case, we have as a fact that A was a witness and B was a witness. And perhaps that's a relevant sort of thing for the way that B goes about determining what the characters should be in the story she should find. Not merely some particular set of characters, but, furthermore, that there are some characters in the first story and A is one of them, and there are some characters in the second story and B is one of them. And besides that, the character that A is in the first story, B is in the second story. That's a much finer sort of situation than 'search for a story in which there are the same characters.' It's 'search for a story in which you are the character the other was in their story.'

A sort of gross possible reason for doing it that way would be that if the person is trying to make a point with the first story, then having such a second

story is a way of seeing that you agree with the point. So, for example, in other materials a second story is prefaced with "I know just what you mean" and then a story is told which has the same paralleling of characters.

Aside from that, there is a technical kind of problem; one that I can't all that easily develop here, but I'm going to try. It turns out to be rather important that there be an ordering to the way that B searches for characters, in the search for a story: The first character B searches for counts more than the second character. And by that I mean that the first character B picks will control the way B looks for a second character. That is to say, there is a way in which characters in stories fit together, and, as the position of the storyteller shifts, then the terms for conceiving the various other parties shift. So, for example, if I'm a victim in an accident then I may conceive of the others around as 'witnesses,' but I may also conceive them as 'possible helpers,' or 'gawkers,' or whatever else, whereas if I'm a 'witness' then the way in which others are conceived may not be in exactly the same sort of way. I may see them as 'people to talk about the accident with,' i.e., as possible co-conversationalists.

That sort of shift is rather transparent in one way, and that is, if you consider that it's not 'the same story' invariant to perspectives, characters, etc., then 'the same event' in some sense may have quite different things going on depending upon who is telling about it. And depending upon what they said was going on, would also turn how they put everybody together. So that for a bunch of people on a train, each of them may have a different way of seeing who else is there. That can be suggested in a fairly obvious way. One guy on the train could see the others as 'whites,' one guy may see the others as 'marks' (e.g., if he's a pickpocket), and various other such ways of seeing what the others are. And if we're taking the situation as being one in which the storyteller is a character, then which character they are can matter a good deal for what the other characters are. Now I made that point so as to try to suggest that there is reason to believe that if somebody's going to be searching for some event in their memories so as to produce a second story, then they don't just want a list of characters, A, B, C, they want an ordered list of characters. And they want at least a first character around which to organize that ordered list – in contrast to, say, the characters' order of appearance, which just doesn't get stable. Now I proposed that one way that B might go about searching for a story would be to find such a story as had B being a similar character to the character A was in A's story. And that is then to say that such an initial use of the character A was in A's story could be basic to B's finding a story.

There are some rather nice features for a procedure like that. One thing is that it's capable of enormous generality. It doesn't matter what story A tells you, you have a way of searching for a second story, that procedure holding independent of the particular character. You find what character A was, and then use that to find whether you have a story in which you were such a character. And it's not just general in the sense that we could propose a procedure which says 'find a story in which the first character mentioned in

A's story is a character, and tell this as your second story,' but it specifically fixes on the party who's telling you the story. That is to say, if we're talking about the story as being told in conversation, between some set of people, involving them in interaction, then what we have is not just a general procedure but one that's also the most *interactionally relevant.* That is to say, in each case, for a particular second story, the second storyteller is constructing his story not only by reference to the story that A told him, but by reference to what A did in that story, i.e., that A told the story is then made something that B deals with. By going about constructing his story by reference to finding a story that he is a similar character in, B is making something of the fact that A told B the story, i.e., the procedure is 'interactionally relevant.'

With this procedure we have a proposed description of how people may sometimes listen to stories; a proposed description which can be checked out. We can look to other story sequences to see whether it happens that as the stories vary in character we get second stories involving that the teller of the second story is the same character as the teller of the first story. If that is so, then we have a series of gains. For example, we have as one gain that we can talk about this being seriously a 'second' story. We have hints of far more interesting gains than that. For example, we may be getting some glimpse of the way in which somebody's memory is at the service of a conversation. If we're talking about B going about searching her memory, it isn't overt labor. That is to say, when somebody comes up with a second story like this, they haven't found themselves working to do it, it just literally pops into their head. Which is to say, perhaps, that it may be possible that this thing we think of as an extremely private repository but which we're also aware of as operating quite without control, is something that operates by virtue of procedures which are socially organized and are characterizable.

One thing we can be noticing about such a relationship between two stories is that B's story is told within 'conversation time.' That is to say, it isn't a situation in which A tells a story and some time later B tells their story. That happens, to be sure, i.e., B remembers something a week later, etc., but for a considerable amount of stuff, B is able to produce a story right then and there. Now that B is able to produce a story right then and there matters a good deal for what can be done with the story. One of the things that can thereby be done is showing that one got the point of the first story, since B can tell it at such a place in the conversation that A, looking at it, can see what it's about. That is to say, if A told a story and then the conversation went along and they were talking about something or other, it may well happen that if B then tells her story, A is going to figure it's a new story, or it's a second story but it's second to some other first story. The juxtaposition of this story to that one may matter a good deal for, e.g., A to see that B's story is produced by reference to A's particular story. The reason for that is that B's story doesn't, after all, *say* that it's the product of an analysis of A's. It's only if you analyze B's story that you find that it's that. A has just produced her story; she knows what her story's about. She hears B's story, and if she's going

about listening and analyzing as B did with hers then she'll find that
'similarity' is used in producing it. But that she has B's story so available may
well turn on where the story is placed. And that is a topic to which a good deal
of attention will be given later on.

Now, in talking about the second story I gave a characterization of it which
specifically was concerned with its having been produced by reference to
performing some operations on the first story. I want to mention in passing,
something which should be marked: That hearing in such a way as to analyze,
and analyzing in such a way as to produce a second, is a basic way one goes
about showing that one understands something that another person has said.
Some procedures can be formally characterized in similar ways to the second
story. Sometimes there are much simpler sorts of things, sometimes much
more complicated sorts of things. Here's a simpler one:

A :   How long are you going to be in town?
B :   Till Wednesday.
A :   Oh you'll just be here a week.

The way in which "you'll just be here a week" is a way of showing one's
understanding of what the other person said, involves the way in which it
takes "Till Wednesday" and performs some operation on it by reference to,
say, when 'now' is.[2]

So what we're seeing is that people aru going about using their hearings.
But anybody could say that; the question is, can we say something fairly clean
about that. And also, can we use it to bring attention to parts of what
happened which, not only were we not aware of, but wouldn't come to be
aware of. That is to say, it isn't obvious in the first instance that if I had made
a list of features of the second story which included the fact that B was the
same character that A was, that one would notice that it was an observation
that counted in any way. What we have at this point, then, is not only that
it's an observation about this story, but an observation that we've done
something with.

I'm going to leave the second story for a while and go back to the first
story. I want to deal with some other ways that story is listened to, beyond the
ways that the second story shows it was listened to. One sort of thing we
might want to fix on, but we would, I suppose, if we were conservative
enough, figure we couldn't at all deal with, would be something like this
"Mm hm:"

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[2]The actual fragment runs off a bit differently:

A :   How long are you going to be here,
B :   Uh: (.) not too long. uh:: just until uh:: I think Monday.
        (1.2)
A :   Till, oh you mean like a week tomorrow,

Elsewhere the actual data has simply been substituted for the presented data, but in this
case the comment appears to be geared to the data as presented.

A :   Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on
      the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura
      yesterday,
B :   Mm hm
A :   And on the way home we saw the:: most gosh awful wreck.

I suppose if one was altogether naive one might say that what a person
understands when they say "Mm hm" is whatever the other person has said.
It would seem obvious that you couldn't show that that was so, and
furthermore, sometimes it's obviously not so. One sort of question is whether
we can say anything about what "Mm hm" does in this case.

   One thing we can notice about stories is that we tend to get a sequence of
things like "Mm hm" ("Uh huh," "Oh::," "Yeah," etc.) and then
something else, like "Oh isn't that awful." The question is whether that sort
of fact turns out to matter, i.e., whether that sort of fact gives us some idea
about what "Mm hm" does. Let's notice what the story has so far involved.
A begins by saying "Say did you see in the paper or hear anything last night
on the radio." Now obviously what we've got going there is that A is making
some request of B for information. And B in due course fills that request for
information, saying "No, I haven't had my radio on," and a little later on, "I
don't get the paper."

   Now we can ask, how does B know where to place her answer? An obvious
answer to that would be, she should place her answer at the end of the
candidate news story. Well, how does B know when it's over? You could
perfectly well have:

A :   Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on
      the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura
      yesterday,
B :   No, I didn't see it in the paper.

That is to say, if B sees this as the thing that could occur in a newspaper, then
B might, having read the paper, treat just this as adequate for trying to recall
whether it was in the paper or not. But B does not do such a thing. She waits
to get more. She does not see the first part as the candidate news story. And
it may be that the request, indicating that 'news' is involved, helps B to decide
on the matter. So that one wants to see that the request for information is
placed at the beginning of the story, and also to see that at some point before
the answer is placed, other things are done ("Mm hm," "Oh::," "Uh huh,"
etc.) which have at least the relevance that they are talk, and not yet the thing
that B is going to do at the end of the story. What "Mm hm" does is at least
this: It says, "The story is not yet over, I know that." And also, it is placed
at a pause-point and shows that B is listening – where there is a sense that B
would have to show that she's listening, to show that she knows the story's
not over. That's at least a sort of listening, in that, in this case in particular,
there is something that she should do when she sees that the story is over.

Now she gets what she should do from what I'm going to call the '*story preface,*' "Say did you see anything in the paper or hear anything on the local radio." It turns out that stories regularly have prefaces, and they regularly have prefaces which are relevant in approximately the sort of way that this one is relevant, i.e., they inform their hearer what the hearer should do when the story is over. This is a particularly simplified one in the sense that it obviously consists of a request for information. Characteristically it's not that sort of a thing, but it's something like "I heard the most terrible/wonderful thing yesterday" and then the story is told. That line is similar to "Did you see anything . . . etc.," in that we find that what that says is, 'When you hear the story is over, say something like "Oh isn't that terrible/wonderful".' That is to say, the characterizing adjective for the story is used by the hearer of the story to produce their remark on recognition that the story is over. And if they fail, then that can be picked up by the hearer, i.e., the initial storyteller, and sometimes it could be a touchy issue. For example, in one bunch of materials there's place where A is telling about a house she has for rent. And the point that she wants to make, she makes in the following fashion.

> A : So I thought just for fun, I would uhm -- uh, since I had this much time, I'd run a little ad myself?
> B : Uh huh,
> A : And maybe handle it myself if I could?
> A : Mm hm,
> B : And do you know I was just amazed, it was in last night, I was amazed at the responses I got.
> B : Mm hm,
> A : And uh it's– I already have a (1.0) a deposit for it.
> B : Well good!
> A : Isn't that something?
> B : Well I should say.

Notice, where B says "Well *good*,! i.e., "It's good that you rented the place" or ". . . rented the place so rapidly," A says "Isn't that something?" Now what she's doing with "Isn't that something?" is picking up what she was telling about that was "amazing," i.e., the responses she got from this little ad she ran herself, and not that she got the place rented, which is "good." And the other grants that it was "something."

In that regard, then, we can find that something like "Mm hm" can have something said about it by reference to the way in which somebody listens to the *progression* of a story. That is to say, we're not in a position of merely being able to say something about the second story following the first and exhibiting an orientation to it, but we can say that the first story is listened to as it is developed, and that there are ways of dealing with the ways it's being de- veloped. Where, furthermore, the ways of dealing with the way it's being developed are something that a person who builds that story is going about setting up. In particular we've seen that one sort of thing a storyteller can be

occupied with is informing the listener what it will take for that story to be over, so that the listener can see such a thing as that it isn't over or that it is over, in that it's not at all common, usual, done, that at the end of a story one says, "And now the story's over," but, that the story is over is something that needs to be detected. For one, the teller of the story gives, right at the beginning of the story, information as to what should be watched for as the thing that will be the completion of the story. If someone says "I heard the most wonderful thing yesterday," then you should watch for what it is that could be a wonderful thing. And when you've heard what could be a wonderful thing, then you should show that you see the story's over. If you don't, then they'll say "Isn't that wonderful?" and you'll be in a position to be seen to be thinking that the story is still to go on – which is to say, you've failed to understand it. And that obviously can happen. I certainly don't mean to be saying that that sort of thing cannot happen.

In this particular case, the preface is indicating that the story involves something that might be seen in the local news, for a hearer who is presumed by this to know, perhaps, what the local news contains, not merely in the sense of what yesterday's newspaper contained, but what any local news contains. Where, that it might be seen in the local news locates for the hearer what they could say, for example, that they didn't see it; recognizing that it might have been there, but "I didn't read the paper," knowing however that such an item has been presented as *could* be in the local news – which would, e.g., rule out Ruth Henderson and A driving to Ventura.

And that her knowledge of what constitutes local news is used by B, is something which is clearly present in B's own story. When B tells her own story, involved in it is not just an analysis of characters and topics, but specifically in addition to that, reference to what happened in A's story; that it was possible local news that was not found. Now this gives us a little bit more extensive sense in which B is attending A as telling the story. A was a witness to the accident, B is telling a story in which B was witness to an accident. But A was much more than a witness to the accident. A saw the accident as 'news' and looked in the paper to see if it was there, and didn't find it there. And by reference to not finding it there, by reference to an interest in it as 'news,' she tells it to B. And B comes back with a story that was just that sort of story. B also is not merely a witness to an accident, but was a witness to an accident who thought that it was a piece of news, a piece of local news, and who looked for it and couldn't find it. Telling the story to A, B remembers all those things.

We can also be noticing that what A does in her story is not just report an accident; she's reporting something which she saw and then did a bunch of work on. What I mean by that is, what she saw was a wrecked car. She worked it up into the 'worst accident she ever saw.' Now I take it that one doesn't just see, laid out in front of you, 'the worst accident you ever saw' – you see an accident and make it into 'the worst accident you ever saw' by engaging in a comparison of other accidents you may have seen. But what I take it is going on is something like this: It is going to be claimed about the

accident that it is possible local news. The fact that it's an accident is, by itself, no grounds for it to be local news. Not any accident is local news. What makes an accident local news is, e.g., that it's a 'big accident,' in that n people were killed, or something on that order. And now the way that she can deal with its candidacy as local news, is by her having come to see it as 'the worst accident she ever saw.'

That she makes of it 'the worst accident she ever saw,' and looks in the paper for it, are mutually relevant in this way: If I were to say, "Hey did you see Huntley and Brinkley last night? There was an accident out in front of my house yesterday and they didn't say a thing about it," one might ask, "Why would they ever say anything about it?" The accident is not something that, via it's having happened in front of my house, one would figure it should have been on Huntley and Brinkley. If I were to say "Did you see anything about it in the Daily Pilot?" then it might be a candidate for such a local newspaper, where it might not be a candidate for a national news show like Huntley and Brinkley. Now, it's not that it happened on my block that prevents it from being reported on Huntley and Brinkley. Things could occur on my block that would be so reported. It's on *somebody's* block that a helicopter crashes. And some automobile crashes can perhaps make some sorts of national news. So that you can read in the *New York Times* about an automobile crash occurring outside of New York if, say, 11 people were killed. Not as headline news, but somewhere in the paper.

So you build in your characterization of what sort of news it might be candidate for. In the case at hand, she builds in her characterization of it as candidate for local news by talking of it as the worst accident she ever saw, and by suggesting that there were people killed in it, where it is the case that local newspapers present reports of accidents in which people were killed. The point is, in her forming this thing up as something she's going to tell somebody, one wants to see that she has to do it right, or that she's telling them something that's not tellable can be claimed; "Why are you telling me that?" can be raised.

The sheer telling of a story is something in which one makes a claim for its tellability. And its tellability can be dealt with. We have a sequence in which a lady who works at Bullock's gets a call from another lady, who'd driven by there, who reports that it looks like there was a robbery at Bullock's. The recipient of the call has had the day off, and the lady who's calling is reporting to her what she's missed. The recipient specifically deals with the tellability of the story by saying "*Oh* I'll call Penelope right now." (Where Penelope also works at Bullock's, and was at work when the incident occurred.) That is to say, she accepts the tellability in the classic way of accepting tellability, i.e., to tell somebody else. Or to tell the one who told you that you are now going to tell somebody else. Many times when we're told a story what we specifically do is to say just that: "Wait till so-and-so hears this." So she says, "I'll call Penelope." She calls her, and Penelope says she doesn't know much about it, oh yeah it happened but "in fact I didn't even say anything to Johnny about it because I just thought well it was so kind of *silly*." That is, she deals again

precisely with this issue of whether that thing is tellable. One finds as a recurrent feature in the telling of stories that people deal with its tellability; in that one could tell stories that people make you out a nut for, a bore for, whatever else. And so you're going about working them up into something tellable.[3]

Obviously in some sense, to work it up into a piece of possible local news is to make it tellable. So that it isn't just another description, put in there for the hell of it, that it was 'the worst wreck I ever saw.' And in that regard, the other person uses that questionable feature of its local-news status in her story, thereby gaining for her story its also-plausibility. That is to say, she saw something happen at the Bowl; it didn't occur in the news, also. That 'also' is a very curious 'also' in the sense that it may well be that it had no reason to occur in the local news. She figured it ought to be in the local news, the local news didn't include it, perhaps not for any reason other than that it wasn't local news. She may be saving that story so as to find, when she gets some other story told to her, that the other story is one that 'also' didn't appear but was 'kept out,' so as to preserve the status of her story as having been local news.

Such a use of 'also' is an enormously common thing, and to get a sense of it as a usual piece of rhetoric, here's a yesterday-instance of it. Governor Wallace is being interviewed by a reporter and he's asked about what he makes of the *New York Times'* characterization of him. He say, "The *New York Times* said Castro was a good man. They were wrong then, they're wrong in this case, also."

Again, then, in B's preservation of this story so as to make it an 'also' is one way of keeping her claim that the thing was local news alive as a reasonable claim, not a piece of nuttery. So, one thing I'm saying is that if you're going to claim something to be 'local news,' then that puts another task into telling the story. However, there's the possbile gain i.e., if she can make it out as 'local news' then she also makes it out as something tellable, worthwhile.

Let me turn now to a consideration of the line, "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday." I want to make a case for the fact that that characterization – as well as many many characterizations in the story – is specifically constructed for this story. That is to say, we don't want to propose in the first instance that when she and Ruth Henderson set out that morning they said "Let's go to Ventura." It's at least reasonable that they would say "Let's go to Mary's," or to some store which happened to be in Ventura. It's by virtue of the fact that she's reporting on an accident and locating where the

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[3]The following turned up between the time the lecture was given and transcribed. From the *New York Times*, October 1, 1968:
While Joseph Loo was watching television on Sunday evening, the telephone rang. His mother answered.

It was Ngoon Goon, Joseph's 13-year-old friend, calling to say that the teachers' strike was over and that they had to go back to school the next day. Ngoon gave the message to Joseph's mother. The message was neither interesting enough nor important enough to the two boys for them to discuss it over the phone themselves.

accident happened that what is said turns out to be ". . . drove down to Ventura."

Now she could easily handle that by having said "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to see Mary Smith who lives in Ventura," but there are some problems about that. If it was somebody who the other person doesn't know, then it would just cause a complication to mention Mary Smith: "Oh, who's she?" "She's a friend of mine who . . ." etc. And anybody knows that when somebody uses, instead of the name of the person they went to see, a place, then they're telling you among other things, 'you don't know who I'm talking about;' e.g., "I went to a party at La Marina last night" tells you among other things, 'you don't know the person I went to see.' Where, if you knew who they went to see, they would tell you who they went to see.

Again, then, what "down to Ventura" does is to help locate where the accident occurred. It occurred "on the way home," i.e., between Ventura and Santa Barbara. Note that it was "on the way to" Santa Barbara for these ladies, who were returning from Ventura to Santa Barbara. In no other way is it "on the way to" Santa Barbara. It could be "on the way to" San Francisco. A stretch of highway is "on the way to" wherever it is that you can go from that stretch of highway. And that's a real problem for seeing a 'local news event' on a highway. Let's say you're from Orange County and you're driving in Arizona, and you see an accident on the side of the road. It could happen that the person in the accident lives next door to you, or is the cousin of your neighbor. But you would have to have some reason to figure that an accident occurring on a road in Arizona involved somebody whom you might know. Odds are that most accidents you see in such a place are accidents that involve somebody that's nobody you know.

And when you're driving the freeway you rarely ever see anybody you know. So we have to have some way of figuring out why it is that an accident seen somewhere on a highway can be seen as possibly involving local people. And not as a matter of craziness, either. Now, people do seem to have the view that there are some parts of some roads which, while they're traveled by people going wherever, are also specifically traveled by people going to some specific place. My evidence for that is such a thing as, e.g., if you're driving up the Harbor Freeway on Saturday, and you look into the next car and see some distribution of people, you're liable to say "Oh they're going to the USC game," though you can be five miles from USC. Or you could see that they're going to Dodger Stadium, and a series of such places. And people routinely do look into the next car, or see the traffic, and say "Everybody's going to the ball game." So that they have some sense that some parts of the road, while they're trafficked by all sorts of people going all sorts of places, they are also specifically trafficked by specific sorts of people going specific places. And there then may be some part of the freeway outside of Santa Barbara which is seen as that part of the freeway on which people are, who are going to Santa Barbara.

Now it's important that the people in the accident live in Santa Barbara, because unless the people live in Santa Barbara it's not likely to be local news. If the accident was on the border of Santa Barbara and Ventura and the

people lived in Ventura, it might be in the Ventura newspapers, but it wouldn't necessarily be in the local Santa Barbara newspaper. For one, then, the borders for local news are not strictly geographic. Somebody who lives in Santa Barbara gets arrested half a block into Ventura, it might not be Ventura news but it might be Santa Barbara news. Somebody from Santa Barbara gets killed a mile into Ventura, it might be Ventura news if somebody from Ventura killed him; it might not be Ventura news if nobody in Ventura was involved, though it could be Santa Barbara news. You might perfectly well come home to Newport Beach from Arizona and find out about an automobile accident in Arizona reported in the Newport Beach newspaper. Which is to say, you might find out that somebody from Newport Beach got killed in Arizona.

So the monitoring of events in terms of that they are local news 'for here,' wherever we are, can involve this business of 'on the way home from Ventura' as a rather serious kind of matter for characterizing where we happened to be. Indeed, had it not been 'on the way home from Ventura,' then it might not have been a told story at all – or, for that matter, an auto wreck that anyone gave any attention to. That is to say, it's possibly the case that the interest in, the noticing of, the wreck is somewhat geared to where the wreck occurs by reference to where you normally are.

Now I want to name what has been done. We took a couple of phrases, or clauses, ". . . down to Ventura . . . and on the way home . . . ," and what we are engaged in is trying to see what the social circumstances are which would involve these things being said. It's not a matter of 'style,' but what knowledge of the world is there that persons have which involves them in putting these items in. The interest of the usage is if someone living somewhere else could use such a line as 'drove down to X . . . and on the way home' and be doing the same sort of thing, exhibiting the same sort of knowledge and attention to the same sorts of issues as to what 'local news' is made of, etc., as this person is.

Let me just note one further thing related to the local news, and that is that the event happened "yesterday." That it happened "yesterday" is relevant in this way: The constraints on mentioning something can be rather severe, such that in talking of it today, it's only that it happened yesterday, or the day before yesterday, or some day formulatable by reference to today – and within very narrow limits – that it could be mentioned at all. That is to say, you wouldn't expect that you could say "Did you read in the paper six months ago there was an accident?" Under one alternative: You can mention it as a *second story*. One marked difference between first and second stories is that second stories don't contain time. The first story says 'something happened yesterday;' second stories don't contain time, or don't need to contain time, or don't need to contain time that is related to the time of the conversation. And in this case the second story talks of something that happened "that night," i.e., some night, some time ago. And that's another sense, then, in which we can say that this is a 'second story.'

We have, then, a rather strong time constraint on mentioning a piece of

local news. Essentially the constraints are, what happened between our last conversation and this one – for certain sorts of people, anyway. And that can be something with real interest, in that it permits us to deal with what's a terribly deep sort of problem: It could be a subject of much puzzlement that two sorts of facts are coexistently so: If you talk to somebody every other day, you have something to talk about with them every other day. If you talk to somebody every six months you don't have anything to talk about with them when you talk with them.

Now how in the world would it be that you could have something to talk about every day with somebody, and not have something to talk about when you talk to them every six months? Why is it that you don't have six months of news? You could figure that the less you talk with somebody, say, a friend who lives in another city, the more you'd have to talk about. It's a rather universal experience that that's not so. It's the more frequently you talk together, the more you have to talk about.

The answer to it is like this: If you talk to them every other day, then what happened today is an item that could be mentioned. And for every day one can have events in that day which are a day's events, mentionable to somebody one talks to on that day whom one talks to regularly. However, suppose for example she had finished this conversation and somebody called up whom she hadn't talked to in three months. The odds are enormous that she would not mention the accident she saw yesterday, i.e., the thing that happened yesterday was specifically 'local news.' Or, narrowing it to things that are much more directly one's own, say you got a small raise yesterday. If you talk to somebody today you could tell them "I got a raise yesterday." If you talk to somebody in three months, that raise is no news. What we have, then, is that you need something you can talk to them about every three months, which stands as a something which counts over three months. And the set of things that count over a day would not count over three months, and you then may literally find that you have nothing to say. Unless you're able to manage your tri-monthly conversation as though it were a daily one, which is on the one hand hard, and on the other hand the sort of thing that if you can do it you get known for it. People come away from a conversation with some sorts of people and say, "I haven't seen him in five years but it was just like yesterday," i.e., you had a bunch of things to talk about, which one would talk about with somebody who you talked with yesterday.

What is eligible to be mentioned can, then, have interactional considerations. I take it you can shift from one conversation to another and find that the things that were perfectly okay in the last do not even occur to you to be said in the next. And that can suggest the operation of an order of attention to, not just who you're talking with, but when you talked with them last.

Lecture 2

Features of a recognizable 'story;' Story prefaces; Sequential locator terms; Lawful interruption

I guess I ought to mention what it is that people in the class will be doing. Your tasks will be to give yourself a chance to see that you're catching on, by doing some series of exercises. The exercises have a series of virtues to them, and that is that the stuff I'm presenting is, as I understand it, researcher's stuff in a particular sort of way. One tends to have a view from one's classes that you have the same access to what something means as anybody else, invariantly perhaps to your position. That is to say, there are things like a researcher, a textbook writer, a lecturer, a TV audience, a class. And people tend to have the view that everybody has pretty much the same understanding of whatever material. Researchers don't have that view at all, at least the researchers I know, including myself. I tend to figure that in the way in which this stuff works, unless you do it or do some research, you don't know what research looks like. You don't know how to read the results, you don't know their sense, you don't know whether anything's been learned or what's been learned. By doing the exercises you can come to see what you, yourself, can do.

For something that looks either like magic, or like nothing, or like impossible to be done, you can come to see that you could do it on different materials. You get a rather different view of things that way, and I would like people to get that view of things for themselves. You'll see that you can do things at one point that you couldn't do at another, so you get a sense of what sort of progress in your own minds you have acquired. You also find that you learn something from what you did. And this experience of finding something out may be fairly cut off from you, and it's something you ought to get, quite independently of what I'll be doing here, and the virtues of the sorts of things I do.

So there'll be these exercises, and let me say just blandly I've had classes for four or five years now and the exercises aren't impossible; pretty much everybody can do something and they get better over the semester. People get a kick out of it, and find that they understand everything much better that way. Now, nobody's expecting you to make miracles. What I do for any given class, for example, will have taken me anywhere from six months to two years to work up, and I don't expect that you would do things of that elaborateness in two or three weeks. But the work is set up so that you can do

something in two or three weeks. It's set up so that you can do something every day, in that that's the only way I can live with doing research – to find something out every day. I don't like to have to wait four years to see if I've got anything. So it's designed, in a way, to give you constant small rewards.

I'm going to start off by going over parts of the last lecture and redeveloping certain things in it which I fudged, our of I suppose initial fear that it would lose the class right then and there if, in order to make the smallest passing point, I had to begin with something elaborate. So I fudged some points and I'd like to come back to them and discuss them somewhat. Then I'll go on with some more stuff about the same materials.

I began off by saying there are two stories here. A first thing I want to come back to is the issue of that those things which I'm calling 'stories' are stories. Now, it's obviously a story. What we're asking is, is there some set of features that stories have so that one can have some principled basis for using what is after all a lay characterization. What we want to find are some features that have been put into it which provide for its recognizability as 'a story'. We want, then, some features that are not just there incidentally, carried-along artifacts of its being a story, but features that are put in, in the making of a story.

What I want to be dealing with – and I'll give a lecture on this sort of phenomenon shortly – is that among the most central things about stories is that stories go on over more than a single turn of talk, or a single utterance. Now, if you intend at the outset to produce talk which will involve that you talk, somebody else talks, and you talk again, then, in the characteristic environment of conversation, which is not two-party conversation but more-than-two-party conversation, there's a real problem. And that is, if you talk, and now B talks, it's open as to who's going to talk after B. Maybe you'll get a chance to talk then, maybe you won't. The question is, is there some way whereby you can provide that B should talk next, and also that when B is finished, you should talk again, i.e., that the others allow you that next slot? The usual run of talk does not involve an attempt to control a third slot, and usually you don't have very good ways to control the third slot.

Now the *'story preface'* phenomenon which I talked of last time – things like "Say did you see anything in the paper last night" or "I heard something wonderful today" – announces that there is a story coming and therefore that what one intends is to be talking in alternate positions until the story is finished, not particularly caring who comes into the alternate positions, but whenever they finish their "Mm hm"'s, "Uh huh"'s, whatever else they put in, that others will be silent and allow you to go on. So that basically what a story is in some ways, is an attempt to control the floor over an extended series of utterances. Formally it can be said to be in the first instance an attempt to control a third slot in talk, from a first. That's why, in terms of the sequential organization of conversation, that one is 'telling a story' is an important thing for others to recognize. So that, for example, if there were more than two persons present in this conversation, if she finished "Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Ruth Henderson

and I drove down to Ventura yesterday," and B said "Mm hm," somebody else shouldn't just go on about whatever they wanted to talk about. And people don't. Stories can be told invariantly to the number of persons present in a conversation. That is, you have people telling stories in a seven-person conversation, and getting the floor for ten utterances across twenty.

So that's one basic reason that, that you're telling a story is something you do right off. And it makes, then, the issue of recognition of a story something that's not only relevant to what happens after the story is finished, but to how the talk proceeds during the story. And one major import of the story preface is announcing a 'story' and thereby announcing that this person is going to talk across a series of utterances, allow for others to talk in the course of his talk, and want the floor back after each finish of another. The preface is, then, very important for the issue of 'a story.' Further, I suggested last time that a story preface does a lot of work. It indicates what it will take for the thing to be finished, and it suggests what sort of thing should be done at the end. And that's one order of the things involved in 'telling a story.'

Now there are a bunch of other things that are also present. One gross, recurrent thing that is present for stories is that across its sentences one finds that a lot of the words, particularly those that are 'carriers of the story' so to speak, i.e., the nouns, verbs, adjectives, can be said to be *co-selected*. If we take the various words like 'drove,' 'wreck,' 'on the way home,' 'car,' 'smashed,' 'small space,' etc. then if we took each place in which the word we were considering occurred, we could get easily enough that the word that occurred there was a word from a similar class where one could replace it by more or less equivalent words, i.e., that would in some way 'say the same thing.'

We have a partial picture of persons, in producing their talk, engaged in selecting words out of various formulations of word classes. They do it by reference to syntactic constraints on word classes and various things like that, and in various ways fix in on a word class from which a word is selected – where many of them can be replaced with another. And one thing to look to is that range of talk within which it looks like a set of words of some sort are selected by reference to each other, or selected by reference to some stateable thing, e.g., a 'topic.' I'll eventually claim that when people are doing 'topical' talk it's not so much or only that all or some of their talk is 'about something;' e.g., they're talking about cars, or each utterance is about cars, but that *how* you talk about cars when you're 'talking about cars' is distinctive from how you talk about cars when you're 'talking about' something else. So, for example, this isn't a discussion about cars. And the ways in which cars are talked of in this conversation has to do with that what's being done is 'talking about a wreck.' So that, e.g., in describing the car she saw, she doesn't say "There was this 1964 Chevrolet convertible, olive green with black upholstery . . ."

What I'm saying is if you take what I'll call the 'descriptors' in talk, then you find that when people are telling stories, the descriptors are co-selected. Let me bring that kind of thing home in a particular way, by reading another story. If it's not too easy to see the point with one case, then with another case

you might be able to get a glimpse of a kind of parallel thing going on. This story is told by a teenage boy, with three or four people present:

> *A* : When I was thirteen some guys talked me into doing houses. Some guy stole this jade cigarette lighter it must've been worth two hundred bucks. Sold it for two bucks the next day. Cut down a chandelier y'know. They stuffed it in my locker. I wasn't there. I didn't go with 'em stealing. They stick it in my locker.
>
> *B* : A chandelier?
>
> *A* : A chandelier. It was crystal and all. They were doin' houses. It was all kinds'v loot. Principal comes over says open up your locker. I says why I just got books in there. Opened the locker. I didn't even know it was in there. Bam I'm kicked outta school till they find out I didn't have nothing to do with it.
>
> *B* : When did this happen.
>
> *A* : I was in junior high school.

Looking at the way in which the talk of, say, burglary goes on, one sees, with things like "doing houses," that the person who's talking about burglary is using a way of characterizing what they were doing which is not, e.g., the way in which some of us might talk about burglary. It's not that he's a crook, he happens to be an ordinary teenage kid, and many kids do that sort of thing. And he might not talk about burglary in that fashion but within the telling of a story about it. We get terms like "doing houses," "loot," "two hundred bucks," "stuffed." It's not, for example, that this follow has "bucks" as the only word with which to refer to money. In other places he talks about "dollars," and things of that order.

If you look through stories comparatively, i.e., take several stories and see if there's a same sort of item or a same sort of action referred to in them, then you can see each item or action looking like other items and actions referred to in the story that it's in, and if you try to shift them around then you find that it doesn't look right.

Now, I haven't proved that this is a story, or given anything like a comprehensive analysis of what stories are like. But I think that I've suggested that in using the term 'story' I haven't used an utterly unexplicated term; that it looks explicable, that it seems to have parts, that its parts seem to be analyzable, that they look like they'd be more or less interesting. It isn't essential to the analysis that I prove that it's a story. But it is more or less essential – at least in the style of work that I'm going to be doing here – that when one is engaged in making an observation which proposes about some matter that it's a case of some lay class, that you have something to say about that lay class, or how it's a case of that lay class. That is to say, it misses the point altogether when, e.g., occasionally a co-professional of mine will say, "Well what you really turned out to say was that that's a story. It was interesting logic, but what you're really saying is that that's a story." That's not the point at all. The only thing that's interesting is the logic. That's the

whole thing. That it's a story, anybody knows. That's not the sociology. The 'points' are the points in the analysis. Sometimes the observations have independent interest, where I take it that a lay scrutiny of some piece of material would not come up with those observations. But those observations were generated by some analysis yielding some phenomenon as observable. And what you want to be watching is the way the argument is made. It's not that that's a way to make an argument about the *point*, it's the way the *arguments* are made that's the whole thing.

So, I take it there's a warrant for saying that the first is a story. Now if one took that as a more or less exclusive structure, then one thing you would be led to conclude is that the second isn't a story. You might say, "Well the second doesn't have some of those things. It doesn't look anything like the first." Now how can we make a claim that it's a story. The key thing about this one, which I will now develop, is that it's a 'second story.' I intend to develop that it's a second story in such a way as to have us be able to look at some other sequence of stories which are not about the same topic and do not involve the same people, and find there's a first story that looks like this first, and a second story that looks like this second. I want to make a case that there is a sequential organization with one of its characteristic features being, as a general matter, that there are 'second things;' that there can be 'second stories,' and that second stories are different than first stories.

A first sort of thing that will give us indications about the more or less special character of this is that it says that what it's presenting has already been told before to the same person: "I think I told you . . ." Now what gives us any information that that's something distinctive? I guess the plain fact is, if it happens that you do monitor the possible things you might say by reference to whether you said them before and to whom you said them before, then if you come up with that you've said it before to the person you're now talking with, the consequence is that you should not say it. That is to say, there's a major sort of norm against repeating the same thing to the same person. If you do repeat the same thing to the same person, I guess that the usual circumstance is that you don't realize it, i.e., you just happen to repeat the same thing to the same person.

Here we don't have that she just happens to tell this person something she already told them, but she specifically announces that she knows she's doing that. And that would suggest that there's some specific reasons for doing that. That is to say, in that one should not tell somebody something you already told them, to tell them something you know you've told them before is to do something special. We can then ask in some strong way, why is she telling her this? There's always the question why is she telling her this, but we can now ask why is she telling her this in that she already told her, and she knows she already told her.

One sort of thing relevant at least to why she might consider telling it is that she just remembered it now. Remembering is much involved here, in that, with "I think I told you." she is engaged in asking the other to remember something. And that remembering is involved is of some real

importance. If we look to the occurrences of utterances which are accompa-
nied by the various announcements and requests for remembering, we find
that they have very orderly features to them. For example, one announces that
one remembers something when what has just been said stands as an
explanation for how it is you remembered that. Using the terminology I'll
eventually use when I develop that matter as part of a much more general
topic, one of the ways you go about proposing that the talk you're delivering
now is 'topically coherent' with the talk that's being done is to use "I
remember."

Now that's a gross point which says that a term like "I remember" has a
sequential function in conversation, locating a relationship between a given
utterance and a given prior utterance. It's a rather common phenomenon.
There are other terms in conversation which have a sequential, structural
function. I'll give an instance from this same data that's perhaps easier to
digest right now than "I remember."

A :   We were s–parked there for quite awhile but I was going to listen to
      the local r–news and I haven't done it.
B :   No, I haven't had my radio on either.

The term 'either' in conversation is this sort of a term. What it says is that
what I'm saying, I'm saying after you said something. It's simply a *sequential
locator* of some utterance. Now, there's an explanation for why it's done. I
don't want to give the explanation by reference to "either" because I'm not
on sure grounds about the sort of problems involved with it, but I suspect it's
a same sort of problem as there is with another instance of this sort of thing,
which is "I did too."

"Too" is exactly that sort of a term. Somebody says "I noticed that" and
somebody else says "I did too." It isn't that I noticed after you, it's that I'm
announcing that whatever I did, I'm saying it after you. So that if I had said
it first, you'd say "too." And, for "I did too." why you have that "too" is
kind of neat. The reason is if you take "I did," it's an utterance that is
occupied as to the sorts of actions it can do. It has essentially two possible sorts
of actions it can do, which are affiliated with the stress pattern. That is to say,
you can either say "*I* did," or I *did.*"

Now the thing is, if somebody says "I noticed that" and you say "*I* did,"
then you seem to be quarreling, and you're not intending to quarrel. If
somebody says "I noticed that" and you say "I *did,*' it seem as though they
doubted you. So, in that this thing is in that sense occupied as to the
sequential actions it can do, i.e., one says "I *did*" at certain places to do, say,
'reaffirmation' as a sequential object, and "*I* did" at other places, then if you
don't want to be quarrelling or indicating that you figure somebody doubted
you, but simply to follow some assertion, you put in 'too' and it takes the
stress, and thereby takes off the alternative issues. So the whole set of "*I* did,"
"I *did,*" and "I did too" are fully issues about the sequential organization of
conversation. And 'either' is that sort of object, too. You could fiddle around

with such utterances without those terms, to see that they seem a little puzzling.

I raised that by reference to "I remember" which is not obviously the same sort of thing, so as to show that there is a class of terms in places which are occupied with work which is specifically involved in the sequential organization of conversation. I make that as a point because it's an utterly unknown one; unknown in this way: The area in which such sorts of issues as "What does 'either' mean?" or "What does 'too' mean?" might be considered, would seem to be the area of semantics. And the discipline of semantics doesn't take it that, that there is a sequential organization to conversation matters for, say, the meaning of talk in any strong way. I take it there are many things which have as their 'meaning' that they're sequential operators, in the same sense pretty much as there are things which are syntactic operators or logical operators. Sequence is an independently structured phenomenon in conversation, and it has objects which work in it, whose explication consists in analyzing their sequential work.

The field-related question is, what sorts of things will it yield that we thought were understood, or we didn't think were puzzles, or we didn't think were understandable, that a consideration of the sequential organization of conversation will illuminate or will solve. That is to say, what extensiveness of import does the fact that conversation is sequentially organized, and that it's an independent structure, have for whatever we know about language.

I was saying, then, that one of the things that the use of "I remember" does is to propose that the utterance it's a part of is topically coherent with prior talk, that is, that it is second to some prior talk. What's involved is, it's not simply that a person proposes "I remember" something, but if you look at what they've proposed to remember, it's something that's similar to, touched off in some way by, topically coherent with what the other person said. As, for example, an article in the *New York Times*, April 2, 1968. The *New York Times* has this Man of The Day article; some guy they talk about today by reference to something that happened on this day. And this one is about Avril Harriman:

> A mellow William Avil Harriman switched off his television set after President Johnson's speech last night, and picked a memory from his vast collection.

Now the thing that's neat is that it's a "vast collection," but given that buildup, what the memory will be is locatable.

> It was not really so extraordinary that the President had decided not to run for reelection he said, why, he remembered sitting in the District of Columbia's National Guard Armory that Saturday night of March 1962. That was the dinner meeting at which Harry S. Truman, one of the four other presidents of the United States who Mr Harriman has

served, stunned the political community with the statement "I shall not be a candidate for reelection."

It's that order of things for which I went through the issue of the hearer's analysis, etc. last time; that there really are sharp constraints on what somebody will propose they remember at some point.

However, we have in our case something much more powerful than we have in the Harriman story. Because while we could do a distributional analysis of stories which suggested that when people use 'remember' they really do present a thing that's strongly similar to and apparently occasioned by something prior, we have in this case – and in other cases – that they aren't simply saying "I remember," they're engaged in attempting to get the other person to remember.

When somebody tries to get another to remember something, they'll present some body of information that can be used to find that thing. Now in this case she doesn't give very much information: "that fall over at the Bowl that night." What fall? (And there could be issues about what kind of an object a 'fall' is. We make it out that there was some sort of accident, but it needn't be heard as that. Indeed, this is one of the really fudged points last time; that a lay reader would see that the second story had victims, and there are no victims mentioned. I take it that we have the sense that there must have been victims, but it's also so that I can't just say that there are victims. I've fudged on that.) So the story is utterly spare. But it's sufficient. That is to say, a question is, how can the other remember it when it is as spare as it is? And the way it can be remembered when it is as spare as it is, is this: That it's recognizably intended as 'a case similar to this other story' is used to find what it is. The spareness of the story is, then, a *feature* of it.

I'll give a much more dramatic instance, from these kids in a group therapy session. One kid is talking about a job he got. At some point the therapist says "Last week you were mentioning something about the fact that you uh–" and he's cut off by the kid saying "I got lost in one job? yeah." The question is, how does the kid, given that information, "Last week you were mentioning something about the fact that you . . ." know what it is, of the things he said last week, that he's being invited to remember. Obviously what it turns on is things having been said right now in this conversation, where one can use what has just been said to find what you're being invited to remember. You can use it in a perfectly natural way, be not at all surprised that you turn out to know this thing that they were reminding you of, before they even say it – by virtue of the fact that you know that they remember it in just the same way that you remember it. That is to say, what you just said reminded them of something, where it may well have reminded you of that very thing.

One sort of consequence – and this is a rather technical consequence – is this: As we're all well aware, interrupting is not a thing that people are supposed to do in conversation. But interrupting occurs in conversation. The question is where does it occur in conversation. And there are some sets of *lawful places that interruption occurs*. That is to say, if we locate a class of

places which have no obvious relationship to 'interruption' as it is semantically or otherwise defined, and we can say that there we will find interruption, then that's kind of an interesting prediction situation. What I'm proposing is that when persons go about doing 'reminding,' i.e., say to somebody "Do you remember," "I think I told you," etc., then there you will find interruptions. There you will find instances of talking before, e.g., a sentence has been completed. So it's not an enormously rare thing that someone is engaged in announcing they've remembered, before what it is that the other person might figure it would take for you to remember has been presented.

I leave aside the issue of why it is that when they remember they immediately come in and don't wait for the other to complete; I'll deal with that at another time. But that they do interrupt when they do remember has at least the import for this discussion, of making it a question: How do they come to be able to see what it is that they're being reminded of? And I take it that that turns on the fact that one reminds people of things that are 'talk-so-far-occasioned.' Which is to say that 'remindings' deal with the 'seconds' phenomenon. And here 'second' is a technical term. It could perfectly well be a third or fourth. A fifth story is for our purposes a 'second.' It may well be there's some way of differentiating third and fourth and fifth, but I don't know it yet.

That 'seconds' have different structural features than firsts seems to be a wider phenomenon than just for storytelling. So, for example, for another sort of thing that has firsts and seconds – questions and answers – then answers tend to be less like sentences than questions are. Now we don't in the first place tend to take it that there's a class of non-sentences and those are 'answers,' since we can't recognize an 'answer.' That is to say, that something is an 'answer' is not in principle detectable unless you also have the sequence in which it occurs. But if you get the sequence in which it occurs, then you're liable to find that 'questions' are indeed sentences, and 'answers' are, with some recurrence, not sentences. It's the same sort of thing for stories, and there are other things like that as well.

That that is a 'second story' is, then, kind of intrinsic to it. Its production turns on its being 'second' in the sense that one of the things involved is asking the other to remember some story, where for that request for remembering to work turns on use of the first story to find what sort of story that second would be, and perhaps to find the very story.

Last time I mentioned that not only did the first story happen "yesterday," but that it happened yesterday is announced. And that there's no announcement of when the second story happened. First stories have specifically that character. If you're going to tell somebody something that's 'news,' something that you have some reason to tell them, then you tend to say when it happened. And you tend to only do it when it happened within some such unit as 'yesterday,' 'the other day,' 'last Saturday night,' and things like that. The second story doesn't have to have that, as the first story occasioned it. One might figure that that's incidental, so I'll read another. If you get two you might feel a little better. Or you might figure it's still just chance.

A :   My little brother's an animal lover. He comes up with some wierd
       things. This morning he was mad at me 'cause people kill gophers.
       Says uh "gophers," you know I said "Well people kill gophers 'cause
       they're on their property not because they don't like gophers, 'cause
       gophers are harming them." And then he fought back, "But how do
       you know it's not the gopher's land."

       .

       .

       .

B :   My mom came up with something like that. She said everybody's
       hunting all these deers and everything, what happens if the guys gave
       guns to the animals.

Leaving aside the ways in which those two stories can have the same other
sorts of similarities as the auto wreck stories, i.e., such similarities as "my
brother comes up with . . ." "my mom came up with . . . ," and the ways in
which they're topically the same, they also have this business of "this
morning" for the first and no time for the second. So the 'time' thing is, I
think, relevant in that it is transparent in the telling of the second story that
it's occasioned by the first.

    [*Question re. the purpose of the course*]
    In the most general terms, here's the purpose. If you're going to have a
science of social life, then, like all other sciences of something or other, it
should be able to handle the details of something that actually happens. It
should be able to do that in an abstract way, while handling actual details. My
research is about conversation only in this incidental way, that conversation is
something that we can get the actual happenings of on tape and transcribe
them more or less, and therefore that's something to begin with. If you can't
deal with the actual details of actual events then you can't have a science of
social life. That sociologists or anthropologists don't study this sort of thing is
more cause for considerations about what are they trying to do, than anything
else. I take it that this is the most obvious thing one would study if one had
the interest of building a science of social life.

    [*Question re leaving out things like facial expressions, tone of voice, etc.*]
    Leaving aside whatever else is left out – and the kind of analysis I do
doesn't deal with , e.g., all the things linguistics deals with – the main reason
why it's left out is that the sorts of things I'm trying to do are not particularly
to develop anything like a comprehensive analysis of what actually happened,
but to begin to set minimal constraints on what an explanation or a
description of talking or doing things together would look like, and one gets
started where you can maybe get somewhere. And things like facial
expressions are enormously difficult to study – which isn't to say that it
wouldn't be great to study them. It would be great to study them. It's an
absence. But there are lots of terribly difficult issues for trying to study things
like facial expressions, having to do with, e.g., it's difficult to even consider
how you would do the filming that would be involved. Like, just consider two

people sitting and having a conversation together; it's not too obvious how you'd get a picture which got you what each of them saw of the other, at the same time, so as to see what they were seeing. Clearly enough, a picture of the conversation from across the room wouldn't give you the same sort of thing as the idea of a camera built into each one's head.

At any rate, the initial question I faced was, could I do something with conversation at all. Some people figure it's absurd to have a conception that we could develop a reasonable science of sociology, therefore let's do sorts of things we're interested in, i.e., focus on problems in the world, and get better information for people to solve those problems. And others would figure that you could study materials like this, but you couldn't study them in any more or less obviously 'scientific' way. Now, I suppose that social science can be considered to be a primitive science in a very literal sense. Look at what primitive sciences tried to do, i.e., they could make 'news' that anybody could see. You could point it out to somebody and they could see, "Yeah, look at that." So that they're informative in a very conventional sense of 'informative.' And, again, I take it that we can begin to work on the issue of what it is that descriptions or explanations should minimally look like, and that we could begin to get an idea of what might be involved in them as we developed a feel for the phenomena. Because we have all sorts of ideas about what explanations should look like, but not particularly ideas of what they should look like when they're controlled by coming to terms with this sort of material, i.e., just whatever happens in whatever way it happens.

So what's involved is a sort of beginning. Though that shouldn't be treated as claiming excuses. It might be possible to do some things with, say, facial expressions, but I don't know what to do with them now.

[*Question re. "I remember"*]

The possibility that there are some ways in which memory is organized by reference to organizational features of conversation is kind of an awesome one, and one which I can give little bits of remarks on. One of the things about inviting somebody to remember is that one seems to feel confident that the remembering you invite, and it turns out with some large regularity to it the remembering you get, is something that can take place in 'conversation time.' That is not merely to say that it can take place such that the person remembering can do it in the same conversation, but can announce the memory when you finish your utterance, or even before. And that the usual timing constraints of conversation – that people start up very rapidly after somebody finishes – can accomodate remembering is a kind of impressive fact.

Another way that it appears that memory is in some perhaps quite dramatic way at the service of the conversation is that what one remembers stands in some close relationship to what it is that's just been done, and if you don't get a chance to say it, when you then get a chance to say it, you've forgotten it. It is in some ways an utterance by utterance phenomenon. I don't know, all I can say is that the fact that what one remembers, that simply pops into your head, turns out to be point-after-point appropriate, and that it pops

into one's head within these very severe timing constraints, seems to be a sort of fact that some attention should be given to. And whether it means that the organization of conversation has some relevance for the study of memory, I don't really know. The time constraints in conversation may be some basis for the time constraints of memory. At least that memory that's used in conversation. But I'm a bit leery of moving from people saying things like "I remember" to talking about 'memory.'

And I don't know a thing about stuff that would seem quite relevant; the psychological literature on memory-time, etc., but I once read a paper by David Rappaport, who specialized in things like memory. It's in his *Collected Papers* and it's a report on a fellow who had amnesia. And they gave him a story that they figured was similar to his circumstances, and he read the story aloud, burst into tears and his amnesia disappeared. So the issue of the way in which stories operate to produce memories is maybe a curious one.

Now there's one other connection that's important in this regard, and that's the relationship between remembering something and making something into one's experience. As a way of thinking about the things that get presented in these two stories, they could be said to have as a peculiar thing about them that they're presented as these people's own experience. Whereas you could imagine living in some sort of 'objective' world in which the way one finds out to whom something happened is, e.g., suppose it was a sad thing that happened, then you find out to whom specifically it was sad, and it's their thing.

But what happens is not that at all. It's that everybody, in whatever way they're involved, it's *their* experience. There's relatively little about the people who were in the wreck; mostly there's stuff about the wreck she saw, and it's incorporated as her wreck. Maybe that operates by virtue of the fact that regularly what one can remember is one's own experience, so one works something up into its being one's own experience – for which there's old psychological literature. Like William James would have supposed that remembering, recognition, and the self are inseparable. And I suppose that turns on an interest in amnesia, in which you get specifically that having lost the sense of who it is you are, then you've lost all the memories that somehow are collected that way. But certainly if we reconsider the discussion of last time, the teller's position is in each case key. And one doesn't remember, e.g., another story that the first storyteller was in, one remembers a story that oneself was in; where that holds independent of the characters involved.

What's beautiful in its fashion is that it's not just one set of big problems that one can attack by considering even this little fragment of data, but that there are a considerable range of tacks one can take on it. That has a great virtue in that one of the research-psychology problems is how in the world do you get yourself to look at a page of conversation day after day, week after week – and you need to do that in order to get just the collection of small observables that you need, to be able to get characterizations of the phenomena. It takes a long time looking at a fragment like this to get even a list of 20 or 30 points about it, without any explanations, descriptions, etc.,

just by virtue of the fact that it's hard to see anything when you look at a piece of conversation. You have to have a way to come back to it. And one way you can keep looking at it is to see the range of tacks you can take on it, which aren't just fitting it to something, but which it will bear consideration of.

At any rate, I'm not prepared to talk about the relationship between remembering and the organization of conversation, beyond that small collection of points having to do with timing, topical coherence, the effectiveness of an invitation to remember, and the fact that if you don't get a chance to say something very quickly you forget it; all of which seem to suggest at least that memory is at the service of the organization of conversation. And a possibility that, on the other hand, the organization of conversation reflects the possible constraints on the way memory, physiologically or whatever, can operate, is certainly not to be ruled out.

[*Question re the teller of the second story as a 'witness' when she doesn't say that she "saw it."*]

A way to consider this is to ask, if you don't put in how you come to know something, what will it be heard as? That is to say, sometimes people don't put in how they came to know it, e.g., "There was an accident last night . . ." And there's a series of possibilities. You could have read it in the newspaper, heard about it, saw it, been in it, etc. Is there anything that can be said about what people make of a report where there's no indication of how the report was gotten? My guess is that if no indication is presented, for some class of things for which it's at least possible that you saw it, then it will be heard that you saw it. And if you didn't see it, then you should announce that you didn't.

That's a type of rule. It says that certain things should be done and if you don't do one of those things, then an alternate item is heard. For example, somebody might say "There was an awful traffic jam over at the circle this morning." Someone else might say "How long were you caught in it?" And you say "I wasn't there, I heard it on the radio." But they will in the first instance take it that you were saying you were there. That's one sort of thing. And if you were, say, in an accident, that would surely be put in, i.e., you would surely say "I was in this accident . . ." by virtue of the fact that that would locate the sorts of things that the other should say when you've finished. They would then be engaged in commiserating and things like that.

But I would rather withdraw the point that she was a witness and not look for that question in this material, and to say that you want to really look to the question of which things get presented, e.g., "John told me . . ." "I heard," etc., and if none is presented, which is taken to be present. The whole game is to find out what you can find out from anything. If you can't study it there, you don't study it there.

However, there are more than a couple of reasons why you'd figure that this person was a 'witness.' One important sort of thing is that it really does matter that how her story is told maps in some ways onto some part of the categories that the first story has. If the memory-search operation goes on in the ways I've suggested, then even if she doesn't say she was a witness, the

way she *found* that story is by looking for a story in which she was a witness. And if you look at the other stories, then they come out that way directly. That is to say, "My brother comes up with . . ." "My mom came up with . . ." and in the other set of materials I gave out last time, it's really close.[1]

So that's a procedure that people use. They take the teller's status in the story, seek to find a story in which they are just such a person, and then tell that story. If they don't have success they don't get a story. And if the procedure works this way, then it would just 'happen' that way, that she would be a witness.

Now you may say, well that's not the procedure. But then the issue is that one wants to introduce materials which suggest that the procedure is not as I had extracted it from these and other stories. What one wants is not an absence, i.e., that she doesn't say she was a witness, but a situation in which on the occurrence of a first story, someone tells a story that wouldn't have this procedure used to get it. The key thing is the procedure. And we're trying to extract from this sequence an apparently generalized procedure, a generally usable procedure. I'm not saying it's the only procedure used for finding second stories; I don't believe that for a minute. It's *a* procedure that is usable for finding second stories. It's an interactionally elegant procedure, since if a person is using a story to make a point, then what you can do to show that you agree is to tell a same story. Furthermore, if you want to do a disagreement you can tell a story which has you in a different position, for example. Which is to say that it's perfectly expectable that on some occasions people will tell stories that are 'different;' analyzing out, besides the characters, the point of the story, and using now the point as the thing they're dealing with.

[*Question re proving that somebody understood something.*]

If we had a bunch of experimental sociologists, psychologists, etc., and we asked, "How do we prove that somebody heard and understands something that somebody said?" we would all come up with constructions of ways to determine that. A typical device is if somebody tells a story, you give a hearer ten minutes and then ask them to retell the story. Or you construct a set of short-answer questions. And they'd say that's a way of deciding what the memory is. Now what's impressive here is, instead of saying "Let's find a way of seeing whether people understand what somebody else says," we've asked "Is there some procedure *people use* which has as its product a showing that they heard and understood?" And if we describe that procedure, we have a way of showing that they heard and understood – or finding that in some sense they didn't hear and understand, i.e., sometimes the other person will say "No that's not what I meant." So it could be a test, if you like. But we have an abstract procedure which describes how people go about showing an

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[1] Probably referring to the "Oh God Christmas" fragment which has, "his father said, 'Well, after 25 years, I don't think we're gonna give presents'," and "I know just what you mean . . . my father said 'No gifts'." See Spring 1968, May 29 lecture, vol. I, pp. 795–6.

understanding. It is also a description of how they proceed. A further beauty of it is that, for such a question as what is it that somebody's supposed to find out from what somebody said, that procedure is directed also to telling us what they found out.

So it's in these sorts of ways that relevant to, e.g., proving things is that you try to find some procedure *they use* and then characterize it.

Lecture 3
Turn-taking; The notion 'conversation;' Noticeable absences; Greetings; Adjacency

This time I'm going to give a lecture which, in its standards and its import, and the implication of its parts considered, will make up the substance of the rest of the course. What I want to do is to lay out in as general a way as possible at this point how the sequential organization of conversation is constituted. I start out with two observations about single conversations, and thereafter develop some of the ramifications of the initially observed features. I give in this first instance no materials for the observations, in that they are grossly apparent. By the term 'grossly' I mean that while they're overwhelmingly present features, they are also sometimes not present features – and their sometimes non-presence is something I will talk to at considerable length. In that they are grossly apparent, there will be no news involved in the observations themselves. That is to say, I make no claim that there's any particular insight in making those observations. They are not the first observations one would make about conversation, they're not the first observations I made about conversation. But the interest in them is not that they are news, but what news can be gotten from them.

Here's the first feature: In a single conversation, people talk one at a time. Or, putting it in a different way, at least and no more than one party talks at a time in a single conversation.

The second: Speaker change recurs.

Now, an initial observation about those features. It's not just one feature and another, but those features are co-occurrent features. That those two are co-occurrent is a fact that we should make a lot of. In particular, from the co-occurrence of the two features, we can produce an initial problem which is clearly an interesting problem; clearly, if you like, a sociological problem. That is, it's a coordinational problem.

The problem is, how is it that while speaker change recurs, one-party-at-a-time is preserved. That's clearly a coordinative problem in the sense that what it involves us in noticing and trying to see how it could ever happen, is that the stopping by one speaker and the starting by another speaker occur in close order. And the question is, then, how does it happen that when somebody stops – though the notion 'stop' is clearly a very problematic kind of notion – somebody starts up. And only one starts up. That is to say, on the one hand, people don't start up talking just anywhere in the talk of others.

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And on the other, if conversations take place with more than two people present, then there's a question as to how it could happen that at each given point when somebody stops and somebody starts up, only one starts up.

Let me put it this way: We have the initial observations, one and two. We have, then, an observation about the features observed in one and two. And that observation about the features observed in one and two. yields a problem for us: How is it that two happens while one is preserved. Now that problem has this to recommend it in the first instance; that it locates for us a class of places in conversation where the two features whose co-occurrence it's dealing with are particularly problematic. Call that place *'completion-transition points,'* i.e., a completion point or a transition point. That is to say, the problem tells us to look at completion-transition points as a place where the initially observed features have a distinctive problematicalness.

And the problematicalness is evidenced in these sorts of ways: First of all, just observationally, that's one class of places where more than one speaker talking at a time specifically happens. It happens of course elsewhere that more than one speaker talks at a time, but here we're locating a class of places to look at where that thing occurs and where we have reason to figure that it will occur, so that we can get at how it comes to occur there, and perhaps the particular sorts of features it has when it occurs there. Also, silence distinctively occurs here. That is to say, no one talking at a time occurs here. Recall that the initial observation was 'at least, and not more than one.' It's not just that at some places in conversation one person is talking, but that someone is always talking. That's clearly not true in some ways, but I'll deal with that.

I want now to make a case for what may or may not be obvious on any sort of reflection; that achieving the co-occurrence of one and two takes work. So we have an initial problem, how is it that while two occurs one is preserved, and what we want to do is to find out what the achievement of a solution to that problem involves; what sorts of coordinative work are involved.

First of all there's that sort of work as between a current speaker and any others which involves how it is that a current speaker is able to show other participants to the conversation that he isn't yet, that he's about to be, that he is now, completing. What does he do so as to indicate that he's still talking. I take it it's plain that it isn't obviously the case that you just have to keep spewing forth words, i.e., people are recognizably 'still talking' when they are, e.g., paused. And more importantly in its fashion, speakers have ways of showing that they are now finished. If the feature is that exactly one should be talking, then showing that you're finished when you're finished is important so as to allow somebody to start talking directly upon your completion. And this has as a correlate, how is it that non-current speakers go about determining, from whatever it is that a speaker is doing, that he is or is not finishing, is or is not finished.

Another sort of problem concerns, at least initially, the relationship between the various non-current speakers: How is it that the various current

non-speakers coordinate their actions at the transition point so that at the transition point some one of them talks, and only one of them talks.

Now, given the initial observations and now this third, we can pose a problem by reference to just those features, when we come to consider some other sorts of facts about these features. And these facts are the sorts of *invariancies* that these features have when they co-occur. They are not features that vary with, e.g., the number of participants to a conversation. They hold for single conversations across whatever n participants there are for the conversation, and across changes in the personnel of a given conversation. They hold across various other compositional features of the parties. I don't know which features they *don't* hold across, but they seem to hold across things like sex, occupation, political persuasion, etc. That is to say, it's not particularly a feature of, e.g., male conversation or female conversation or female–male conversation that one party talks at a time and speaker change recurs. They hold also across types of conversations – argument, business talks, whatever else. They hold across the parts of a conversation – beginnings, middles, ends. They hold across topics. So they seem to be, then, rather general, formal features of conversation.

Let me note a couple of incidental things. With respect to the point about n participants not serving to provide variants of 'one at a time,' what I'm saying is that it doesn't happen that when we get six people in a conversation as compared to two, what we get is more than one party talking at a time. However what we do get, at least sometimes anyway, is that as the n goes up you may get more than a conversation going. So that what happens is that the features are preserved and more than one conversation emerges. That is to say, it may be 'hard' to conduct a conversation with ten people. As a way to ease the problem, we don't then allow three people to talk at a time in that conversation. What you'd get, however, is two, three, four conversations developing out of it. It's via such sorts of points that some of the points in the initial observations can be gotten. That is to say, you can begin to see that people 'adjust' to these features. And that observation itself, about the emergence of multiple conversations, becomes available as something one might look to, by consideration of the initial observation. So we're really going about abstracting whatever we can from these initial observations. And we'll be doing that for a very, very long time.

So we have these features, one and two. We have some suggestions about their generality of presence and their invariance across other features (and by 'invariance' I do not mean 'invariableness.' They are utterly not 'invariable'). We also have a problem, i.e., how is it that while two happens one is preserved, and some brief considerations about the sorts of coordinated work that we want to be looking to so as to see how it is that that problem might get dealt with.

Let me stop that line of consideration for a bit, so as to give a different way to consider this sort of issue. When I began to work on conversation, one sort of question was: Did it seem to be the case that there was a reasonable unit, 'a single conversation,' i.e., could that be an analytic unit. That is to say, as

compared to its being the case that there are only, e.g., subspecies. That there are various types of conversations, the various types have their features, but if you look at the various types there's nothing that is literally in common, though there may be something here and something here and something here, so that we could get an average and say there is a generalized 'conversation' but no actual conversation has its features. And if no actual conversation has all the features, then there's no point in talking about the unit 'single conversation.' Conversations may go on that way but they're not *organized* to go on that way. What I wanted to find was, are they organized to go on that way.

Now, how do you go about coming up with something like an answer for that question. One obvious way would be to see if there seems to be any invariant parts to a conversation; parts of a conversation which were parts of any conversation. So, consider what seem to be 'parts' of conversatons. For example, asking about the weather, or saying goodbye at the end. Do those seem to be present for any conversation? Clearly not. And there didn't seem to be anything that, as a 'part' in that sort of way, was a part for any conversation. But there was something that seemed to be rather close to that, and that part is what I'll call 'greetings.'

What makes 'greetings' close to an invariant part, aside from the fact that greetings occur in a hell of a lot of conversations, is that there are some rather neat aspects to greetings which might permit you to use them as a definitive feature of conversation, and thereby permit you to say that, there being a definitive feature of conversations, i.e., single conversations, then 'single conversations' are things. Which is what we've been attempting to find a way of doing.

One of the nice things about greetings is that while greetings sometimes do not occur in actual conversations, at least sometimes when they do not occur their absence is noticeable. For example, people say about somebody they talked to, "He didn't even say hello." That the absence of greetings is at least sometimes noticeable suggests that they have a relevance beyond their actual use. That is to say, they are used in some corpus of conversations but beyond that corpus they have a relevance for other conversations in which they are noticeably absent.

The 'noticeably absent' thing is very, very important and it will come up again and again. If you're going to make a statement which proposes that something is absent, then you can't in any serious way propose that X is absent unless you have some way of discriminating the absence of X from the assertable absence of millions of things, or ten things that anybody could name. In order to make a non-trivial assertion that X is absent, you have to have some way of showing that a statement, "X is absent," is different from some statement, "Y is absent," where Y may also be absent. For example, I might say "There is no greeting in this conversation" and somebody else might say "Well, there is no suicide threat, either, so what is it that makes your statement that there was no greeting something other than just something you're saying?" Now one way to go about dealing with making non-trivial statements about absences is to have some way to say that the

absence is also an event. That is to say, for only some class of things will it be the case that you can say that X is absent by virtue of the fact that the absence of X is a noticeable feature of what happened. And one criterion for its noticeable status is that people say about it, "X is absent."

There are other things about greetings, particularly relevant to their absence, and also relevant for that there are indeed 'parts' of conversation. One of them is that greetings have a place where they occur if they occur, so that if they don't occur you can say where they didn't occur. Greetings occur at the beginning of conversation. It's not just a part anywhere in a conversation, look for it maybe you'll find it, but you can say where to look for it. It has, in that sense, a structural place in conversation. And there's another rather neat feature which also raises greetings as candidate for a part of conversation: It isn't obvious that one can come up with an exclusion rule for greetings. If there is one I don't know about it at this point. But it appears to be the case that for most sorts of conversations that you could think of, at the beginning of that conversation a greeting is a relevant thing to do. People you speak to every day, year after year, it doesn't happen as, e.g., with exchange of introductions, to take a gross comparison, that after some n^{th} meeting they become irrelevant and you don't do them anymore. Greetings remain relevant. You're married 25 years, you can still, when you come into the house, say "Hello."

So there's this candidate part of conversation. Now we get into a little bit of trouble. Clearly enough, I suppose, one would say that if you happen to have, e.g., some half-hour conversation with greetings at the beginning, then you have a conversation. What happens, however, if you have only an exchange of greetings? And we get, not at all infrequently, people doing 'merely' an exchange of greetings. Would it be said that that's 'a conversation'? Having picked on greetings as at least a part that conversation has, and therefore we can talk about a 'single conversation' as a structured thing, we now end up with the possibility that we're in a position of calling "Hi" "Hi" a conversation. And that grates on people. It seems to be inconsistent with people's conception of what a conversation is.

I'm going to leave the consideration of is there a unit, 'conversation,' and talk now to the issue of what's a conversation. The problem can come up in a series of different ways; for one, in just the way it came up here, where we're engaged in allowing for something being a conversation which people figure is not a conversation when it's brought to their attention. Once the issue comes up, it can be framed as a matter of modern philosophical interest: What do we have to say about the notion 'conversation'? And taking myself as a particularly relevant sample for that sort of issue – i.e., philosophers do this sort of discussion with me – that problem seems to be dealt with by saying things like, "Well, would you consider a press conference to be a conversation?" "Would you consider that section of your class when people are asking questions to be a conversation?" "Would you consider the talk that people do, who are engaged in assembly-line work, over time, to be a conversation?"

Another sort of procedure is to look to actual conversation to see when the notion 'conversation' comes up, to see what it is that people seem to understand by it. That is to say, to explicate the notion of 'conversation' used in conversation, and then use that to constrain the candidates, classes, parts, or whatever else, that you're going to call 'conversation.' That would seem to be a rather natural procedure. Now, in that this procedure may seem quite close to procedures I routinely use, it's very important to follow the distinctions I'm going to make about it for 'conversation.' I'm going to be proposing that such an explicational procedure for 'conversation' will not work, should not be used.

The reason we want to reject the results of that procedure has to do with a consideration of when it is that the notion of 'conversation' comes up in a conversation. It can come up in places like this: You say, "I had a conversation with so-and-so yesterday." And somebody may say "Oh? What did you talk about." And you say "Nothing," or give some kind of a characterization. And by reference to what you offer, he may then say "Well that's not a conversation" or "You call that a conversation?" Now the point about that is, in part, that the locus of use of a notion may be criterial for what the notion is. If the question of the notion of 'conversation' comes up only at special places, and those special places operate in particular ways, then perhaps one ought not to suppose that the notion that comes up at those places is the notion used independently of its coming up.

That is, for the notion 'conversation,' as for an enormous range of other notions, its conversational locus is relevant to what use you want to make of it. The use of conversation as a way of locating some conception which you then are going to give the status of 'semantics' to, e.g., to use to rewrite an entry in the dictionary, has as one major sort of difficulty that the structure of conversation is relevant to when it is that that notion becomes a talked of thing. And unless you have reference to what sorts of issues are involved when that thing is being talked of, then claims that, e.g., when it's not talked of it's known in the way it is when it is talked of, can't be made.

I want to turn our attention just a little bit and notice the following. The complaint that if you had a candidate conversation that went just "Hi" "Hi" then you don't have a conversation, is in the first instance looking at some historical object. It may be that what will turn out to be the correct criteria for deciding what is a 'conversation' don't particularly involve you in focussing on the fact that a conversation *finished* where it did, as defining where it could have gone. And instead, if what is involved is conversation's sequential organization and the rules for that sequential organization, then the question is not whether something that we can lay out that went from here to there was a conversation or not, but whether whatever was done was done by reference to how conversation gets done, and via that, that it could have more or less gone on indefinitely. It being done, it needn't have ended this way. The rules will allow for it to end this way, and for it to end other ways.

That is to say, 'doing conversation' is behaving according to certain sorts of orderly procedures. And we can notice, e.g., that "Hi" "Hi" satisfies the

initial observations, i.e., "Hi" "Hi" occurs by reference to 'one party at a time' and 'speaker change' occurring. So, if it turns out that the features of conversation are not 'parts' in that way, but are formal features in this way, then what happens is, having offered greetings as candidate 'parts', the shift that takes place is coming to see that one doesn't want, or need, or have, 'parts' like that at all. It need not be the presence of some lexical items in some order that is definitive of 'conversation,' but that there are means for the preserving of certain features. Where the rules that provide for the preservation of those features, and the tasks that are done in satisfying those rules, can permit you to focus on what the potential is at any given point in a conversation. We're using, then, a much more abstract procedure and a different set of features than 'parts of conversations' like 'greetings,' 'endings,' or whatever. We can then ask do we have 'conversation' in a somewhat different way.

In its fashion the history I've recounted is a perfectly natural history; i.e., it would be perfectly natural for whatever course of development of analysis of something that what you're looking for initially when you look at something – a plant, a social object, whatever it may be – is to find some parts. One would begin off, then, with things like 'greetings' and in due course come to things like 'one at a time' and 'speaker change' occurring.

Now I want to talk to the issue of what a solution to the problem, How is it that while speaker change occurs, one at a time is preserved, looks like. I'll begin that by sketching out what at least initially seems to be a simple solution – and a simple general solution, i.e., one that can hold for any conversation of any length in some community of conversations. The aim of that is to give some idea about what in the world it means to say we have a solution to that problem; what a 'solution' would look like. The solution that I offer is an adaptation that I made from a research report on a somewhat affiliated problem, 'Logic, rhetoric and poetics among the Burundi' by Ethel Albert, in the issue of the *American Anthropologist* called 'The ethnography of communication', 1965 or 1966.

For the simple solution to this general problem, what we have to have is some way, no matter what the number of conversationalists is, and no matter who that number consists of, i.e., not only for, e.g., five conversationalists as compared to seven, but for any five, to order their speech relatively to each other for any actual conversation they go through. We need some solution which anybody can consult so that they don't have to have, e.g., negotiations before the conversation – which would themselves be conversation – to arrive at some way to get through the conversation. And here's what Albert proposes, reconstructed somewhat. What you have is a single stratification system in which every member is, for other purposes, ordered relative to every other member in the society. And everybody knows their relative ordering to everybody else. When any subgroup gets together for conversation, what is done is to use their hierarchical positions to generate a first round of conversation, where a first round consists of each person present talking once. Highest ranking person goes first, next highest second, etc., etc. When you

get a first round, then all that's necessary is just repeat the round indefinitely. What's left out of Albert's account is some indication of how it is that anyone decides that, e.g., the first speaker is finished so that the second should speak. Well, you could imagine that there'd be a particle or word that's used only and always to end an utterance. Such things exist, e.g., in radio communication techniques, "Over," "Roger," "Over and out." And then the next speaker goes.

There are a range of problems that this sets up, some of which seem to be unsolvable, e.g., what happens when speaker one stops talking and speaker two doesn't talk? Albert has a remark to the effect that if a high ranking person refuses to talk on his turn, the conversation just stops. For other problems you could get solutions: Such issues as how anybody talks to some specific other person and how they, then, go about talking back to him. You could consider the sort of thing that is done in some sort of parliamentary bodies: If A is talking and A insults B in the course of his talk, then B has a right to talk at that point; B doesn't have to wait until his turn to talk, to deal with A's insult.

But in any event, it gives us a stark simplicity we can see, and a fabulous interest for social sciences, which turns on this: You could predict the in-detail order of speakers of any conversation in that society without ever looking at those conversations. And you could find whether there were any particularly odd events, or anything worth further examination, by simply inspecting the actual order of some conversation. That is to say, you predicted it would go: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and it turned out that in some round it didn't go that way, it went 1, 4 5, 2, 3 or 1, 4, 2, 3, 5, etc. We might then focus on that as a problem and try to find out how it happened. Perhaps some change in status had taken place. But it's altogether unclear what would happen – and Albert doesn't have much to say about it, she says it doesn't happen – if somebody spoke out of turn. You might find that what happens is they kill the guy, since in a way there's a lot invested in its coming off in order.

There do seem to be a series of ways in which it's fragile, and in fact I think that it doesn't work that way at all, but it gives us some sort of idea about what a solution looks like. Now turn to our society of speakers. While there might not seem to be any reason in the world to suppose that there's a general solution, perhaps the reason that people believed there might be more or less general solutions turned on the fact that the possibilities of conversation are enormously widespread. One can talk on the phone, doing what's a recognizable conversation with somebody one has never met, without any trouble whatsoever – or at least for some people one has never met. And one is able to engage in conversation – at least with respect to these sorts of features – with an enormous range of 'new' people. Which would seem to suggest that pretty much everybody must have some way which they take it is the same or similar to others for dealing with the question of how it is that sequencing in conversation is achieved.

There are a series of issues. One issue concerns the question of the *'completion'* phenomenon: How is it that people go about producing

recognizably complete utterances. And a basic thing that seems to be involved is that there's a generically available packaging device for utterances, and that's the sentence. And what we'll be doing is examining the sentence for those aspects of its structure which are relevant to sequencing in conversation. The gross point is that the utterances in conversation seem by and large to occur in integral numbers of sentences, and not fractional, or integral and fractional, and in terms of units of one. Furthermore, not only is that more or less roughly so, it's so across rather large variances in the length of the utterance being produced, i.e., it doesn't happen only if people are producing utterances of six words, but they will adapt even rather long utterances to single-sentence formats. The sentence is a great packaging technique for a series of reasons, only a couple of which I'll mention. It has a structure which can at all points be seen as to whether it is possibly complete or not possibly complete, and people are able to deal with it in such a way as to see, on its occurrence, that it's possibly complete. And also, from its beginning it can be looked at to see what it will take to complete it. If somebody begins with "If," for example, then there's already strongly usable information as to what it will take to complete that sentence.

Now the sentences we'll be considering here, we'll have to re-imagine as they're being produced. That is to say, I'll be talking about what I'll call 'process-sentences,' and not 'product-sentences,' and there are some differences. Mainly what I'll be distinguishing is that process-sentences can be grammatical in such a way that, dealing with them as they happen, they're recognizably grammatical. If, however, you take the utterance off a page of transcript, it will turn out to be an ungrammatical sentence in some way. A simple way to think of it is, A talking along producing a sentence, and B cuts him off. Then what A has produced, looked at on the page, is an ungrammatical sentence or at least a non-fully-grammatical sentence, though it's a so-far grammatical sentence.

Recall also the discussion about stories, where I mentioned that we have these 'story preface' phenomena. There I suggested that a reason for the story preface phenomenon was that if you intend to produce talk of more than a sentence length, then you want to be saying that in advance, so that people will not figure that every possible completion is your completion. Now if you're going to do that, you have to have ways to signal your completion independently, since hearers are attentive to this formal technique for recognizing completion, i.e., the sentence as a packaging unit.

That suggests how people massively go about producing utterances which are recognizably complete or recognizably incomplete, and how, then, if others don't talk while someone's talking, you get one-at-a-time until the transition point. And it tells us when it is that transition points will occur. Now how is *transition* dealt with. There seems to be an ordering of solutions. A first solution – and it's first in the sense that if this one is done, it operates; if it's not done, the second may be done and if the second is done it operates; but you only get the second if the first hasn't been done. So, the first solution: Current speaker can select next speaker. The rule for the various non-

speakers would then be, look to see whether a current speaker has selected someone.

The whole business might sound very simple, but much of the work we'll be doing will be on the various techniques that speakers use to select next speaker, and the way that that occupies their sentence. That is to say, there is some work in a sentence besides showing its completeness or incompleteness; work which is devoted to doing a selection of a next speaker. The thing we would think of first, i.e., saying the name of the speaker you're selecting, e.g., "Joe, what do you think," is not at all anything like the only or even the most common way that people go about selecting next speakers.

So we have 'current speaker selects next speaker.' If we consider that alone, we see that we have an altogether different system than the one I sketched before. Consider only a couple of differences. In the system sketched earlier, suppose you're Number 5. While there's a conversation proceeding, insofar as your talking-turn is concerned, you don't have to listen to anything except the talk of Number 4. That is to say, the sort of participation involved provides that you need to listen to nobody but Number 4, and to Number 4 only to find that he's finished. If you have a situation in which each current speaker can select a next speaker, then as long as you would be willing to speak if you were selected, then – forgetting about common courtesy, interest in the conversation or anything else – you have to listen pretty much to every utterance in the conversation.

What I want to be locating is the way in which the obligation to listen is built into conversation. It isn't built in merely in the sense of, be a good guy and listen to the other people, or, if you don't listen and people see that you're not listening they'll get mad at you, or, listen because you want other people to listen to you. It's built into the operation of the system. It's built in, in that if you're just willing to speak when selected, then you have to listen to each utterance, since it's each utterance that can select a next speaker. It's not that now comes in some big shot and he goes about selecting the next seven speakers. The biggest shot in the world selects only the next speaker. And the next speaker after him selects a next speaker. That is to say, it moves case by case.

And in that regard, then, if you wanted to come up with a characterization for a single conversation of how it is that its actual order of speakers is arrived at, you would have to study all the utterances of that actual conversation – in contrast with the system I sketched earlier, where you wouldn't have to look at anything in an actual conversation. And that's kind of an interesting side-fact, in that social scientists tend to imagine that they can adapt procedures to any which world. In that case, the Burundi should be the most studied group in social science, since – if that's indeed the way the Burundi talk – they're about the easiest to study, their system the one which you have to give the least attention to study; you could build the most interesting models on, and you could do it in a week; you could have a computer program of all Burundi conversation. But clearly enough for our society of speakers with a system of case by case selection, it's not the same circumstances.

Again, then, the first preference is: Current speaker selects next speaker (with a series of constraints which I'll come back to). The second preference is: Current speaker does not select a next speaker but he selects a next action. For example, a person will ask a question but not specify who should answer it. If a bunch of people had seen a movie and you hadn't, you might say, "Well, was it a good picture?" and then somebody will select themselves to speak, and when they do so, they will provide an answer to that question. The current-speaker-selects-next-speaker situation also involves selecting next speaker's action. While you can select a next action without selecting a next speaker, you pretty much can't select a next speaker without selecting a next speaker's action. It would be hard to simply select a next speaker; for example – leaving aside that it's got a character to it that I can't develop now and don't want to merely assert – "Well John, you haven't said anything all night, say something."

The thing about these two techniques is that the technique is built into an utterance. It's not an independent part of an utterance that it does selection of next speaker or selection of next speaker's action. That is to say, you don't talk along, "My opinion on this is such-and-such-and-such," then pause and say "Mary next, do a joke." And that turns out to be absolutely of fundamental importance for the study of sentences, since the study of sentences has not taken it that sentences in speech are occupied with work involving their successors and predecessors, as formally built into those sentences. The curious thing in its way, is that a closest natural approximation to the separated-parts situation doesn't work very well at all. And that is, such things as "John, I want to ask you a question, what time is it." What you get is, you say "John," that's already an utterance, and he says "Yeah?," "I'd like to ask you a question," that's also an utterance, and what you regularly get is simultaneous talk consisting of your question and his "Go ahead." And you don't have to pile up these external parts which announce what you want to do; there are ways of doing that in a built in fashion. And if it's built in, one import of its being built in is that to go about choosing either of these two selection techniques is to constrain what you yourself do in your utterance. You only have one sentence more or less, and if among the things you're going to be doing is this sort of work, there's going to be a considerable constraint on what you can do in that utterance.

Now, we have a third possibility, which like the second, can operate if the first is not used. The third is open, i.e., whereas the second involves that a speaker selects himself but does the action that's been selected for him, the third involves that a speaker selects himself and selects the action he will do. But there are a series of other layers that operate so that when situation three occurs they constrain what it is that the self-selected speaker does. It's not that the one who speaks says anything in the world. What he says will be closely ordered with respect to what's been going on. And in that both the first and second involve next action selection, it seems better to say, not that we have a next-speaker selection system, but that we have a next-*action* selection system, in which next-speaker selection is also one thing that gets done.

But the idea is that we have a system which operates case by case. I'd say 'utterance by utterance' but by virtue of the connotations involved in the notion 'utterance' I want to be talking instead of something I'll call an 'adequate complete utterance.' The basic relevance of an adequate complete utterance is that it's adequate for sequential purposes. When it's over, a next should speak. People's business is to produce 'adequate complete utterances' and if I use the term 'utterance' I use it only out of socialization.

Here's a sketch of further matters to be focussed on. The case-by-case operation makes one relationship between utterances a central one, and that is the *adjacency* relationship. And the adjacency relationship is used in talk in an enormous number of ways for a series of other layers or orderings that the sequential organization of conversation has, besides just the issue of selection of next action. One of the most immediately observable ways in which the adjacency relationship matters is this sort of thing: A has talked at some point and he's selected B to do something. Now the way B has of showing, among other things, that he sees that he's been chosen, and chosen to do something, is to do that right then and there. And that is analytically a great resource for us. That is to say, we're put in a position to be able to see what it is that some speaker A has done by reference to its being part of B's business to show what *he* sees that A has done, i.e., to produce an utterance which in some way exhibits that he sees he is selected, and sees he is selected to do some thing.

The adjacency relationship will matter an enormous amount since – to put it in a sentence – the kind of massive integration that conversation can get, i.e., with people talking for a considerable while in some way that they see is related, operates through adjacent relationships. That is to say, suppose we have four utterances. Utterance 1 and 4 are not directly related. There aren't formal techniques for locating an n-minus-third utterance as the utterance you want to be talking to. There *are* formal techniques for locating the last utterance as the utterance you want to talk to. Now if the last utterance also located the utterance before it as the utterance it was talking to, then you can have some way of locating that utterance as one you are talking to, through this last one. So you're operating through a series of adjacent utterances. I'll consider in detail how that operates, in due course.

Lecture 4

Turn-taking; Complaints about interruption; Enforcement

I want to finish some points from last time. First, the fact that there is an orientation by co-participants to 'completion' as 'transition point' defines not only sorts of work that co-participants do, but time constraints on when it is that the product of the work should be available. That is to say, you not only need to be able to find completion, but, in that completion point is also transition point, your finding of completion has to be available on the occurrence of completion. Presumably, therefore, you will be doing work of attending to the upcomingness of completion while the thing is being produced, so as to have the results available for use by you on the occurrence of completion.

Also, I made a point that a gross sort of fact was that utterances are packaged in single sentences. What is involved for that is generally that the rule for recognizing completion is that the first 'possible completion' is to be recognized as the actual completion.

One other thing. I offered as the third possibility in the selection procedure that there is no selection of action or speaker. Now, what happens there is that the first starter on completion of prior utterance seems to be the one who gets rights to be next speaker. That would obviously enough differentiate the sorts of things we could expect in case 3 from what we would expect in case 1, where speaker is selected. Case 2 and 3 can be similar in the sense that first starter goes, where we can then have 'competitive starting' occurring there.

I noted with respect to case 1, that if people are willing to speak if selected, that can involve a rather pervasive listening to others' utterances, so as to find, e.g., if they are selected, and if they are selected, when they should speak. Let me add that if one wishes to speak next independently of having been selected or when no one is selected, then if one is going to bring off one's utterance after someone's and before anyone else does, then that also involves an obligation to attend the structure of some corpus of utterances, i.e., those utterances which you might choose to speak after. So again there's motivation to listen, which is independent of any rule that would say 'you ought to listen in conversation,' motivation to listen which turns on a willingness to speak or an interest in speaking.

Now the mechanism that I outlined last time serves to show how it might be generally possible that we have, in actual conversation, the co-occurrence of one party talking at a time and speaker change recurring. There was no

focus on either of those features as having, each independently, regular structures involved in their preservation. That is to say, I did not consider any sorts of regulations devoted to, e.g., the preservation of one party at a time, or the preservation of speaker change recurring. And there are regulations which deal with each of those. A basic reason why I did not deal with those sorts of rules first was that you could perfectly well have a consideration of those rules and not at all have the mechanism whereby their co-occurrence was achieved. Those are quite separate sorts of things.

I am going to talk this time about one aspect of one party talks at a time. That aspect is that *not more* than one party talks at a time. And I am going to be dealing with some of the regulations around that feature. The main point will be to develop one further way, beyond the ways I developed last time, that these features are basic for conversation. The question that we are going to be attending is how is it that conversationalists deal with both the possibility and the actuality of it happening that there is more than one at a time talking.

There are some perfectly transparent things that happen, one of which is that somebody complains, e.g., "You interrupted me." I want to discuss some sorts of orderlinesses involved in the occurrence of such a complaint.

A first thing to note is that when it happens that two people are talking at the same time in a single conversation, a first thing that happens is that one of them stops. The basic general way that parties deal with the occurrence of two or more talking at a time is for various people to stop; to stop, that is, before they have completed whatever it is that they were in the process of saying. Now, being able to prove that somebody stops 'before they completed' is an independent sort of task, which we will consider on another occasion. But stopping is very neat in that if two are talking at the same time and one stops, that renders the circumstance that it is no longer the case that more than one is talking at a time – independently of who it is that happened to have, as it may turn out, brought about that two were talking at a time.

So, if a party is speaking and another starts up, then the party who is speaking may stop. And such a complaint as "You interrupted me" would then be placed on the other's completion. Now two things are involved. One is, he tries to put the complaint into a point at which no one else is talking. And also, he tries to put it into the first point after the person who he is claiming interrupted him stops talking. I want to focus on the point that he tries to place the complaint directly after the event he is complaining of, to suggest that that fact – that complaints about interruption occur in very located places – unveils a small part of some rather general facts about conversation, which have to do with where things are placed. And complaints are placed in several other rather restricted sorts of places.

A second place complaints can go is a version of the first, and involves that if you have not raised a complaint, e.g., on some occasion of your being interrupted and you are interrupted *again*, then you may say "You keep interrupting me," which involves focussing on the last thing as something that is non-unique.

A third such place is – and this will turn out to have some rather neat consequences – after a complaint has been made to oneself. If A at some point in a conversation complains to B about something he did, then one thing B can do is, in return, place a complaint to A. Now notice that if the first complaint is placed in an orderly way, then it will not be just anywhere that the second complaint will go; i.e., a return-complaint will not only be relative to the first complaint, but relative to some other event, relative, e.g., to the occurrence of a complainable by the one who then does the return-complaint. In either case, having not taken some chance to complain about some given event, one may well yet get another chance to complain about that event; under the circumstance of a recurrence of a complainable, or under the circumstance that somebody complains about something one did.

Now I've been talking about a statement like "You interrupted me" as a 'complaint.' We could, I suppose, give the thing a more neutral characterization by saying that it is, e.g., noticing an interruption, merely making an observation, or offering some formulation of a prior occurrence. Where, for the latter, saying "You interrupted me" would be assimilated to saying "You asked me a question" or "John gave Mary a greeting," etc. And seeing that possibility gets us somewhere. You could figure that somebody goes about offering a formulation of a prior occurrence by virtue of the fact that their formulation is correct; that is to say, that the way someone happened to come to say "You interrupted me" is by virtue of the fact that someone interrupted him. You might then be in a position of saying that people can, as some utterance they can make at any point in a conversation, assert some name for a prior utterance. But that clearly gets us results which we do not want to have, since if one went about saying what any last utterance was, one would be met with returns that would indicate it was an odd thing that one was doing. So that we want perhaps to restrict it more sharply than saying 'a formulation is being made of a prior utterance.' Perhaps we could say that 'a formulation is being made of a prior utterance where that prior utterance is a violation of some sort,' which would restrict the occasions of going about formulating a prior utterance much more sharply.

One thing suggested by the foregoing remarks is that when one goes about formulating a prior utterance, one's hearers inspect one's own utterance for what *it* is doing. And the fact that one is saying something that may be 'correct' is perhaps not the only thing, or even *a* thing that they look to. But where one 'notices that a violation occurred,' one may be seen to be 'doing a complaint.' Now there are a couple of things involved in the selection that you're 'doing a complaint.' One is that the doing of a compliant locates, via the placing of the complaint, what to look to to see whether there was a 'complainable.' Secondly, the doing of a complaint sets up a sequence.

With regard to the first point, complaints regularly do not say "In the last utterance you interrupted me" or "In the last utterance minus three you interrupted me." They just say "You interrupted me" and things like that. And participants can know where to look, to see whether it is so that such a complainable occurred, i.e., in this case, to the immediately last utterance,

such that if they don't find it there they may say "No I didn't," or "No he didn't," though he may have made some interruption somewhere. That is to say, they use the placing of the complaint to locate the complainable. And just as it is the case for complaints that they do not need to say what to look to to find whether a complainable occurred, so the same goes for the various things that can follow a complaint. That is to say, if you offer an apology like "I'm sorry," or an excuse or a denial, then those are heard as apologies, excuses, or denials for that complaint. And they furthermore exhibit that you saw the statement. "You interrupted me" as a 'complaint,' and furthermore, that the complaint was 'well taken.' That is to say, they exhibit not merely that you saw that this was a complaint, but saw also that it was a complaint about this utterance, and that this utterance was a complainable.

Now it will turn out that the placing of an enormous number of things work in just that way, locating which prior utterances are being dealt with. So, which prior utterance is being 'answered' is located by the placing of a possible answer after a particular question. It will be heard as 'the answer to that question,' and not, e.g., the answer to some question that went five minutes before. And that turns out to be important in another way, in that for some sorts of things, the very recognition of what the item *is* turns on its placement. That is to say, e.g., for the category 'answers,' that something is an 'answer' turns on its placement after a recognizable question, where answers don't by and large have the sorts of forms that permit their decontexted recognition. Various sorts of things, like "I went to the movies," are seeable as 'answers' via their placement. So it's not just that they are seen as 'answers to a directly prior question;' their placing controls that they're seen as 'answers.' That placing should matter is not at all surprizing, given that we have a serial coordination system if we are going to have any coordination in a one party at a time structure. I've already said that the adjacency relationship is very important, and placing is one way that one uses the adjacency relationship.

With regard to the second point, that doing a complaint like "You interrupted me" sets up a sequence, the occurrence of a complaint can locate the sorts of actions that appropriately follow, and who should do them; for example, that an apology is appropriate, or an excuse or a denial, and should be made by whoever it is that's 'accused.' Now that will turn out to be relevant to considerations of why people sometimes don't do complaints, an issue that is important in this way: If one is examining conversation for possible occurrence of violations, or examining social interaction generally for possible occurrence of violations, then one may have constructed criteria which permit one to recognize the occurrence of a violation. But independent of one's recognition criteria, one knows that one thing about the occurrence of violations is that they can be noticed by participants. One may then be in a position where one has located some possible cases, only some of which have been noticed. Now one either has to say, "Well the occasions that have not been noticed are not violations," or come to a position whereby one can say that they may or may not be violations, but they're not *not*-violations simply

because no one noticed them. And the way one could establish that they're
not not-violations simply because nobody noticed them, i.e., 'complained'
about them, is to establish that there are reasons for not noticing violations.
And people do both see a violation happening and not complain about it. I
am suggesting that the complaint's starting a sequence will turn out to be
relevant for that sort of issue.

For one, the sheer fact of a sequence being started involves that when the
sequence is over, the last utterance before that sequence is no longer available
for being used to place utterances in the same way it was before that sequence
got started. So: One was saying something, something perhaps fitted to
something somebody just said, and one is interrupted, now there is this
sequence. What one was saying, and what the utterance one had fitted one's
utterrance to was saying are no longer available simply by placing an
utterance. If one's interest is to get one's chance to say something that is
placed by reference to what was just being said, then it is one's interest to not
put in one of these sequences. The sheer fact of doing a complaint selects
somebody other than oneself to speak next, selects them to do something
other than deal with what has been going on, i.e., to deal with the complaint.
It gives one the floor back after, e.g., the excuse, to, e.g., accept the excuse,
like "Okay" after the other says "I'm sorry," but when one is finished
somebody else may then speak, and one is not then perhaps in a position to
directly continue what it is that was going on. That is to say, insofar as placing
considerations matter, it may be more in one's interest to use the place one
may get to talk, to talk to what is going on, than to start a sequence which
intervenes. And that's one possible sort of account for not complaining, i.e.,
for not 'noticing' an interruption.

Earlier I mentioned that complaining serves to select the complained-of
person as next speaker. Now, one sort of problem for a complaint is that
apologies, excuses, denials, are not the only sorts of things that they can do.
One thing that a complained-of person can do has already been mentioned –
they can return a complaint: "You interrupted me," "Well you interrupted
me in the first place," or "Well you never give me a chance to talk." "I'm
sorry." Which is to say, for one, if you do a complaint you may end up
apologizing. So that if what you want is, e.g., for the other person to
apologize, a complaint does not guarantee that you will get that.

Another thing that can happen is, as a complaint can formulate a last event
as illegal in some way, so can an utterance be placed which formulates *this* last
event, i.e., the complaint, as illegal in some way, e.g., "You're always
complaining." That is to say, what you did can be examined for its possible
illegitimate status, and that finding used as a next utterance: "You inter-
rupted me," "You're always complaining." Which then involves another way
in which, having begun with a complaint, one may find oneself in a sequence
that is not the sequence one intended. The sequence that a complaint starts is
equivocal with respect to the fact that a complaint in some way controls what
happens, but does not fully control what happens. In particular, it does not
control that the event it has noticed will be the event that will be dealt with.

Obviously then, if one knows that one has dirty laundry, one has a basis for avoiding recriminations. Not any occasion in which one could complain will be used to complain if that the other has a collection of complaints they can offer is known to one.

But sequences which turn on the fact of a complaint are, in their way, overwhelmingly frequent. I leave aside the issue of what sorts of import they have for where the conversation goes beyond the complaint sequence, noting only that one can clearly get into, specifically, an argument. And that is a matter that is exceedingly important, in this way: One question that could be asked is, is it the case that only some sorts of conversations have a reasonable potential of yielding an argument, or is it the case that any conversation has the potential for yielding an argument, independent of, e.g., topic. And one can see that, for one, the internal violations to the ways that conversations proceed can generate an argument. Another issue related to the question of can any conversation yield an argument, is that of reasonable diagnostic interest in the following sort of phenomenon: Some people say about each other, "Why is it that we can never have a conversation without it ending up in an argument?" And in that it is a thing that is said all the time, it is of interest to see how it could be sensible. I think fiddling with just some of these resources, one can get perhaps a glimpse at the way in which 'having an argument' as a possibility gets built into conversation, and the way in which, then, considerations about avoiding an argument can be involved in avoiding raising a complaint.

There is another sort of thing. Leaving aside any issue of later raising a complaint – recalling that if one does not raise it here but talks otherwise, one may still be able to raise it later – one can do one of the sorts of things that are utterly beautiful in their conversational occurrence: One can in some *other* conversation, in which, say, a party who did an interruption to you is being talked of, not only raise your complaint against them, but you can raise your complaint against them while saying that you did not complain, e.g., "I didn't say anything about it, but he constantly interrupted me," which is a chance to both show your graciousness and get your score.

Now the problems raised with making a complaint can in one sense be said to turn on the fact that it is the business of parties to the conversation to deal with the conversation's violations. That is to say, we are dealing with a particular sort of set of rules. There aren't officials present monitoring conversations who insert corrective operations or who allow it to proceed to the end and then asses fines. It is a situation in which there is a self-enforcing system operating. And given the ways that conversations are done here, there, anywhere, between whomsoever, it is essential for the workings of conversation that they have self-enforcing systems. It might be a dream that we could have a system where there were outside officials who would deal with the violations. However, if anything like the rules for conversation that are operative now were preserved, such a dream could be seen to be nonsensical, in that there is a sense in which the detection and dealing with of violations is not only the business of the parties and not an outsider, but that the very

detectability may be something that the parties and not outside observers can do.

And this raises some really interesting kinds of issues. We have in the first instance, some formal normative features for conversation, which are in a way a public law for conversation: One party at a time, speaker change recurs, the selection mechanisms, and a large range of detailed specifications. The question is, how is it that the parties to a conversation are mobilized in the interest of society, to monitor their conversations so as to have it that their conversations satisfiy the general rules. This is really a very classical sort of sociological anthropological problem. How is it that a society arranges to have people have a concern with some sorts of rules that in any particular case may be uninteresting for that scene, but which needs in some way be generally operative, and which needs that the local participants have it as their business to do the enforcing if it is going to be enforced.

There is a usual sort of solution, one aspect of which is to fit on to some generally required mechanisms a series of what turn out to be private rights and private obligations, and thereby have the possibility that people will attend to violations as violations of themselves. That is to say, we have a generalized feature, exactly one party should be talking at a time, which has as one aspect, not more than one party should be talking at a time, which turns out to be very crucial for the workings of conversation. All sorts of mechanisms are built up around it which require it for their working. But nobody has to learn, e.g., that those things require it, in order to see the importance of it. What you get are some norms built up which say, e.g., that a currently speaking party has a right to speak to completion. Then, the occurrence of more than one talking at a time can turn out to be an observable violation of the current speaker's right to speak to completion. The current speaker can then be mobilized to see that some right of his has been violated. And if a current speaker is built in the right way, then he can get aroused at somebody dealing wrongly with his property – his property being that space in the conversation in which he is now talking.

Now a current speaker's getting angry at somebody interrupting him involves that his anger is something one has to consider as analogous to a cop in the room. That is to say, by organizing emotions such that people will get angry at, or feel contrite or guilty about doing such a thing as, intruding on X's time, speaking while he is speaking, interrupting him, then one has the possibility of having any actual parties to a conversation engaging in enforcing these sorts of mechanisms for each other. Maybe in some extremely private situation, off by themselves, some set of people can glory in that they do not have conversations like this, that they do not treat each others' rights in that fashion. But it is just that sort of thing, i.e., indeed it will be reported as a sign of X and Y's intimacy that "When we talk together neither of us ever finishes an utterance, we pick up on each other immediately." Which is to say, for one, they haven't got a sense of their private rights being affiliated to that rule, and nonetheless they can find a way of doing conversation together – though they're not about to try to use it elsewhere.

Max Weber regularly says things like, the big problem for any society is that there are some more or less generalized organizational techniques which it sets up and which people need to be mobilized to behave in the interests of, but – and in this I'm not clear whether it is one or the other of the following alternatives: Either Weber thinks you cannot mobilize people unless you mobilize them about private interests, or it's that he says that societies 'know' that they cannot organize people unless they are organized about private interests. And so they find some kind of techniques whereby private interests are fitted to 'public requirements.' It's a theme that occurs again and again in Weber; for example in his incredible paper 'Politics as a vocation,' he locates the political boss as that sort of person who is able to monitor the range of private interests and use them, and interest in them, to engage in some sorts of public action. He makes a case for the ethical disinterest of the political boss and thereby assimilates him to the priest who is engaged in the same sort of task of monitoring the relationship between an ethic and anybody's ethics. He also does a similar sort of discussion when he begins *The Sociology of Religion* as follows:

> The most elementary forms of behavior motivated by religious or magical factors are oriented to *this* world. "That it may go well with thee . . . and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth" (Deut. 4: 40) expresses the reason for the performance of actions enjoined by religion or magic.

The point being that any religion, he says, is in the first instance needing to show that it is this world's interests that it has in mind.

With Weber's interests at hand, one of the things one wants to be looking for is how it is – if it's so – that some sorts of mechanisms which nobody could be interested in, which nobody could use an interest in to build some specific actions, nevertheless can be found to be operative. I say 'nobody could be interested in them' in an extremely serious way. There is a series of things which, even if you were interested in them, or claimed interest in them, they're not believable. So, for example, the classical suspicious person is the public spirited citizen. If you call the cops and tell them that you're just reporting something because you are a public spirited citizen, then they have doubts about you. And, as we know from our own circumstances, when you propose to do something by virtue of its public interest, then that is immediately doubtable, where, if you take it that you did it for that reason, if you propose some private reason it is believable. And I'll deal with issues of 'believable' and 'doubtable' in due course.

What we have then is a series of mechanisms that are built around general features, and those mechanisms are in general operative. But there is no particular interest that anybody could have in the preservation of those general features in any given case. What we get apparently is that the general features are transformed into local private rights which are affiliated to anybody by virtue of the fact that they just happen to be talking now. And

emotions are apparently organized around those in very strong ways, so that, e.g., in the case of interruption people will become utterly outraged over its occurrence, in a way that is presumably no weaker than the outrage they could feel about any other of their private rights.

Now that type of operation gains the extensiveness of its power by reference to a series of things that are done with the occurrence of an interruption. What happens is that if somebody does an interruption to you, though there is the rule about interruptions that provides that they should not be done, it needn't be dealt with simply as an interruption, preserved historically as an interruption; it can be assimilated to a class consisting of a bunch of other things like it. And the organization of that class involves that each of the cases can – almost like a bunch of kids trying to deal with a bully – give each other case support. So, if one does an interruption it can be used in such a way that somebody reporting it does not say "John interrupted Mary," or "John interrupted Mary yesterday," or "John interrupts people," but "John is rude." And indeed, when somebody interrupts you, you can say, not "Why did you interrupt me?" but "Why are you so rude?"

Now 'being rude' is not specifically, say, a synonym for 'interrupting.' If that were so, that would obviously be no gain whatsoever in terms of what you are saying about someone. But the way it works is, for the variety of things that stand as cases of 'being rude,' the class can be used and the case needn't be. That is to say, you can tell somebody that so-and-so is 'rude' and you do not have to feel that you are telling them only the gist of it; you do not have to tell them what in particular he does, or he did. And there are a whole bunch of things that can be done when something somebody has done has been transformed into 'being rude;' things which turn out to be relevant for whether one does anything that can be so transformed. That is to say, what we have is not simply a situation in which there is some way of dealing with the fact that, e.g., two or more talking at a time occurred, but ways in which the possibility of its occurrence are dealt with in advance. It is by no means the case that the fact that somebody can complain to you and you have to apologize constitutes the sorts of sanctions you can suffer if you interrupt someone. The sorts of sanctions which you can suffer turn initially and heavily and sufficiently on the transformation of "You interrupted me" (or any of the other things which stand as 'being rude') to "He's rude."

Let me note that, in that the doing of an interruption is a case of the class 'being rude,' when you come to be talking about 'being rude' you are also talking about the treatment that the violations of a series of other rules get. We have located a population of events for which we now have, at least as a proposal, a similarity between them and 'interruption,' all of which are also more or less privately noticed, privately enforced violations.

Now there are a series of things that can be done with the determination that somebody was 'rude.' Just to assert the name of that thing, though what we're interested in is what the name stands for, such an observation as that somebody is rude is usable for 'gossip.' We then have to consider how it is

that it is used in gossip, and how it is that, that it is used in gossip matters. I just have a collection of points, and it is not enormously well organized. But for one, when someone is being talked of, one candidate item of even a brief biography is that they are 'rude.' That is to say, if we are looking for a model biography that people can offer about somebody in a minute, or in an hour, i.e., it does not matter how brief it is, then 'rudeness' is one item, whatever the other items are. And 'rudeness' is hearsay usable. That is to say, if someone, talking to you about a person you haven't met, says that he's rude, then if somebody asks you about that person, you can say he's rude: "I don't know him but I hear he's rude." 'Rudeness' occurs, not only in exchanges of gossip among co-conversationalists, but in brief biographies in newspapers. I have the suspicion that, of the things that you remember about somebody whom you don't know, one such item is that they're rude. And if it's known about somebody that they're rude, then if you meet them and they do an event which can be conceived of as rude, then that event can confirm that they're rude.

For one, then, 'rudeness' is a feature of a 'personality,' and that somebody is rude is one of the things that is preserved in the constituting of that personality. One of the deep problems with trying to deal with interaction by reference to a notion of 'a person' is that it would seem obviously the case that a thing like 'rudeness' as a 'personality trait' turns on the construction of a person such that various sorts of enforcement mechanisms can be operative. And the types of things that stand as 'personality traits' constitute ways of making it operative for anybody that they behave in some way or take the consequences.

And if you have an interest in your biography, then you have an interest in being or not being rude insofar as you care that that item be known to some indefinite set of others who know you or don't know you, where some others whom you don't know may encounter people who've never met you, who know some very small amount of things about you, and one of the things they may know is that you're rude. Which is to say, some distant operation is being performed on the fact that you interrupted somebody. Further, it isn't simply *your* biography with respect to which 'rudeness' can be used. Rudeness can also be used by reference to various sorts of identifications which involve you, but yet not 'you,' uniquely. It's not simply that one can preserve "John is rude" when John has done one of some series of things that involve somebody in some way coming to say that he is rude and passing it on, but "John" can be transformed also. For one, "John" can be transformed into a last name, i.e., "The Smiths are rude." So that, leaving aside your own biography, if you are concerned with your sister's biography your rudeness can serve to constitute a part of her biography, say, as a transformation from "They're rude" to, when she is being talked about, "She's rude." And again, her behavior can be monitored by reference to whether it turns out that she does what it is that confirms 'rudeness.' And there's a series of other transformations: "People in that neighborhood are rude," "The younger generation is rude," whatever.

What we have then is an enforcement system for conversation which operates on transformations of a series of violations made to whomsoever, the knowledge of the operation of which serves in part to provide bases for not doing those things – or doing those things if you'd like to have that reputation, or your sister or your mother or your neighbor or your friends to have that reputation. I say that, in that it seems to be plain that people know that they can indict others via such actions of their own. And of course they're specifically socialized so as to know about such things, i.e., they're specifically told not to do certain things as will reflect not on them alone, but on others.

So that we have really enormously elaborate and apparently powerful – if not overpowerful – sets of regulations operative about the classes for which 'interrupting' is a case, fitted onto the general feature 'exactly one party talks at a time.' And of course the same enforcement structure will be operative for a series of other features, fitted to other parts of this general structure.

And when we ask, as we might reasonably ask, "Why in the world would a society be built in such a way that such a big deal is made of that somebody interrupts someone? Why are there these enormous machines ready to operate on such a fact? what we've done is to misconcretize the phenomenon. That is to say, we've asked "Why is it such a big deal that somebody interrupted someone?" where what we have is a mechanism designed to get at the general way of preserving whole classes of things. So that besides the private enforcement we get all the rest of this business of the transformation to rudeness, the usability for gossip, the generalization of personality traits, etc., all of which I suppose would look like some absurd irrational fear, were we to have started out only with the notion that it's all designed by reference to a rule that says 'don't interrupt.' But when we have more or less some picture of the way in which 'one party at a time' works, such that the communication system turns on it in many, many ways, and also that we can at least consider that for other things about conversation the same mechanism is operating, and consider what the possibility of operation would be of a series of independent mechanisms, you might see that it's not as irrational as all that, or as weird as all that, or as overbuilt as all that.

Now, I introduced this whole business in the first place so as to make the point that there was another way in which the co-occurrence of 'one at a time' and 'speaker change recurs' was basic. Forgetting about the latter things I talked about, that other way to see that they're basic is this: It can be said about the rules of sequencing in conversation that their enforcement procedures turn on the operation of the rules for sequencing in conversation. They are self-organized in that sense. That is to say, the fact that one places one's complaint about an interruption in a silence; that a complaint serves to select the complained-of to speak; that he speaks next; that he speaks to the complaint and speaks to the complaint by reference to the candidate interruption, all this proceeds by reference to the rules of sequencing. And I take it that that's an extremely natural criterion for some rules being basic; that is to say, when you reach them, you reach the ground. There are no other

rules which deal with how to deal with violations of them. And if those rules for dealing with the violations of them aren't operating, then there is no dealing with the violations of them.

A further way to see the basicness of the rules of sequencing is to ask what domains of violations, for example, or of other things, turn on the operation of the rules of sequencing in conversation. Any domain that turns on them requires for its operation the operation of conversation, which can then again suggest the reasons why these rules would be subject to the sorts of enforcement possibilities that are involved.

Lecture 5

Collaboratives; Possible utterances; Utterance pairs; Greetings and introductions

In the last two lectures I gave some rather general considerations about conversation. I introduced some suggestions about orders of organization, e.g., that the adjacency relationship would turn out to be very important. And also we began to see some small, primitive sequencing, and to see that sequences could get fitted to adjacency considerations. So we're beginning to build up some further types of organization operative in conversation. This time I want to shift gears somewhat, moving from a rather generalized consideration of conversation to some specific material. What I want to do is to go through a consideration of how it is that we come to turn some particular materials to technical interest. I want to do that by reference to some problems that we're now ready to handle, having to do with the sentence as a packaging technique, with utterances, and with completion, and also in due course, one party at a time.

Turning to the data handout, I want to focus on aspects of three parts of it. The first part is:

Dan :	Jim,
(　　) :	hhh//hh
Dan :	This is uh Al,
Jim :	Hi.
Dan :	Ken,
Jim :	H//i
Ken :	⌈Hi,
Dan :	⌊—an' Roger.
Roger :	Hi.
Jim :	Hi,
Dan :	Jim Reed.

The second part is:

Ken :	We were in an <u>au</u>tomobile discussion,
Roger :	—discussin' the psychological motives fer
(　　) :	hhh//hhhh hh
Al :	—drag racing on the streets.

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And the third is:

> *Ken* :   I <u>still</u> say though that – If you take, if you take uh a big fancy car
>   out'n the road, – – an' yer hotoddin' around, yer– yer <u>bound</u> to
>   get– yer bound t'get cau::ght, and yer bound t'get <u>shafted</u>.
> *Roger* :   ("Bound to," // man–)
> *Ken* :   W'l look. Now // I'm gonna–
> *Al* :   Unless yuh do it right. // THAT'S THE CHALLENGE.
>   THAT'S THE CHALLENGE YOU WANNA TRY AN' DO
>   IT RIGHT SO YOU <u>DON'T</u> GET CAUGHT!
> *Roger* :   That's the problem with society! heh heh

I'll start off with a phenomenon which one might or might not find interesting – and I suppose it's something that anyone could conceivably notice, and perhaps even be able to make something of, though I'm not sure about that. What we want eventually to do is to show how it's interesting, and then also to see what kinds of work we have to do to get at a local explanation of it – where the issue of its interestingness will turn out to be much more general than the explanation of its occurrence here. The phenomenon is in the first instance available in the second fragment. That is to say, a gross thing that this material just exhibits – exhibits at least for the right sort of attention to it – is that there are three people producing a single sentence in concert. It is at least to be supposed that they're not doing it with a script, but that the first person intends to produce a sentence and the second brings off a continuation of that, and the third brings off a continuation of the second's. The name I use for this is either 'collaborative' or 'joint productions.'

   An initial reason to be interested in them might have been that we have the initial gross fact that utterances are packaged into single sentences. So if we got variations on that thing, I suppose that we would find our usual expectable variation to be a person producing a series of sentences, not a series of persons producing a single sentence. As soon as you raise the question of methods about it, i.e., how do they do it, then you can immediately come to see that you have something that is technically of great, great interest. It's really one of those sorts of things that is a naturalist's dream. There, in nature, is the sort of thing you would dream of having, if you could dream that well, but you'd never figure would be given to you whole.

   I gave a consideration in the third lecture about how it is that if people are willing to talk if selected, or want to talk when they get a chance if no one is selected, then they ought to be 'hearers.' They ought to listen for completion and they ought also to listen for selection. One could, by just thinking it through, figure if they're going to talk on completion, then they have to have been listening for selection, to have the selection results available *before* completion. They would have to be listening to something that somebody was saying, and analyzing that, for some purposes anyway, while the thing is being said. They'd have to do that if they're going to have some result of that analysis available, first of all to see that 'completion' has happened, but also

to have available the results of the analysis on selection, to be used, e.g., to start up speaking, to pick a right action, on the completion's occurrence and not an hour later. So we more or less have the idea that they must both be listening to and analyzing an utterance while the utterance is being produced.

Now that's an argument. Is there some way to go about proving that people are listening to and analyzing an utterance in the course of its production in such a way as to have the product of their analyses available, e.g., on the completion of the utterance? While you could try to figure out experimental techniques for showing that, it turns out that there's an ideal procedure available in nature, and that is: One thing that people sometimes do is, e.g., someone is talking along, producing a sentence, and they may pause with an "uh." And somebody else puts in the last word.

If you know anything at all about syntax, you know it's not so much an issue of getting the *correct* last word – via syntactical considerations that would be almost magical – but it's a sufficiently interesting thing that somebody has so analyzed a sentence that they know that the next word at some point should be, e.g., a noun of some particular sort. That is to say, given the structure so far – where the structure as it develops is setting continual constraints on what sorts of syntactic object can go at each particular point – that they're able to put in a syntactically coherent part is then direct evidence that they have been listening and analyzing in the course of the utterance, and have the results available to use so as to fit in a part right then and there. That is then to say that they have a way of proving to the person they're talking with that they're hearing and understanding what he's saying. So there's that phenomenon which might be a thing you could be amused by, or have happen many times and not even notice, which is technically of great interest. And we'll have a lot to say about some aspects of it in due course.

The second utterance in this fragment, "–discussing the psychological motives for," is rather a different sort of thing because "We were in an automobile discussion" is a perfectly good sentence. It's not an incomplete sentence that's continued, it's something that is in its fashion even more interesting – a complete sentence turned into an incomplete sentence, as is "Unless you do it right" a completion to ". . . you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted," though again that one looked like it was a complete sentence. We do have a case of an incomplete sentence which gets finished by some other in "–drag racing on the streets," where that is a completion to the whole thing. And we want to notice that they're not finishing off an idiom, e.g.:

> *Roger*:   Kids don't drive long. They start off when they're si– by the
>   time– when they're sixteen, by the time they're eighteen they're
>   back walk(hh)ing hehh through circumsta(hh)nces hehhehh
> *Dan*:   –beyond their control.

That is to say, "through circumstances beyond their control" is a packaged phrase. Given various other considerations, if you see the beginning of it you

could fit 'beyond their control' onto such a beginning.

Now one thing we can say, where a possibly complete sentence is continued, is something like this: For utterance completions, one doesn't want to say that the end of a sentence is, or can be treated as, a recognizable end of an utterance, but one has to talk about 'possible sentence ends' and 'possible utterance ends.' One has to talk about it that way because, among other reasons, it may well be that people treat even the ending that an actual speaker uses for his sentence/utterance as only a 'possible ending.' That is to say, having engaged in some analysis of the sentence structure of an utterance while it's being done, one is engaged in seeing what possibilities are open at any given point in it – at least from some point into it, i.e., I'm not in a position to say that when you say "We . . ." that anybody could finish that one off, though they may be able to finish it off in some way. But there are points at which people have some sense of sets of possibilities. Apparently they need not treat what you choose as the necessary, but they treat that as a possibility so that they still have possibilities available to them, and they can if they choose go on with the 'same sentence;' that is to say, they pick another possibility. Or, for example – and this is a perfectly familiar occurrence – if you're speaking along, and you produce a sentence/utterance and nobody starts up immediately, then, even though you've done what you figured to be the end of what you were doing, you don't necessarily 'start again' if you take up speech. What you do is, you 'continue' the sentence which you had been engaged in producing. You can treat your own initially intended end as only a possible end, and hearers can do the same thing.

Of course the question is why in the world would people ever do it? Why would they ever mobilize the energy and resources required to engage in an analysis into possibilities and then using it to fit a continuation? Or *is* there any reason why they would? Is there a 'why'? Maybe even if there isn't any 'why,' as long as we know they do it. In fact, when I first found "We were in an automobile discussion" I was absolutely awed. I thought "God, look what an amazing thing these people are doing." And then something like, "Does it ever happen?" And we searched around and found that it had some literary use; some high literary use, like in some recent plays, and it also occurs as the normal form of speech in Donald Duck cartoons. And then it turned out that in ordinary speech it's really extremely common, not some arcane art at all.

The gain is something like this: If we say that utterances are packaged via the use of sentences, then there is a way in which we could say that a sentence is a unit of social organization. If, however, it turns out that people can collaborate in the production of sentences – now, not of sentences that they're repeating, like the collaboration on an idiom – but collaborative production of new sentences, then there's a different sense in which the sentence is a unit of social organization – the sense in which a sequence of sentences is a unit of social organization. Where that is our usual, comfortable sense of something being such a unit, i.e., that the coordinated activity of a set of people is involved in its production. And one doesn't think of a sentence as being that sort of object at all. At most you'd figure, well, a sentence might be that sort

of object in the sense that while somebody is doing it others are attentive to it and are silent. It's used as a building block for conversation in the sense that each person does one or does two or whatever, and not that for all we know if they wanted to, they might have a conversation system – even our system with our capacities – in which it was a norm that people engaged in the production of sentences which, say, tended to be of a mean utterance length of three. Which would be kind of an earth-shaking fact for various disciplines that take the sentence as a unit and are concerned with, e.g., the psychological explication of how it is that people produce a sentence, treating the fact of single sentence equals single utterance as very, very important.

So we're talking now about 'possible sentences' and 'possible utterances,' and furthermore we're not just talking about that as a kind of statistical caveat (i.e., we could talk about actuals but we're not going to venture that far); what we're saying is that for producers and for hearers, an actual sentence is 'one possibility,' or some actualization of possibilities. And they have as a capacity that they can actualize other possibilities. And that stopping is 'stopping a possibility at some point.'

One other thing that we might want to consider in that regard is the first fragment, which has this guy Dan producing a sentence, "Jim, this Al, Ken, and Roger," over a series of provided-for insertions of other people. Again, it's a natural fragment. I didn't make it up, it just happened that way. In order to get into a position to deal with these particular occurrences, we need to engage in a consideration of the circumstances. It's a group therapy session, Dan is the therapist. It's been going on for something on the order of an hour and 20 minutes of a two-hour session before Jim, a new patient, comes in. The others know, by the time he enters, that a new patient is coming. He opens the door and we get the following:

Roger:	On <u>Hollywood</u> <u>Boulevard</u> the other night they were givin' tickets for dirty windshields.
	((door opens))
( ):	((whispered)) ( )
(*Jim*):	HUnh!
(*Dan*):	(Hi Jim, c'mon // in)
(*Jim*):	(G'morn//ing)
(*Dan*):	(Whyn'tcha close the door)
(*Jim*):	(Ok,)
	((door closes))
( ):	hhh
( ):	((sniffle))
Dan:	Jim,
( ):	hhh//hh
Dan:	This is uh Al,
Jim:	Hi.
Dan:	Ken,
Jim:	H//i

Ken :	⌜Hi,
Dan :	⌞–an' Roger.
Roger :	Hi.
Jim :	Hi,
Dan :	Jim Reed.

Perhaps a first thing to mention is that the initial greetings betwen Dan and Jim followed by the introduction sequence with greeting exchanges, stand in some disjoined relationship to what's been happening in the conversation, i.e., it's not something in the conversation beforehand that provided for this sequence happening. Which is to say more generally speaking, that there are some sorts of things, anywhere, that have their placing accounted for not by reference to what's been taking place in the conversation, but by reference to other sorts of events.

That is to say, there are some conversational occurrences which have sorts of priorities. And that has an interest to it, in thise sense. It may be somebody's business, and an etiquette book might tell you that it's somebody's business to, e.g., greet Jim and to, e.g., do the introductions. An etiquette book would say 'when a new person comes into a dinner party (or a meeting, etc.) it's the business of a host to greet them and introduce them to the various persons present.' That's fine and dandy as far as it goes. However, one of the things that needs to be considered, and that makes the character of the rules in an etiquette book not the sorts of rules that, as sociologists, we need, is this sort of problem: When Jim comes in there's a conversation going. It stops. It stops and this sequence gets going. Now the rules in an etiquette book tell you whose task is what, when there's some task at hand like greetings or introductions. It doesn't tell you what other people should do, and it doesn't tell other people what they should do. And it's not sufficient to have a rule which says 'the host should greet the newly entering party' when one wants there to be some control on what other people do. Not merely that *they* don't greet the newly entering party, but that they, e.g., stop to allow that sequence to take place. For each rule of the form 'X should do Y,' one apparently needs some rules which tell other people what they should do, and that would probably be a rather complicated task if you set out to include that in an etiquette book.

Eventually I'll have something to say about this exchange, "Hi Jim, come on in," "Good morning." I avoid it now because it may seem to put too large a burden of investigation on a sort of thing that looks like a 'that's just the way they happened to do it' occurrence. The thing I will get to is this difference: Dan uses Jim's name, but Jim doesn't use Dan's name. And that's a real difference. It's a difference that matters; it's a difference that's an orderly thing. Roughly speaking, if a person names the person they're talking to in, e.g., a greeting, then which sorts of people do or do not name somebody in return? 'No-naming' of people is a very big business, and it has rather notable sources of its occurrence. Roughly, a source of its occurrence is the problem for the returner of choosing what name to use. Should he say "Hi Dan"? "Hi

Dr so-and-so"? "Hi Mr so-and-so"? etc. And I want eventually to get back
to that.

I talked about *adjacency* placing. Now I want to introduce one type of
organizational object that's used in conversation. It's a thing I'm going to call
'*utterance pairs.*' Various sorts of things come in pairs, specifically in adjacent
pairs, such that if a first is done to somebody, then the somebody to whom
the first is done does a second in return. Greetings come in pairs. For
greetings, the pair consists of a first greeting and a second greeting. For other
pairs that's not at all the way they work. For a pair like question–answer, the
first item is a 'question' and the second is an 'answer,' and for various others
there are other combinations. Also about greetings: Greetings are complete
utterances. That is to say, we can notice about the timing of greetings that
there is an occurrence of a second "Hi" right after the first with no wait to see
if one is going to talk some more. Which is to say that greetings are
sequentially adequate. On the completion of a greeting the sequencing rule
operates; the selected speaker speaks and does the return.

Now, someone having been addressed with a greeting, selected thereby to
speak next and specifically to do a greeting in return and do it right then and
there, its absence is noticeable, commentable on. So you get occurrences where
somebody says to a kid, "Hi Johnny," and after a rather short time, if Johnny
doesn't say anything his mother says "Didn't you hear somebody say hello to
you?" or the person who said "Hi Johnny" will repeat it, "*Hi* Johnny." I'm
not going to talk about 'repeats' but let me just note that, that something is
a 'repeat' is itself noticeable. Which is to say, for one, a 'repeat' will be done
in a different way than the original item is done, and you get a funny thing
that sometimes happens: "Hi Johnny" ((pause)) "*Hi* Johnny," "Oh I didn't
hear you." Where you might figure, well how in the world does a person say
"Oh I didn't hear you," it's only a puzzle if one doesn't see that in fact
'repetitions' are recognizable. Someone recognizing this as a 'repetition,' they
can thereby realize that this was a 'second' greeting, and thereby that they
failed to return a first.

So far as I can tell there is a considerable freedom in at least some parts of
the culture for what sorts of things you return a greeting with, but it may well
be that that's a regulated matter in some places. There's this guy Ross who
wrote a famous article called 'U and non-U speech' which is about upper-class
and non-upper-class speech in England. He reports that upper-class people in
England normally repeat whatever greeting they've been offered; non-upper
class people may not. So, you might figure that "Hello" is not upper-class,
and upper-class is "How do you do." If somebody says "How do you do,"
upper-class people say "How do you do," and if somebody says "Hello,"
they say "Hello." So that sort of thing, as 'nothing much' as it may seem, can
be an object for regulation.

So we have the exchange of greetings and then the introductions. And if
we're going to have both sequences, it's going to be in this order. One might
not have the greetings, or the greetings could be done without a verbal
greeting exchange; with glances, nods, waves, etc. But, as between the two

sequences both of which can happen, one of them goes first, i.e., Dan is going to exchange greetings with Jim before he does the introductions. So now we're talking about a relative organization of sequences in conversation, aside from the issue of the priority status of the insertion of these sequences into the conversation that has been taking place. Notice that we don't get, on the completion of the exchange of greetings, people starting to talk. Silence is maintained except for those who are selected to talk throughout the sequence until it is completed.

One thing that is kind of neat is the ordering of the prepresent persons as they are introduced. There seems to be a right way, or alternative right ways, to introduce some person to a series of persons. How is it that the order of persons is selected? Apparently, if the ecology of the room can be used, then the ecology of the room is used. The way the room is set up, "Al, Ken, and Roger" is a clockwise going-through of the persons. "Roger, Ken, and Al" would also be an orderly procedure in the sense of going through adjacent persons, as compared to going from Al to Roger and then to Ken. And I don't know whether clockwise and counterclockwise are equivalent. I just haven't been able to have the presence of mind to see it when it was being done. It may well be that it's always clockwise, or that it varies with the position of the introducer, but it is something to look to. I have a suspicion that either way may work, by reference to the "uh" in "This is uh Al;" i.e., the "uh" is not by reference to Dan not knowing Al's name, but if clockwise and counter-clockwise can work from himself, then there would be an initial choice for him, i.e., should he start with Roger or should he start with Al, and it may be that issue which is involved in the hesitation. That's again something about which I don't know. But it's something that we might be able to guess.

In any event, it goes through in a clockwise order. There would be grounds for doing other orders, i.e., if you wanted to specifically point someone out first. And one of the neat things in its fashion about this is that, e.g., that you're picking out someone especially, in an order of introductions, is something that can be seen from one sequence. You don't have to see the same person introduced over a series of sequences to see that. In this case, the use of the clockwise movement through adjacent persons provides that nothing is particularly being done aside from introducing the people, i.e., they are not being differentiated. The fact that Al is first doesn't mean a thing; it is not to be information for Jim that, e.g., Al's status is higher than the others.

We have, besides that, that they're all first names. Again, that could be differentiated: "Jim, this is Al, Ken Goss, and Mr Roger Mandelbaum." That is to say, it's not always the case that if you get one first name you'll get another first name. You can perfectly well get "Jim, this is Mr so-and-so" or ". . . Dr so-and-so." And that has, at least initially, the import of having somebody telling the various participants not merely what each's name is, but what it is that they can call each other. That is the work of the item used in the name part of the introduction, and one way that, as an introducer, you can go wrong, make people angry, be yourself embarrassed; if, e.g., you say "Dr Jones meet Mr Smith," and the first thing Dr Jones says is "Just call me

Jake." Or you introduce him as Jake and he wants to be called Dr Jones. Etiquette books are full of information about the way you make decisions on that sort of a matter, and the way, as a person to be introduced, you inform others as to how they should introduce you. Emily Post has a big discussion about dinner parties where, if people are differently aged so that there are younger couples and older couples, if you don't want to be called Sam by somebody your daughter's age, then there's a strategy which can get him to call you Mr Smith, and it turns on introductions.

And it's important to emphasize that it's not a matter of what it is that the introducer calls the introduced people. Somebody may call two people they're introducing Jim and Al, and nonetheless not introduce them to each other as Jim and Al. You can watch that in operation, and it's very lovely to see, e.g., when somebody is talking about somebody, the way in which they go about finding the name to use to talk about the person, which is a name that has some independence from what either of them call that person when they're talking to that person. The character of names as property is something one can very easily find, even in our egalitarian society. If you collect that set of names that, e.g., your mother is called over the day, you'll find that it's not a small collection, and people own the rights to do various names, and those rights to use various names can change.

We can note also about the introduction sequence that it goes to completion. That is to say, it's not only that he goes around clockwise, but he also takes them all in. He doesn't introduce only somebody, or leave out somebody. And that's again a thing about which etiquette books and other sorts of regulations talk, e.g., for what size group do you introduce somebody to each, as compared to saying, "This is Joe. Joe, this is everybody." Those things vary not only with reference to the size of the group, but with reference to who it is that you're introducing. Some people come into a group and you may just introduce them to "everybody." Others come in and you may do the introductions one by one.

There is, by the way, no "hi" from Al. I just don't know whether Al in fact said something that we couldn't pick up on the tape, or whether he nodded and didn't say anything, or whether he didn't do anything. I have no particular guarantee on it, i.e., from what I know about these sessions it's perfectly conceivable that Al refrained from returning the greeting on purpose. He may have or he may not have. In any event, with the others we have these definite greeting exchanges.

Now there's a neat problem. If people are introduced in pairs, what sort of attention is each giving to the sequence in which somebody else is being introduced? We could imagine that, introductions and greetings and things like that going in pairs, then it's nobody else's business to hear, or they can hear but that's up to them. And what one wants to see about this sequence is that for the later speakers in it, i.e., Ken and Roger, the way it comes off shows that they were engaged in attending to its earlier parts.

In particular, the work of the word "Ken" as an introduction of Jim to Ken turns on that it follows "Jim this is uh Al." The word "Ken" is not

necessarily a way that one 'introduces.' The word "Ken" can be, e.g., a way of getting Ken's attention. Ken gets that he's being 'introduced' via the fact that he knows that an 'introduction sequence' has begun, and the sequence comes off as requiring that he show that he knows it, which he does by his way of dealing with "Ken." He's not, then, an overhearer to this first part, he's a proper hearer, and he should and does use his hearing of this first part – and so does Roger: We have an utterance, "–and Roger." If we took this utterance and asked what is it for, and how the hell does Roger know what to do, then we have no way to handle it but by reference to the fact that it is organized with respect to the prior utterances.

So, that this is a *sequence* of introductions and not, e.g., merely a list of paired introductions, is something that the way it's done brings off. He could bring off a list of paired introductions: "Jim this is Al." "Jim this is Ken." "Jim this is Roger." Where, for the participation of the parties to the specific occasion of their being introduced, that they participate in it would require no attention to the other parties' being introduced. Here, the thing is brought off coordinatively.

Let me make one brief remark about "–and Roger," about 'and' as a conjunction. One tends to have a picture of 'and' being used for just conjoined things, like items on a list. Now, while it is used that way, it has a specific use here. It isn't only or particularly used in lists to locate that something else is going to follow that's also on the list, but it's used specifically to signal that the thing that follows is the *last* thing on the list. So you will regularly see that 'and' placed, not in each spot or any random spot, but placed before the last item on the list. (Now I say "placed before the last item," and that's a transformation from "it signals that the last item is coming." That's a kind of thing I do all the time, but it has to be sceptically viewed. It may be a 'signal,' I don't know, but I treat it as that. If it has that sort of association, then I tend to treat it as doing that kind of a job. Now it may be that that's not reasonable, and when I think about it I don't know if it does that kind of a job for some of them, and I would like to prove it for some of them. But I say things like that, and will probably continue to.)

Now, the fact that you can go around a table so to speak, provides that the fact that there is an order to introduction sequences is something you can see in pre-operation. One sort of way you can make such observations – and if one learns to make them one may learn to like them – is to watch, when you see a sequence about to happen, e.g., people are sitting around a table and somebody comes up who knows somebody at the table and now they're going to be introduced around. It you watch the others, then you can see that there are characteristic ways that they prepare to be introduced; characteristic ways they behave before they're introduced. Things like: Before they're introduced they avoid eye contact with the person that they're going to be introduced to, but when they're about to be introduced they may keep their head in a particular way, ready to turn, i.e., they don't keep it in any which way, but ready to be just turned up. The order of introductions is important, then, in the sense that you don't get "Al," and then he realizes he's being introduced,

and now they sit around waiting to see who, if anybody, is next. But if now it's Al, then Ken knows he's next, and Ken prepares to be introduced, and can then lift his head in such a way as to catch Jim's eye when Jim looks at him, so it doesn't then happen that Ken gets introduced, offers his eyes to Jim but Jim had already looked at him and has passed him by, or he offers his eyes and finds himself being stared at. The timing is kind of a nice thing, where you want to arrive at the exchange at the same time. And you can watch heads for that sort of thing. I've heard it said about our society that all the old graces are lost and people are just not the way they used to be. But if, e.g., you watch them moving their heads in an introduction sequence, then you'll see some of the old graces.

Coming back to the issue of producing a sentence across a series of other persons' insertions: If we consider the task of introductions, and consider that if what the guy is up to is to do an introduction of Jim to 'the members of the group' as compared with an introduction of Jim to three people, then to organize the production of that introduction in such a fashion that it comes off as one unit within which they have all attended to it as a unit, may be the elegant way to do specifically introducing somebody to what you want to be 'members of a group.' To pack it into a sentence structure can perhaps make the fact that there is a relationship involved, a something that you are able to bring off in a way that you might not have as a specific thing you're bringing off otherwise. I'm not saying that if he'd said, e.g., "Jim this is Al," "Jim this is Ken," that people would figure that they don't have any particular relation to each other. That's not the issue so much as that there are ways of doing it so that their relationship is built in via, e.g., that they all are shown to be attending to other than their own introduction; that he's addressing each of them in this sentence, and in a way, he's addressing each of them in each utterance.

Lecture 6

Greetings and introductions; Orientational utterances; Ultra rich, infinite topics; Being 'phoney'

I'll continue for a bit on the greeting–introduction sequence. What I want to do now is to consider what sorts of things serve to occasion an introduction sequence, and what relationship there might be between the occasioning of it and the work it does once it's occasioned.

The occasioning of an introduction sequence can in the first instance turn on certain formal co-participant considerations, having to do with just such things as that some people are in a possibly public place and somebody comes into view who's known to only one of them. If, for the one to whom they're known there's rights or obligations to have even a brief exchange, then engaging in an introduction sequence may be thereby occasioned. That is to say, if the newcomer who is acquainted with one of some pre-present group has occasion to start talking at all, then it may be felt that the pre-present acquaintance should introduce the others to him. And that can matter with respect to future possibilities. People can be seen to attend to the possibility that they will be put in a position of engaging in such a sequence, so that one thing that they will do when they're with some given other is to monitor where they will go in an attempt to control the chances of coming across an anybody that they know, for whom they thereby may feel obligations to do an introduction. And this suggests that they use such formal considerations as 'the co-presence of an acquaintance who was not originally with you' as grounds for doing an introduction.

Now I'm not here referring to the possibility that you won't do an introduction, because whether you do or don't do an introduction is in its way irrelevant, since if it's the thing that's appropriately done, then that you don't do it can just stand as a notable event on the part of any of the other parties to it. The person who came into the view of you and your acquaintance can go off and comment, "He was with somebody but didn't introduce me," or, e.g., people you're with can say "How come you didn't introduce us to that one?" etc. And they do. Indeed, with an exchange of greetings, immediate introductions is a normal and perhaps normative thing, in just the way it happens in our case – which would seem to be perhaps a much more special case, but it probably isn't very special.

So there's that sort of way in which introductions come to be done. The sheer fact that people of certain sorts of relationships come into each others'

presence suffices to occasion them. That means that these things can be rather massively used, insofar as, e.g., people operate in relatively public places and insofar as there's some 'underlapping' rather than overlapping, I suppose, of acquaintances, i.e., that there's some chance that when you're out walking with X, the Y that you meet will be a Y who doesn't know X, who you know. Or the reverse; when you're out walking with X, some Y appears who is known to X but not to you.

The question is, what do these introduction sequences do. Well, one thing they do is, at least in some rapid minimal way, put the two people who are introduced into a state of talk together, a state of talk which has a legitimate source for its occurrence, the introduction. The state of talk you put them into may be a very minimal one, but one thing that I've already at least suggested is that states of talk once having gotten started have, at least with regards to the sequencing structures, indefinite possibilities of continuation. And the question of once it gets started where it will go, even for this conversation, is not particularly constrained by how it got started, i.e., that it got started this way does not particularly constrain future possibilities.

And you give them certain resources whereby to conduct that state of talk you're putting them into. The basic resource in this regard is, not giving them each other's names, but giving them names that each can use for the other. That takes some work on the part of the introducer, i.e., determining what name each should use requires sorts of analysis on his part. And apparently that choice is not the introducer's free choice, i.e., it's not just that he has a task to do and however he brings it off, that's okay. He can do it badly and he can do it well.

What sorts of things seem to be involved in what names you pick? Let's consider that a bit. When you put people into a state of talk with their names, are you giving them nothing more than a name to use, or is it that the choice of a name is already informative to them of more that they can use in conducting their conversation? Each of them knows you, and there may be some rather specified ways in which they know you, i.e., they know you as a this or as a that; as a neighbor, a colleague, an old friend, etc. And they may know whole bunches of other things about you. And the fact, then, that somebody is *with* you can, before you've made the introductions, set up various kinds of constraints on who they figure that other person is. Not 'who' in the sense that it's your cousin from Milwaukee, but that it's a 'somebody like you' in some way, for example. Where, if they each have various such properties as the right age, appearance, etc., it may well be that each can figure that the other is 'a friend of yours' and then they are perhaps potential friends of each other's. Which is to say that they can perhaps use your presence with the other person not merely as something that occasions their introduction, but as informative about each other and each's possible relationship to the other, i.e., what they could possibly have to talk about. And the sort of introduction you give them, even if only the exchange of names, may be something that allows them to see that such is the case. For

example, introducing them to each other via nicknames may be saying to them that they are the same sort.

So the idea is that the fact that an introduction may be brought off puts one in a position where each of the parties to the introduction are engaged, before that's taken place, in some attempt to determine not merely who the other is, and not merely who the other is with respect to you, but perhaps as well, who the other is with respect to them. And they can use a range of information to set up possibilities on that, which, in the way you bring off your introduction, can be delivered or not.

Now, as one limiting end of this, you may determine that while the conditions have otherwise been satisfied for an introduction, the people don't belong to meet, by reference to, e.g., the possible status relationships of the two. And you may decide not to do an introduction, or that an introduction is to be a purely pro-forma thing. So, e.g., Emily Post gives instructions on how to introduce your neighbor to your gardener so as not to set up a conversation, or to set up a conversation of a rather delimited sort, in which she wants to know when she should cut her tulips.

So the way in which you bring the introductions off matters by reference to what sort of a fix you put these people into. You could put them into a conversation in which one or the other doesn't want to be or shouldn't be – leaving aside that you put into conversation people you don't want in conversation, etc. Or you can put them into the conversation they want to be in, as compared to a conversation that they don't want to be in, where they only discover after an hour of talk that in fact they have gotten into a conversation that they could have had, but you didn't let them know that they could have. So that regularly, besides an exchange of names, you can give them that sort of information which can 'get them started;' such things as "You're both from the same town," "He was in the same class as your brother," "He's been dying to meet you," etc.

Now it's in the way that the information you announce informs the various parties of things like their respective positions, presumably based on some determination you've made, that the detailed character of each actual introduction sequence turns out to count, where one has in the first instance a rather general structure which is just, as I say, occasioned by the fact of co-presence for anybody. It's not that this holds for rich people, poor people, high school kids, pairs of people under a formulation that the initial pair walking together down a street are acquainted for more than a year or barely acquainted, or that there are two people and one enters, or three people. That is to say, this is really an extremely formal kind of situation. One person comes into the presence of some collection of more than one, where now, for the collection of 'more than one plus one,' some two are acquainted across those lines. That can set up the possibility of an introduction sequence taking place, given that it sets up initially the possibility of at least greetings and perhaps a conversation, across the lines. However, there's this specific work of the introduction sequence. And it's in terms of the specific work of an introduction sequence for some actual group that we have all these elaborated

kinds of workings being used, in which who you introduce first can matter, the names can matter, and all the rest.

One way to think about it is to consider that a way to simplify the task of doing any introduction would be, e.g., to constrain the occasions under which introductions could get done. You could say, for example, introductions should go 'first name to first name.' That can operate to constrain the initial use of an introduction to only people you can introduce that way. But notice that that already sets up a problem, and anything other than the actual one creates problems, in this way. As you're going along, you're initially going about the business of exchanging greetings and perhaps getting into a conversation with somebody who comes down the street whom you know. Now that is to say that the doing of the introduction is contingent on something else happening which is regulated independently of any consideration about whether you should do introductions. It's a more general thing, that walking down the street or being in some public place, whether you're with other people or not, if you come across somebody you're acquainted with you can get into a state of talk with them. The addition of other people only serves to provide what may then or ought then happen in the conversation that can have been generated independently of their presence.

So that if you wanted to simplify the kinds of tasks that have to be done on each occasion in which you're doing an introduction by constraining where you're going to do introductions, then you come up against the structure of the ways that conversations get started. A situation can then arise in which you have a possible conversation taking place between two people in the presence of others who were already in a state of conversation with one of those two. And in that one person is overlapping as a co-participant in two conversations, there's some business of 'bringing the whole thing in,' which is apparently obliged. So it's that the introduction sequence occurs upon the occurrence of the greeting phenomenon, and the greeting phenomenon is occasioned independently of that there are others with you, where the introduction thing turns on that there are others with you, that implicates this involvement of work in how you do an introduction sequence.

What this amounts to is, if you were to figure that an introduction sequence is merely a ceremony, then it would be an awfully elaborated sort of ceremony, in the sense that it's not one ceremony which you do time and again, but for each use of the ceremony you have to engage in some work of analysis in order to bring it off right. One wants to know why is it built in such a 'complex' way. Transform that terminologically into an 'adaptive' way. That is to say, it's built in such a way that if a person who needs to use it knows how to use it, it can be used on any occasion of its invocation, where its occasions of invocation are specified only in extremely weak, i.e., general ways – only in terms of things like 'more than one person plus another person' plus 'acquaintanceship' plus a conversation getting going, where a conversation getting going is provided for independently of the addition of others.

So the thing is really geared in very nice detail to the conditions for starting conversation. And that involves then that one isn't to view the properties of

the introduction sequence as some sort of indication of the fantastic lengths to which people went in the old days to make elaborate ceremonies. That is to say, it's not only that it's adapted to the sorts of work it does, it's adapted to the conditions of occurrence. Its work of getting people into a state of conversaton could be done quite differently under different conditions of occurrence. For example, you might have a rule which says 'for two people who are to be brought into a state of conversation in a situation like this one, then it has to be the second or third time that they encounter each other, and they have to encounter each other via passing you in both positions.' That is to say, if A knows B and C, then one time A is walking with B and meets C. And another time A is walking with C and meets B. Then the third time, A can bring B and C into conversation, having had, e.g., time to inform each of them about the other. Or you could carry around letters to hand out, about the various people that you know. The point is that you don't have those sorts of preparations set up in principle, but you have to be ready, and perhaps in code of some sort, to tell them what they can do together and various other sorts of things as well.

   In that regard, it's not incidental that introductions use names, in the sense that if you're using names in an introduction, then it's one property of names for introductions that names are adequate to any round of introductions. ('Any round' means that it's not as though you will have an expectation that you will have to introduce a thousand people to each other, but that any two or three people you introduce to each other will have a name.) And there's lots of other identifications you could use which would not be adequate to any round. If, for example, you went about introducing people via their bridge scores or their grades or, e.g., via the position they play on a baseball team – which you do sometimes – then you might find that you would on some occasion be introducing people and have nothing to introduce them with, i.e., they don't have a bridge score. But there are some sorts of identifiers which have a value for everybody; like you could introduce everybody by their age. Eventually we could introduce everybody by their telephone number or some such thing as that. That introductions take place between anybodys, anywhere, involves them in having as an item that information can be fitted to, something that anybody would have, anybody could exchange, etc. A name is one. (And now the name gets fiddled with so that you end up having eleven or three or six different names, which the various people who know you use.)

   Now I want to deal with 'part two':

   Ken :   We were in an <u>au</u>tomobile discussion,
   Roger: –discussin' the psychological motives fer
   (   ):   hhh // hhhh hh
   Al :   –drag racing on the streets.

   I want to be able to locate where, i.e., at what sort of layer of organization, the joint production is operating. We can get a bunch of general points about,

see a lot of interest in, the joint production phenomenon. That's something separate from locating, for each occurrence of one of them, what order of organization is it operating out of, i.e., what is the fact of collaboration doing there, or what is the fact of a joint production doing there. The question is, then, what's being done in that they're bringing this thing off in just the way they do, as compared perhaps to allowing "We were in an automobile discussion" to be a sentence, and if Roger wants to talk, he'd be producing another sentence.

Let me more or less outline the course of the discussion hereafter. I want to propose that the first utterance in this series is what we could call 'orientational.' I'll have further things to say about how it goes about being orientational, but one aspect of that is its placing, i.e., its placing directly on the occurrence of an entry, greetings, and introductions, into a conversation that has been ongoing. There is that order of sequencing which operates to provide that where greetings and introduction-rounds take place on an entry of a new party into a conversation, then the introductions being over, some orientation is an appropriate object to do. There is, then, an aspect of "We were in an automobile discussion" which is operating at the organizational level of 'introductions' and things like that; in terms, then, of an overall sequential organization of a fairly general sort, where that sort of sequence is really quite recurrent, and placing a candidate in such a place can involve its being recognized.

So, then, we have needed at least some sort of consideration of the prior materials because we can't find what this thing is doing without them. It isn't an inspection of this line that tells us what it might be doing – where we have to know some sense of what it might be doing to find out what they're then doing to it. And furthermore, it's not just an inspection of this thing plus the utterance before it; but in order to find what that was, one has had to see the sequence it was involved in. So that it's via attention to the sorts of sequences that have been proceeding that we can get a beginning handle on this. And its understanding by the various parties is presumably the same sort of phenomenon. It locks into a sequencing potential that their attention to the prior sequence as an 'introduction' makes relevant. And we saw that the very way that the introductions were brought off involved attention by the various parties to a 'round of introductions' as something that each will have shown the other that they were doing. (For example, I mentioned last time that on the doing of each greeting pair, the parties to it stopped talking. Normally when you're introduced and you do a greeting pair, upon the completion of the greeting pair you do some more talk. So that the enclosure of these greeting pairs within the introduction is handled by such a thing as that they don't begin to talk, but that they stop and each next pair starts up; apart from that it's organizationally brought off by Dan through his use of a single sentence.) And the next item stands in a sequence to the introduction round, as compared to being just some next item which may be related to prior things but which has no relationship to them in terms of that order of organization. As, for example, a question "What did you say?" might be related to a last

sentence, so when he says "Jim Reed" somebody could say "What did you say?" Now that's related to what was last said, but it's not related in the way "We were in an automobile discussion" is.

I'm suggesting that you can try to get an idea of an order of organization and see the sense in which some aspects of an object are operating at one order of organization while others may not be. I am proposing that "We were in an automobile discussion" is operating at the same order of organization as the introductions, and is something placed 'after introductions.' Now let's consider some aspects of it as an 'orientational' utterance so as to get some feel for the sorts of work involved in such an utterance.

One very characteristic way that an orientational utterance is done – though the formulation I'll give will sound simpler than it is – is to name a formulation of the topic that was being engaged in before the entrant came. That is to say, upon the entrance of a newcomer to the conversation, even if you don't have an introduction sequence, i.e., with people who are already acquainted, upon greetings being done somebody can orient the new party by saying 'what we were talking about.' I say it sounds simpler than it is by virtue of a rather complex problem of the ways in which the topic name is chosen. There are a lot of options involved in the choice of topic name. And the choice operates in some independence of whatever the pre-present parties may understand is the topic they were talking about. There are some sorts of analyses that such a speaker as the one who is here doing the 'orientational' utterance should do in determining what topic name to use. And one sort of analysis that he should do involves some consideration of alternative topic names in terms of some identification he makes of the entrant, and as well, some sorts of identifications he claims for himself and others. The choice of a topic name can be the product of such a determination. For example, if a bunch of ladies are sitting around talking, then if somebody enters they may say "We're talking about the new breed of petunias" under some determination of what the new person is like, or they may cast what they're doing into quite different sorts of terms, e.g., "We're talking about the garden club", etc., having to do with, among other things, that they figure that the person who's entered knows about the named topic in such a way as they could join that topic.

Another sort of thing is that the entrant can see that they do or do not belong in this conversation. One sort of thing that is specifically done by these orientational utterances is to inform an entrant that they should stay, participate, or leave. So that the person who's making the orientational remark engages in a determination of such a thing as would the entrant like to join this conversation, would they be able to join it, or not. They then don't use the product directly, e.g., "You wouldn't be interested, go away," but some formulation of what's being done which tells them that they don't want to be there or that they don't belong there. And this can be done in a variety of ways. For example, there is a terminology which does that work specifically. Somebody comes into the room and you look up and you say "We're talking shop talk" or "We're talking girl talk" – not that they're

talking about girls, but, e.g., two women are sitting and talking, the husband of one of them comes into the room, and now they say to him "We're talking girl talk." Or, for example, one can say "We're talking about . . ." some item which is known by the other to be, e.g., 'shop talk.' That is to say, they know nothing about that item, but it's a term in some business that they don't know anything about and are known to be uninterested in. Any technical term for any field, offered to a non-specialist, serves as information that you take it they're not interested.

Now if you're going to use some possible descriptor of a topical sort, e.g., "We're talking about the new breed of petunias" as compared to a characterization of the topic, e.g., "We're talking girl talk," that has a problem in it. That problem is the kinds of information you have available to you about the person to whom you're offering this thing, i.e., what do you think you know about it with respect to what you think they know about it, where the choice of terminology may exhibit your intended position with respect to the matter, and also your understanding of their intended position with respect to the matter. If somebody says "We're talking about gardens," then somebody who doesn't know much about gardens may figure that they could perfectly well get along in a conversation about gardens, i.e., that they know as much as anybody who isn't a bug about gardening. But if they're told that what's being discussed is some new breed of petunia, they might figure that they wouldn't be able to handle themselves in this crowd. But then again, if you tell somebody that you're discussing some new breed, it may turn out that though you think you're an expert on it, you're a novice compared to them. So you have to make those sorts of determinations, which are classically famous sources of amusement, embarrassment, etc., i.e., you pick a technical term to show your expertise to somebody you meet at a party, and they turn out to be the authority on that thing while you know little more than the name of it.

There are, then, those sorts of orders of work involved in an orientational utterance. And the last thing in the world you want to find yourself saying is, "He says 'we were in an automobile discussion' because it's true," i.e., because that's a correct characterization of what they were doing. That it's true couldn't be more irrelevant. The fact that something is true is not grounds for saying it, i.e., not grounds for saying it in any given place. But naming a topic is one way of doing an orientation, and the choice of a topic name counts in a variety of ways.

Let me just note that the use of a topic name to do an orientation has, aside from the work it does by reference to the recipient, that it gets that topic up on the board again. And in that regard, this sort of orientational utterance is a case of one way of dealing with interruptions, i.e., it's a case of reassertion of topic, where reassertion of topic works not just to announce what we were doing – i.e., an announcement of one does not provide now for a list of others, e.g., "We were in an automobile discussion and last week we were talking about high school dropouts" – but it works to reinvoke a topic. And they do reinvoke the topic, or they can be quarreled with, "No we weren't, we were

doing something else." But again, it's via the fact that the thing is 'orientational' that to whom it's directed can be found; indeed, seeing that it's orientational is crucial to seeing to whom it's directed. And seeing that it's orientational involves seeing its sequenced position with respect to the introduction sequence.

I want now to suggest that an 'automobile discussion' is a special sort of topic for the sorts of people that are doing it here, i.e., these teenage boys. There are various ways to develop the sort of topic it is. The way I'm going to talk about it is as a topic 'for them,' a topic for teenage boys – not that it's a topic, and it can be a topic for teenage boys and for others, but 'automobile discussion for teenage boys' is one name because the way in which it's a topic for them is different than the way in which it's a topic for anybody else. Let me give one way to show that it's a special sort of object – and at least incidentally we may see whether my formulation of it is acceptable or not.

There has been a bit of literature about special topics for a culture. In a book called *The Nuer* by E. E. Pritchard, an anthropologist of a slightly earlier day, he talks about cattle for the Nuer; how cattle for the Nuer are a topic of a very special sort, and how you can't talk about anything with the Nuer without it ending up being about cattle. This is from Chapter 1, pages 18–19.

> We have seen in a brief survey of some Nuer institutions and customs that most of their social behavior directly concerns their cattle. A fuller study of their culture would show everywhere the same dominant interest in cattle. For example, in their folklore. They are always talking about their beasts. I used to sometimes despair that I never discussed anything with the young men but livestock and girls. And even the subject of girls led inevitably to that of cattle. Start on whatever subjects I would, and approach it from whatever angle, we would soon be speaking of cows and oxen, heifers and steers, rams and sheep, he-goats and she-goats, calves and lambs and kids. I've already indicated that this obsession – for such it seems to the outsider – is due not only to the great economic value of cattle, but also to the fact that they are linked in numerous social relationships. Nuer tend to define all social processes and relationships in terms of cattle. Their social idiom is a bovine idiom.
>
> Consequently he who lives among Nuer and wishes to understand their social life, must first master a vocabulary referring to cattle, and to the life of the herds. Such complicated discussions as those which take place in legal disputes, can only be followed when one understands the difficult cattle terminology of colors, ages, sexes, and so forth.

Now, he wants to make a case for the central status of cattle in the Nuer society but I'm not particularly involved in that. The question is that you can make a case for the central status of cattle conversation among the Nuer. And we want to make a case for the peculiar status of automobile talk for teenage boys. And I want to talk about the topic as being 'ultra rich' for them. I

suppose it's something that I could just say, but I'd rather not just say it if we can get anything out of a discussion of it.

One sort of thing we can mean by 'ultra rich' is that it's in some literal way an 'infinite' topic. Imagine that we're talking about a car. A car has a finite set of parts. Any part can be talked of, for some amount. Then you can imagine that talking about the parts of a car would involve you in reducing the amount of talk you can make about that car's parts as you proceeded through the conversation, i.e., you would be getting into a position where you'd have less and less to say. In the first instance this situation is rather simpler for adults, in that, e.g., for some car you have, not any part is an object that you could talk about; there may be very few parts and there may be very little that you could say about them. But we can begin to get a picture of the way in which automobile conversations for kids are not at all constrained in the way they are for adults, by considering what sort of an object a car is for a kid, by reference to its parts. A car for a kid has an infinite set of parts. That's an assertion. That assertion doesn't turn on that there are a lot more parts than you think, but what I'm saying is, for one, any part of a car can be replaced. And any replaced part can be replaced. You can have, then, infinite conversation, in that you can replace a part, announce that you've replaced a part, discuss the replacement of some replaced part, etc. And there are very nice relationships in that replacing a part leads to considerations of other parts to be replaced so as to keep the car organized now around the new part.

The dramatic difference is if, e.g., an adult happens to announce to another adult that they just replaced the engine in their car, or the tires, etc. there are extremely few sorts of reasons why that could have happened, e.g., the engine died, the tires wore out. While such reasons could exist for teenage kids, their reasons are in no way constrained like that. The replacement of a part has to do with, e.g., making it a better car. And there is no issue of economics, i.e., it isn't that the part is replaced instead of replacing the entire car, but one replaces a part as a way that one keeps one's car in model shape. The idea being that the ways in which kids treat cars have as their consequence that they can have talk about cars, not merely of much more technical sorts, but of a much more elaborated sort than adults could have.

Now there's a phenomenon like the following involved. If a bunch of people go to a restaurant and they get the menus and somebody says "Gee I think I'll have roast beef," that is not treated as merely their choice, it's treated as a proposal. So that somebody else will say, "Oh I just had roast beef last night," or something like that. If the first statement were not heard as a proposal, the relationship of the second to it might be obscure. But you get that a person's proposed thing that they will eat is treated as a proposal for others. And people say why they will or will not have that thing, or engage in some discussion about what this person ought to have other than roast beef. That's a way in which what might seem in the first instance to be personal proposals get treated for some rather small group. Now for kids, cars have the same sort of status. If you propose, e.g., "I want a Chevvy 409," then that

proposal will be treated in the same sort of way. Another kid will say "I don't want a Chevvy 409" and say why, or that you shouldn't want a Chevvy 409. So there's that sense of anybody's 'want' being a community affair. And again, it's a sense in which a proposal is conversationally generative. That is to say, if you say "I want a Chevvy 409," if that can be turned into an issue of whether everybody else ought to have one or you ought not to have one, then the way in which it can produce talk is different than if you say "I want a Chevvy 409" or "I want a steak" and the business of anybody else is to just list their desired item.

So there's that sense in which this is a kind of special item for conversation. We could just begin to consider, as one criterion of possibly interesting items for conversation for different sorts of groups, what sorts of things which you offer as simply a personal proposal, are treated as intended as otherwise. I suppose to some extent for students, course selection might be such a thing. If you go around at certain times and say "I'm going to take this," then perhaps your friends will treat it as something they should consider, something you should reconsider, etc.

Now with respect to car parts there is again that character, for at least some teenage boys anyway, that the parts are replaceable, that conversation can be about replaced parts, parts to be replaced, parts to be replaced after parts that are to be replaced have been replaced, i.e., "After I get the new aluminum V8 engine, I'll do X, Y, Z." So you get a picture of conversational possibilities that are really immense. And again, that sort of format, of 'after I get what I don't have now, what I will then do' is, I take it, something rather constrained in its use.

Another thing that allows for the kind of extensions it has is the scope of the community involved. For lots of things, to introduce them comparatively operates within very restricted lines. So, for example, if we're talking about bridge playing and we're not professional bridge players but just occasionally play bridge, then I pretty much can't use any bridge player for comparison apart from the people we play bridge with. If I'm talking about how somebody cooks and we're not listed chefs, then I can't talk about anybody for comparison as a cook except somebody that we know. Now as our status shifts on those things, the constraints on to whom somebody can be compared, can shift. In that regard, even negative comparisons can be a major indication that people figure you are in a different league than they figured that you were before. When they say you're worse than X, X being some sort of professional, that's a lot better than being better than Y who's just a neighbor.

Now it's a character of comparison of cars, that a kid hotrodder can compare his car or somebody else's car to some car of somebody that neither of them know; some car they've heard of. Cars which haven't raced can be compared. And the community of stories about cars can be passed with considerable hearsay. So that it's not just your car compared to a friend's car, but your car within a community of cars.

I wanted to suggest that we can say in interesting ways that an automobile discussion is something special for kids. And we've found some ways of

showing it's special which are themselves interesting. The point is it's not simply that kids talk more about cars than other people talk about cars, it's *how* they talk about cars that's interesting. And how they talk about cars may provide for that they talk more about cars. Now how kids talk about cars may be undifferentiated from how other people talk about other things, or how kids talk about other things. It just may be that there are some cultural objects for a group, 'ultra rich conversational topics.' And for some conversation system there's a way in which something can operate as an 'ultra rich topic,' so that any 'ultra rich' topic gets talked of in more or less the same way. I don't know if it's so, but it's at least possible.

Now it's perfectly possible to be a teenage boy and talk about cars in the way that anybody else talks about cars. But then one wouldn't be in a position to engage in talk about cars with those for whom it is special. For one, you simply wouldn't be able to understand what they're talking about, i.e., you might not know what the terms mean. What are 20-inch slicks? You don't have any idea. There are other sorts of things involved: If, for example, at some point in the conversation somebody says "I can get you ten seconds for 500 dollars," you might not know whether that was good, bad, cheap, too much. If somebody proposed that the engine weighed 340 pounds, then you might figure that its weight was relevant, but you might not know whether it was particularly light or particularly heavy, or that's just what it weighed. Where, when they talk about that thing they would have no reason to state the value of the variable when that variable is asserted. And that is a characteristic way that they're doing 'member' talk about something. That is to say, when people know the values of items, they don't attach that value to the assertion, "It weighs 340 pounds and that's very light for an engine of that sort, and that it's light is a good thing." You wouldn't even know that you wanted a light engine.

So there's a whole range of ways in which the talk can be opaque. And while you may figure that you're perfectly well interested in having a conversation about cars, *that* conversation about cars, with its opaque terms, etc., may be specifically uninteresting. And that it's uninteresting can be a way in which you find yourself left out, and left out of something that can matter for such as you. There are certain sorts of things which one can be quite uninterested in, have no feelings about, and nonetheless know that 'people like you' do. The classical sociologist Simmel introduced a concept which he called 'completeness,' which had to do with the extent to which some group formulated as a group-within-a-group was able to make members of all of those, or only part of those, located as eligible. So that, e.g., the fact that you work in a factory may make you, for some people who also do it, eligible for being a union member though you may not want to be a union member; you may see that some people will figure that you should be a union member and that you have to take a position, say, with respect to whether you're going to be a union member or not. And he employs the notion as a way of assessing organizations. Any organization which claims some population as its eligibles, to what extent did they want completeness – some don't want

completeness – and to what extent if they wanted completeness did they get it.

And one can at least approach the way in which persons within some group orient to the fact that there's some claim that they ought to be a member. So teenage boys may, whether or not they are interested in cars the way, say, 'hotrodders' are, know that that's a thing that they have to take a position on. That is to say, it's of such relevance that they either are or they are not. Whereas there can be things which if you aren't, you don't figure yourself as a 'not such-and-such,' there are some things which gain such relevance within a group that you can be a 'not such-and-such.'

In that regard, then, the topic that Ken proposes with "We were in an automobile discussion" is one that is not at all incidental for Ken to be proposing that we were engaged in. It's a topic about which it can be expected that there is some considerable identificational interest in on the part of Jim, the new entrant. Now I take it that it's not too much to say that their knowledge that somebody new was coming into the group, that he was a boy, was relevant to the projection of this topic as something that they could continue until he came in, and indeed have going when he came in, as compared to other sorts of topics that they could have going. That sort of inference can be made in that it is altogether relevant to parties that when somebody comes in, that they be caught in a characteristic pose.

There are all kinds of funny things involved in that. If, e.g., you're sitting in your house and watching TV, watching some serial at 8:30 at night and the doorbell rings, then the first thing you would do is turn off the TV so as to not be in a positon of having somebody who comes in seeing you watching that TV program. Where, although you may claim "I never watch it, I just– this is the first time," they can nonetheless figure that when they catch you doing anything, they catch you doing what you characteristically do. Knowing that some people are coming may, then, involve you in arranging things so as to have a 'characteristic appearance' evident. The import of this sort of characteristic appearance on the entrance of somebody is really profound. And it has some very neat sorts of throw-offs. Suppose, for example, that people are coming over to your house. Now, you have magazines on your coffee table. And the magazines you have on the coffee table are legitimately treatable by them as ways of determining, e.g., what you read, and via what you read, what you're like. Or rather, they can use some magazine that you have, to make an initial determination of what you claim to be, so that they can say later on, "He's a phoney" though you haven't asserted any claim, in the sense that you haven't said "I'm a real intellectual." But by virtue of the fact that you have that magazine there – even though you might say "This is the first time I ever bought it" – they can figure that you put it there for them to see and are thereby claiming that you're the sort of person who has that thing. And of course it's classically known that people specifically arrange things so as to locate who they are, to others. That initial appearance is, then, something that is known to be projectable, and can be treated as projected whether it's projected or not. By

that I mean that somebody can say "He's a phoney, at first I thought he was an X but then I realized he's not," where the person being talked about 'never claimed' to be what he isn't,

It's something that requires attention, that people pick something that matters; in our case, that they may have engaged in such a conversation as will allow them to be in the position to say "This is what we're doing" when doing such a thing as this can matter. And that's one sense in which it's misguided to say "They say 'we were in an automobile discussion' because they were in an automobile discussion." They may have arranged that they are in an automobile discussion so as to be able to say "We were in an automobile discussion." That initially used orientational item isn't to be seen as simply chosen by reference to what they were in fact doing, since for one, if they weren't doing something that they wanted to use as an orientational item, they could use some other orientational item; they could do other things, e.g., discussing who they are, or who he is, or something else. And of course it's perfectly possible that one will say, not what one was doing, which is true, but say what one might well have been doing, which is more useful.

Now let's notice one feature of 'an automobile discussion for teenagers' which begins to invoke another aspect of this orientational usage here, and that is that *these* people were in an automobile discussion is specifically interesting in that they're not just 'teenage boys' and this is not just a 'teenage boys' conversation;' it's a group therapy session. And there can be for the entrant quite a question as to what in the hell do they do in here? And the claim involved in "We were in an automobile discussion" may well be "There's nothing special here at all. We do what we always do." That is to say, it does not in any way whatsoever differentiate the talk done here from such sorts of talk as teenage boys do, independently of settings. Consider that you really would have no idea what in the world they'd be talking about. They could be talking about things that you have no knowledge with respect to. Or one might have one's imaginations about what people talk about in a group therapy session. They could be talking about things that you absolutely don't want to get into, etc. Is he going to have to talk about his fantasies with respect to his mother? It's perfectly plausible for him that when he enters, that's what they're talking about. So there's perhaps this enormously comfort-offering character to this statement.

One feature, then, is that the proposed topic does not locate the setting that is transparently involved here, or the status of the boy as is transparently involved, i.e., that they're 'patients.' Instead, it locates – at least by naming it – that it's a thing that such people as we do wherever. One further rather neat aspect of it is, as I said, it's special for teenage boys. Which is to say that they're going to be talking about something that they're experts in. Which is to say that they're going to be talking about something in the presence of an adult, in which he's not an expert. Which is to say that they're going to be talking about something in the presence of the therapist in which he's not an expert. Which is something perhaps peculiarly safe. He's coming into a

position in which there's an expert there, a therapist, knowledgeable in ways that he's not knowledgeable and he would figure that the other patients are not knowledgeable, i.e., they're going to be saying things which they don't know the sense of. That's one thing everybody knows about therapy; you're going to be saying things and you don't know what they mean, but the therapist knows what they mean. Now a topic is proposed that is such a topic as he knows that he and the others will know what they mean, and the therapist won't be able to understand them – not in the sense that it will be psychiatrically dense for him, but that he's a culture-outsider for it.

Also of course, remember the early point that automobile discussions for teenagers can go on forever. You could have a topic announced which would clearly provide for, "Well, where are you in it, the beginning or the end?" For example, "We were talking about Psycho." Psycho could be talked about for a while, and if you've already been talking about it, I'm probably in at the end of the conversation, maybe it'll go on another ten minutes. If we're in an automobile discussion, there's no sense in which it is relevant that we just began or we've been going on for an hour. Whatever length it's so far had, it can have an indefinitely continuing length. So he doesn't have to figure "Well God damn it I came in at the end of just the sort of thing that I'm able to handle." And that possible extendedness of a topic from where we catch it is in principle an important issue, in terms of the view you have of what's taking place.

So he's being invited, perhaps, into a situation in which what's going to be done is that sort of thing that he is possibly most comfortable with, done with colleagues, done in the presence of an adult who might be expected to be peculiarly knowledgeable about what he says in ways that he couldn't control, but where the adult is perhaps not at all in that position, and for such a topic as can go on indefinitely. Not only go on indefinitely in the sense that it can continue until the end of this session, but it can go on in the next session just as well. And a topic for which, whatever it is he already knows, has had conversations, experiences, etc., about cars, he is stocked with material that he can tell them. He doesn't come into a position in which he's told that he's going to be speechless.

So it's a very powerful topic choice used orientationally. If one considers the options of attractive orientational topics, I would venture to say that there is none better for them. That is to say, the alternative favorite topic that you might come up with would not have the kinds of attributes this one does. Sex, which would be a great teenage boy topic, is hardly the kind of topic that could proceed with the kind of ease that it could with the absence of a therapist. A sex conversation here would be quite different than a sex conversation outside. And whatever other topics one might come up with would not have the peculiarly neat status that this one does. It is, then, orientational in a large range of ways beyond 'what we're now going to talk of here.' It's orientational about who we are, what we talk about, the sorts of ways we talk about it, etc. I would particularly single out things like the expertise relationship for the item with respect to the therapist.

That having been said, we can at least notice that, the introductions having been finished, it is one of the kids who goes about doing the orientation, as compared to leaving that for the therapist to do. That is to say, if there is that sort of job to be done, then they take over that piece of work, where there could be questions about who does it, and what's involved in one or another of the potential doers doing it. If the therapist spoke, would he say "We were in an automobile discussion" or "They were in an automobile discussion"? If he'd said either of those, what sort of a reinvoking of the topic would that be, i.e., would it be voluntary or would he be instructing them to go back to their conversation? I don't mean that in the sense that if the therapist said it, it would oblige people to talk, because you can't oblige people to talk, but it would set up the import of their talking or not talking. And of course, whether he would pick that sort of orientation at all is another issue. In several ways, then, it can indeed matter who does that sort of thing.

Now, I'm not trying here simply to give information about teenage boys or favorite topics of teenage boys and things like that. I want to be pointing out something like this: If one were asked to say something about that item "We were in an automobile discussion," one might find that it was utterly dense, and utterly dense specifically because it seems so "Well, that's what they were talking about, so it's true, isn't it? What else should they say? So what can you say about it?" But we've been able to marshall a bunch of ways of getting at this thing that permit us to say a lot about it, and a lot about it that makes us eager to look to other conversations in which, e.g., a topic gets named, so as to see what that's doing. What one might do, then, is review the character of my discussion, not for what it says about automobile discussions and teenage kids, but for the sorts of attacks that were made on this utterance, i.e., the various kinds of attacks that were made on this utterance, i.e., the various kinds of starting and restarting that have been done to locate the kind of work involved in a thing like this.

Now I'll shift ground altogether and begin to get back to the continuation that's done. And when we come back to it now, we have at least the idea that perhaps there's a lot going on in that thing, so that if there's a lot further happening it's not surprising. Again, the point I want to make is that what we want to do is to lock in on where, organizationally, is the doing of the collaboration accomplished. Is it accomplished at the same organizational level as, e.g., that it's 'orientational' or is it involved in other sorts of matters?

I want first to note that there's an aspect of the form of this collaborative that's extractable so that collaboratives like it can be built, and in fact, utterances can be built by single speakers as well, which use this form, i.e., its form is perhaps one that is not altogether unique. Let me give another instance and the relationship will be obvious: "We were at dinner, dining on roast beef and mashed potatoes." So that you have here this kind of relationship between a noun and a participialization of the noun which permits you to treat a possible sentence as only the 'independent clause' of a sentence that has an independent and a dependent clause, via the use of just participializing the noun. "We were in an automobile discussion" "discussing

the psychological motives for . . ." The construction clearly could have been used by Ken himself, and it doesn't involve some really arbitrary fitting.

We can note that Roger's starting up clearly preserves the orientational character, though there's obviously some modification involved. And we can note that, that Roger's utterance is a continuation of Ken's is something that Al then shows that he saw. Al could have built an utterance which would involve transforming Roger's from a continuation to a new beginning: "discussing the psychological motives for" "drag racing on the streets, is what we were doing." Had Al provided that last utterance, he would have turned Roger's into the beginning of his. So what he actually does is relevant to what Roger will have done, just as what Roger has done turns Ken's from a perfectly good sentence into a clause.

That of course doesn't tell us at all why Roger does this. Now we had an initial feature which was that if Ken's is an orientational utterance, then it locates Jim as the recipient. If it locates Jim as the recipient, then Jim should speak next. And I want to propose next time that it's by reference to dealing with Jim speaking next that we can deal with what Roger is doing here.[1]

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[1]None of the subsequent Fall 1968 lectures was transcribed.

Part II
Winter 1969

Lecture 1

Announcements; Touched-off utterances; Noticings; The makings of conversation; Local resources

The following fragment occurs about six utterances into the first of these group therapy sessions that I've been fiddling around with. Roger has been talking, and I put the last bit of his talk in for a reason which I'll get to shortly.

Roger:	. . . of the desk that 'e li//kes.
Al:	Hey you have a <u>hole</u> in yer shoe,
Roger:	heh Do(hh)n' tell me. hhh heh
Al:	This place co:s' too much money. Can' afforda buy shoes.
	(2.0)
Roger:	'S breaking my folks.
	(2.0)
Roger:	My insanity's breaking their bankb'k.
Dan:	Have yer folks said anything?
	(0.7)
Roger:	Nah(h)
	(4.0)
(*Roger*):	((very soft)) (They ain't sayin nuttin'.)

I've been collecting notes on this thing for a long time, kind of a conglomeration of things. I'm starting to talk about it now in that it has some rough relationship to at least some aspects of 'weather talk.'[1] It may be a relevant predecessor to considering weather talk by virtue of this sort of issue: Where do people place announcements, noticings, in conversation? That's one sort of thing. Another sort of thing is more in point for weather talk in particular and concerns the 'makings of conversation,' which is something I've worked on a bit with regard to a conversation in which a piece of news, "I got a raise," is used to make certain sorts of talk, i.e., is used in the making of conversation. And I want to deal a bit with the makings of conversation by reference to this fragment.

But I'll start off by just grossly saying something about that first matter, the placing of announcements – leaving aside for now some sorts of noticings, including the one in this fragment, "Hey you have a hole in your shoe."

[1] The class had been given materials to consider, on talk about the weather.

It appears that there are, maybe, three sorts of places that announcements go; two of which have one sort of orderliness to them, and the third, another. First of all they go in what is in its way a 'free space' for announcements – at the beginning of conversations. When you say to somebody "How are you?" or when you begin a call, then one of the things that's done at that place is to make some sorts of announcements: "How are you feeling?" "Lousy, my wife just had an operation," or, "I just called to say I have to have an operation." So that's one place that announcements go. However, not all sorts of announcements should go there, and indeed announcements which you may want to make, you may not want to put there because in putting them there they are thereby given a kind of status.

There appears to be some sort of hierarchical relationship among an-nounceables. Putting an announceable at the beginning, you might be seen as claiming one order of importance for it, i.e., treating it as 'initially mentionable' or as a 'reason for a call.' It may perfectly well be an announceable, but not an announceable that should be treated as initially mentionable or as a reason for a call. So even if you have a bunch of announcements and you get a chance to make an announcement, you may not make the announcement in that initial place. Of course for the dealing-with of an actually occurring announcement there is the problem that for those two people that thing that should not go first could, for some other people or on some other occasion be placed in, e.g., 'reason for the call' status.

Again, then, first there are the sorts of things which are useable as reasons for a call or gotten by "How are you?" Second, and in a way related to this type of first, is a place that occurs when somebody signals that perhaps the conversation should close. There, one regularly gets somebody saying "Oh by the way . . ." and then putting in the announcement. Now I haven't talked about 'closings' but I'll just say for now that one of the big things about closings is that closing is not something that's done like 'greetings' in that you say "Hi" and you've done a greeting, but closing is something that's collaboratively done and takes a sequence itself, so that there are closing-beginnings and then closing-ends. And in conversations people go about getting together to close. So one second place for an announcement is after a closing-beginning with somebody saying "Oh by the way . . ." and putting in the announcement.

Third are announcements that are placed in the 'middle.' And if you take a collection of announceables that are placed in a conversation, the ones I'll talk of now do not seem to be so easily interchanged with the first two. The character of announcements placed in the 'middle' is this: They're a sort of thing that occur as '*touched off*' utterances. And by that I mean something like this: In one of these group therapy sessions we get the following sort of occurrence:

Ken :   Hey put your shoes back on c'mon I can smell you all the way
         over here.
Roger : It's good for // you.

Al: It's your problem. It'll grow hair on your chest.
Roger: Yeah and all that good stuff.
Ken: heh heh God any more hair on my chest and I'd be a fuzz boy.
Roger: 'D be a what?
Ken: ⌈A fuzz boy.
Al: ⌊Fuzz boy.
Ken: Fuzz mop.
Al: Then you – then you'd have to start shaving.
Ken: ehhehh
Roger: Hey I shaved this morni – I mean last night for you.

What you have is the occurrence of the mentioning of shaving occasioning Roger's announcement that *he* shaved. That announcement is not, perhaps, the sort of thing that he would do at the beginning of the conversation – or if he did announce it at the beginning he would be claiming for it some sort of status that he might not want to claim for it. Now some things shouldn't go as touched off utterances in the middle of a conversation. If, for example, they're talking along and somebody says "Harry and Mary just had a baby," then you wouldn't at that point say, "Hey *I* just had a baby." A thing like that should have gone at the beginning, it shouldn't be 'merely' touched off. But for some things, if you announce them right up front, people can ridicule them, like "What's the big deal about that?" which happens in one of the group therapy sessions. Ken's first utterance in the session is "I was at the police station this morning." That's an announceable. Somebody else says "Big deal." That is, it's seen that not only is he making an announcement but that, in that he places the announcement where he does, he's making a claim about it. Were the talk to come down to, e.g., a discussion about cops, he might then say, "Well I was at the police station this morning and . . ." and launch into whatever he wants to say. And it might perhaps be treated quite differently. The question of how the things get treated, depending upon where they're placed seems to be relevant to where they get placed.

Now what's interesting is that one of the ways in which you don't have to put announcements in at the beginning of a conversation is that the course of a conversation can allow for the 'natural placing' of announcements by virtue of whatever it is that happens to come up. So if you have a bunch of announcements you don't have to figure that if you don't get them in right at the beginning you'll never get a chance to say them, but you can simply introduce them as appropriately placed, more or less, given what's just been said – given that the character of the conversation is that it may wander over this and that. (And if it doesn't happen that way, and you still want to say something, then you can put it into the closing section, after a closing has been begun.)

Of course if you're using the touched off mechanism then there are ways of setting up that you might be able to touch things off. But then there are also topics that, for some set of people, you may be able to feel fairly assured that something like it will come up and you can mention your news. To take

a dramatic instance, in these materials one topic that is invariable is talk about cars. And it happens in one of the sessions that something really godawful happened. Roger had sold Al a car which then "blew up" shortly thereafter, and that was a rather touchy sort of thing. Al doesn't announce it. What happens is that the conversation – as it invariably does – gets around to cars. Roger's car club is working under his direction, and there is discussion about how they may be being exploited. 5

> *Roger*: And I'm not using other people to do it. They're enjoying it
>   too. I'm just I'm just enlightening 'em to my uh method of
>   enjoying themselves.
> *Ken*:   heh
>   (4.0)
> *Ken*:   Now Al. Al likes t– likes // t–
> *Roger*: I'm opening new channels for // eight out of the thirteen.
> *Ken*:   Waita minute wait.
> *Ken*:   Al likes to uh t–to ride sailboats or– or something // (   )
> *Roger*: Not any more hah hehh ah hah heh
> *Ken*:   Why? What happened?
> *Roger*: She's gone hehh
> *Al*:   She is sold. She's gonna be sold.
> *Ken*:   Oh. Well, he used to.
> *Al*:   ⌈Mm hm,
> *Ken*:   ⌊Or–he–he still does in–in the back of his mind probly.
> *Roger*: Now he likes to drive fast Austin Healys now.
> *Al*:   Not any more.
> *Roger*: What happened?
> →*Al*:   It blew up.
> *Roger*: Didju really?

And that may be more effective than if he had just started off with an accusation. These touched off things are technically very elaborate and all I'm saying now is that we can watch for them.

One thing about the touched offs is that if you're going to make one, then the placing of that item upon the occurrence of the utterance that touches it off is crucial. What that involves then is that that's a place where you can find somebody really trying to get the floor, cutting somebody else off, interrupting and the like, with their touched off announcements. Now some sorts of *noticings*, e.g., 'environmental' noticings like "Hey you have a hole in your shoe" and all sorts of things which occur in conversation and which involve the noticing of, e.g., the passing world ("Hey your cigarette's gone out," "What was that noise?" "Did you see that?") are similar to the touched off announcements in that – again as for most sorts of things that happen in conversation – the timing of their occurrence is one integral part of their occurring. And with environmental noticings one of the ways that one tends to go about showing that what one is asserting, one has just noticed, is to do

it by reference to, e.g., an interruption of somebody else. So we regularly find that these sorts of noticing announcements cut into someone else's talk. It isn't then, perhaps, an altogether incidental thing that this "Hey you have a hole in your shoe" does start up while another person is talking. That's kind of a characteristic thing for noticings.

Now I take this to be a weak assertion in that I don't really know that it's so that noticings are specifically interruptive. I raise it as a possibility. It is a matter of some interest for us, in that any place we can cut into and locate specific classes of things which occur as interruptions means that we are reducing the random disorderliness of the occurrence of interruptions. There are bunches of different things, and each one is something we would want to consider.

Another weak but possibly so feature, which is a feature here, is that "Hey you have a hole in your shoe" announced by Al, interrupts Roger and is directed to Roger. That is to say, it is perhaps the case that that sort of a noticing is a sort which would be directed to the person just talking. And if that's so there's a good reason for it which is, if Roger is talking then one legitimate – if not somewhat obliged – thing that Al can be doing is looking at Roger. And that then involves that while not in any way topically related to what Roger has been saying, that Al has been paying attention to Roger is something that announcing the seeing of the hole in his shoe can involve. So it might turn out that, e.g., noticings of things like the physical features of persons in the room are placed by reference to the talk of the person whose feature is noticed. And that is an offshoot in its way of that attention that one might, should, be giving to the speaker, and involves then that one isn't just announcing any noticing, but announcing a noticing which in its fashion turned on an attention to the speaker. That is so here, it may be so elsewhere. And if we're looking for aspects of the orderliness of noticings, then that they are interruptive and that they are directed to a current speaker are two possibilities.

Now that doesn't tell us anything in the world about why Al says "Hey you have a hole in your shoe" – where the fact that Roger has a hole in his shoe doesn't account for Al's saying it – and why he says it is one sort of thing I want to give some attention to. I want to make a partial lesson out of the talk about the hole in Roger's shoe because involved there is a kind of thing which, if you are an analyst of conversation who is a knowledgeable member of the society whose conversation you are analyzing, could trip you up. That is, it would not lead you to see a sort of thing that a cultural stranger might see, but which in any event I guess we can come to be in a position to observe. What's involved is this: When you're thinking about this hole in the shoe and what's being done with it you may tend to start off with, as your primary sort of fact, that in the world – as apart from in the conversation – the shoe is Roger's, and use that possessional relationship as central. Whereas if you're going to use that sort of a fact, what you want to do is to ask, Well how does that fact, that an object is somebody's, conversationally matter? And you may get one immediate sort of payoff. Whereas in the world, that it's Roger's shoe

matters in that, e.g., if it's Roger's shoe then Al can't walk off with it, that doesn't say that Al can't talk about it. But that it's Roger's does matter for Al talking about it in this way: If Al's going to talk about it, e.g., notice a hole in it, then he has somebody to talk to about it – Roger. And he can figure that if he talks about it Roger's going to talk back. That is to say, the possessional relationship turns out to mean that that's a thing which serves to locate who it is that will talk if you raise a topic, so that if you raise as a topic, an object that is owned by somebody, then you can perhaps pretty well figure that they'll be willing to talk in turn about it. So that fact that Roger owns the shoe controls some sorts of uses in the world, but doesn't in any way prevent somebody from, e.g., talking about it – though it happens that in some cultures, and for some objects in this culture, the fact that somebody owns something serves as a perfectly adequate constraint in a conversation for anybody talking about it, e.g., when they're present.

Now the lesson is something like this: With respect to, say, things being conceived of as "That's X's, that's Y's, that belongs in the room, that's Z's," etc. all those sorts of things are possible *makings of a conversation*, where the fact that it's somebody's can count in various ways, but not automatically as something which says, e.g., that only they can talk about it. So you want to think of bringing a bunch of possible conversational equipment to a conversation with you. Think of Show and Tell in grade school as a model; where, however, while it's perfectly obvious that some things are specifically brought to a conversation for their possibly being noticed and remarked on in some occasions, it's not just the particular thing that you want to talk about that you bring, but you bring a range of things – some of them unavoidably, e.g., your body and attributes of your body, its odors, etc. What you want in the first instance to do, insofar as we're talking about the organization of conversation, is to think of the collection of attributes a person has, as possible features of the conversation. This one happens to be brought by X, that one happens to be brought by Y, but it's a collection that one might as well imagine as being brought and thrown into the middle of the room.

And in its fashion one of the striking sorts of facts about people's talking together is what they can make do with. You might figure that Johnson and Rusk have lots to talk about, but me and my girlfriend, we see each other every day, nothing much happens, what the hell do we have to talk about? And it's just not so. It's specifically a trained sort of thing, i.e., one takes delight – and sees it as perhaps quite different from one's own life – in watching a little kid make a morning out of a piece of string and a tin can. You say "Look what a kid can do. Just a piece of string and a tin can and an odd pair of shoes lying around, and he's able to have a morning's play."

The point I'm getting to is that the *local resources* are what people make conversations out of, what they can make conversations out of, and endlessly. And the only way you can begin to think about, well, how in the world can they do it; how in the world can they take whatever's at hand and make conversation after conversation after conversation out of it (and of course weather talk begins to come up as a thing at the back of our minds), is by

seeing that whatever they happen to bring in with them is available for conversation. And on some occasion you will have found that your T-shirt and your sweater and your shoes and somebody else's, and your glasses and your ears have been turned to use. It's in that sense that you want to see that whatever anybody brings into a room, they bring as possible makings, to be turned to use. And where things like 'who owns it' matter for, e.g., what your're doing when you talk about it, who you're selecting to talk, what the chances are of getting anybody to talk, and things like that, but not so much in the way in which 'who owns it' matters for other sorts of events.

So a shoe is then a perfectly good ordinary object to make some talk about. The issue is to find a way of turning it to use under the various sorts of constraints that there are in conversation, which involve that you pretty much can't say "Hey you're wearing a shirt" or things like that just anywhere in a conversation. That is to say, you have to be attending the things everybody brings in and piles up in the room so to speak, for now-sayable things about them. So if the shoe has a hole in it, that may be noticeable. If you weren't wearing a shirt before and now you are, then "Hey you're wearing a shirt" may be now-sayable. And when we come to see that it's things like the hole in the shoe that are used, or that you're now wearing a shirt or that you're wearing a new shirt, then we can see that a vast amount of conversation is devoted to those makings that everybody brings with them, and that even though people don't make an altogether only topic out of those makings, they nonetheless show, again and again, that they're attending those things, awaiting their possible use, so that when something happens, then they can use it. And we can see that, furthermore, the fact that such a thing was talked of last time doesn't mean it isn't to be talked about this time. The fact that it was talked about last time can set up its being talked about this time, e.g., "You look better today than you looked yesterday," where yesterday I said "you don't look so good."

Okay, so for the question 'why did he talk about the shoe?' what I attacked was 'what is it that makes anything like a shoe talkable-about?' where, for the discussion so far, 'shoe' could be replaced by anything that somebody brings. It's really worth trying, insofar as we're thinking about social organization, to attempt to reconceive all these objects as just piled in the middle of the room and available for talk, and then to try to reconceive how it is that things like whose it is matter for the organization of conversation. You can then get to things like how whose it is turns what you might say about it into some *conversational action*. That is, to say this about that, given that it's so-and-so's means that I'm doing an 'insult' or that I'm doing a 'compliment' or that I'm 'flirting,' etc. One wants to see the way in which those conversationally implicative doings turn on treatments of this collection of things piled in the room, available for making conversation out of.

Now another sort of thing to be considered is that Al didn't invent that particular noticing. A hole in a shoe is a noticeable, mentionable thing; it's been noticed and mentioned before Al came up with it. And secondly, with respect to the issue of what's going to happen upon the mentioning of the hole

in the shoe, a hole in the shoe is something about which there can be some sorts of controls on what will happen, by virtue of the fact that 'a hole in the shoe' is specifically a *symbol*. By that I mean it's not just that I'm saying it's a symbol but that it's known to be a symbol, i.e., there is a collection of things like a hole in the shoe that are specifically treated as symbols, e.g., a frayed collar, shiny pants, etc. And that is to say, it's known to be a symbol with respect to money, though it's not only a known symbol with respect to money – it can be a symbol with respect to other things as well, but related to money, i.e., that somebody doesn't care about his appearance. Somebody who can walk around *without* holes in their shoes may walk around with holes in their shoes as a way of, e.g., exhibiting to others that they don't care.

And when you're talking about something as being a symbol, then there is the issue of its cultural dispersion. And a hole in the shoe is a symbol in a more dispersed way than, say, wearing shirts with button-down collars is a symbol. I read once where Jack Kennedy was commenting on Bobby Kennedy and said, "You want to know what kind of slob he is, he still wears button-down collars." That is to say, for some collection of people at the time the comment was made, button-downs were no longer worn. And for some collection of people the shirts that are worn can be symbolic of either that one can't afford to or doesn't know enough to keep up with what it is that we wear. But that hole in the shoe is a different order of symbol than that.

Now in asserting there's a hole in someone's shoe, that it can be a symbol specifically used with respect to money-talk is relevant to its use. There is, then, a kind of natural sequence involved in noticing a hole in a shoe and getting money-talk of a particular sort – that sort being complaints about expenses. Where the complaints about expenses serve as one way to deal with an aspect of the sequence involved in the initial noticing, i.e., given that sort of a noticing, a sequence can be done in which an explanation of the noticed phenomenon is offered. Here, the complaint about expenses serves to explain the hole in the shoe, where what might be independently 'an explanation' and 'a complaint about expenses' can be combined, i.e., it is 'an explanation by reference to a complaint about expenses.'

Given those possibilities, another order of quesiton is, what is it that's going to be complained of to produce the explanation? Or, more abstractly asked, how is it that people go about getting what it is they're going to use to make the explanation? For one, one may find that there is a considerable regularity between "Hey you have a hole in your shoe" and thereupon some explanation involving a complaint about expenses, but where the explanation will vary across uses of "Hey you have a hole in your shoe," i.e., on some occasion it's one explanation and on another occasion it's another. And the question is, is there some way that people arrive at which one they use or do they just use any one? That is, in its way, one particularly interesting issue in that it looks like it's kind of an orderly thing as to how the particular explanation-item is arrived at.

Focussing now on the explanation-item in our data, "This place costs too much money," let me make some points on it, particularly about "this

place." And what I want from those points is that we collect some features of the use of "This place costs too much money" which recommend its use here to produce an explanation/complaint with regard to the hole in the shoe. One thing is of course that "this place" costs money – without regard to whether it costs "too much" money, it costs money. A second thing is that it costs money for both parties involved; the person noticed to have a hole in his shoe, and the noticer. That this place costs money for both is relevant in at least these sorts of ways: If, as is the case here, the *noticer* is going to produce the explanation/complaint, then there's a question as to how he can come to know why the other might have a hole in his shoe; what kind of expense might be involved which prevents the other from having decent shoes. That is to say, he could pick such an expense as, while it might be true, the question is how would *he* know? It's after all the other guy's shoe and the other guy's expenses that he's talking about.

Well, one obvious sort of thing is that he can pick such an expense as he also has; where, then, given that he knows what the import of that expense is for himself, he can perhaps find in part that he has some view about what that expense is for the other. So, that he picks an expense which he also has is perhaps not at all incidental to the particular explanation he offers. And it's an explanation which involves not only that it's an expense which Al and Roger both happen to have, but that Al knows that Roger has, and that Al knows that Roger knows that Al has. It's not merely that they both happen to have that expense, but that they each know that the other has it. So, for example, suppose that Roger is an alcoholic, and perhaps Al is also an alcoholic, but Al doesn't know that Roger is, or Roger doesn't know that Al knows that Roger is. Here what we have is that Al knows, and Roger knows that Al knows, that they have this expense, i.e., the cost of therapy.

It's also perhaps so that Al's using an expense that he has as well can be relevant to Roger's accepting that candidate explanation, i.e., that Roger doesn't have to be embarrassed about that expense. And again, it's not so much the hole in his shoe, but remembering that the hole in the shoe is a symbol; it's not an issue of explaining *only* the shoe by virtue of the cost of therapy, but explaining such things for which a hole in the shoe is a symbol, i.e., that going here is affecting what it is that you might spend on things like your shoes. And such issues are perhaps relevent to Roger's being willing to acknowledge the item. That is to say, there might be a thing which Al knows that Roger has an an expense, where, say, Al doesn't have it as an expense, and if that were offered Roger might say "Well that's not the reason," i.e., then you could have issues of the embarrassability of the item.

So that's one order of considerations having to do with, if an expense is going to be used, what some constraints are on the selection of an expense, where the expense is, say, selected by the noticer of the hole in the shoe. If you watch the use of noticings like this one, you'll find that if it is the noticer who offers an explanation, he offers one which can hold for him as well. Where, then, one of the most characteristic things that go in a place like that is taxes. "Well, taxes are just too high." What makes things like taxes such a

magnificent item is that if you just meet somebody, then you can feel assured that taxes is an expense for whatever they might complain about; a thing for which you can legitimately suppose that they suffer from, as also they can suppose that you suffer from.

There are quite separate sorts of further considerations involved in "This place costs too much money" which appear to be relevant here. One such order of consideration is this: Without regard to the issue of expenses and complaints, 'this place' and aspects of 'this place,' of which only one is that it "costs too much money," is a thing that we can talk about *in* this place. Which is to say that the therapy situation is something that is talkable-about in therapy. So that with respect to producing talk that is, say, continuable, appropriate to the occasion, etc., talk that has 'this place' as a subject is appropriate to this occasion. Not perhaps for any 'this place,' but for such a 'this place' as a therapy session. Where, then, for other things that the two might have going for them, know about each other, etc., 'this place' is an apt topic in general. And for a range of things other than its expense, 'this place' comes up throughout the conversations.

And that, again, has to do with the makings of talk. If you leave aside the issue that the cost of therapy is or is not a good explanation for having a hole in the shoe, the fact is that for all sorts of things, when explanations are needed local materials are usable for the making of the explanation. And one indeed tends to think most directly of what, locally, is to be used to explain something when something explainable occurs, even though on reflection you regularly know that it's a ridiculous explanation. If you're sitting with someone and they look glum, then one of the things you routinely do is try to figure out what it is about here-and-now that they might be glum about. If you call somebody up and they say "Hello" in a lousy voice, the first thing you think is "What are they mad at me for?" although you may perfectly well know that somebody can be mad about anything, it can have nothing to do with you, now, here, etc.

I'm suggesting that *local explanations*, for whatever, are preferred explanations if they can be used. And for a large range of expenses, across places, 'this place costs too much money' will be used. And then, forgetting about just money explanations, when you have an explainable, then 'this place + X' (where X is a feature of 'this place' that explains the explainable) is used. And that turns on 'this place' as an utterly apt object for use as an explanation, i.e., on the topical appropriateness of 'this place.' And although it may have nothing particular to do with the availability of 'this place' for 'money explanations,' the two unusually recommend each other. If you think of looking for a money explanation, looking for a money explanation which I have in common with him, looking for a money explanation which I have in common with him that we both know about for each other, then you may get a collection of eligible items, where 'this place' has much to recommend it along lines of just the sheer usability of 'this place' in talk at this place.

There's another sort of thing which also helps to recommend that usage of "This place costs too much money." And that is, if one is looking for an

explanation having to do with expenses, then local expenses are the best. So, for example, if somebody is deciding if they should buy some item, then the best way to decide that you shouldn't buy it is by reference to something that you just bought, and ideally that you just bought at this store, i.e., 'this place.' So that 'this place' as an excuse can then be used by reference to that sort of preference for the most local expense to be used.

Lecture 2
Safe Compliments

I'm going to take off on a point that several people made about 'weather talk' – that weather is a 'safe topic' – by reference to where one might go with that as an initial possibility.[1] I will sketch out some stuff I did a while ago on something which had the modifier 'safe.' I did some work on 'compliments,' specifically on what I called 'safe compliments,' the idea being to see what it was about some compliments that made them 'safe' compliments, i.e., to turn an initial observation into an analysis. The initial material went like this:

> Ken: So did Louise call or anything this morning?
> Dan: Louise? No.
> Ken: No?
> Dan: Why, didju expect her t'call?
> Ken: No, I was just kinda hoping that she might be able to figure out some way t–to come to the meetings and still be able t'work. C'z she did seem like she d–wanted to come back, but uh she didn't think she could.
> Dan: D'you miss her?
> Ken: Well in some ways yes, it's–it was uh // nice having–
> Roger: (No he thinks if uh–)
> Ken: –having the opposite sex in–in the room, you know, havin' a chick in here

I was playing with 'it was nice having a chick in the room' as a compliment, and specifically a safe compliment. The question then is, can we extract from the sort of thing this one is, a set of features which will locate a class of compliments like it, which are also safe compliments? Where that is a test of the fact that we had some generative features. And also, whether when we get those features what we get is something which in its fashion recommends the use of such compliments. So, among other things, I want to be able to discriminate between 'safe' and 'unsafe' compliments, consider the kind of treatment that safe versus unsafe compliments might get, get criteria of them, and see then whether, e.g., the treatments that they might get can serve as grounds for choices between them. That is to say, one might well choose 'unsafe' compliments, but the choice could be directed to what transpires given the alternatives.

In order to make the analysis I have to deal – in rather simple terms – with

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[1]Most of this session was given to an untranscribed discussion of 'weather talk' based on materials the class had been assigned.

an area of work which I haven't talked about yet, having to do with the *organization of identifications* of people. We can note that the term used, 'chick,' names a feature of the person complimented – that they're female, which is used for the compliment, which also differentiates that person from all others present. That is to say, the set of people present is, by reference to 'femaleness' which has female–male as its alternatives, [M, M, M, M/F], where a characteristic has been picked that isolates the complimented person. I take it that that is a really non-incidental sort of fact for a compliment, and I'll try to say how it's non-incidental. I'll also suggest that a procedure of producing compliments by finding some attribute of a person that discriminates them from all others present can be employed rather more widely than in just this way.

One of the reasons we can go from the fact that he picked 'female,' to locating 'male' as an alternative – apart from the fact that 'female' and 'male are obviously in alternation for the compliment in this case – turns on a way that compliments get dealt with by parties present. If one says, e.g., "It was nice having her here because she's got a good sense of humor," then apparently what one sets up is the possibility that someone could say, "Well what about me? I'm pretty funny aren't I?" Or if you say "It was nice having her here because she's smart," again they could say "What about me?" And even if they don't *say* "What about me?" apparently they can take it that you are saying something about them as well. Now, why they can take it that that's so, and why they come to say that that's so, are independent sorts of issues of interest in themselves. But the first sort of fact is that they regularly can take it you are saying something about them when you say, e.g., "It was nice having her here because she's smart." That is to say, they can take it that a compliment to X can be, by virtue of the item it picks, thereby an insult to others.

Now that raises interesting sorts of issues in this way: If, when we were talking about multi-party conversation we had, say, a model of a two-party conversation, then we might figure that if, e.g., somebody is being addressed in the multi-party conversation, then only the person being addressed is being done something to. That is to say, e.g., if A is offered something, then nothing is being done to C and D. If A is promised something, if A is insulted, questioned, argued with, etc., then nothing is being done to C and D. That is to say that C and D don't see anything done to them or that B, doing something to A, doesn't see that he's doing something to the others. Then we should have a view that to whom an utterance is directed is to whom something is done.

It's quite plain, and quite important, that that's not so. And it raises some rather neat technical issues that it's of interest for. If there is a possibility that in doing an action in conversation to some party one may thereby be doing actions to others as well, the question then is how is it that others find out what is being done to them. Are there any sorts of systematic relationship between doing X to A, and how C finds that something is done to him? Can he find that just anything is done to him? Is there some procedure whereby he

finds what's done to him? Is it perhaps that doing an X to A permits C to see specifically that a Y is being done to him? If that's so, then that sets up as an interesting possibility that one way of doing a Y to C is to do an X to A. That is to say, you might have no particular interest in doing the X to A; what you're interested in is doing something to C in some way, and that you can do it by doing an X to A.

Let me make this very concrete. Consider the case of two guys and a girl in a place together. If she flirts with B, then she may be seen as teasing C; C may see that she is teasing him; her way to tease C may be to flirt with B. That is to say, she may have no interest in flirting with B, she may be interested in teasing C. That's one sort of obvious situation. Let me give you some other data, again from the GTS material. The first fragment goes like this: They're talking along, and at some point Ken, in a low voice, starts talking to Roger.

Ken :	Roger.
Louise :	Well, he mentioned // 'bout talking // freer.
Ken :	((very soft)) Dju wanta–
Ken :	((very soft)) Dju wanna come over after uh school t'day // an' I'll give yuh the (radio),
Louise :	We c'd all get rea(h)lly // free then.
Roger :	Okay,
Louise :	hh
Ken :	It's almos' done. I think it'll take me 'bout // two–
→*Dan* :	Ke:n,
Ken :	–two more // hours ( ),
→*Dan* :	Y– why don'tchu make these arrangements out of here, huh?
	(1.0)
(*Al*) :	((very soft)) Oh–oh
	(2.2)
→*Al* :	Yes teacher.

Where we could ask why does Al say "Yes teacher"? Nothing was said to Al. Another thing we can consider is a sort of recurrent sequence in these GTS sessions, which involve threats from Al to Ken in which Al ends up saying "If you don't do X by the time I count to three I'll beat your brains out," and Ken does whatever the X was that Al had threatened about. At the end of which, Roger will say to Al, "You're so damned vicious." And we can ask is there any orderliness to that kind of event. We would want to know if there is some orderliness involved in the production of what we could call 'third utterances' after a sequence in which two other parties are involved and where, as the first part of that sequence, one of those two parties specifically does something to the other of those two parties.

I take it that we could come to see that there can be some relationship, of maybe a vague sort right now, between these materials and what happens in

them, and something like "I like her because she's so funny" "What about me?" So that, in terms of the sequential organization of conversation, we're asking about some orderliness in the production of talk after a sequence, by somebody who is not involved in that sequence. Where what we're saying, among other things, is that those third utterances are perhaps produced by reference to their speaker engaging in an analysis of what the first speaker did to the second, and using that analysis to find what's being done to him, and using what he finds being done to him to produce an utterance in return to the first speaker's.

Taking the case of "Why don't you make those arrangements out of here," there can be a way in which Al sees that the warning that Dan has done is a warning not only to Ken but to the others as well, and is replying to that warning. And for the case where Al is threatening Ken, what we may have is that insofar as relative power is being dealt with in that exchange, that Al can exhibit his power over Ken makes the question of Roger's relationship to Al with respect to their mutual power also an issue. If Roger does nothing, that doesn't mean that he's less powerful than Ken, but it can allow that he's less powerful than Al, whereas if he then takes on Al and Al gives in, then that Al is more powerful than Ken, and Roger is more powerful than Al, puts Roger in a position in which he is, for now, on top.

Now one aspect that's of technical interest is this: The initial condition – that an utterance directed by A to B needs to be analyzed by B to find what B should do, but is of no interest to C and D – tells us what sorts of analyses of that utterance C and D need do; for example, that C and D can stop, having found what it is that A has done to B. The suggestion I offer now tells us that that's just not so, and also tells us something about the order of analysis that C can do, given some utterance by A to B. Suppose that C is going to do an analysis of an utterance from A to B, an action done by A to B. How is he to proceed? In principle we could imagine that what somebody does on any utterance is to find out, say, what it is doing to them, i.e., that they look at it independently of to whom it's done. I suppose that's a possibility but I just don't have any good way of seeing how it could work. An alternative, and workable, way to proceed is this: What you do is find what it is that A has done to B. Then you use that result to see what his having done that to B involves him in having done to you. That is to say, produce the first analysis and then use its results to find what he's done to you.

Then the question is, how do you find what he's done to you? And to find what he's done to you can perhaps proceed by reference to issues like: If, for the action he's done, he's classified B in some way, e.g., possibly inferior, smart, etc., then you might ask, am I eligible for such a class? If I am, I may be involved in one way; if I'm not, then I may be involved in another way or not involved. That is to say, you use the *categories* involved in the classification of B to see how you stand by reference to those categories. You then use how you stand to find out what he's done to you. So if A is a female and she's flirting with B, a male in the room, and you are a male in the room, then you're eligible for being flirted with, and if you're not being flirted with, what

are you being done, by reference to the fact that you're eligible for being flirted with. If B is being threatened, and he is being threatened by reference to the fact that A is a therapist and B is a patient, and you're a patient too, then what is being done to you by reference to the fact that a patient is being threatened?

The point I'm making is that on the one hand it does appear that people produce third utterances to sequences in which they're not, so to speak, involved; that they do it in an orderly fashion; that they do it by reference to a consideration of the initial utterance of that sequence; and that they do it involves then that they examine those sequences. All this is in the first instance to the point that when somebody is being complimented others can assess what's being done to them. And if someone can find that nothing is being done to him, then that is one way in which you can be producing a 'safe compliment.' This holds, of course, not only for compliments but for a range of other things. But that is one aspect of a safe compliment, i.e., it isn't anything about which anybody else in the room would feel that they have been slighted by your making it; they're not going to use your compliment to somebody else to produce a comeback. I take it that's a rather natural sense of 'safe,' and also a sense that is employable within the sequential organization of conversation.

Now this compliment is not only safe, it's weak. And 'weak' is another feature that such a thing can have. It is weak in this way: While it compliments the person in this safe fashion, it also provides that, on what it compliments them for, they are easily replaceable. All it locates is that she's 'a chick.' It doesn't locate some feature which is both absent from the others and also rare. I suppose one could construct some way of complimenting her such that the loss is magnified by reference to the fact that she's relatively irreplaceable, given the features presented. And of course compliments often specifically deal with issues of the relative replaceability of the person complimented.

We can build this particular compliment up in other ways with regard to its making. It may well be, e.g., that insofar as he employs something like 'male' – 'female' for something on which we have a situation of [M, M, M, M/F], then it's 'safe' not merely in the sense that he picks a Y and there are only X's present, but also in that it's a sort of thing that any X could have done, using that Y. That is to say, he hasn't put himself in a position where the fact that he picked that feature is useable by the other X's – now, not by reference to what he's done to them but by reference to what he's said about himself, distinctively, e.g., for having, say, an interest in that feature, for which he could then be twitted. But the particular compliment used here is the sort of thing that 'any male' could say, such that he's not particularly twittable by another male for it. They are all similarly situated; they are all M with respect to F. Though of course, suppose now there's a bunch of males and they are differently situated with respect to age; then, should one who is 60 produce that compliment, somebody younger might say, e.g., "What could you do with her?" That is to say, they could differentiate them and him

to produce something which turns on his compliment and turns on his doing it. So that the sheer fact that they're all males, while providing for one sort of safety of 'chick,' can nonetheless involve for other things about the males, if they are differentiated on those, that they can use that differentiation to deal with the compliment.

A compliment can, then, serve to partition people into categories. A thing we want to look for, then, by reference to the way the compliment will get dealt with, is how the various people are aligned by reference to the partitioning. And a criterion of a compliment's safeness is that it picks an attribute on which others are not in a position to figure they stand differently than the complimentor, and are in a position to see that they do stand differently from the one who is complimented, so that they are not also judged and therefore are not judged in a negative way by the compliment's formulation. And of course, safe insults can be produced in a similar fashion, i.e., so as to discriminate the insulted person from the others present.

Now the question is, with respect to 'weather talk,' what do we need, to be able to show that 'the weather' is a 'safe topic'? What we need is to develop a notion of 'safe' for 'topics' so that we can have said something when we say 'weather' is a 'safe topic.' The discussion on 'safe compliments' was to give a sense that something could be done with a notion of 'safe,' something of a formal sort, i.e., it doesn't have to be merely an intuition, but what's involved in something being 'safe' can be laid out.

I specifically do not know what it is that we'd want to be saying about 'safe topics' that would capture how weather talk is safe, or at least discriminate between safe and unsafe topics. It may be that there aren't too many safe topics other than weather, but that there are lots of unsafe topics. And how they're unsafe needs be seen. I can't even say that this is a model for a notion of 'safe' for topics. It is offered as a way to see that it's at least a possibility that something can be done with weather as a 'safe topic.'

Lecture 3
'Patients with observers' as 'performers with audience'

I'll be talking this time about a fragment which almost directly precedes the "Hey you have a hole in your shoe" exchange which started off lecture 1. It is specifically the beginning of the first group therapy session that I observed. What happened was approximately this: I came a little early and got introduced to the guys, and they were informed that I would be there. I was in a room, sitting behind a one-way mirror, and they were in an adjoining room. We met in the observation room and then they went out because it was a little early, then came back into the adjoining room. There was a microphone in the ceiling, and the following took place:

Roger: Turn on th'microphone.
              (1.0)
Al: T(h)esting,
Roger: We're about to sta(hh)rt. hehh hh heh
              ((thump))
Al: We ah gathuhd heah(h), on this day(hh),
              (4.0)

This has a series of sorts of interest, some of which are my basis for going through the description of the preceding events, and I'll get to those.

In terms of the organization of conversation, I became interested in this sequence because it looked like a different sort of sequence – while surely being a sequence – than those I had primarily focussed on. In earlier work I had come upon and considered things like the *utterance pairs* – utterances in which somebody does something of one sort directed to a present party who then does something in return. In this sequence there appear to be no pairs. Nor do the utterances seem to be sequenced by virtue of being tied together in the way that earlier lectures have talked about '*tied utterances*,' i.e., having syntactic relations to each other across utterances or across sentences.[1] The question then was, since it is in the first instance plain that this is a sequence, what sort of a sequence is it? How is it a sequence?

Another type of interest this fragment has turns on the way in which its use involves the exhibiting of an attention to the presence of observers. I will talk at some length about that.

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[1] See Fall 1965, lectures 4 and 5, and Fall 1967, lectures 11 and 12, in vol. I.

A third sort of interest is, when it gets considered in detail, related to the first two. On the one hand we might say that insofar as what they're doing is exhibiting an attention to the presence of an observer, why do they do it in the way they do? That is, why do they do it in a play-like fashion; 'play' having two different senses, both of which I think are appropriate: 'play' as in a game, and 'play' as in a performance. Why, that is, do they enact their attention to the observer as compared to, e.g., talking about it? If they're going to deal with the fact of an observer being present, I suppose it wouldn't be particularly strange were they to begin by talking about how they feel about there being an observer. And occasionally, in this session and in others, they talk about that. They notice, for example, that some people seem to be attentive to the presence of an observer; that someone keeps looking toward the two-way mirror, or someone seems to be 'on;' they sometimes say that they're hesitant to talk, and things like that. But that's not the way they in the first instance deal with the presence of an observer. On the other hand, with regard to the type of sequence it is, it's 'a piece of play,' again in the two senses of a game sequence and a performance.

Now dealing with the presence of observers and producing a piece of play can be quite alike things and need not be a merging of disparate things, in that it's not at all peculiar that people do, e.g., 'playing in the presence of observers,' specifically behaving in ways that deal with the fact that there are observers. And one needn't restrict that to professional sports, there are all sorts of other things which are types of play which take place in the presence of observers. We'll consider how it might be kind of a play sequence, and how it might be a play sequence by reference to the presence of observers. And also, what might be involved in doing their exhibition of an attention to observers in this way as compared to, e.g., talking about it – which I introduced in the first instance because it is a way that is usable and that they do use.

We might notice in the first place that this isn't just any possible play sequence that could exhibit an attention to observers (I'll talk about it as a 'play sequence' – we'll leave the question of whether it *is* that aside for now); it's a play sequence that has other virtues to it: It's a play sequence that specifically works as a 'beginning.' And while it may perfectly well be that one could begin right off conversationally, with the topic of there being an observer, this thing is 'a beginning' in independence of that sort of fact. That is to say, if it does 'attention to the observer' it also does 'a beginning;' or, if you want to put it the other way around, it's 'a beginning' and it also does 'attention to an observer.'

There is reason to say that some things, of which group therapy sessions are one, can specifically have 'beginnings' as compared with just getting started in any which way, where 'any which way' is, in its way, 'a start.' I'm talking, then, about a 'beginning' as a 'part,' recognized as a 'beginning part,' perhaps not to go anywhere else, and accomplishing 'beginning.' Instead of going over the reason to say that some things are beginnings, etc., I would recommend a paper that a friend of mine has done, which is about beginnings of such

group therapy sessions. It's Roy Turner's paper on therapy beginnings. He deals in some detail with how therapy sessions begin, and that they have specific ways of beginning. The way he gets into the phenomenon of their beginnings is that what tends to happen is that people arrive one at at time, more or less, and the therapist comes into the room, say, last; and while if at least two patients are there they talk together, there is a way that the session 'begins,' i.e., they begin to do therapy talk or they begin in particular sorts of ways.

In this collection of therapy sessions there are other occasions in which an attention to such a thing as 'a beginning' is done. It's worth some consideration in that, e.g., in one session they're talking along for, say, a minute or so, and Roger says "Shall we commence?" Now one might note that the term 'commence' is not only a term that is synonomous with other terms for 'begin,' but it is particularly a meeting-type way of referring to beginnings. And one of the things we find in these sessions is that participants use a terminology appropriate to things that have structures in ways that, say, one might not use when just conversing where, if we're already talking, it might be queer to say "Well, shall we begin?" But a 'beginning of a therapy session' is an attended part of the therapy session, as compared to just drifting into therapy talk, or 'therapy talk' being undifferentiated from any other talk that gets done while these persons are more or less together.

In that regard, then, this fragment is a 'beginning sequence;' a pre-beginning and then a beginning. Sequences like it are used specifically to begin performances, i.e., when a lecture or some other sort of performance is being done, people go through a sequence like this. And anybody who's seen one of those things more or less knows that such a sequence is gone through; you needn't have done it yourself to be in a position to do it some time. Now there are some immediately interesting aspects of this fragment as a beginning sequence which are related to its known, standardized use. For one, someone just does this first thing, "Turn on the microphone," and that first thing, occasions a second which occasions a third which occasions a fourth. That is to say, at least so far as I can tell, we're not dealing with this sort of sequence in its normal environment, in which it is somebody's business to say "Turn on the microphone" and some particular other person's business to then go "Testing," etc. When Roger goes "Turn on the microphone" he's not invoking a bunch of jobs that have been pre-assigned. What he's doing is making a first move which is also a *proposal* to have a series of such moves.

So, for example, there are various ways to begin a game. You can begin a game by having some negotiations: "Let's play X" "Okay" "You be this and I'll be that." Now there are other ways of beginning games which people use. One of them is to make a first move in what could be a game. Then, that we're going to have a game is something that others can accept, not by saying "Yes let's play that game," but by doing a second move. You throw a ball to somebody, they can catch it and then do something with it and a game can get started. It isn't unheard of to both propose and start a game in the same

move, though to do it is to put oneself in a position of having one's move left in the air. Others might not do a next move that involves acceptance – they might not choose to, they might not know to.

What we have, then, is such a thing done which, for it to come off, involves some collaboration on the part of others present. And the character of their collaboration is sharply defined. That is to say, the character of their collaboration is that somebody makes a second move, and not anything they might do stands as a second move for this beginning. And from among the sorts of things that they might do that could stand as second moves for this beginning, the alternatives matter a good deal. For example, one perfectly reasonable second move to "Turn on the microphone" is "okay" or "It's on;' i.e., rather than taking a performer job one might take a co-laborer job, and produce, then, an action which involves that you have taken some piece of work that is consistent with the sort of jobs available if another person has a job which involves him in saying "Turn on the microphone." But given an acceptance of some sort of gameplay that the first has chosen for himself, then, in choosing one for himself he's constrained the sorts of ones you can take for yourself if you're going to play some such game as he's made a first move for. How then do you go about choosing which sorts of moves to pick, if you're going to pick something consistent with his first move, that turns his first move into a first move in a developing sequence?

One wants to note, then, that the thing thereafter proceeds with reference to what these first moves have involved, i.e., with reference to the jobs that each has picked. A second move having occurred, a third is done; a third having been done, a fourth is done, and they're done in some consistency with the position each has taken in the first two. The person who says "Testing" also does the speaker-beginning "We are gathered here on this day," and the person who does something like directing, "Turn on the microphone," does that sort of thing again with "We're about to start." There would be nothing particularly interesting about that if it was done by reference to some job assignment that had been given to, e.g., co-workers, but that is not the case here. And in that regard one wants to ask not only how does Al choose a particular second move, and such a second move as locates some position he has with respect to the sort of game Roger has begun, but also, how does Roger come to choose such a game as a way to do beginnings?

I intend to deal with both those questions, i.e., given what Roger does, how does Al come to choose what he does? And how does Roger come to choose this particular beginning (leaving aside that he can venture it with some hope of success, i.e., with some hope that somebody will pick it up)?

The question, how does Roger choose such a beginning, has as the relevance of its answer that it is by reference to the features of the thing that it begins, that he can, with the help of others, bring off a way of exhibiting an attention to the observer. Let me try to lay that out now. Here's the situation: An observer has come to watch a group therapy session composed of patients and a therapist. The patients know that that's so, and also perhaps

know that it is they, the patients, who are to be specifically watched, their activities to be made out. So they're in a situation where they're talking to each other, not to the observer, and while talking to each other they're being listened to by somebody to whom they're not talking. That somebody is legitimately listening to the talk of others who are not talking to him is a fairly peculiar situation, i.e., one does not normally have rights to overhear, nor does one normally have to bear being overheard.

Now the question is, can one find situations in which one has just those features – talking to others in the presence of someone who is legitimately listening and making out what is going on, but is not participating in the sense of talking? There is at least an obvious place where that occurs: the theater. The circumstance of the theater is specifically that people are talking to each other onstage, but what each of them is attending as the thing that's interesting is what somebody to whom they're not talking is making out of their talk, i.e., the audience. So there's a very nice, formal relationship between the circumstance of the therapy session with an observer and the properties of the situation that Roger adapts the beginning from, i.e., the theater. And that at least raises the interesting possibility that this beginning was picked for that relationship.

And there are some rather neat results of its use. For one, they're talking, there's an observer present, the observer is engaged in making out what they're saying to each other; using it, so far as they might think anyway, to make some assessments about them. That is to say, they've had observers before. The observers before tended to be other therapists. They might well figure that what an observer is doing is listening to what they say in a similar way to that of their therapist, e.g., to figure out what's wrong with them. It might be an aim that they could have, to put the observer in a position of not being able to be assured that what they say in this session is to be read by him for its therapeutic interest, i.e., to be read by reference to what each of them is like.

How might they go about complicating the work of an observer? If they can bring off for the observer that while they're talking to each other it's an attention to the observer in the way that it's done in the theater that they have, then that makes a reading of what they say to find what they're like, complicated. It does so because in the theater, while the only people who talk for the audience are the actors, there are perfectly serious senses in which the actors are not talking to each other. The actors are talking with each other's talk; cuing each others' talk, i.e., you could perfectly well have an actor get up there and do his entire part, and then each of the others do it, though when they act it out it gets meshed as 'talk to each other.' Each of the parts are written out, somebody memorized one, somebody else another, and the completion of an utterance by one occasions the utterance that should go there by someone else. But they are not listening, producing, etc., by reference to what another one says except in the sense that the other cues them or is cued by them. Nor would one sophisticatedly figure that what they say says anything about them in particular – they're actors.

So by using this theater format they deal with the question of the readability of their particular statements, since that readability turns on that they're saying it to each other, and that each is producing, on his own, what he's saying, and producing it for the others and not for the audience. And that seems to be a really neat sort of thing to do. You then tell the observer that something he might make out as said each to the other, you may well be producing for him. Which would be a quite different task of understanding. In that regard, the enacting of it is far better than the saying of it. That is to say, if somebody were to begin by saying, "Since there's an observer here I'm not going to say what I really think," that very statement could be subject to a usual kind of reading by an observing therapist. That wouldn't be 'acting' it would be 'clamming up,' etc., and would be just as good material as if they produced talk, e.g., without knowing that there was an observer present. So there's a way in which this enacting of a theater sequence is a rather subtle sort of address to the observer.

And when we turn back to some of the details of this thing, what we can see about it that now becomes interesting is that none of these utterances are addressed to each other and nonetheless they're in a sequence that is orderly. That is to say, "Turn on the microphone" is addressed to whoever it is that could turn on the microphone. It occasions the utterance "Testing," which is again not directed to any of the people present. That occasions "We're about to start, which occasions a 'start,' "We are gathered here on this day." They've now exhibited that they can talk in a theatrical fashion, i.e., in which the utterances are not directed to each other but are directed to someone who is not talking to them, and they nonetheless can talk consecutively and in close order. And I mean 'consecutively' in a strong way, i.e., Roger begins right off after the utterance "Testing," which is one word. Now one-word utterances are not the most normal sort of thing, and it might well be that Roger, were he not treating it as a 'cue' could, e.g., wait for its completion. But he sees its completion. So the way that they bring it off is a nice exhibit of their capacity to talk in a sequenced fashion while talking, each not to the other, though each is hearing and using what the other said to then produce a next.

Let me add that in picking the analog of the theater as a way to begin, they choose jobs for each other, from the theatrical repository of jobs, that are consistent with their position in the therapy situation, i.e., they pick 'performer' jobs. They are going to be the ones who will be talking to an audience in their circumstance as patients with an observer. That is to say, they've picked the theater and mapped its categories of performer/audience to patient/observer, but they could also have picked the theater and then proposed about themselves that, say, they're the audience, thereby perhaps assigning to the observer the possibility that he's the performer. They could come in and say "Well, I wonder what the show's going to be like today." That they pick those categories which will allow them to do whatever it is that their business here is to do, under the auspices of those categories (i.e., 'performer' where their business here is to be 'patients') is one aspect of their selection of the theater.

We have, then, a rather nice way to see that their circumstances are being used to locate analog structures which have similar properties, which can be used to do work for them, where they then pick positions from that analog's categories that preserve some features of their initial positions – where for each such picked analog they could take categories which didn't stand in that relationship. And one will routinely find that when persons in some stateable circumstance pick an alternative collection of categories through which they're going to operate, they pick such a collection as preserves some features of the initial circumstances. So that, e.g., when at one point the therapist sanctions one of them he gets "Yes teacher," which is to say that the collection 'teacher–student' is being used to deal with 'therapist–patient.' If one wanted to characterize what that is, it's something I talk about as *'partitioning consistency'* and I gave some instances of 'partitioning' considerations when I talked about 'safe compliments.' By 'partitioning' I mean putting objects into various classes which stand in some relationship to completely different collections of categories and their internal relationships. So not only do they pick the theater but they pick jobs in the theater that have a nice relationship to the circumstances they're dealing with in beginning a therapy session with an observer.

Furthermore, that the theater is picked and its beginning used has as its virtue that, a first move made, others know what a next move can be, i.e., they have picked something that – whether anybody has done it before – is familiar. So the choice then is presumably, in part at least, constrained by what can be brought off with a first move; what first move can be recognized as such a first move as can be replied to then and there, in such a way as to bring off a sequence. And this ties back to the issue of why this beginning, and how does Roger get something that can be used by the others if they want to. If they're going to do a kind of play sequence, one of the things that really does matter is the order of moves, that they get done in just the right way – though of course there could be some variation on it. And to do a first move which is an invitation to play can work by virtue, in part, of the fact that one of the things that people know about 'play' is, e.g., that the moves occur in alternation (A goes then B goes then A goes, or A goes then B goes then C goes then A goes, etc., etc.), such that if this is a play move though it isn't addressed to anybody present, then they ought to go next and do a move that should follow this first. Order of moves is a crucial phenomenon for games, and alternation is one of the most usual patterns that games have. It's that sort of fact that sets up the issue of whether it's going to be picked up and tells how it should be picked up, independent of content. For many possible game first moves you know that you'd better try to make a second move if that thing is to get going.

Let me say specifically what I take to be one of the central sorts of points that this discussion has. If this analysis is anything like right, then what it means is that people – kids like Roger who is 18 years old or something like that – have their circumstances available to them in an abstract way, such that they can use the abstract characteristics of their circumstances to locate other

circumstances that stand in a strong abstract relationship to their current circumstances. And they use the concrete features of those others to signal that they see an abstract relationship, and to invite other people to see the same and to then produce actions by reference to their abstract analysis of their circumstances – and they accomplish all this rapidly.

That is to say, a question might be, what sorts of abstract knowledge do people have of their actual circumstances? Well, they may know that being a patient is one sort of thing and being an observer is another sort of thing and when the patients talk to each other what we say is being made out by the observer, etc. Okay, suppose they have some abstract knowledge of that. How can they use that abstract knowledge? They are able to use such knowledge to locate circumstances which have features that stand in a strong relationship to the initial circumstance, and those features are then used to project actions by reference to those other circumstances, which actions have some hope of being picked up. It's not just one person who is by himself capable of that, but he can have hopes that others can see what he's doing, see it fast, and collaborate with him.

Now one might say, Well how do you know it's going on there? At least in the first instance what one wants to see is, is it *a* feature or two features, or a whole collection of features all of which are presented here – actually brought off by these people, which stand in what is a discoverably nice relationship to particular thing that they are using, like the theater. Then, if it's a whole bunch of features, the notion that it's accidental that he picked the theater, or, if it's not accidental that he picked the theater it's an accident that he picked that he's going to be a performer, or it's an accident that he picked the theater when there was an observer present, etc., etc., might seem too neat to be accidental. Also, if they can do this here, i.e., use the theater with their circumstances as patients with an observer, and we're considering that it's an abstract capacity that they have, then that suggests, well, look to other circumstances. Do they do a similar sort of thing elsewhere? If so, then in considering the initial instance you don't need so much to rely on collecting a list of features that they've preserved in their enacted performance. If they do a similar sort of thing in other circumstances, with other analogs, then you can see that it isn't that they happen to know a lot about the theater and they've thought a lot beforehand about the relation of being a patient and being an actor.

So that's the main interest of such a thing as they're doing here: It raises a possibility which is intrinsically interesting; 'intrinsically' because we want to know what sorts of abstract knoweldge people have of their circumstances, and what they can do with the sorts of abstract knowledge they have.

Let me just throw out a suggestion that I can't really develop here. The question is how it is that people are prepared for these sorts of performances, not only with a first move generating next moves, but also for the knowledge that if you pick some situation, you can and ought to bring off a sequence that all actions are part of, i.e., you don't have something that's not a part of such a sequence. You might well have "Turn on the microphone,"

"Testing," and then Roger puts in something which has nothing to do with theater beginings and then returns to it after a while. That is to say, aside from being orderly and alternating, etc., the whole thing comes off with all its parts being parts.

I think some case can be made for it being at least a specific feature of children's imitative play (playing house, playing doctor, playing ship, playing school, etc.) that in that sort of work they gain a command of producing sequences of actions within a particular framework, and orienting to it move by move. A sort of instance of what I'm talking about, I pull out of a book called *Intellectual Growth in Young Children* by Susan Isaacs. It's an old psychology book done in the thirties or thereabouts, when people used to sit around in grade schools, kindergartens, and nursery schools, trying to study children's intellectual and social development by just watching them. And there's lots of more or less raw material in the book. One piece goes something like this: The class is playing that they're in a boat and the boat is going somewhere, and the children in the boat are doing boat jobs. One of the children is a passenger and he's working on some sewing that the class had been doing over the course of the day anyway, and he runs out of thread. The teacher says "Well, why don't you go get some thread?" He says, "I can't, because the boat's still moving," and he then goes through a sequence which involves asking the captain to bring the boat to the dock, the captain docking the boat, announcing that the boat is docked, the kid now getting off and getting the thread, coming back, and the boat taking off again. The boat of course is just a bunch of arranged chairs.

Now attending to the sort of thing you're doing and how that thing is done, is then an exploration of what's involved in using, collaboratively, some set of categorized terms, and how one then produces a correct sequence of actions for some set. Kids are constantly playing with what sorts of actions belong in a game and what are outside of it, and how the fact that you're in some game constrains and permits collaborative sequences of actions within it. So it's at least a possibility to be considered, that things like imitative play are a considerable ordering resource for people learning the sorts of shifts from one structure to another, and then the orderly procedures within a new structure that they're for now adopting. Where the key thing about the game situation is that people who do imitative play do it interestingly when they produce a series of analogs, doing them separately so that there is one sequence in one situation, another sequence in another, etc.

Another point is relevant for our materials here; that here we have the starkest instance of what is otherwise less apparent but also more or less so, and that is that the way Al has of showing that he sees what Roger is doing, is to do something that fits there. Not to say, e.g., "I understand," or to say "What you said was . . ." but to produce an action that fits there, and that sets up another which can fit with it. That is to say, probably from the kind of academic training one gets, one has acquired the idea that what 'understanding' means is to be able to paraphrase, or to be able to say what somebody means that they didn't say. Now, I think that the natural place for

the notion 'understanding' is in something like this. In terms of sequencing in conversation and many other things, you do '*showing that you understand something*' when what you do is, not talk about it, repeat it, paraphrase it, etc. – *that* would normally mean that you're puzzled. When you say "What you said is . . ." or "What you mean is . . . ," then that's how you show that you're puzzled or doubtful. The way that you go about exhibiting your understanding is just to produce another that you intend belongs, given what has just been done. You can put another item in that is consistent with the sort of thing you figure they're doing. And then, that we're playing it out right, is the way each of us sees that we're 'grooving,' as they say.

Another sort of point turns on similar considerations. If we ask, What does what Roger says mean? then at least one thing we really have to come to terms with is What is Roger doing? Where what Roger's doing is 'making a first move' and what Al is doing is 'making a second move,' and that what they're doing is really, specifically, something in a sequence. It is not that it's incidentally in a sequence, i.e., that it happens to be in a sequence but it could perfectly well be the same thing and not be in a sequence; it is that what they're doing is 'doing parts of a sequence.' And that's relevant because people might well figure when, e.g., they're studying talk, that you could perfectly well examine, say, what "Turn on the microphone" means, without reference to the fact that "Turn on the microphone" is a first move in a sequence. But for various sorts of issues like its effectiveness, its being understood, and such sorts of things, that it's 'a first move' is what it is.

Lecture 7

Alternative sequences; Challenges; Claiming membership

Ken:	Hey – Hey check this: I went down to uh H–Hollywood All– – – down to the Holla– Ho:llywood, (1.5) uh Automotives?
Al:	Mm hm?
Ken:	And they told me how I could stick a th–uh:: Thunderbird motor? (1.0) – in my Jeep? And I bought a fifty-five // Thunderbird motor.
Roger:	Not 'motor,' 'engine.' You speak of // electric 'motor' and a // gasoline 'engine.'
Ken:	Okay
(Al):	( )–
Al:	Yer no//t.
Ken:	'Engine.' // Okay–
Al:	'Internal com<u>bus</u>–tion.'
Ken:	Alright, so // lookit,
( ):	mhhh
Ken:	I moved this thing in the Jeep, yesterday, an' it took me all day to do it.
Roger:	Why the // hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep.
Ken:	(An' nen I)
Ken:	This thing is the hottest thing in <u>town</u>!
Roger:	Fords aren't hot,
Ken:	That Ford– In comparison to that old four cylinder I had in there it's hot,

Initially I'm interested in this data via an interest in what types of things have a set of permutations as a real set of alternatives, where this thing seems to present one type. What I mean by a set of permutations is that beginning with one type of question, of which "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep" is an instance, and, alternatively named, they could be 'challenges' or 'requests for explanations' or 'requests for justifications' – beginning with that, one can get several different types of sequences.

So you could get some sort of an R (request) and then you could get a candidate explanation, and then a treatment of that explanation, done by the requester. That's one sequence. That might characterize this sequence here. Or you could get R and then some sort of a question in return, then an answer

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Lectures 4, 5, and 6 of Winter 1969 were not transcribed.

to that question, and a treatment of the answer. Here what I'm thinking of is, e.g., "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?" "Why not?" or "What's the matter with that?" or "Wouldn't *you*?" where the requester may himself then do something akin to an explanation. Or it could go on from "Why not?" to "What do you mean 'why not'?" Alternatively you could also get something that is not a question but is a peculiar kind of explanation for this environment. That could be a thing like:

A : Why do you have a gun?
B : Well, everybody does.
A : They <u>do</u>? Well maybe everybody where you live does.
B : Well I don't mean that, but I mean it's not unusual.

That is, you get an explanation of the sort "everybody does," which is closely related to "Why not?"

Now I take it that those sequences stand as kinds of alternatives to each other. And what sort of things are alternative to each other is a matter of interest. It's also particularly a matter of interest when what stands as an alternative to, say, an answer–explanation is some sort of question. That is to say, we're not talking about the sort of alternative as, instead of "This thing is the hottest thing in town," "This car is the hottest thing in town," or some other explanation for it, but that one *not* make an explanation is an alternative. So that "Why not?" is an alternative. Perhaps you could say "Why not?" is an alternative to anything. But that we can locate how "Why not?" is an alternative here, as we specify what is going on here, is one sort of interest for this sequence.

There is a large range of further interests that this material could have, some of which I'll mention, others of which I'll be forced to mention, others of which I won't deal with at all. As an example of things I won't deal with at all, we might note that, having been corrected about his usage of 'motor,' having acknowledged the correction via " 'Engine.' Okay," on its next potential place he uses "thing." I would venture that that sort of usage may be recurrent, i.e., having used a wrong word and having been corrected on it, the next situation where you should use one or the other, you may use something else.

Let me get into the details of this sequence. I suggested that "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?" is a 'challenge.' Let's say we think it's a challenge. How could we go about deciding it's a challenge; specifically that it is *seen* as a challenge? We might examine *its* characteristics. We might alternatively examine the *return* to it, "This thing is the hottest thing in town!" where a consideration of this return is relevant to seeing that Ken sees that he's been challenged. In a nutshell, it's a 'password' answer. That is to say, it is a 'correct answer' without regard to whether that is Ken's reason. Now challenges and passwords are of course closely related sorts of things. The way you respond to a challenge is with a password, and passwords are correct in some independence of what that 'question' might have as a correct

'answer.' So that you could have as a challenge that a guard gives, "What day is this?" and the password-answer might be "Christmas," where that might have nothing to do with whether or not today is Christmas. So I'm proposing that "This thing is the hottest thing in town" is a password-answer. And I'm suggesting, then, that for the issue Does Ken see "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?" as a 'challenge,' that he produces a password-answer is a way of establishing for the candidate challenge that it's seen as a challenge.

Now we have to make a case for it being a 'password.' One thing about passwords of course is that they are passwords for some group. That is to say, a password-answer to a challenge is correct for them where, again, correctness of the answer in independence of its being a password-answer is irrelevant. Roughly what I want to propose is that for Hotrodders the password-explanation for replacing one engine with another engine is that the product is "the hottest thing in town," in the sense that the motivation for building cars, changing cars, etc., is to produce, as an intended product, "the hottest thing in town." There are materials where that is posed in a series of different ways. At one point when they're talking about cars, talking about somebody else's car than Roger's, Roger says "I want to build the hottest street machine in West LA" And at other places such sorts of statements are offered, and I take it that's a prototype 'good motive.'

Now that's of some interest in locating the following sort of thing. When Roger asks his question, the question's status as a challenge turns that he asks what would otherwise be, i.e., for lay people, non-hotrodders, a kind of peculiar question. Ken has proposed, without any justification in the first place, that he just put a Thunderbird engine in his Jeep. And I say 'without any justification' by virtue of the fact that if *I* were to be telling somebody that I just put a new engine in my car, then I suppose I would say something to the effect of, "Jeez I had to put a new engine in my car, the old one blew and I can't afford to buy a new car." That is to say, lay people, straights, non-hotrodders, don't replace engines in cars except for 'good reason' having to do with two sorts of things; the defective character of the engine they initially had, plus that there is some reason for not replacing the car. But Ken doesn't say anything about why he's putting in a new engine by reference to the defectiveness of his old engine, and Roger doesn't ask why Ken is putting a new engine in his car, e.g., "What happened to the old one?" And indeed, the state of Ken's old engine is not raised until the end, and even then it's not raised with respect to the old engine's being shot, but rather it's proposed that it was not as hot as the new one. So what we have is the picking of a quite peculiar – though not for such people – question; the question itself, then, locating the world in which the talk is going on.

That order of consideration locates this question, "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?" as, for these people, *not* an alternative to "Why are you putting a new engine in your car?" or "What happened to the old engine?" or "Why are you putting in a fifty-five engine?" Now, aside from the discussion so far offered about how this question would be, within that world,

for them, a candidate 'challenge,' there are particularities of the utterance itself which are relevant to its status as a 'challenge.' One, which is not a particularity for this challenge, has to do with the use of "the hell." And of course that form, "Why in the world are you doing X?" "Why in the hell are you doing X?" "Why in God's universe are you doing X?", etc., is a way of turning some question, "Why are you doing X?" into a challenge – or a request for explanation in any event – in which one doubts the correctness of the action being reported; not doubting that it is being done, but doubting that it should be done. "Why did you do that?" is one sort of question. It says 'this sort of thing perhaps should be explained.' "Why the hell did you do that?" says 'you shouldn't have done it, why did you do it?' It doesn't merely request an explanation, but also a justification. So that insertion, "the hell," is relevant.

Relevant also is a transformation that is made in the question. Roger says "a Ford." Ken didn't talk about a Ford, he talked about a "Thunderbird." Now aside from that Thunderbirds are Fords, there is the issue that Fords are not necessarily Thunderbirds, and insofar as you're classifying Fords, then Thunderbirds are the highest kind of Ford, and in that regard, then, "Ford" is on the one hand the result of some operation performed on "Thunderbird," and also an operation that does not elevate or retain the status of Thunderbird, but specifically lowers it.

Now, all name uses are very relevant sorts of things, and for hotrodders, the quality of engines for hotrod use can be in such terms. A Ford engine's hotness is something which can be compared with Chevvy hotness, etc., without respect to whether it's a particular Ford or Chevvy engine that's being considered, though of course that is modified by things like which year, i.e., some year's Ford may be acceptable, whereas without regard to equivalent power a Chevvy for any of those years might be acceptable and a Ford not. In any event, the way that engines are referred to, and the way that cars are referred to, is quite elaborate. A particular feature, for example, of the special status of cars for hotrodders is that for hotrodders, and for hotrodders rather uniquely, cars have names. Not just names like '59 Ford Fairlane, but also a name that you give it, e.g., Voodoo.

Regularly the sorts of things people give names to the particular objects of, involve kinds of criteria for the special treatment of those sorts of objects. There are some things which everybody more or less gives a name to each case of, e.g., their pets. There are some things which pretty much nobody gives a name to, e.g., their TV sets. There are things like cars which only some people, e.g., hotrodders, give names to. In that event, the choice of how to talk about a given object of a given class of object is a rather sensitive issue. It's a much more sensitive issue by virtue of another sort of consideration: That what my car Voodoo is, is something that the way in which anybody would normally refer to it would not tell you. If Voodoo is a '55 Chevvy, if its name is Voodoo you can be sure it's not just a '55 Chevvy. It's a '55 Chevvy with "a three twenty-seven 'Vet in it, dual quads, full roller cam, four-speed neon hydrostick, four fifty-six positraction,

big slicks,'' or ''with a three ninety bored out to four ten, two four barrels, straight (   ) cam, four-speed closed spline, four fifty-six, big slicks,'' etc., etc. That is, it's a conglomerate of various brands' products. It's not just that we're giving it a name so as to avoid calling it by the name that everybody else is calling it by, but that what anybody else would call it wouldn't be correctly naming it. I take it that the name '55 Chevvy has this sort of character: It's what it is that I started with. And that could end up having almost no relationship to what the parts of the car now consist of. The point is that the way it came off the assembly line defines an initial way of characterizing it. It's not, then, simply a matter of ''I call my TV set Charlie'' but actually I'm differentiating it from any RCA 23-inch TV. If a car has such a name as Voodoo or whatever its name might be, then it should be absolutely differentiated from anything else that came off the same assembly line it came off.

Again, then, all name uses are very relevant, and the operation of transforming the proposed Thunderbird into a Ford is not doing nothing. For one, it's setting up ''Fords aren't hot.'' Again, then, ''Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?'' and ''Why did you put a new engine in your Jeep?'' are just not alternative questions. If one was asked, the other would never be asked. Specifically, ''Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?'' is asked by virtue of hearing a claim being put forth by Ken that maybe he is building something that he wants to have recognized as a hotrod. It is that that provides for the challenge, not that Roger couldn't say in some other circumstances, ''What was the matter with the old engine?,'' i.e., were Roger talking to his mother – or even were he talking to Ken, where Ken didn't seem to be proposing that he was building a hotrod.

Now one question is, on what basis does Roger see a claim being made? For Roger seeing a claim being made, we want to look to the way Ken goes about characterizing what he did, how he characterizes that replacement, in part by reference to how people characterize replacements. And again, it's my suspicion that people will regularly talk of the state of the object being replaced and why they didn't buy a new one, where the reason for replacement will have to do with things like price. So, that Ken is making a claim of building a hotrod turns on perhaps such a thing as that he offers no account of the Jeep engine's failure in his characterization of the replacement he's made. Where, for building a hotrod, nothing in the slightest needs to be wrong with the engine; the engine could be perfectly magnificent – for that engine – and yet be replaced. That Ken doesn't mention anything the matter with the engine is, then, the right way to be talking about building a hotrod.

So the occurrence of the challenge can turn on it being seen that Ken is claiming to be building a hotrod. Now that then involves claiming some sort of *membership*, which membership is challengeable by somebody who figures that they for sure are such a one, and who is then going to stand as guard to whether anybody else who claims to be such a one is such a one. And this is in itself kind of an interesting matter. The question is, who's business is it

whether or not Ken is, thinks he is, decides to be, a hotrodder? Why should it be Roger's business? Is it any hotrodder's business whether somebody else wants to pass themselves off as a hotrodder? And if it is their business, what are their means for dealing with those attempts of others to pass themselves off as hotrodders?

One wants to begin to notice that the range of resources are not in the first instance terribly large, though they may be terribly relevant. That is to say, one may presume that hotrodders don't drive around the neighborhood looking for people who are passing themselves off as hotrodders, and write nasty letters. Nor do they send notices to a central office where there are some officials for deciding the claim, as, e.g., if you were claiming to have some lineage, someone might write a letter to the DAR and say "X is claiming that his family came over on the Mayflower, is that so?" and the DAR could find out, and they could take some action, i.e., they are a central organization devoted to that sort of thing. And I'm not kidding, they stamp geneologies, "Passed on by the DAR that this is a true geneology." Now hotrodders don't do that sort of thing and yet they do care that people do not successfully pass themselves off as hotrodders. The question is, how do they go about dealing with that they care? I'm not sure about that, but I take it that one way that you're recognized as a hotrodder by a hotrodder is by being given a challenge to dragrace. If you're stopped at a light and a car pulls up next to you, and he figures he's a hotrodder and looks you over and figures you're a hotrodder, then he can offer a challenge by, e.g., revving his engine. If he doesn't figure you're a hotrodder he can decline to challenge you. Of if he challenges you, you can refuse.

Now you could figure if hotrodders like to drag, why don't they drag with just anybody? Some of the reasons for that being an issue have to do with the kinds of structures that hotrodders are operating within, i.e., it is not just a matter of a person judging another person but may have to do with that hotrodding is socially under pressure in a series of ways. One import of the whole change in the character of automobiles is that they're vastly more powerful than they were when hotrodders began to do hotrodding. You can buy an awfully powerful car right off the assembly line, and you can also buy awfully powerful modified cars. And if all that counts is any sort of speed that you might want to use as a measure, on a drag strip or on the street, then hotrodders couldn't beat everybody. So the hotrodder is operating within a situation in which, insofar as kids are building cars to be hot, others can have hot cars built for them – and better ones.

That competition, unfair as the hotrodders see it, can be by 'rich kids,' not that hotrodders can't also be rich, but somebody who could just buy a car that could give competition, where a 'hotrod' is something that you yourself, or you and your friends are doing. But primarily the competition is by adults. Now kids invented hotrodding and kids want to keep hotrodding for kids. What that means, among other things, is that perhaps old hotrodders are now competition, i.e., not seasoned hotrodders but ex-hotrodders, now adult

competitors.[1] So, kids other than hotrodders have gotten interested in worked-up fast cars, and persons other than kids have gotten interested, and ex-kids remain interested. That any given hotrodder tries to put down somebody else as merely claiming to be a hotrodder is, then, a relevant sort of thing for that given hotrodder to do on behalf of hotrodders in general.

One thing that one wants to be aware of is that the structure of these activities has nothing to do with hotrodding. One could substitute many many sorts of things for which people have memberships, etc., and they operate in similar ways. Hotrodders reinvent procedures, problems, concerns, orientations, etc., which a range of other social organizations have as well. That hotrodding is one of those sorts of things only locates the type of materials that they have available. So, for example, one of the materials that is obviously fundamental is their technical language. But that is of course fundamental for a whole range of those sorts of things that one can be a member of. You have to have at your command a technical language, and it's the sort of thing that people pick you up on and correct you.

Why do they have to bother to correct you? After all, many times people say the 'wrong' word, as long as everybody knows what they mean, what's the difference? The sheer fact of their correcting you is telling you that they know what you meant. Now it is not just that everybody likes to correct everybody else, but that when they correct, something particular is going on, in that the sheer action of correction is something that operates under constraints. Correction in public is a sanctioned event. Adults can correct children in public; adults shouldn't properly correct each other in public. You can say afterwards, "You said X but you should have said Y," e.g., "You said it happened Tuesday, it happened Wednesday." But you don't, at the time it occurs, say "No. Wednesay."

The sheer fact of a correction, "Not motor, engine. You speak of electric motor and gasoline engine," even it if weren't specifically a put-down, would be some sort of evidence for the issue that Roger at least takes it that he's a hotrodder and he hasn't (yet) decided that Ken is. That is to say, for anything that has that kind of ranking, the higher ranked person can correct. Teachers

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[1]Sacks doesn't use the word "seasoned." Now and again there are words and phrases in the edited transcripts that Sacks did not actually utter. Sometimes they were used to make new transitions, fill gaps, etc.; sometimes they were used in an attempt to clarify or bring out a point Sacks is making which, in the spontaneously produced wording of the lecture, is unclear or latent. In this case, in the unedited transcript, Sacks notes that the "competition" is "primarily adults" and a bit later goes on to say:

> There are some fascinating aspects to it, which have to do with that kids invented hotrodding and kids want to keep hotrodding for kids. What that means among other things is that perhaps ex-hotrodders are now competitors; i.e., not 'old hotrodders,' but adult competitors. [Winter 1969, unedited lecture 7, p. 12]

Inasmuch as 'ex-hotrodders" and "old hotrodders" seemed problematically synonomous, the contrast was reorganized, now with the addition of "seasoned hotrodders."

can correct students in public; students don't correct teachers. (Regularly students will come up after class and say "You said X but you meant Y," and you have to go through a whole thing to get students to correct in public.) So that phenomenon is absolutely unparticular to hotrodding. That it's there in hotrodding is nonetheless interesting; a resource that hotroddders have, not only for the business of dealing with cars, but also for dealing with setting up prerequisites for acceptance.

Many kinds of groups take a considerable amount of work to become a possible member, e.g., work like learning enough about cars so as to be able to talk about cars in the way that they talk about cars. That obviously has a great virtue if they don't want their group turned into something that if you just happened to take a fancy to it yesterday, you can consider youself a hotrodder today. You can't become a hotrodder overnight. And that is to say, for seeing the serious kind of object that some group is for kids, you could perfectly well appreciate that for any group that they might set up, if they were concerned about the size of membership, i.e., they wanted to be large, one thing to do would be to reduce the cost, the work involved. Now when you find that they build up the work involved, then what's going on is that they're putting barriers between the initial interest of somebody in becoming a member, and that they can become a member. So, for example, one question about the hippies is, is it possible to become a hippie overnight? You can take such a thing as the requirement to have long hair, as a thing that could put somebody two months away from being a hippie at the moment they decide to be a hippie. Hair, in that regard, is work. Having hair of that length evidences not only that you haven't cut your hair in two months but that you withstood any attempts to get you to cut your hair in that two months. Which is to say that for kids of a certain age, the length of your hair can evidence that you've been through fights with your parents, the school, etc., and withstood the pressure, so that three months', six months', etc. growth of hair is evidence of some sort of work you've done, even though you may have just arrived on the scene. And hippies of course do talk about 'weekend hippies,' and they are seeable and are in a different status, etc.

What I want you to see is that it's sociologically nice that the signs of possible membership, the stigmata of candidacy, are things that can evidence work having been done between the time that you might have decided that you want to be one, and your being a candidate. And it's fascinating to find for kid groups that those sorts of operations that the society otherwise uses, that many groups in it use in one or another fashion, kid groups also use. Like these sets of tests. And in the case of some sorts of groups, including these kid groups, they make it a work and time test rather than simply a money test. Money tests are characteristic for adults. All you have to do is send in your $5 or $1,000 or whatever it is, and you're a member of whatever it is. Now, that you have the money is a test of other things, but it isn't a 'character test' like learning hotrodder language is a character test, i.e., you have to do it yourself, you have to make a commitment and spend X amount of time before you could ever make the conversation go. Though of course for many kids it

happens naturally in that when they're 13 and 14 they're talking with kids who are 13 and 14, i.e., they know the language a little bit and then learn it a little better, etc. But, e.g., joining the President's Advisory Club which costs, say, $5,000 a year, doesn't take the kind of character test which being hotrodder or a hippie does.

It's in parallel interesting that some of the things which work for kids' groups, e.g., to be a hippie you have to have long hair, and things like that, are the sort of things such that you could be an acceptable hippie today and tomorrow an acceptable middle class kid, i.e., you go get a shave and a haircut and some new clothes. This can be compared to those sorts of memberships whose conditions are such as to make it not only work to get in, but work to get out. Various sorts of organizations set it up so that the kinds of signs that are required for being in, are not easily removed, e.g., if you became a Hell's Angel for which you had a collection of tattoos. Whereas, for all the work it might take to learn hotrodder language, people are enormously sophisticated at 'code switching' as they call it. Every kid who comes to live in a dormitory presumably has the occasion of, when he's home, speaking in a way that he didn't speak before, and being embarrassed, but the order of shift that he's able to make over the weekend is fabulous, and absolutely characteristic. People are really adaptive in terms of language capacities. Certainly some things are not easy to get out of, e.g., if you were brought up as a Negro slum kid, how easy would it be for you to get accepted as a bank clerk, i.e., in terms of that sort of language. But that's a different sort of thing. I'm talking about adolescent socialization into some kind of language. Now presumably if you used it a great long time you might not know what the other words were, e.g., how to express excitement other than to say "Wow." But then, words like these are so generalized in their use that your unique usage of "Wow" is not seeable as a sign that it is your only term for expressing excitement by virtue of being a long-time hippie.

So kid groups are designed so as to allow their members, at the end of their stay, when on the one hand they're no longer welcome in the kid groups by virtue of being an ex-kid whether they like it or not, and in any event they're now graduating, to have that thing be cheap for them, i.e., they can leave easily. Now any time a kids' group claims to be more than a kids' group, presumably one of the ways it can bring that claim off is to increase the cost, not of getting in but of getting out. And that is to say, not of 'getting out' in terms of leaving the group, but of getting back into something else. And I suppose one could look at kids' groups in that light.

And it is these sorts of cost considerations that are in part involved in why somebody would want to be a borderline hotrodder. That is to say, to want to be recognized as a hotrodder by hotrodders and not recognized as a hotrodder by others, e.g., cops. And since hotrodders know that hotrodders are the specific objects of cops' attention, some people's ideal is to be a hotrodder in the sense that any hotrodder could recognize them but not to be a hotrodder in the sense that a cop will recognize them. And that's terrible for other hotrodders; if they drag you, they can be arrested and not you. Like,

here's what happens: Two cars take off from a light. They don't go very far, and they slow down very rapidly. If you're within a ten-block range you hear the sound. So a cop has been around the corner, he's heard the sound, knows there's a drag going on, and now he comes out. There might be five cars on that block of traffic and now he's engaged in picking out the cars that have been dragging. The hotrod was clearly doing it. If you have a car which is just a powerful new Pontiac, then you're not particularly a suspect object. Not to mention that if you're a hotrodder you might be stopped any time, where if you're not in a hotrod but you pass as a hotrodder with hotrodders, you won't be stopped when you're not engaged in a drag race.

And that is the classical problem, e.g., the problem of the promiscuous homosexual is that he wants to be recognized as a homosexual by other homosexuals but not by cops. And that is his job, to accomplish that. So one of the ideas is to see that the character of this fragment could absolutely be replicated for a series of other phenomena than cars.

Now, I've gotten altogether off the track of where I initially wanted to go. What I initially wanted to deal with was the alternative ways that we deal with a challenge, *as* 'alternative:' Such issues as that the relationship between claims and challenges is close, so that Roger, seeing Ken doing a 'claim,' could be doing a 'challenge.' And that Ken can recognize a challenge in a series of ways; for one, he knows he's doing a 'claim.' Also, from the character of this question, "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?" not being, say, the question his father asked him about how come he put a Ford engine in his car. Also from the particulars of the way that the challenge comes off.

Then we have the password-answer, "This thing is the hottest thing in town!" And I offered, as an alternative to the password-answer, the question "Why not?" It is specifically an alternative here because the other is a password-answer. As it happens, he has offered a password-answer and it's been shot down as to its appropriateness for the materials at hand, i.e., that password didn't cover the work he'd done. Now, that it got shot down is not the point. The point is, if it is a password, then you could *invoke* the password by a thing like "Why not?" If you took it that you were perfectly well a member, and you were not about to let the other person put your membership in question, then your way of showing, e.g, 'how could there be an issue about that?' could be via a "Why not?" kind of question, which would say 'Look, I know there's a password, and what the password is, and your asking me makes me doubt that *you* know that there is an obvious explanation for what I did.' Then you put them into a position to have to justify their question, and you in a position to comment on their justification, as compared to the way it runs off here, which ends up with Roger commenting on Ken's justification with "Fords aren't hot." Whereupon we get a fabulous reduction and change in character of the claim from "This thing is the hottest thing in town!" to "In comparison to that old four cylinder I had in there it's hot." And I should tell you that the sequel is that not long after, he comes in to a session and says "How do you put a Chevvy engine in a Jeep?"

> *Roger*:   I did a helluva lot of work last Saturday. I put three different
>   engines 'n three different cars plus a brake job.
> *Ken*:   Y'wanna do a brake job?
> *Roger*:   Hm? No, I don't wanna do a brake jo(hh)b hhh
> *Ken*:   I gotta Jeep that c'd use a good brake job, heh heh mhh eheh
> *Roger*:   You don't think that's a lotta work? I'm proud // a'myself.
> *Ken*:   No I– I <u>know</u> that's a lotta t–work to put a set of brakes in
>   that's why I keep hesitating,
> *Roger*:   I put three engines in three cars.
> *Ken*:   You wanna put a new engine in a– in a new Jeep?
> *Roger*:   For money.
> →*Ken*:   Okay, fit a Chevvy Two into a Jeep. (1.0) I've been trying to
>   figure out how for the last two weeks hhh

And they more or less accept that question and give him advice, and nobody
asks him what happened to the Thunderbird engine.

What I want to pick up now is that the sort of choice makeable between
"This thing is the hottest thing in town!" and, e.g., "Why not?" matters in
this sort of way: It is a sequencing problem. Now, I mentioned that, given the
question "Why not?" we could get "What do you mean 'why not'?" And of
course we could then get "What do you mean what do I mean why not?" The
question is, why would we get an extension like that, i.e., of questions
building on questions? Well, if what you do is offer an answer to the
challenge, then what you're setting up is that the other person operates on
your answer. You know that they're in a position of being doubtful, and that
if you produce an answer they are thereby put in a position of being able to
do a critique on your materials. A way to switch the thing around is to
attempt to get them to offer such sorts of materials as that then put *you* in the
position of commenting on their candidate explanation. That is to say, we
have here an occasion of battle for which sequencing considerations are
operative, where the position of commenting on the answer is an ideal
position to be in, a position one may want to achieve. And these attempts of
people to get into a position of being the commentor on the answer of the
other can be done via the production of actual sequences from a set of
sequences that are alternative to each other.

So the possible answer to the question, why would we get an extension
made up of questions building on questions is, we get that sort of thing where
an 'answer'/'comment on answer' relationship is one in which the comment
will have considerable power. Then we want to ask *where* do we get this
'question building on question building on question' sequence going? Could
it get going for any kind of question? Does it get going only for a special kind
of a question? Can we say something about its populational positions? At least
one place where it occurs is with initial challenges: "Where were you last
night?" "Why do you ask?" "What do you mean why do I ask?" And there
are other things to be done at any point than just building up a question
sequence. You can give an answer that's a useless answer: "Where were you

last night?" "Why do you ask?" "Oh, I just wanted to know." Where "I just wanted to know" doesn't give the person anything to make a good comment on.

What I'm attempting then to do is to deal with a distributional question in a way. Where does this 'question on question on question' sequence occur? Where does the attempt to get into a position to do a comment on the answer occur? Do they have some locus? Do they occur everywhere, anywhere, or do they specifically occur somewhere? Where one wants to get from that some determination that some sequencing positions are 'better than others,' or that people figure that that's so, and figuring that that's so has involved them in evolving a really elaborate set of ways they can move from a given position, where there may be a much more elaborate development of possibilities in one sequential place than in others.

Now we're not talking about what can somebody do given the question "Why the hell you gonna put a Ford in a Jeep?" in the sense of 'what set of possible things could they do, since they could do anything?' That is, Ken could say "Good morning," i.e., one could do 'anything' that has nothing to do with the question. We're asking what sorts of things are *in sequence* with some given object, and is it possible to develop a comparison between the kinds of permutations that have been developed off of one object as compared to the kinds of permutations that are developed off others. If a comparison can be developed, then the sorts of permutations, their character and their import, would be a matter of interest.

Lecture 8

'Identification reformulation;' Pairing off at parties; 'Abstract' versus 'concrete' formulations

I want first to talk about problems that I'll call *'identification reformulation.'*[1] I haven't dealt much with materials on identification so far, but I would like to give a glimpse of the niceness of the materials involved in that. In the following bit of data, Nancy is a lady who is taking a class at college. At the end of the course she goes out with some of the people in the class to a place where they have beer and pizza, and now she's telling a friend of hers about it.

> *Nancy*: . . . so a bunch of us went over, and there were three of us gals and five or six fellas. And then one of the girls had to leave, about half an hour later 'cause she had to go home and let her roommate in. And uh, one of the other girls had to leave for something. And there I sit with all these young fellas. I felt like a den mother.
>
> *Agnes*: Are you the oldest one in the class?
>
> *Nancy*: Oh by far.

What I mean to notice by 'identification reformulation' is that we have here an initial formulation of the population: ". . . three of us gals and five or six fellas." Then something happens, some people leave, and what we get is not a restatement of that formulation by reference to the now current situation, i.e., "So now there was just one gal and five or six fellas," but a different formulation of the population: ". . . young fellas" and a "den mother"-like person. We want to see why a reformulation is done, and whether there is any basis for the particular reformulation. We might also see if we can say anything about the initial identification.

Now, core to at least one sense of the situation is that while in the reformulation there are different identifications used of the various personnel, the personnel identified in that scene were all present in the initial situation and were already identified. It's not as if some new people arrived and now

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[1] The actual "first" consideration, of a phenomenon Sacks talks of as a 'constructed explanation', has been omitted here. It can be seen in Spring 1970, lecture 6, pp. 263–6.

a new set of identifications are employed to deal with the new people, where, e.g., that calls for a shift in the characterization of earlier people as well. The people identified in the reformulation were all identified earlier. Each person was identified via the two classes, 'gals' and 'fellas.' And we can offer some considerations about the usages of those initial identifications. The issue isn't simply that any way would have done to identify who went to the beer place, e.g., "eight or nine people" or "a bunch of us students" or, in that these fellows later become "young fellas," she might have used sex plus age: "Me, two young girls, and five or six young fellas." There are combinations, alternatives, and you could get a range of different sorts of things being used. We want to know why those particular ones were used.

I would like to note two sorts of things. First, with respect to going off together to a beer place and with respect to being together in the beer place, then *sex* is a relevant way to characterize how these people come to be co-present. That is to say, 'gals and fellas' is a way of formulating people's co-presence for such a place; which is not to say that 'students' isn't also, but 'gals and fellas' may discriminate between being in this place together and, e.g., being in the classroom together, which is where they started from. They started, then, as 'students' and they became 'gals and fellas.' And that's not quite all, because the *numbers* matter. For the issue of their co-presence in the beer place, that they go out in the group as 'gals and fellas' is one thing, but also relevant to how they are together is the relative numbers. That there are three of one and five of the other, and not three of one and three of the other, is an important sort of fact for the report of what was happening – where we don't want to forget that she knows at the outset of the narrative how the evening turned out – in that three of one and three of the other, any equal number, can turn into pairs. The issue, then, of what could happen over the course of that evening, which is initially potentialled by the formulation 'gals and fellas' and would not be in the same way raised by 'eight of us' or 'a bunch of the students,' is partially modified by the fact that there are three of one and five of the other. That is to say, under the circumstance of three gals and three fellas, the story would turn on the suggested possibility that pairing up is going to happen, and a natural history of the evening would then be a matter of how it is that I ended up with the one I ended up with. Three and five do not make pairing up a potential, i.e., a natural historical, thing.

Alright, then the two girls leave. Now the issue is that when the two girls leave, that she does an identification reformulation is not an incidental sort of fact. That is to say, that event occasions an identification reformulation for at least some possible reasons turning on that two girls having left, the issue then for her is how is it that she is still there. It's now just her and the five or six guys. Should she leave? If she shouldn't leave, how is it that she can find a way to stay? There are several things involved in this issue. One is that she can figure that if anything of a sexual sort was to be coming out of the evening, then that possibility has now been undercut by the potential sexual objects for the guys leaving. She may then be simply in the way of the five fellows, i.e.,

they could go out to do something else; they are in any event not going to do anything with her.

There is also the issue of, two girls having left, how, specifically, is the evening to be brought to an end? There's now one and five or six. There clearly is not going to be any pairing off, unless it turns out to occur by virtue of the fellows drifting off and leaving her with one of them – where, then, she has either a pleasure or a problem as it may be. With the girls having left, is there some way of arriving at a way of finding where we are so that we can, having found where we are, find a way to end the thing? For example, we could find where we are in such a way as to have the thing end by leaving all together rather than, e.g., the guys just drifting off.

Another sort of issue is that when there are the two other females there is a crowd of an undifferentiated sort for, say, any observer. There's eight or nine people of various ages and sex, and she is in no distinctive relationship in that place. When, however, there is only her and the five or six fellows, then an issue which she can figure that others observing the scene are attentive to is the question, What is she doing with them? Where it is transparent that for combinations of people, members of some combination in some public place can be attentive to what any unknown observer figures that a person like them is doing in that collection. She can then be looking for some identification which could yield various sorts of results. She could, for example, search for an identification which yields a kind of legitimacy to this combination in this place.

Now the initial identification had that kind of characteristic for some collection of people being in a beer hall. That they're 'gals and fellas' accounts fot their co-presence, makes their co-presence not a problem. The events that then happen have as contingent for them that she either can come up with such an identification as locates them as legitimately co-present, or she can leave and make that not a problem. Should she not leave, not having found an identification which makes their co-presence legitimate, and should some of the fellows drift off, leaving a pair, then, as a pair it might be noticeable as persons of cross sexes and marked age differences. In a place where they're not supposed to be, pairs like mother–son, father–daughter are noticeable.

It's in that light, then, that "I felt like a den mother" is an appreciateable reformulation. Her reported feelings are not that she felt 'like a movie star' or 'like the center of attention,' but "like a den mother," i.e., someone who properly belongs with five or six young fellows when that person is female but not anything like the same age. And with that formulation also, if it was presented at the time, the event could be transformed into kind of a meeting, where, then, that everyone should leave together could be thereby implied. And she might perfectly well have presented her reformulation, e.g., "God I feel like a den mother." It's also worth noting that it's rather important that *she* would have presented that reformulation, i.e., it would not be the sort of thing that one of the fellows could delicately propose to her, e.g., "God it's like having a den mother here." That is to say, *their* way of keeping her

present would not involve that sort of identification as the legitimatizing identification.

Now it's really neat if it's the case that that is what she felt like. That is, she was not *searching* for some way to find, do I belong or don't I belong, but the product of a search which located how they could be legitimately co-present over those changes in personnel, just popped into her head. So, while there is a lot of work involved here, it is not work from which anybody gets sweated up. It is not a problem for which she has to particularly search out a solution; it is not a solution to a problem that she had in the first instance proposed to herself in order to see that she needed to solve it. But nonetheless you can find that on occasions of an initial formulation of a population, changes in personnel of that population will provide that people will go about reformulating that population. And they will do the reformulations in various such ways as to yield, e.g., the continued legitimate co-presence of the people now present, or to find that "Gee, I'd better go." Where one thing that "Gee, I'd better go" is dealing with is that they cannot find a way to rationalize their continued presence given the change in the personnel. And of course the very statement "Gee, I'd better go" is often treated as something like this: A request on the part of the person who said it, for such a reformulation as the other parties will offer, as will yield that the person should still stay. So it routinely happens at parties that some collection of people leave; somebody will say "Well we'd better go," and then the host will say something like, "Now that all the guests I had to invite have gone, we can have a party with the people I wanted to be with." That's a prototype of the kind of work one can do, and not any identification will do that kind of work.

Let me turn now to another sort of matter. There's a place in the book *Deep South*, a wonderful ethnography of the south in the thirties, where they're talking about upper-class life. And one of the things they do is give a characterization of an upper-class party. The situation for this group that they're studying is that maybe five couples gather very frequently during the week at one or another's house for a party. They're all married couples, and pretty much all of the couples are having an affair – whatever that meant for those people then – with somebody other than their spouse. But they arrive with their spouse and leave with their spouse, though the evening involves them in not being with their spouse at some point in it. Now, generically there's a problem, but in that material it's a nicer problem; and that is, e.g., a party having gotten going with something like everybody in the living room and one or some small number of conversations going, how do a series of multi-party conversations get transformed into two-party conversations of the right sort? I ask it that way because two-party conversations are an essential in-between stage for other two-party events. That is to say, if a given pair who haven't come together and who don't start off in a situation of him talking with her, are to end up in his car or their bedroom or wherever else, then arriving at a two-party conversation is crucial.

The reason you have to end up with two-party conversations is that two-party conversations are stable in a way that multi-party conversations are

not. If a two-party conversation is going, two people of the opposite sex, then nobody has the business of joining them. If a three-party conversation is going then anybody may be able to join it and also, anybody may be able to leave it. Furthermore, it's much harder for either parties in a two-party conversation to get out of it than it is for any party to get out of a multi-party conversation – or indeed, than it is to get *into* a two-party conversation. So, although if a two-party conversation is not cross-sex then others are not locked out of it, if you have a cross-sex two-party conversation then others are locked out of it. Furthermore, what is involved is not that these two persons arrive at a two-party conversation, but that the *collection* of people somehow arrives at two-party conversation. That is, given the various etiquettes involved, you just don't have eight people sitting around and then A and B, who are not married to each other but are married to others also sitting around, get into a conversation together or go off together. What that involves, I take it, is that for the study of the natural history of a party in which a collection of people end up in pairs – whether they came in pairs or not, but if they came in pairs they end up in different pairs – the organization of conversation is a crucial phenomenon. And the particular problem that the organization of conversation has for this situation is, how is that multi-party conversations can get transformed into two-party conversations.

I have no particular good ideas about how those multi-party conversations get transformed into two-party conversations, but there are of course a collection of events that are relevant to that. One problem is arriving at appropriate physical arrangements with the person you need to have a two-party conversation with in order to get where you want to get eventually. And there are a series of ways that that can be done, which are not obviously just doing that, i.e., a bunch of people are sitting around and somebody – characteristically a male – can get up and say "Anybody want a drink?" At that point, some other person, e.g., the relevant female, could say "Yeah, get me a scotch." Now when he gets the scotch he brings it back to her. That can then allow that he stays where he happens to have arrived. So that things like who accepts the offer to get a drink can allow that one is placed in physical proximity with another, in a quite random-appearing sort of way, i.e., it just happened that that guy asked who wanted a drink and you just happened to want a drink; where, that he ends up in direct physical proximity to you, and that, e.g., the various sets of persons eventually get into the right sort of physical proximity, can allow the peeling off into two-party conversations. And the various sets of persons can get into the right sort of physical proximity in that, e.g., when somebody goes to fix a drink he leaves a spot vacant next to his wife, to whom somebody can offer a cigarette, and take that spot, leaving his spot available for someone else.

Now, I don't have a Disney-like picture of them playing that thing, and I have no idea that they get cued in like that. But it seems plain that there are mechanisms that allow for people changing their physical proximities in large ways as compared to, e.g., you're sitting here talking to three people and the right conversation emerges so that one of them is no longer interested and

they drift off into another conversation, so now two of you are in conversation. And obviously a key thing is that you have to arrive at mechanisms which are delicate, i.e., you don't have a system which works simply by reference to somebody coming in, sitting down with his wife, and then getting up and walking across the room and having a two-party conversation with somebody else's wife in the presence of everybody else. Presumably in these southern parties, the simplest kinds of mechanisms were, e.g., dancing, where, for a bunch of friends, switching partners in dancing is an appropriate kind of thing and allows for people to drift off, and at the end of any given dance the people who were dancing together can sit down together, etc. Then there are those places where people can go one at a time, though they don't necessarily come back from or end up in a place where only one person is, like, men can go to the bathroom and women can go fix their make-up, and those provide ways that people can disappear, without specifically going where it may well be that everyone knows that they're going.

And there are a bunch of other ways that pairing offs can happen. Regularly, people discover who it is that wants them that evening by virtue of things that don't happen at all in two-party conversation format, but can happen by reference to just the ordinary multi-party conversations' features. So, if A tells a joke, who it is that laughs most, or specifically last, or specifically takes up some remark of his – somebody who isn't his wife – is somebody who could be telling him what's going on with them. And people apparently notice that, "Well it was right at the beginning of the evening that I said this, and she found it so interesting; she had had the same kind of experience." Where, then, two-party conversations can be set up by virtue of the fact that you say to the crowd, "You know what happened to me the other day," and then a half hour later, standing somewhere, she says "You know what you said before? That happened to me also." That is to say, the materials you drop out in a multi-party conversation can be things that are picked up by somebody for later use. And people will regularly pick up on items which weren't specifically directed towards them.

It's a matter about which you have to be really sophisticated because people are vastly smarter than you'd ever imagine about these sorts of things. I offer you a sort of thing I found in my favorite magazine. *Cosmopolitan.* It's the most extraordinary magazine; it's been taken over by Helen Gurley Brown and turned into an unmarried girls' technical manual. And what I mean by sophisticated is advice of the following sort. How do you meet a rich guy in New York? A cheap way is, you put an ad in the *New York Times* for a slightly used Astin-Martin. You get phone calls from guaranteed rich guys, and you say, "Gee I'm sorry, I sold it," at which point the conversation can go wherever the conversation goes. Now that takes ingenuity. So the kinds of sophistication that people can bring to bear on problems of pairing off may be quite something.

Q: I don't see why they take such elaborate pains, if everybody knows what's going on.

HS: Well, what everybody knows, and what everybody knows by virtue

of that the others have let you know it, are altogether different sorts of things. What everybody knows, more or less, is different than if the people involved force it on you. So what's done here is that while everybody knows, everybody is also engaged in concealing the thing among themselves so that nobody among the group is behaving scandalously. And let me just note in that regard that the gossip is as important as the relationships. That is to say, the wives and husbands are utterly interchangeable. I take it that there's no interest in each other by virtue of the fact that Mary and Sarah discover at the same time that for each of them the other's husband is really the guy they were interested in in the first place. The interest is that it's somebody different, in the context of its being something they can occupy themselves with talking about among each other. So, e.g., any two women can talk about the fact that a third woman is having an affair with somebody else's husband, leaving aside that either or both of them are. In such conversations, it is routinely the case that people will talk about somebody else's illegal behaviors though the two people who are talking are 'doing the same thing,' without their then saying "Well I don't see what's so odd about her sleeping with X, I'm sleeping with Y."

So there's this texture of keeping it somewhat under cover. And indeed, it's the keeping it under cover that operates to locate who you have an affair with. The law in America is that you have an affair with your best friend's wife, and vice versa. Because that's the only person you can routinely be with, without it being "What are *they* doing together?" And that's what set up all these people being routinely together and not having to acknowledge what's going on. Whereas, e.g., if a guy brought home his secretary and her husband to a party, then it might be a thing for which his wife and the neighbors would have to consider what's going on.

Q: The thing that puzzles me though is, in even an affair where two people are involved, four people are really collaborating, and there sort of has to be permission.

HS: That's why this thing is so interesting, because, e.g., you've got to end up without having somebody's wife sitting there by herself, or somebody's wife sitting alone at one end of the room and somebody's husband sitting alone at the other end of the room, with everybody else having vanished.

In any event, parties are a great thing to study, and anybody who cared about making themselves a major reputation in, e.g., sociology or anthropology would find that's one ideal thing to pick up, for these reasons: First of all, one of the greatest of all sociologists did a study of parties. It's a rule of course in academic life as in sports, that if you can beat the best you thereby become their equal. So if you could write a better paper on parties than Simmel wrote on parties, that's one way. Also, one of the most famous contemporary sociologists attempted to study parties, and failed. There are a lot of people who tried to study the structure of parties and couldn't do it. So that if you wanted to pick a topic that, if you could crack it, would put you somewhere, parties are a great thing. And you should be able to see why they're interesting. They're ideal sorts of social objects in that they have an

obvious organization though nobody knows what it is and it isn't laid out in advance. That is, one party is like another party and yet nobody knows how in the hell they move. Now, parties are obviously, manifestly, objects which should be studied as sequential objects. And the notion that the structure of conversation is relevant is possibly a way to deal with some of the sorts of things that sequentially happen in parties.
Here's another piece of data:

Louise : He was defending you.
Ken : Well he was defending certain rights that everybody <u>should</u> have, I mean– not in the way of driving across golf courses, I admit that was wrong, but certain– certain rights of uh being able to do what you want.

The interest in this thing comes up as follows. A guy is doing a dissertation on topic in conversation, focussing on the following sort of process. He's got a set of conversations in which he was a participant when he worked at an insurance company. He was trying to get people to engage in what he called 'abstract conversation,' and found that it's terribly difficult to get people to engage in this kind of conversation. So, e.g., he brings up the topic of draft card burning and he wants to get into a conversation in which they talk about, e.g., the morality of draft card burning. But the conversation turns into one in which the issue is, do all the various parties have their draft cards in their wallet, and each one takes out his draft card and they discuss it, and then they go through the rest of the cards they have in their wallets.

So the difference is between a discussion of the morality of draft card burning and a discussion of "Do you have your draft card?" "No I don't," "Yes I do," "Here's mine," "Look, I've also got a this card," "I've got a this card and a that card," "Do you have a that card?" "No I don't." And he talks about that sort of difference as 'abstract' and 'concrete,' where the shift in topics, when they are normatively concrete, would be different than the shift when they are possibly abstract. That is, the 'draft card burning' conversation would lead to a different sort of topic than the "Do you have a draft card?" conversation. The latter could lead to other cards you have and the former could lead to other sorts of morality issues.

So that was the problem within the context of which this material seemed to be interesting. And that may be seen quite directly, i.e., what's involved here is that Al, the person being referred to, did some talk occasioned by something that Ken had done. Louise gives it a 'concrete' formulation and Ken gives it an 'abstract' formulation. My specific interest is in this question: Does it appear, at least for some sorts of things that can happen in conversation, that there are bases for it being difficult to have abstract conversation, and it being a rule-governed fact that concrete conversation is preferred, i.e., takes place? The matter has an obvious large-scale interest in that if it were the structure of conversation that got in the way of having

abstract conversation, then the unsuitability of conversation for abstract talk, abstract thinking, etc., might be found.

What are the sorts of things involved? We have here two alternative – and as it turns out, competing – formulations of the same event. Both agree that it was 'defending' that was going on. The question is what was that 'defending' about? Ken? Or rights that everybody should have. Do those formulations at all turn on the way in which the defense was constructed? I think that they are quite independent of the way in which the defense was constructed. If the issue somehow got going as to whether Ken was right in driving across the golf course, then Al could be seen to be 'defending Ken' without regard to the abstractness of Al's defense. That is to say, were Al to have said "I think anybody has a right to do anything they want," people could nonetheless see that he was defending Ken and not defending anybody's rights to do whatever they want to do. So, even though Al formulated his defense abstractly it could be seen to be doing something concrete – though it might well be that had he formulated his defense concretely he might not be seen as doing something abstract, though someone else could propose that there's really an abstract issue involved, i.e., if Al said "Well I think that Ken has the right to do that," somebody else could say "What he means is that anybody has a right to do things like that."

It is not, then, a situation in which the formulation of Al's defense, or its terminology, controls whether it will be dealt with as abstract or concrete. And ruling out that the terminology is criterial has a lot of importance because the very issue of 'which one is abstract and which one is concrete' thereby poses some kind of question, whereas on the one hand, if we just had Al's statement, "I think anybody has a right to do whatever they want," we might say "That's an abstract statement," and on the other hand, it might be never understood that way *except* in isolation. It would perhaps be otherwise understood as a way to defend Ken's rights, or to formulate Ken's action as not wrong.

Now one of the things we've learned is that a way people have of interpreting an utterance of somebody else's is in terms of what sequentially relevant action it is doing. Not only is that *a* way, but it's an obliged sort of thing to do. For co-participants in a conversation, what they want to find out is what, sequentially, is this fellow doing? It's their business to find that out. That's what they're obliged to find out. And they're obliged to find it out so as to use their results in an utterance appropriate to that one. So, *interpretation in sequential terms* is done and required. And one aspect of interpretation in sequential terms involves the issue of 'to whom is the action that the utterance is doing done?' Where the collection of co-participants defines the population of 'to whom it could be done.' He's saying it to one of us, no matter how he may be saying it. And the question then is, which of us is he saying it to, and what is he doing to that one that he's saying it to? Those are the kinds of obliged problems that hearers deal with. That means that the initial formulations of actions are in terms of sequential objects, and sequential objects by reference to co-participants, without regard to terminology, i.e.,

they're initially transformed into that sort of phenomenon: Insulting Joe, complimenting Sam, etc. He may say "I've known lots of nice white people in my life." The question is, who is he talking about here?

What that may mean is, however abstract the terminology, arriving at that he is doing something abstract – if it's done – follows on a transformation of what he's doing into concrete terms. It's not, then, a matter of if it's an abstract utterance give it an abstract interpretation, but *whatever* utterance, give it that sort of concrete interpretation. Then maybe you could re-give it an abstract interpretation. So that finding that he's doing something abstract awaits finding what concrete thing he's done. Now I think you can go a fairly long way in establishing relative order in terms of what sorts of interpretations are done.[2] And insofar as we use the terms 'abstract' and 'concrete,' the sequence interpretations are concrete – which is not to say that they *are* concrete aside from that issue of 'abstract–concrete.' Once having arrived at the 'concrete' interpretation, the issue now is to see whether the utterance that you found to be this sort of thing should be considered also or alternatively something else. And that involves questions of whether in the ordinary course of affairs you need to bother seeing that, or if it's raised, how it's dealt with. It could be raised as it is done in the materials here, or it could be raised by the speaker himself, e.g., by saying "I don't care either way about what Ken did but . . ." or "I don't want to be speaking in Ken's favor but I think everybody should do what they want to do." One can then be attempting to give instructions as to how the action of their utterance is to be appreciated. And there the question is, are there any assuredly successful ways to bring off that it will be heard as an abstract thing?

Some sorts of consequences of its being heard as an abstract thing are that the range of normal conversational resources are lost. It is not then something which locates somebody who should talk next, somebody to whom it's been done, etc. That is to say, there are then no selectional considerations – unless you could in fact get an argument going; then you can do agreeing and disagreeing. But the issue of getting it going is itself a conversational phenomenon with regard to the issue of whether you're doing that. And the question of whether you're doing that or not is one that has a natural sequential paradigm in the way that this one doesn't. And even when gotten going, the question is whether there aren't then routine ways in which it would just drop back into concrete talk.

It's a terribly interesting topic for a variety of reasons. One of them is that abstract versus concrete has a lot of psychiatric interest. The inability to do abstract thinking and reasoning and talking is treated as a characteristic of

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[2]Here followed two discussions which were not transcribed. One was a consideration of a mis-hearing of the word "agreeing," where sequencing could be seen to determine the very hearing of a word. See Fall 1967, lecture 12, in vol. I. The other discussion focusssed on sequence for understanding reference, vis-à-vis the phenomenon of 'intentional mis-identification.' See Spring 1966, lecture 21, pp. 417–20 and Winter 1967, March 9, p. 544, in vol. I.

some kinds of psychiatric disorders. So, if that's a particular kind of defect, an extension of what is in a way, normative, rather than something that is really peculiar to those birds whereas everybody else does abstract talk, that's of interest.

Lecture 9

Sound shifts; Showing understanding; Dealing with 'utterance completion;' Practical mysticism

The first thing I'm going to discuss will not very likely have its import clear, though I'll sketch it. I have a fascination with a difference in the way things that have 'you' after them, and the 'you,' get put together. Things like "didje" and "wantche." There are obviously other instances, "wouldje" and "betche," for example. Let me try to give some characterization of the problem to which these might be relevant. There are, in linguistics, theories that go by the name of 'transformational.' What in its simplest way it involves is that in trying to account for the syntax of some actual sentences, where that sentence is part of a corpus of possible sentences, what's done is to posit the existence of a finite and relatively small corpus of alternative sentences, and then account for the production of the actuals – though the primitives can perhaps be actuals – by operations performed which combine and otherwise transform the primitives. So at least to some rather considerable extent any proposed set of transformations have a kind of hypothetical character to them. Nobody knows whether there are, really, some finite corpus of primitive sentences in people's brains, and whether or not they start out with one of them and then perform the operation on it. But there could be extremely convincing theoretical reasons for urging that some sentence was arrived at by some sort of transformations, or that transformations in general are the way that sentences are arrived at.

That's the context. Now when I noticed this difference between "didje" and "wantche" as a class difference, it seemed to me that that phenomenon can be relevant to the status of the phenomenon of transformations in this way: Suppose we asked, what would be convincing evidence that people make some actual transformations? Or suppose we asked a related question, are there things to look at which are to be explained by reference to there having been a transformation? Then we might be engaged in looking at some phenomenon for how it might evidence a transformation having taken place. We'd look at it to see what it is the product of. And an obvious way to look at something to see what transformations it evidences having been done, would be to see if we could find in it residues of its earlier status. That's quite an obvious way to look at natural objects. If you're given a rock you might well find youself looking at it to see, not what its current state is, but to see evidences of its prior states. Now for things like a sentence, the 'earlier' would

be something like a hopeful analogy, since the sentence itself doesn't have prior statuses. If you had a page which is partly ripped, you might be able to see the prior status, or inquire into its prior status to find what's missing and things like that, which are the kinds of problems that archeologists face when they're dealing with ancient fragments. But perhaps there are places where you could do that for actual talk. So the strategy is not at all arcane. The question is how could it seriously be applied to a piece of talk – and by that I don't mean, e.g., a tape recording to find out what was erased.

Now we have "didje" and "wantche," and the way I operated was to notice this thing about them: Whenever 'did' and 'you' are not in the environment of each other, they have a particular form or a range of forms, i.e., 'did' and 'you,' and 'want' and 'you,' and there are a great many places where 'did' is said and 'want' is said. And we also would say that when they get combined in adjacencies of "did you" and "want you," i.e., in adjacencies of that order and not the reverse order ("you did" and "you want"), you get "didje" and "wanche" (you don't get "je dij" and "che wan") And that holds for various other things and 'you,' and various other things and various other things.

So we have what might be reasonably seen as an initial state or a normal state, and then another state which might be an end product. Now what happens when the two, 'you' and 'did' or 'you' and 'want,' are combined in the 'did' plus 'you' and 'want' plus 'you' order is that the combination yields, not a retention of their sounds but other sounds where, however, those other sounds are not new sounds but other sounds in English. The 'j' is used in, e.g., 'judge' and the 'ch' occurs in, e.g., 'church.' So the 'd' plus the 'y' might be said to yield 'j.' And the 't' plus the 'y' yields, 'ch.' And that is an absolutely simple transformational argument: In the environment of 'd' plus 'y' where 'y' follows 'd,' the yield is 'j.' If 'd' is followed by 'y,' say 'j.' If 't' is followed by 'y,' say 'ch.' The question is, what kind of evidence would there be for that happening? Does the argument of 'originally' hold, i.e., that 'j' was originally 'd' plus 'y'? Or is this just a different thing?

I want to make the following argument about the evidence for transformation, by reference to the notion that you can still see, in the end product, features of the original item. That is to say, in the worn out stone that was a statue, you can see a smoothed down face and you can say it wasn't originally done as a smoothed down face, it was originally a full face but age, water, etc., smoothed it down. Then what is it that these things might be said to preserve from the original although they are different? To make that kind of argument you need contrasts, i.e., you need to have different cases so as to be able to see what is being arued. That's why I picked two cases to use, and indeed it was noticing the two cases that set the whole thing up. I started with the case 'didje' and 'wanche' and noticed several diferences between them, and then constructed an argument to see what could be done with those differences. So what's preserved from the earlier state or the hypothetical earlier state or the possible hypothetical earlier state? What we want is that if things were different in the earlier state, that difference is preserved. Then we can say they

got transformed, and they got transformed in an orderly way, and what differentiated them in the earlier state still differentiates them. And that obtains here. Among other differences between 'did' and 'want' is that they have a specific orderly set of alternative sounds, 'd' and 't,' which differ in only one way: 'd' is voiced and 't' is voiceless. Now notice that 'j' and 'che' preserve that difference: 'j' is voiced and 'che' is voiceless.

So you get the claimedly 'product' sounds preserving that there is a voiced/voiceless difference, and preserved for the right cases, i.e., the argument would fall apart if 'did' plus 'you' became 'didche' and 'want' plus 'you' became 'wanje.' Another possibility, which would provide that the argument would never have gotten constructed in the first place is if 'did' plus 'you' and 'want' plus 'you' became cases of the same product, 'didche' and 'wanche' or 'didje' and 'wanje.' Instead, the voiced/voiceless distinction is preserved, and preserved for the right cases. Then you can see that there was an original sound, which in any event we know to exist – 'd' and 't' – and new sounds were picked, where the new sounds evidence the old sounds by virtue of having the voiced/voiceless features in them, and in them in the right way. That pretty much holds for the range of 'd'/'t' endings. So then, when you look at 'didje' and 'wanche' you can say that in the voiced/voiceless distinction you can see the earlier state evidenced in them, where if you were just going to have a new pattern of sounds there could presumably be any pattern of sounds if it weren't that the original sounds governed the choice. You can say, then, that there was an original sound and features of it governed the outcome.

I stopped with 'didje' and 'wanche' but the point is that one can ask if there are other places to look, to find in some state of the materials a history of transformation. And sound shifts are an obvious place to have looked, since those people who work on the history of a language do specifically study sound shifts. That is, the way in which languages develop, the emergence of German from Indo-European for example, is found by positing a collection of sounds in Indo-European and seeing how they evolved. And they get, then, laws of sound change – which for all I know might have that 'dy' and 'ty' were the original sounds and 'j' and 'che' emerged from them. The question of 'didje' and 'wanche' would then presumably be partially historical; it may be an evolutionary phenomenon that you got 'didje' and 'wanche.' I suppose that the notion of sound transformation, with sounds being explorable for their status as the product of transformation, provides that talk is an obvious place to look at the phenomenon of transformation.

The second little exercise concerns the utterance "You went up further then" in the following fragment.

A :   Didje have a nice time?
B :   Oh, <u>won</u>derful.
A :   Goo::d,

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A :   ⌈Good.
B :   ⌊Just won̲der//ful.
A :   Where'dju go̲::.
      (0.6)
B :   We were in northern California, up–    (0.2) weh(hhh)–    (0.4)
      way up in the mountains too.
      (0.4)
A :   Oh well w̲e wen' up there oh:: about thr– ˙hh I'd say about
      three weeks ago we was up at Maripo̲:sa, ˙hh//hh
B :   Uh huh,
A :   –an' up in the Mother Lode country en we // wen' all through
      those gho̲st tow:ns.
B :   (        )–
B :   Oh̲:: I see,
B :   Well we were up uh ˙hh intuh Red̲ (0.5) Red Blu:ff?
      (0.4)
A :   Oh̲::.
B :   (     //     )
A :   You wen' up further then.
B :   Yes.
A :   Uh//huh,
B :   Uh huh,
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One kind of issue that we could be interested in – though I'm sure it sounds peculiar to have an interest in it by virtue of these sorts of materials – is the phenomenon of understanding. I say 'peculiar' because we might figure that that's what talk is all about; one thing that talk involves is understanding; if understanding isn't there, then there's nothing much going on. Are there then ways that we could specifically justify the study of understanding; of how understanding is shown? It's in the light of that issue that I wanted to see what would be a simple, obvious way to begin to study the phenomenon of understanding. I began to locate some materials which are on point. The simplest direct instances which start us off are things like this:[1]

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A :   How long are you gonna be in town?
B :   Uh, til about Monday.
A :   Oh it'll be just a week then.
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[1]Those are not actual instances, but versions of the following two:

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Goldie :   Ho̲w long are you gonna be̲ he̲:re, =
Jessie :     = ˙hhhh Uh:̲ it's (˙) no̲t too lo:ng. Uh:: Ju̲st until: uh:: I think Mo̲nday.
             (1.2)
Goldie :   Til, oh you mean like a week tomo̲rrow,
             (˙)
Jessie :   Ya̲h
```

and

A : Where are you staying?
B : In Pacific Pallisades.
A : Oh at the west side of town.

Now the relevance of those things is that when we take the third utterance in
each of those fragments what we can see is that those third utterances
specifically involve their producer performing an operation on the second
utterance, and using some of its materials. In that we can lay out those
operations, we can say that what's being specifically done there is 'showing
understanding.' And if it's so that people do that sort of thing, we can then
say that a warrant for the study of the phenomenon of 'understanding' is that
it's specifically a thing that is achieved, and it can proceed employing
conversation, and have places where it gets exhibited, etc. We need not say
we're interested in 'understanding' by virtue of, e.g., some humanistic bias
about the nature of conversation, or by reference to some theoretical
supposition that people understood each other, but by virtue of the fact that
one of the things people do in conversation, as they do 'questioning' and
'answering', etc., is, specifically, 'showing understanding.'

Now one might figure there was a simpler procedure than performing
some transformation operation on the initial item, e.g., repeating.

A : Where are you staying.
B : Pacific Pallisades.
A : Oh. Pacific Pallisades.

That can work, but it's of interest to note that some repeating may well show
understanding, but repeating is equivocal. Repeating does not guarantee that
you thereby show understanding. The materials in point for that are: For the
sort of thing the doing of which specifically involves repeating, that you
understand can, for that thing, be questioned. And by that sort of equivo-
cality of repeating, I mean to refer to, e.g., telling a joke. That you repeat it
is of course crucial since, while there are some changes which would preserve
the joke, many would not. And one may be seen to be 'repeating a joke one
has heard' over a series of modifications one makes. The point is that jokes are
specifically objects done as repeats, and they are specifically objects the telling

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Goldie: Now you told me you eh–uh–where are you.=Are you at uh: Puh–ih: (˙) Palos
uh:
     (0.4)
Jessie: eh–No in ah:::::uh: (˙) ˙t Marina del Rey.
     (0.9)
Jessie: Marina del Rey. =
Goldie: = Oh Marina del Re:ry.
Jessie: ⌊Yah.

of which does not evidence that you understand it. So, where there's an issue of whether a person understands a joke they tell, that they told it doesn't solve the problem. The materials on this are rampant, and a characteristic case is where somebody's 12-year-old son or daughter comes home with a dirty joke, and the recipient can find that he has no idea whether or not the kid understands the joke and may then engage in an examination to find whether the kid understands it and may find that he perfectly well doesn't understand it as the examiner figures it should be understood. Sometimes the kid has no idea why it's funny though he laughs, other times he may have a perfectly good idea of why it's funny although it stands as an alternative to what the joke is about.

So, although there is a great range of things involved in the equivocality of repetition, it is the fact of repetition that is equivocal, though any given repetition may be fairly clear. That is, repetition doesn't tell you that they understand, but the way a repetition is done may tell you that someone specifically doesn't understand. In any event, that someone is doing a repetition may leave one as much in the air about whether they understand as one would have been had they not talked. Repetition, then, is not a 'simpler case' of showing understanding than the transformation operation under consideration.

Notice that the operation on some prior utterance can fail; i.e., it perfectly well can be that you produce an understanding utterance that involves that it is a misunderstanding, e.g.:

> *A*: Where are you staying.
> *B*: In Pacific Pallisades.
> *A*: Oh in the center of town.

Then it can be taken that you don't know where Pacific Pallisades is. And, that understanding utterances can fail would seem to be related to the fact they could succeed. Now repetitions can fail also, but when they fail what fails is not the understanding but the hearing, e.g.:

> *A*: Where are you staying.
> *B*: In Pacific Pallisades.
> *A*: Pacific Boulevard?

In that same data there are some nice little things involved in repetitions. Let me give you some discussion on it because it evidences something related to understanding:[2]

> *B*: Now you told me where you are. And you're uh, Palos– uh,
> *A*: Uh no. In La Marina.
> *B*: La Marina. Oh La Marina. Yeah.

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[2]See p. 141, n. 1 above for the actual fragment.

B says "Palos–" as a rememberance of what she was told, and it's corrected. What she was originally told was "La Marina." "Palos–" is the first word of a place in Los Angeles, 'Palos Verdes Estates.' I think that may be fairly uniquely what it could be the beginning of, in that that's not the place that was told her. Nothing like that was in the name originally given her, i.e., 'La Marina.' However, if you were told La Marina and didn't remember that name, then you might well come up with Palos Verdes Estates as the place that was told you, by virtue of this sort of thing: If you're given a name like that, and you analyze out of it and preserve some features of what it names, then when you need the name again you use the features to find the name. Palos Verdes Estates is quite substitutable for La Marina, i.e., they're both specifically Western Los Angeles beach cities, relatively snazzy beach areas. So if what you did when the person told you "I'm staying in La Marina" was to say to yourself, "Where is that?" or "What is that?" then you would come up with such features as not only located it, but located it, e.g., in contrast to where you live. So for B, who lives in a not very snazzy section of middle Los Angeles, such features would be distinctionally relevant. If that's what's happened, then the recovery operation, though wrong here, does exhibit that it was not the name that was remembered but properties of the thing named, i.e., though it's wrong, it's also right in many aspects. And it specifically is not an error via sheer use of terms, i.e., had B said "Mariposa," then there is the issue of the 'M-a-' preservation.

So in this case, where B has been given the name on the prior evening, it is not so much that she is now attempting a 'repeat,' but that she is doing an operation of recovery from an analysis. And there is a range of evidence for the sort of thing I've proposed actually being correct. Over the years we've been collecting what we call '*gist preserving errors*,' where one is trying to recall something and finds that one recalls not just anything else, but something else which stands in a very nice relationship. Titles of things is a main area that we used, and we get things like The Yellow Rolls Royce when what was meant was The Solid Gold Cadillac. These are very common; an error-of-sorts in which you remember the features of the item and find another item with that collection of features, where the other item might well be the right one except that it happens to be wrong. This is the sort of phenomenon that, given one instance, you might figure it's a very rare case, but you could collect a bunch of them in a week.

So, even the case of 'repeating' or 'redelivering,' where we're talking about remembering in a way, can be rather more complicated than it appears. And even with local repeating you can get similar sorts of problems involved. Someone who does what they figure to be a 'repeat' having heard and understood something that was just said, will turn out to have heard something quite different than was just said, but what they hear is something that *could* have been said given, e.g., what they were talking about. I don't have any instances with me, but I've collected some in which the thing heard bears no describable relationship to the thing said, where what may happen is that a conversation is going along; somebody in some way switches topic

without specifically signalling that they've switched topic – which can happen, e.g., if there's a pause, or e.g., if somebody notices something and talks about the thing they noticed – and what's heard is a perfectly okay thing to have said on the ongoing topic.

Returning to the earlier materials, I want to focus on "Oh well *we* went up there oh: about thr–'hh I'd say about *three weeks* ago we was up at Mari*po:sa*." I want to try to locate a problem for which this utterance has interest. One topic that is fundamental to the study of conversation is '*utterance completion.*' It is fundamental in a whole range of ways and I'll mention just a few. If you're going to have a conversational system which operates with speakers talking one at a time, and if you're going to have a conversational system in which not only do they talk one at a time but in which there is – as an ideal – no gap plus no overlap between adjacent utterances, and if there is not some specific definitive way that completion is signalled, e.g., a particle that signals that the utterance is over, then there is a problem of completion which has these implications: A speaker needs to speak in such a way that others can see that he has not yet completed so that they don't start up so as to have him talking and them talking, and he needs also to be able to signal completion in such a way that they can see on its occurrence that it's happened so that you don't get his having stopped and they not having started.

The question then is, what are the mechanisms whereby completion is signalled and recognized? The basic structural unit in terms of which completion is dealt with is 'possible sentence endings.' And possible sentence endings are something that people can see as forthcoming so that on the occurrence of one they can start up. (The reason for saying only 'possible' sentence endings and not 'actual' sentence endings is that perhaps any possible sentence ending but at least most possible sentence endings are also not necessarily sentence endings in that that sentence could be continued.)

Attention is then directed to employing 'possible sentence endings' which has a consequence that speakers go about producing, with exceptions (I don't mean exceptions in any given conversation, but that there are conversations which are exceptions), utterances of sentence-long length. And they do that though the utterance-sentence length varies considerably. That is, they may produce an enormously long sentence within an utterance or they may produce an enormously short one, but where, e.g., the enormously long one is easily transformed into or is maybe a transform of a series of small ones, they nonetheless produce a long sentence rather than a series of sentences. And they may be said to avoid series of sentences, since if they have something they want to say, any possible sentence ending within the series could be treated as an occasion for someone else starting to talk.

That means not only do they produce multi-clause sentences, but they also produce multi-claus sentences of one sort as a preference over another sort. That is, there are two sorts of multi-clause sentence; one that indicates right from within the first clause that it's going to be a multi-clause sentence, and one that doesn't indicate that it's a multi-clause sentence until some second

clause occurs. Those are formally distinct in this way: If somebody uses 'if' in the first clause of an utterance then a hearer can see that the sentence of which this clause is a part will at least have another clause and can be monitored until the 'then' clause occurs, where the 'then' clause will indicate that it's the last clause. That can be compared with such a sentence as, "I went to the movies but I saw a lousy picture," where 'but,' which makes it a multi-clause sentence, doesn't occur until after the first clause of the sentence is over. Were one monitoring the talk for first possible ending, intending then to talk, one could have started simultaneously with 'but.' Now notice that you can get a transform of that sentence which will have this indication at the beginning, e.g, "While I was at the movies I saw a lousy picture."

Now there are reasons for doing the 'but'-type thing. These reasons are indeed relevant to the issue of a one-sentence utterance. One reason is, suppose you produce a one-clause, one-sentence intended complete utterance and nobody starts talking, where you haven't required that they start talking by, e.g., asking a question. Seeing a pause, you may then take it as your task to continue talking or to start again. If you take it that it's reasonable that it's your fault that there's a pause, then a way to deal with that pause as not 'nobody's talk' but 'a pause within your own talk,' is to turn what you say thereafter into a specific 'continuation.' And when you make a specific 'continuation' you get certain other virtues, one of which is that the 'but'-clause provides that it was correct that somebody did not start talking. You also signal that when the 'but'-clause is finished you will have finished the utterance, and it will have been a one-sentence utterance. So at least it needs to be looked to see whether multi-clause sentences in which the signal of multi-clausedness doesn't occur until the second clause, tend to be done where a one-clause sentence has been done and there was a talk gap. If that's so, then these second-clause signals are not inconsistent with the argument that if you're intending to produce what could be a two-sentence utterance, then you can make it a two-clause, one-sentence utterance.

Those, then, are the sorts of things involved in the ways that people go about dealing with the problem of signalling completion and incompletion, and giving that information as early as possible so that others will not see a possible completion when they shouldn't, or fail to see a possible completion when they should – where of course I'm suggesting that things like 'if' are attended for their status as completion signals. So the mechanisms for dealing with completion and incompletion are quite delicate sorts of things, and the sentence-utterance we are examining here may locate a rather nice technique with regard to the issue of completion. I say "may" because I'm not altogether convinced that I have a finding here. Again, here's how it goes:

B: We were in northern California, up– (0.2) weh(hhh)– (0.4) way up in the mountains too.
      (0.4)

A: Oh well <u>we</u> wen' up there oh:: about thr– ˙hh I'd say about <u>three</u>
      <u>weeks</u> ago we was up at Maripo:sa,

And we're focussing now on A's talk: "Oh well *we* went up there oh:: about
thr–" and she stops and does a correction. Now, what kind of thing can that
correction-occasion serve as? Why indeed does she need a correction here?
Well, suppose that at this point – if not at the beginning – she sees where that
utterance will go, i.e., she sees that she's going to say something about
Mariposa, in alternation to "up there." If she were to do that in a grammatic
fashion it would end up as two sentences, i.e., "Oh well *we* went up there oh::
about three weeks ago. We were up at Mari*posa*." Two sentences. If she were
to do it that way, then at "about three weeks ago" would be a possible
completion and a possible point for the other to start talking. And the other
might start talking by reference to the fact that it's not only a possible
completion, but also a perfectly good return to her initial remark, and could
occasion a number of appropriate returns, e.g., "Oh isn't that a coincidence?"
"isn't it lovely up there?" etc., etc. So it's not just a possible sentence, it's a
possible utterance by virtue of its relation to what occasions it. And that's a
problem.

   Now if, within the first sentence of your own utterance you start to do a
correction, whatever sort of correction, you're still within that sentence. If you
can produce such a correction as indicates that, from the correction on, now
the hearer needs to remonitor for sentence completion, then what you can do
is produce almost a complete sentence and start a correction that allows you
to do now another complete sentence. Then you don't face the two-sentence
problem. You end up having in effect done two sentences, but there's never
been a chance for a hearer to find a first possible completion of the first. The
correction allows for hearing that the sentence, and the utterance, is still open,
and a first possible completion has again to be watched for.

   While I wouldn't dream of saying that this stands as a technique that one
could use from the outset to produce two sentences without it having occurred
that there was a possible completion between them, what it means is that
having begun a sentence and having discovered in the course of it that you
need two, you have a means for getting to do two without possible
completion having occurred. Furthermore, she's gone far enough in the first
so that it isn't just that she is replacing the first with the second, but the second
adds to the first, since the first is quite available already as to what was said
in it, i.e., she didn't cut the first off in such a way as to provide that the first
is simply replaced by the second in terms of what the first meant. By virtue
of that, it would not do to just say that she's replacing a bad start with a good
start. She is in fact here achieving two sentences without having any place
occur in the course of those two sentences which could be seen as a possible
completion.

   Turning to another matter, what interested me in the first place about this
data was the sequence of places, in terms of, a place is named, then it appears
that the other was there too, and then it turns out that they weren't in the

same place. And questions come up like why pick 'northern California' in the first place? Why not pick what gets used eventually, 'Red Bluff'? And, is there any lawfulness to such a sequence? I'll start off with a discussion of 'northern California,' and try to give some characterization of its use.

There is one obvious basis for it, they are southern Californians. A southern Californian knows what northern California is, i.e., pretty much any southern Californian can tell another southern Californian "I was in northern California" successfully, i.e., without the other saying "Where's that?" as compared to, e.g., "I was in Red Bluff" where someone might well say "Where's that?" And if you started with that and they said "Where's that?" then you're likely to say "In northern California." Now if they were northern Californians they wouldn't say "I was in northern California," they might say "I was up in Kern County" or something like that. The place name they choose turns on where they are, where they're from, and what they know about each other; at least in that they know each other is a southern Californian.

You could extract a general rule from that, the general rule being: When you are doing a description (much more generally than places), in the first instance pick, if you can, such a description as you know that the other knows. Let me give now a really neat result of that. Here's the data:

> *A*: I'm reading one of uh Harold Sherman's books.
> *B*: Mm hm,
> *A*: I think we read one, one time, about life after death'r something,
> *B*: Mm hm,
> *A*: And uh, <u>this</u> is How Tuh Make uh ESP Work For You.
> *B*: Mm hm,
> *A*: And it's <u>ex</u>cellent.

Let me here make a parenthetical remark. Lots of people are amazed at people's gullibility. "Imagine all these people who believe in ESP." Now, one has to come to appreciate the way in which people believe in ESP. I want to introduce a term, and it's not to be heard in the way, e.g., a title of a how-to book would be heard. The term is 'practical mysticism.' What I mean when I say that people are 'practical mystics' is available as the talk goes on:

> *A*: And it's <u>ex</u>cellent.
> *B*: Well, when you get through // with it,–
> *A*: And he talks about–
> *B*: Is it yer book?
> *A*: No, Eloise uh brought it by, she was going away for a couple of weeks, and she brought it by with a <u>note</u> on, that s'd– it was a book she thought I would like, and uh, uh:: if I could, uh she'd like to have it back in two 'r three weeks.
> *B*: Mm hm.
> *A*: Uh I'll be through with it before she gets <u>back</u>.

B :   Uh//huh,
A :   But uh,

Then there's a bit of talk about the book, the author, etc. And then:

B :   Is it an expensive book?
A :   I would guess it is, but the– the price has been clipped off of the
        cover, you know
B :   Mm hm,

Now, 'expensive' means 'expensive for a book,' where 'expensive for a book'
is grounds for not buying it but borrowing it. Now, imagine yourself a really
serious believer in ESP, and then consider the sorts of uses that ESP would
have; like obviously you could use it on the stock market. And suppose I
came to you and said "You really believe in ESP, well here's a book, I
guarantee it. I want $50,000 for it." Whatever I asked, it would only set up
the task of getting the money. For people who believe in ESP in the sense that
they operate with it, they use it all the time, the way to see the special
character of their belief in ESP is that a book about ESP is still a book, and
you'd just as soon wait two weeks to borrow it than to buy it even if it was
$2.95; or if it costs $8.00 you'll get it out of the library.
      The lesson is that when you go about disparaging people who believe in
ESP, you have to try to figure out what does it mean to believe in ESP. It's
probably quite different than believing, e.g., that the car that's bearing down
on you doesn't see you. You don't then figure, e.g., well what's it going to
cost for an operation, but you jump. And I'm sure that these ladies would
jump. That is, for things that anybody knows are practical, they'll behave
practically; and indeed they behave practically with respect to ESP. Which is
to say that while they say they believe in it and they talk a good deal about
it and they go to meetings and they use it all the time, they're not staking any
money on it. So, at least insofar as believing means putting your money where
your mouth is, the character of their believing is obscure.
      Okay, returning to "I'm reading one of Harold Sherman's books. I think
we read one, one time, about life after death or something." And by the way,
the whole character of the state of religion in our day is evidenced by that "or
something," as though it could be about life after death, or not. What could
the "or something" be? Anyway, the question I wanted to deal with was, why
in the world does she say "I'm reading one of Harold Sherman's books"? It's
not the way in which one would regularly identify a book, i.e., one might say
"I'm reading this book, *How To Make ESP Work For You*." However, if the
rule 'pick some way of identifying an object which will permit the other to see
that they know it' operates, then there is a real elegance to her selection. She
finds a way to formulate that book which permits the other to see that the
other knows, not that book but a book of the same class, i.e., 'Harold
Sherman, we read one of his books.' That then locates this book in the way
in which a title does not.

That she goes through that kind of work to find a way to refer to the book is a most elegant sort of evidence that one does work at finding a description for something, and does have a preference, if one can use it, for building such a description as will permit the other to see that you know that they know what you're talking about. "One of Harold Sherman's books" specifically involves just that sort of a thing, and involves going out of your way to do it in a way that saying "northern California" doesn't. But 'northern California' is a simple instance of the same phenomenon, and it's in that way that one picks 'northern California' before 'Red Bluff.'

Fragment

Verb uses; 'A puzzle about pronouns'

One kind of curious thing about some verb uses is, suppose you go to a luncheon and you meet somebody there who is serving. They are likely to describe what they're doing as "I'm helping X." That is to say, what you get is 'helping X' as an operation over a scope of jobs you could be doing. If X is hosting then you can be 'helping X,' if X is washing dishes you can be 'helping X,' etc., where what you report is how you *come* to be doing what you're doing; where, in a way it's obvious, I suppose, what you're doing. People can perfectly well see what you're doing; you're washing dishes or you're serving or you're doing something else. And what you report is how you come to be doing that, by reference to somebody else's responsibilities. In reporting what you're doing, you preserve who's business it is to do it, and just report your own actions by reference to that you're doing it for them. And it's of interest that those sorts of terms involve that a description of what you're doing is not, for example, observable by somebody who was to see you. That is to say, if you were to offer a description it would be "Yesterday I helped Mary" rather than "Yesterday I washed dishes." Now that means, of course, that there's some complication in attempting to arrive at a description of what somebody is doing, by virtue of the fact that what they figure they're doing and what you can see them doing can turn out to be independent, in the sense that what they figure they're doing turns on their relationship to somebody else and what that other person is doing.

Here's a same sort of thing. "Her house is beautiful, I'll take you up there some time." The 'take' is a similar sort of thing. In characterizing what we're doing as 'I'll take you up there," that preserves the relationship between me and that other person, and you and me, as compared to "We'll go up there some time." If two people are together and they're asked what they're doing, they will often say, not, e.g., "We're going to the movies," but one of them will say "I'm taking X to the movies." And that can be a point of humor, if you do a reversal on it. If it's a man and a little kid, then if the man says "He's taking me to the ballgame" or "He's taking me to the movies" or "He's taking me to Disneyland," that's just to say "I'm taking *him* to Disneyland." Which is also different than "We're going to Disneyland."

And I guess that, that the description is 'taking to,' not 'going to' matters, since, e.g., people complain, not that we don't go anywhere, but "You never

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This fragment was not among those Winter 1969 lectures that Sacks decided to have transcribed. It just happened to be one of the few surviving tapes, and was transcribed after his death. One source of its interest is that it may represent the sorts of lectures that did occur but which Sacks didn't think warranted transcribing.

take me anywhere." We may 'go' a lot of places, but "You never take me anywhere" allows for a complainable position. So, for example, there's a point in people's lives at which X takes Y somewhere; that is, by virtue of 'X takes.' Then there is a point at which they need no longer use that; if, say, they have a joint budget. Then X is no longer 'taking Y' somewhere, they're just 'going' to those places, and it apparently remains a complainable by reference to a past. That is to say, the romance is out of the marriage when they only go places together, he never takes her anywhere. X and Y going somewhere is not, then, necessarily equivalent to X taking Y somewhere. And of course X taking Y somewhere is not the same thing as Y taking X somewhere, whereas X and Y going somewhere doesn't make a choice on whether X is taking Y there or Y is taking X there.

And those are obviously issues that turn out to matter, so that if X is in fact taking Y somewhere, and X is female and Y is male, then X may sometimes give Y the money to pay, rather than pay, so that it shouldn't be seen that X is taking Y there but will be seen as Y taking X there. That is, who turns out to pay is read by the cashier – or in the mind of the parties is read by the cashier – as who is taking whom, and that's something that they want to bring off right, for whatever reasons. And people will specifically go through a business of transferring money before they enter, or secretly transferring money, so as to have that end up the right way – though it's not anybody they know that's receiving the money, but it's nonetheless an embarrassable sort of thing.

The problem is, of course, that romance is defined as something that operates in pre-marriage, where everything is 'taking to,' so that if you want to preserve romance, you have to preserve some of those things which are hard to preserve. And there are, of course, a whole set of efforts that people go into, to preserve that sort of a thing. The movie *Eight And A Half* deals with one of the classical themes, that sex should be a lovers' relationship and not a married couples' relationship. And couples play at that all the time; that is to say, having their evening sex is something that came off as a seduction, and not routine. There's a very large orientation to that sort of phenomenon, and I guess people can become fairly adept at achieving for themselves the observability of that they're doing something other than just going to dinner, just going to bed, etc.

Here's another sort of thing, that's of no large consequence, maybe. It involves things like "I imagine," "I guess," "I suppose," and things like that. Where these involve not only the issue of whether you know or not – where they're saying that you don't know – but they also have a sequential import. If you say "I imagine" or "I guess" or "I suppose" and things like that, then you're characteristically inviting the other party to also take a position. That is to say, you get a differentiation when you use those things, where, if you say "I suppose," then the other will say, for example, "Yes, that's true" in distinction from, for example, just "Uh huh." And they may be done, indeed, where you take it that the other knows something, as a way of getting them to tell you what you figure they know. Here's one:

> *A*: And it left her quite permanently damaged, I suppose.
> *B*: Apparently.

Okay, let me talk a little bit about "have to." First of all, "I have to do X" is a way of making a rejection of something else, so that "I have to do X" relates X to Y; Y being something that somebody proposes: "Do you want to come over?" "I have to do X." Now, "I have to" can, when it is being talked of, be referred to as "He says he had to" or "He had to." And those involve how it is that you accept the excuse. If you believe the excuse you say "He had to do X" (or just "He can't come"). If you doubt the excuse you say "He said he had to do X."

And it's curious that a bunch of things are pretty much introduced as "I have to." So you can perfectly well turn down a proposed evening's engagement by saying "I have to work," whereas you don't quite do the same thing when you say "I'm sorry, I want to work." Indeed, there are a bunch of things which are just not properly said with "I want to," of which 'work' is one. If you want to achieve being odd, then you make that combination as a way of talking about certain things. Now it's of course the case that for any Y that you are invited to, while you may be able to say "I have to do X," not any X will do. So when somebody sends you an invitation to a wedding on Sunday morning, you can't write back and say "I'm sorry, I have to wash my car." And if somebody calls you up and says "So-and-so died, the funeral is tomorrow," you can't say "I have to go to class." And that's relevant to how it is that certain sorts of formal situations operate to involve you in avoiding having to even say what's involved. That is to say, for a large class of engagements, 'prior engagements' – whatever they are – are offerable as excuses for turning down next engagements.

One other small thing. Here's a line that goes "One night I was with this guy that I liked a real lot." The only thing I want to point out about it is that it's not exactly clear, when "liked" is used, whether it means 'exclusively then, and no longer.' It's one of those things for which there is a choice involved, such that one can use, though talking about a past event, "that I like a real lot." That is to say, for that sort of thing you can use the present tense. The choice of tense, then, can be informative, and you have, then, two options.

There's an interesting parallel, in a way (this is a wrong thing to do, but it's a way of exposing a kind of ambiguity). In English, for example, 'you' is obscure as to whether it's singular or plural. A phone call goes like this:

> *A*: Hi Judy,
> *B*: Hi.
> *A*: What are you doing? Why don't you come over?

Now, in French it would be very hard to leave it to her to say whether she'll come over, or whether she and her husband will. As it happens in this case,

she says "Well, we're going out," and then he says "Well, I thought you and your husband might come over."

Another minor sort of a point has to do with the use of 'do.' It's a very interesting term in English, by virtue of the fact that it is one of the few things that are, in English, pro-verbs. Like pronouns. 'Do' is, quote, a substitute for other verbs. So there are a lot of things that you can say with a particular verb that you can also say with 'do.' In some languages there are well-developed pro-verbal systems. In English, 'do' is supposed to be the most prominent, though I think, and others think, that there are other pro-verbs in English, of which 'say' is a prominent case; 'say' being, for one, the pro-verb for the 'performatives.' But one small interest of 'do' is that it can be, for some things, a way of indicating that what it's being used as a substitute for is *routinely* done. A guy says, "One day some guys and I were doing houses." Now "doing houses" is a way of saying "we were out robbing houses." And you can say "One day some guys and I were out robbing houses," where you make no indication of whether it is that you rob houses routinely or not. If you say "doing houses" then you're making a statement of a different order. And that usage is rather more general than that; indeed, I was surprised that it's there, because its main use in that routinized fashion is academic. That is to say, "They do philosophy" rather than "They're philosophers." The 'do' is a way of indicating a professional attitude, as I suppose "doing houses" is a way of indicating that you're at least not altogether amateur at robbing houses. The choice, then, of the pro-verb versus the verb may be non-incidental.

With respect to these performatives there are some things you want to differentiate, so that, for example whereas "I promise" does 'promising,' something like 'I mean" doesn't do 'meaning;' what it does is 'correcting.' That is to say, when you say "I mean" you're asserting that what you're saying now stands in a relation to something you just said, and could stand as a correction to what you just said. And that can go with "he means" just as well.

I'm sure there's a vast pile of further things you could say about verbs, but now let me give you a nice little puzzle about pronouns. Here's a quotation from the book *The Development of Logic* written by John and Mary Kneale (Oxford University Press). It's the authoritative, as they say, history of logic. It's really extraordinarily good. The quotation is from page 61.

> The method of exposition in the *Prior Analytics* differs in two notable respects from that in the *De Interpretatione*.

Prior Analytics is one of Aristotle's treatises on logic, and *De Interpretatione* is another, earlier of his treatises.

> In the first place, Aristotle uses letters as term-variables, that is, as signs to mark gaps which may be filled by any general terms we choose,

If P, then Q. Alright?

provided gaps marked by the same letter are filled by the same term in any one statement.

This is a new and epoch-making device in logical technique. It is used for the first time, without explanation, in the second chapter of the *Prior Analytics*, which deals with conversion, and it seems to be Aristotle's invention.

In earlier works, generality is indicated by a rather clumsy use of pronouns, or by examples in which it is left to the reader to see the irrelevance of the special material. Both methods are used by Plato and Aristotle.

An example of the former, from the *Republic*, is: "When things are of such a nature as to be relative to something, then those that are of a certain sort are relative to something of a certain sort." The latter is used by Aristotle in *De Interpretation*: "The denial proper to the affirmation, 'every man is white' is 'not every man is white;' that proper to the affirmation 'some man is white' is 'no man is white'." Plato's statement would be almost unintelligible without the illustrations which he adds, and Aristotle requires the reader to understand that the particular terms, 'man' and 'white,' are irrelevant to the point he is making. In both cases the use of variables would have given greater clarity and conciseness. For the statement of more complicated logical rules, such as those of the syllogism, their use is almost indispensable.

The point is that at one point in the history of logic, generalizations are done by these pronouns. It was a great invention to replace pronouns with letters. Now, could we come up with some thoughts on why pronouns were used in the first place? Why they were a good first attempt? And why they then turned out to be lousy? It can't be solved just by logical considerations; you have to give some thought to the nature of pronouns as linguistic phenomena. There is a bit more about it on page 61 of *Development of Logic*, but they don't come up with an answer. In due course I'll give some thoughts on it.

Part III
Winter 1970

Lecture 1

Foreshortened versus expanded greeting sequences; Voice recognition tests; Reason for a call; 'My mind is with you;' Tellability

My idea is to give a bunch of lectures under the title 'Overall Structural Organization of Conversation.' The title names a type of organization of conversation which is discriminated from other types of organization that I figure conversation has. This type deals, roughly, with beginnings and endings, and how beginnings work to get from beginnings to something else, and how, from something else, endings are gotten to. And also the relationship – if there is one – between beginnings and endings.

I figured I would first off do something that has two sorts of lessons to it. First, I would seek to give some idea that it's not the case that overall structural organization of conversation is at all the same thing as comprehensive analysis of a single conversation and, in particular, that it doesn't pay to try, it isn't a pointed thing to do, to attempt a comprehensive analysis of a single conversation. Secondly, in contrast perhaps to the first point, it nonetheless pays to work at some single conversation as elaborately as one can. So I'm saying it doesn't pay to attempt a comprehensive analysis of some single conversation; I'm not saying pull out what you can and forget the conversation that you happen to have pulled it out of. I think it does pay to do as elaborate and extended a working on a single conversation as you can bring off.

To instance those points I thought I would take some single conversation that I've spent some amount of time on, that I also think is kind of a simple conversation, and consider it here. There will be some discussion of its overall structural organization, but we'll see that there are a lot of other things. And maybe we'll see that the task of comprehensively analyzing some single conversation may not have any particular point to it. My strategy for suggesting the unpointedness of a comprehensive analysis of a single conversation will be to show the enormous range of disconnected materials that one gets into in studying some single conversation. So, for example, if you thought an analysis of a single conversation in book form would look something like *The First Five Minutes*, in which you have a running discussion paralleling the conversation, then I would hope to have you see that there

might be at some places discussions running to hundreds and hundreds of pages and other places that were thin, and that the connectedness of the parts would only be guaranteed by the way the pages were put together.

Furthermore, for the sorts of problems that any piece of material in any conversation happens to pose, that piece of material is only incidentally likely to be the appropriate material for investigating the problem that it poses, and therefore you would regularly find that you want other stuff to do the investigation on. It would then be just slapped into the running commentary, and in no sense would you be able to say that some analysis developed on some fragment was developed on that fragment; it indeed had to be developed on something else and just put in here because the issue gets touched off in some fashion. On the other hand, a command of the intricacies of a particular conversation will permit all sorts of its parts to be dealt with much better than they would be if the fragment that you were interested in were simply isolated for consideration.

So I'll be going through a range of things; some kinds of topics that were in fact generated out of a study of this conversation, some that might well have been but weren't, others that this conversation implicates but that were developed completely differently and I can't conceive of how I could have ever gotten them from this. There will be some awfully neat things and some things that are extraordinarily crude.

Let me say a little bit about this conversation, to locate it by reference to some of the things I may then say about it. It's part of a three-part sequence in some serious sense, in which Estelle calls Jeanette, and out of that first conversation Jeanette comes to call Penelope, and in the third conversation, out of the second, out of the first, Jeanette calls Estelle. Each of the conversations runs about the same time, some two minutes, and they all more or less deal with the event at Bullock's department store that's talked of in the first conversation. I'll start with something which falls under the title of the course, and that is the beginning of the first conversation.[1]

Jeanette :	Hello,
Estelle :	Jeanette,
Jeanette :	Yeah,
Estelle :	Well I just thought I'd– re–better report to you what's happen' at <u>Bu</u>llocks toda::y?

I've been studying greeting sequences for a long time, and the characteristic ways that greeting sequences come off; by which I mean such sorts of things as: Greeting exchanges, name exchanges, then how-are-yous, then things coming out of how-are-yous. And there is a whole range of familiar things that we might bring to our minds as to how greeting sequences come off. A thing about greeting sequences – taking only what is perfectly obviously a 'greeting sequence;' i.e., without getting into any issues as to 'is that part of

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[1]The class was given copies of the transcript of the first conversation.

the greeting sequence or not?' – is that they are characteristically not as brief as the one here. That is to say, a greeting sequence generally looks like a six- or seven-utterance thing, and this one is then kind of brief.

Given that kind of fact, I began to focus on this sort of question: A greeting sequence can be considered by analogy with a chess game in that it has certain sorts of at least simple features that are very similar to a chess game. For one, there is – and in an even stronger sense than in a chess game – an utterly normative first move, "Hello" (as compared to 'pawn to queen four'). "Hello" is, say, essentially universal with very very small special exceptions for telephone calls, e.g., in an interrupted conversation or in an immediately returning second conversation (like in the third conversation here, which is a return conversation between the same two parties and is expected, the phone answerer goes "Yeah?" instead of "Hello"). Other sorts of exceptions have to do with business situations where an answerer will do some identificatory announcement (e.g., the name of the business, a telephone number) instead of "Hello."

The brevity of this sequence is not at all the crucial thing, but it permitted a focussing on what gets done within a greeting sequence, and how it gets done, and how that is related to moving from the greeting sequence to something else, like a 'first topic.' I will eventually argue that the phenomenon 'first topic' is a part of the overall structural organization of conversation – or at least getting into a 'first topic' is a part. So that 'first topic' is not merely a way of talking about some topic that happens to be first, but is in fact a thing that we can give an analytic name to. And I'll develop bases for saying that in due course.

Now thinking in terms of 'moves,' one could ask what kind of thing can be done at any given point to, e.g., foreshorten the greeting sequence and then perhaps get into a position to do something else yourself, or extend it and leave open the possibility that the other party will do something else, or just allow it to go along and see what will happen. That is to say, one can think of the tactics in the greeting sequence as possible ways to, e.g., control who gets a first chance to raise a 'first topic.' And a first question that leads you to ask is, who among the parties – now differentiated into 'caller' and 'called' – has, say, the first opportunity to make such a move as does some sort of control of the length of the greeting sequence and its consequences, and who gets to do its consequences. And in that regard, then, if "Hello" by the called is normative, we would want to know whether the first utterance of the caller can be used to start a move toward making the first topic, and how they could do that. And if caller has first position to possibly start a move towards topical talk, then we could say that called only gets the possibility of doing that themselves if caller doesn't. That is to say, called's possible first position for moving towards, say, topic control, will only occur in the third utterance of the conversation – if it can occur there, depending upon what's happened so far. There is, then, a differential position with respect to getting a first chance to move towards getting into a first topic. I'll try to show some ways that callers can do it and some ways that calleds can do it if callers don't, and

I'll also discuss some basis for neither of them doing it, or one, or the other, etc.

The argument I'll develop will say that the sequence here is an instance of caller taking their first chance to generate a minimal greeting sequence; one that puts them in a position to make first topic. Now, there's the initial "Hello" as a required first thing. That simply gives the caller a chance to do something, for which there is a not very large set of alternatives: He can return "Hello," do variants on "Hello" like "Hi," do things like called's name as is done here. If caller does the called's name, or at least some intended recognition of the phone's answerer, then that gets dealt with by a couple of variants. "Yeah" is obviously one, and another obviously is "Yeah?" with an intonation rise. I think those are quite different sorts of things in terms of the discussion I'm developing, i.e., in terms of what that puts the caller in a position to then do. It's a difference involving that "Yeah?" seems to have as its import that it's caller's business to now, e.g., identify themselves and not, e.g., to move to topic beginning. So you might get:

> *Jeanette* :   Hello,
> *Estelle* :   Jeanette,
> *Jeanette* :   Yeah?
> *Estelle* :   This's Estelle.

And then you go into another greeting sequence:

> *Jeanette* :   Oh hi!
> *Estelle* :   Hi.

Or "Hi, how are you?" etc.

We don't yet have any reason to say why somebody might be interested in not having the how-are-yous done, for example. For one, if they are arrived at, then, one how-are-you being done and answered, another is appropriate, i.e., "How are you?" "Fine, how are you." And there are – just to make the thing kind of intuitively plain – perfectly dandy reasons for avoiding how-are-yous. Suppose you're calling somebody up to tell them that their husband died. You don't want a sequence including the caller saying "Hi, how are you?" "Fine," and then "Gee I'm sorry to tell you the bad news . . ." That is to say, there are occasions – and it doesn't have to be that dramatic at all – in which you don't want to elicit some such statement as "Fine" from a party you're calling. It may be that you have bad news for them, or bad news about yourself – and if you're going to deliver bad news about yourself, you might not want them in a position of having said "Fine;" i.e., of having already been put in an embarrassing position relative to the news that you're now going to deliver. So at least in that way one can see that how-are-yous are possibly something to be avoided, and that there are perhaps then also ways that they can be avoided. And it's one way in which one can come to see the package of "Hello" and "How are you" and all the rest of that, as containing

parts that people can attend the separation of and may have differential interests in the use of.

Now, plainly enough the use of "Jeanette" as a first utterance by the caller does a series of jobs. It claims recognition of the answerer and, as well, informs that person that its user feels entitled to address them in the way they have just done. So that, leaving aside whether the called can, from its enunciation, recognize the caller, "Jeanette" is markedly different in the information it gives the called than would be, say, "Mrs Jones." As is perfectly well known, names of address are not freely exchangeable and, leaving aside the issue of why names of address are used as compared to "Hello" or something like "Hello," its use puts you in the position of choosing among such things as you can use with respect to the recipient. And by that choice you then inform the recipient about what you take it your rights are with respect to them, e.g., that you know them well enough to call them by their first name; that you recognize who they are. And it's not only that "Mrs Jones" would be an alternative to "Jeanette," but it might come off with a question intonation, indicating perhaps that one is not even knowledgeable as to whether the person who picks up the phone is she.

But at least for the beginning of phone conversations, not much later than first or second move, another altogether independent thing that's going on, besides these kinds of declarations of what my rights are with respect to you, or what my obligations are with respect to you, is the kind of information that the sheer saying of something gives to the other, i.e., the chance to do a voice recognition of the caller. And let me introduce some parenthetical kinds of considerations about this matter of voice recognition. It seems to me that kind of an interesting question is, what sorts of investigations do people do of the properties of new institutions? Do they try to find out, e.g., what its distinctive features are, what its distinctive virtues are? Under that general kind of a question one might bring the telephone to bear, to see a kind of neat thing: It seems at least plausible that while people have for a long time played recognition games with each other, until the telephone they could not perhaps have played voice recognition games with any seriousness (they might have been able to play some small versions of voice recognition games, e.g., through a closed door). But a thing they came to do with the telephone was to use it as a vehicle of *voice recognition tests*. That is, we know that what a party has with respect to somebody over the phone is only their voice. And what they do is to employ this feature of the phone that you only hear the voice to build an institution in which they test out 'Do you recognize me?' from the voice. A great deal of phone beginnings are, then, either specifically or in effect voice tests in which the other party is now supposed to show that they know who it is where you're not telling them. And therefore the sort of thing that you say right off can constitute that sort of a challenge to them. And of course, furthermore, we've all encountered people who specifically make it a test, i.e., who from right off will not allow you to go along listening and talking until you find out, but who will say "I bet you don't know who this is," and then you've got to come across with a name.

Rather elaborate other information gets developed as well, having to do with, e.g., the timing of a call. That is, call timings will get used by parties to exhibit their attention to each other as an intimate matter. Everyone will have had the experience of hearing the phone ring and saying to themselves or somebody else in the room that they know who it is, and then announcing to the person on the phone once they find out who it is, that they knew it was them. So that people also use the scheduling phenomena around a call as kinds of information. For each of them, the fact that the call occurs at some time permits them to have developed, and on each occasion to show, sorts of intimacies.

Now, I raise that as I say parenthetically, only to say that it kind of suggests that an examination in which the modes of interaction were considered and the telephone's distinctive features were located, was then used to develop something that could deal with things like 'intimacy.' It may well then be that institutions could get examined for their unique possibilities, and when their unique possibilities are found, they're employed. We might then look to other developed institutions for which we can have some handle on their history, to see the sorts of work done on them which have nothing particularly to do with 'what they're supposed to do' or anything like that, and which then get elaborated on to make them both formally analyzed and comfortable institutions.

So in this case anyway, with "Jeanette" used in second position, we get something that is in effect a voice-recognition test by Estelle – she never does give her name. The use of "Jeanette" also does such things as claim that I know who you are, that I can call you by your first name, etc. It also has, apart from those sorts of jobs, the sequencing job of providing that the next piece of talk should be something like a "Yeah." That is, "Jeanette," seen sequentially, is to be treated as a kind of a guess, and gets then some return which says at least 'that's correct.' It can also get a return that says 'that's correct' plus perhaps a request for the name to be returned, as with "Yeah?" (And we can note that "Yeah?" leads us into a different sequence than "Yeah," i.e., it leads to a recycling of greetings.) If you get "Yeah" after the name, then it's possible to move into a first topic if you care to – and I'm differentiating a 'first topic' from, e.g., "Hi, how are you."

So what we can say about the Name → "Yeah" exchange put right after "Hello" is that the caller's use of a name may constitute his first chance to possibly control the length of the greeting sequence and also control that he will be in first position to raise a topic. That is to say, "Yeah" will be coming in one or another form, and if "Yeah" comes as contrasted to "Yeah?" he can then move into a topic, i.e., his first chance to do that will be in the fourth position. Thinking of the thing in terms of moves, then, what we want to see is that there is some strategy for getting into the first topic by the fourth position, i.e., by the caller's second move.

We can then look to see whether there are ways that a *called* can do that, or better. I have a sequence that goes something like this:

A :   Hello,
B :   Good morning.
A :   Where've you been!

"Where have you been?" in the sort of discussion I'm offering, seems to involve us in some rather elaborate sorts of things. For one, what's plainly involved is a use of a recognition of who it is that's calling, and also a move from a greeting sequence into some other sort of talk – here done by the called. Now, if I can just suggest that calleds are not in the first instance in a position to get to do first topic talk, then how and why calleds go about doing that would be something we would want to focus on, and I think I can say a bunch of things about why they would. That is to say, there are developable bases for "Where have you been?" being done in the called's second utterance – the first utterance they could have done it with.

Roughly, at this point something like this is involved: A kind of fundamental thing for telephone conversations in particular, though it may sound on introduction to be nothing of import, is the distinction between 'caller' and 'called.' A thing that called can hardly ever get out from under is that they are the called and the other is the caller, and that there are all kinds of things affiliated with that. For some sets of people it's a funny consequence of that each has free rights to call the other, each should call the other, that it's an embarrassment to the one who receives the call every time he receives the call, i.e., I should call you as much as you call me, therefore every time you call me you embarrass me because I haven't called you. Now what something like that generates is that such recipients attend sometimes to see if they have the makings of transforming a call made to them, to a call that wasn't really made to them. And a way they do it is by right off, as fast as they possibly can, attempting to indicate that they've been trying to call the other party all day, all week, etc., so that it's just incidental that you called me because I've been trying to call you, and let's just forget about it if we can, that you're the caller. So things like "Where have you been?" which might get followed by "I've been here," "Gee I've been calling you all day," "Oh right, I was out for a minute" or whatever, are attempts to transform caller–called into something else, and those attempts are non-trivial. And aside from the possibility that they're done in special circumstances I think they're done by reference to the kinds of logic that I laid out.

Among other ways that caller–called matters is for whole ranges of things that get done in the call. If, for example, I have some news that stands as grounds for my calling you, e.g., I just got engaged, and I haven't called you, and you call me after some delay, and I deliver that news to you in your call to me, for all you know I'm delivering that news only because you called me and I wouldn't have called you to tell you. That is to say, there is a phenomenon which I will give a good deal of attention to, which I'll call *'reason-for-a-call call.'* I want to suggest that it's a very important phenomenon, in that there's a problem which that phenomenon will help us to solve:

Somebody comes up to you and says "How's Joe?" Joe's some friend of yours, they know him more or less. And you say "Oh, he's great!" You say that in full confidence, and nonetheless you haven't talked to him in a month. Now how in the world is it that you can go about feeling full confidence in how Joe is though you haven't spoken to him recently (it might be only two days since you've talked, but that wouldn't effect the issue of how in the world do you figure that you know he's okay). The answer to that may be something like this: If persons are in such a relationship that they know that as between them if there's a reason for a call then a call will be made, then the fact of an extended silence is as informative as some call. That is to say, they may have calls that come from time to time, but they know that if there are no calls, that means there's no reason for a call. And since the class 'reasons for calls' has known members (marriages, new jobs, births, deaths, divorces, etc.), then silence can tell you for somebody with whom you stand in a reason-for-a-call relationship, that no such things have happened and you can therefore know that they're fine.

By virtue of that, it's a very tender thing for a call to occur and one of the participants have a reason that they haven't used. Because what that says is that there may be some things that we consider a reason for a call that you have not told me. And therefore I may not know what's up with you when we're not conversing. If somebody were thereafter to ask "How's Joe?" I might say "I'm not sure," where it's not a matter of greater or lesser time elapsed, it's just that I'm no longer in a position to feel sure that you will call on reasons for a call. So if you catch people with reasons for calls that they haven't used, that's a criterial thing for the status of your relationship and for your confidence in the fact that you know how all sorts of people are whom you haven't spoken to over varying lengths of time, for whom what you need to know is that they will call when there's a reason for a call.

And that kind of thing can then be relevant to the types of beginnings in which calleds attempt to deal with that they are indeed the called, i.e., if they can't say "I've been calling you for days!" "Where have you been!" they will do a thing like "Isn't that amazing! I was just about to call you. I've got some great news!" And you can get elaborately detailed stuff like, "I was waiting for the prices to change on calls, so while it's eight o'clock in New York it's not time yet out here . . ." etc.

In going through a thing like this I think it may be worth pointing out that the explanation can be bought without having any feelings that it's *intuitively correct* for you that that's what's involved. That is to say, one doesn't have a feeling for 'an organization of reasons-for-call-type friends.' You don't classify your friends that way. Nor when you're engaged in doing these kinds of strategies do you conceive of them as ways of dealing with that he would wander around later on feeling that I don't call him when I have a reason for a call. But I think you can come to see that there are two sorts of things, reasons-for-call-type calls, and also relationships which turn on the occurrence of reason-for-call-type calls. And once you have reason-for-call-type calls, and relationships around those types of calls, then you can begin to see what kind

of an interest there is in the caller–called status, in attempts to change it or weaken it or whatever, in the course of a call.

Further, you can come to see the relationship between reason-for-a-call-type calls and the strategies for getting from the greeting exchange to something else, where that candidate something else is at least for some calls the reason-for-the call as 'first topic.' It can be done overtly, "The reason I called was . . ." or there are other ways to do it. But – and now I'm going to make a weird argument – there can be attempts to avoid the occurrence of a 'first topic.' What's weird about this argument is that I'm making a thing, 'first topics,' and then saying they're variously dealt with, rather than taking it that whatever topic is done first is a 'first topic.' So: There can be attempts to avoid the occurrence of a 'first topic.' 'First topics' are special in a whole variety of ways, including that in reporting on a conversation in another conversation, some item from that conversation can be reported specifically as "The first thing he said was . . ." Now, you don't have lists, preserving the sequence of things raised in a conversation, which you can use in other conversations, but you do have a preservation of 'first topic' status. So you don't say "The fourth topic raised when I was talking to Joe was . . ." but you do say "The first thing he told me was . . ." So if there is interest by people in doing such things as taking items from one conversation and using them in subsequent conversations, then by putting something into first position you can thereby do something about its reusability in further conversations. That is, if you put something into first position, use it as 'first topic,' then you can achieve some sorts of immortality to it or movement to it. You make it available for later use as a 'first thing he told me.'

But as well, we can come to see that a thing that people do in conversation is to provide that they do not have a 'first topic' item. So that though they indeed talk about a bunch of things, they avoid giving something as a thing to be so marked. There may be things one is willing to say, wants to say, but one may be unwilling to have any of those things be seen as the reason for the call or as something distinctly important. One way that is managed is to build up the beginning of the conversation in such a way as to have nothing in it markable as 'first topic,' 'reason for call,' etc. So, for example, in the 'how are you' sequence we can get "How are you?" "Fine" "What's going on?" "Nothing," where "What's going on can be an occasion for putting in the item of news which would then be treated as 'first topic,' 'reason for the call,' etc. You can say "Nothing" and then later go on to say a bunch of things that are going on – where when you say "Nothing" it does not occasion hanging up.

And there are bases for that: As there are reasons-for-call calls, and reason-for-call-type relationships, so, too – and in some ways they are the same people who are in relationships that involve them in being required to call when there is a reason for a call – are there people who may be required to call when there's *no* reason for a call. Persons are often in a position, when they are calling, to bring off that they're calling for no reason, "I just felt like calling." Now, you may also have news. And that can be a problem in this

way: There are routinely occasions in which you pick up the phone, the party
at the other end is identified, and you then and there know that there's
business of some sort, i.e., you know that they are people who only call you
when they have business to do. That can become a problem as between some
people if they know that they should have a relationship in which they call
when there's no reason, but somehow they always get into a position of calling
only when there is a reason. And such sorts of people can elaborately attempt
to avoid the reason for the call being in fact placed as 'reason-for-call,' but
mentioned somewhere in passing, perhaps. And plainly you can achieve
'personality characteristics' by doing that, i.e., achieve being 'phlegmatic' by,
only well into the call and 'in passing,' giving some announcement that others
would figure that they would have made right off. Of course there is also the
possibility that the candidate 'first topic' or 'reason-for-call' item, when it is
put elsewhere, is *seeable* when it occurs as having been 'delayedly placed,' i.e.,
placing it elsewhere might or might not bring off that you don't think much
of it; it might be seen as, that you're 'trying to bring off that it's nothing very
much.' So there are other possibilities than sheer issues of what kind of
classifying you're *intending* to do, which have to do with how you bring off
who you are with some item of news.

Now when we have at hand things like 'first topics' and 'reasons-for-calls,'
their positioning, how you get to them and how you avoid them, we can see
that talk about strategy for handling a beginning is important, and we have
real motivation for looking at the organizations of greeting sequences relative
to these things. We want also to see that there can be differential strategies,
since the two parties can have quite different interests in getting rapidly to a
first topic, avoiding a first topic, having themselves control that first topic, etc.
We can begin to think of somebody attempting to solve this sort of technical
problem: The phone rings, I pick it up and say "Hello," and the other party
speaks, and now I know right then and there that it's somebody for whom I
have a reason-for-call status to whom I should have made a reason-for-call
call, and I haven't. How, right now, do I handle that? And then, what kinds
of moves can I do to bring it off? And it's extremely important to see that
when we do something like "Hello," "Joe," "Wow! I was just about to call
you," that that solution is available at just that place, though presumably
when in fact you're called, even if you were thinking of calling the person or
just about to, it was not the last thing you were doing before the phone rang.
So you want to think of the rather elaborate analytic job that they're doing to
find the sorts of things that they have to do in a next utterance. It's an
extraordinarily compact operation where, whatever problems you get as
'called,' you're able to solve them within utterance time – which is extraor-
dinarily rapid within these first series of utterances.

Now, in the middle of a conversation, we know well, in some ways, who
it is we're talking to. And there are enormously elaborated ways in which we
bring off that 'my mind is with you' – I use that rather loose sounding phrase
and you might figure that it could get shot down, but we'll see in due course
that people really can achieve showing that 'my mind is with you.' And the

question is, at the beginning of a conversation, how rapidly can parties achieve that sort of a thing? Of course the question in the first place is, what sort of a thing is it? It's something as extensive as this: Let me give some non-phone-call kinds of things, to give some idea of the kind of job that's going on; a job we want to think of as an analytic task of sorts. Let's say someone visits your house some nth non-first time. And they walk through the house and say, "Gee that's new isn't it?" And you say "Yeah, I got it a couple months after the last time you were here," or "I just got it," etc. Consider that as one of the ways in which, as between two parties, one goes about showing the other 'how much you're in my mind,' i.e., on any given occasion of looking through your place, I can see the sorts of changes that have been made since I last visited you, and show them to you. I can find things that have changed in 'our time,' i.e., time that is only marked by our relationship. And you too can see, even though maybe lots of people come over to your house, that this item was purchased, not 'in February 1967,' but 'after your last visit,' whenever that was. And it's neat in all sorts of ways, since one doesn't say "Gee that's gotten battered since the last time I was here," or "Gee you've gotten battered since the last time I saw you," and things like that, but one finds things like a new something-or-other.

So you keep these kinds of calendars and objects in mind, and you can bring your mind to focus on that sort of a thing, i.e., of all the houses you've been in in the last six months, you have them in such a way that you know what's in this one's house, and in that way you keep an attention to them. What you're doing, then, when you're 'bringing your mind' to somebody, is somehow bringing 'our file' to their attention. And in a phone conversation what's going on is that my mind, by a very early point in the conversation, is turning to the history of our particular relationship, and I have ways of showing you that. "How's your mother?" can be a thing done right off, as a way of saying I know who you are and I know that the last time we talked your mother was sick.

You want to see things like the beginning of a phone conversation as that kind of 'bringing my mind to you.' And you can then see all sorts of little things that you don't obviously attend as such; things equivalent to noticing the furniture, like noticing the voice, noticing whatever else, as products of an effort to 'bring my mind to us.' And it's a thing done by the called without any available preparation, i.e., the caller can in the first instance, in some way, bring their files to bear before they make the call. But the called is just there, waiting for people in the world to demand a focus on 'the two of us and our history,' right off, by the fourth or fifth utterance. And people can of course do it with enormous rapidity even though they talk only occasionally, where the issue is that they're doing indefinite numbers of other interactions in between but they're able to keep those things separate. Now obviously they can mess up by asking something which reveals that it's not you I'm thinking of, it's somebody else. But on the other hand, they have ways of asking questions which can be heard as pointed though they're not; i.e., they would work for lots of people, and if I don't remember yet – not so much who you

are but what's up with us, I can throw out such remarks as will not reveal that, while I'm working my way into finding out.

Again, I think it's difficult to appreciate the kind of job we're asking people to be able to accomplish within utterance time, which involves no gaps. So that although the called has been doing God only knows what before this call came, they are recognizing a voice, not just as a name of somebody in the world, but of somebody with whom they have something going, which they now have to bring to bear with enormous rapidity. To make the point in a slightly different way, consider that a bunch of people call you in series, with a 20-minute break between. A calls: "What's new?" "Nothing." B calls. For B there's an item of news which did not at all pop into your head with A. For C there's another item of news which didn't pop into your head with B. That is to say, you're apparently able to keep the news items that you have around, in such a way that it's not that they occur to you and you censor them, but that they just don't come into your head in one conversation and become a first thing in mind in another conversation.

You're classifying your experiences, then, by reference in some way to who potentially is to be told about this, so that they're immediately available for the telling to that one. And again, it can fail. We all have experiences, which you might now see the sense of, where you have a conversation with X, and after it you remember "Gee I should have told him such-and-such." What is remarkable is that you are able to do the job as well as you do it, and over a series of calls, i.e., it's not that you tell the first three people who call you the same item, but that for each call you have some items to use, and they're different. And how those things come to be picked turn on the ways you find what's for them and what's not for them; not necessarily what they shouldn't hear, but what would be of no interest to them.

There is, then, this enormous amount of work that you're doing right off when you get a call, which you might even start doing when the phone rings. And that then makes it of interest how the initial sequences get handled so as to permit you to find, for the party at hand, if there is some first item that you want to use, that you should use, that if you don't use now it'll be too late later on, etc., as compared to the caller who can already know that there's a first item for the called, and can begin right off to use the ways to get in a position to produce it. I'm hoping that these utterly bland sequences, like "Hello," "Jeanette," "Yeah," can be seen by reference to the kinds of work that parties are engaged in when such a thing happens as that the phone rings. They're doing sorts of jobs that they can fail to do, do wrong, etc., and for which 'first topic' is a central object that they have to make decisions about, for which, if they're the called, they can't have plans about.

We might consider what's been said now by reference to what is required for us to be in a position to do an analysis of the initial sequence. That is to say: To come to the notion that, e.g., this is a 'minimal sequence,' and a minimal sequence in which caller made a move to control its length and also to control her chance to get into first topic position, we need not merely a series of other calls in which we could, say, establish 'normal call beginnings'

and then consider those versus 'foreshortened call beginnings,' but we need also a whole range of analyses of later parts of conversation, which would tell us why in the world anybody would have some basis for attempting to do the moves which produce a 'foreshortened beginning.' Further, we would need materials to tell us things about reasons-for-call and reason-for-call relationships, no-reason-for-call and no-reason-for-call relationships, first topics, avoidance of first topics, etc., as kinds of materials required in order to turn this small sequence, "Hello," "Jeanette," "Yeah," into the kind of object I begin to have the idea it is.

We also want to think of that particular sequence as really one machine product. That is to say, it's not this conversation as an object that we're terribly interested in, but we can begin to see machinery that produces this as a series of moves, and to appreciate it as a series of moves among the potential sets of moves that are otherwise to be actualized for some people – and we don't care who they are.

In a way, our aim is just that; to get into a position to transform, in what I figure is almost a literal, physical sense, our view of what happened here as some interaction that could be treated as the thing we're studying, to interactions being spewed out by machinery, the machinery being what we're trying to find; where, in order to find it we've got to get a whole bunch of its products. We can come to know that they can really be thought of as products, and that we can really think of a machine spewing them out. We come to have the idea that there is this 'group mind' or 'culture' or whatever you like, that's producing these things. We come to some decisions that we're going to talk about things like a 'group mind' or a 'culture' producing events – when we don't have that at all to begin with. That is, we needn't at all suppose, to begin with, that these are other than two people doing some interaction, rather than the actualization of a series of techniques otherwise produced in other ways, etc. Where all of them can be considered as a sample of sorts, that can be comparatively investigated to find out that they're all doing something, and how they're doing it. And this would be another way to be interested in the whole thing as some actual sequence, i.e., as an assembled set of parts that could be otherwise fitted together.

Returning to the data, we in fact next find a reason-for-call announcement (which is also a first-topic announcement and a 'story preface'), "Well I just thought I'd– re–better report to you what's happened at *Bu*llocks today." Now there are ways to show that it's a reason-for-call, and more than that, it can be shown that Jeanette recognizes the status of this item. The argument will eventually be something like this: It's perfectly possible to produce what you figure is a reason-for-a-call item, and for the one you're talking to to respond to it as not a reason for a call. And that is a specific issue in a conversation, and there are ways of proving that you recognize and accept its status. In this case, the way that Jeanette goes about proposing 'I agree with your classification of the item as a reason-for-call' is, at about 45 seconds into the call, when Estelle says "so find out tomorrow and let me know," Jeanette says "*Oh* I'll call Penelope right *now*." Which is to say, 'You treated the item

as the basis for a call. I show you that you were right by myself treating the item as the basis for a call.'

Now to see that that's so, and that the co-classification matters, one need only to refer to the second conversation where Jeanette calls Penelope (who is a co-worker of Jeanette's at Bullocks, and was there). Penelope says that it was nothing, and makes a point of saying that in fact she didn't even say anything about it to her husband. And that's an important thing for Penelope to do in the second call, because she is, in a way, up against a problem. Jeanette, who wasn't at work today, has called Penelope to find out about this exciting event, which is to say that Penelope hasn't called Jeanette to tell her about it, though they are people who do that for each other. Penelope has then got to have some way of dealing with that she has not made a reason-for-call call when Jeanette figures that a reason-for-call call should have been made. And what Penelope does is not merely to say 'I didn't call you because I didn't think it was anything,' but 'I didn't even tell my husband,' for whom she doesn't even have to make a call to do it, i.e., it was such a minor thing that it wasn't mentioned, where, coming home from work, anything you could get your hands on to tell about what happened in the day would be delightedly presented.

We see, then, that reason-for-call status is a kind of contingent status that one can claim and that can be accepted or denied. We just happen to be lucky with these data, in that the reason-for-a-call status is specifically dealt with in these different ways, i.e., it's accepted by the called, and accepted in the perfect way to accept such a call, i.e., to say "I'll call X and tell them." Next, it is rejected by a called, with a perfect rejection, i.e., "I didn't even tell someone who was right here, not to mention making a call about it." So, the status of "I just thought I'd better report to you what's happened at Bullocks today" as a reason-for-a-call announcement is one that gets verified in what would seem to be *the* right way to verify it, i.e., use it in the same fashion as it was used. And not only is it so used, but it is told to the initial teller that it's going to be so used, where we want to differentiate between the use of some reaason-for-call item also as a reason-for-a-call, but not telling the party that offered it to you that you're going to use it that way, as compared to telling them that you're going to use it, which tells them that they did right by you, and they should keep doing just what they did.

Reason-for-call status is not, then, something you assign to anything you choose, but seems to have normative classificatory importance. And we can see why it would, i.e., people who are hysterical or lethargic about determining what is a reason-for-call are not keeping their correspondence in proper form, and people will either figure "he only calls when something really terrible has happened," or "he calls all the time about things that don't matter," ". . . so I really don't know what's going on anyway." That you in fact pick items that others will see as 'a real reason for a call' is a way, then, that you can show them that you're doing your job about, e.g., keeping them in mind or watching the world for them, or watching for things that are properly told to others. And we can see from this sequence of calls that if you

go wrong, people can even overtly make it their business to let that be known. In this case, Penelope specifically says "Tell Estelle I just thought it was stupid," though when Jeanette calls Estelle back she doesn't tell her that Penelope thought it was stupid, but attempts to preserve Estelle's investment in the story, which, as it happens, Estelle is kind of sensitive about. It might be seen that these things are being treated as instantial for interactants, where their assessment matters for further considerations about their relationships, their conception of the party that they're dealing with, etc., so that one will be careful about making something a reason-for-a-call item or not.

Now one thing we can ask is, are there components to a thing's status as a reason for a call? There are some sorts of obvious things, such as that what happened at Bullocks happened "today." If you wanted to be altogether systematically naive about the matter, you might figure that "today" is just the name of a day, such that if it happened on some other day you could say "I'd better report to you what happened . . . Thursday, last Wednesday, January 12, 1962 . . . etc." Those items are not exchangeable, and we get into some very important issues with this, which I will talk to somewhat. That is, we are happy to buy a picture of terms which involves that some term that is actually used should be treated by us as one among a contrast class of such terms from which it's chosen, such that, it's being chosen, we consider the set of terms to decide what features this term has and then ask why it was chosen from among the members of this set. That is to say, 'today' is a 'time reference,' consider the set of time references. Why was this one chosen as differentiated from all the others? And there are whole ranges of things just like that. Just to give a trivial instance, at one point Estelle says "There was a policeman there with a great big long gun! He had it in his hand . . . and he was standing on the side so he could see everybody." Now we could say 'standing' is a term, one of a contrast class with 'sitting,' and that in saying he was standing she is also saying he was not sitting, and she picks 'standing' because . . . etc. One of the things I'm going to argue in due course is that whatever the merits of these contrast-class arguments are, a really deadly problem with them is that it turns out that where some member of a contrast class is usable, if another member was correct, *that other member would not be used*. It's not as though he's either standing or sitting; since he's standing I'll say he's standing. If he's standing I may be able to report it; if he's sitting it may not be reportable. So, to take a rather obvious instance, Estelle reports that the policeman was standing there and "he had a gun in his hand." That may be reportable. If he had a gun in his holster, you might not even notice or report that he had a gun. And for things like the time, if the time is not 'today,' then you may not report the time. Indeed, if the time is not 'today' then you may not report the event.

So one doesn't want to suppose that what's being done is picking a term from a collection, the alternative members of which tell you what the picking of the term does. Each of the terms will have different conditions of use – at least under this rather narrow sense of 'contrast class.' One might well work at a more elaborate sense, i.e., semantic, in which you specified the conditions

of uses of terms and then tried to see whether they had some conditions of use which were alternative, i.e., if either were correct, one or the other would be used. Though very characteristically their conditions of use are really independent, i.e., if one could be used, the other could not be used if it were true; if the other could be used, the first could not be used if it were true.

'Today' is not, then, naming some day on which the reported event happened; it's doing a bunch of other things. For one, 'today' is not equivalent to the series of other days in the sense of being just some day. 'Today' in part constitutes the warrant for the report, i.e., to say it happened 'today' is to claim it as potential '*news*,' if it's a newsworthy item at all. And that's a part of the way in which it's a reason-for-call item; that what I'm reporting is news. Now plainly there can be an item that's news today, in the sense of its being worth reporting in that it happened today, which would not be mentionable tomorrow, not because it's no longer new, but because unless you tell it today it's not 'news.'

I mention that because it has an enormous consequence to it, which is, roughly, the following: A classical puzzle that we all more or less know about is, how in the world is it the case that people you talk to every day, you always have something to talk about whereas people you talk to every three months you have nothing to talk about. Why isn't it the case that if you talk to him every three months you have all the things to talk about that happened over the three months. The solution in part being that a whole bunch of things that you can mention the day they happen or the day after, are 'news.' If you don't mention them that day or the day after, they're nothing. You can't then tell them to somebody you haven't spoken to for three months. What you tell such people are things that stand as worthy of mention over a three-month period. If you don't have them, you may have nothing to talk about. I have a friend whose solution to this was that although we only talk to each other every three months, when he talks to me he tells me what happened today. So it's as though we have a continuing friendly conversation over coffee. But by and large that is a massive sort of problem, and the 'today' aspect is a way of warranting that this is an item tellable at least for some sorts of people, e.g., people who talk to each other all the time. The fact that it is tellable by Estelle to Jeanette by virtue of 'today' doesn't mean that it would be tellable, even if they were talking on the day of the event, by people who only talk every six months.

In this particular conversation, 'today' happens to have a much more delicate use than merely claiming the tellability of the event. I'll try to develop how that works. We need some information: Jeanette works at Bullocks, Estelle does not. Jeanette has her day off on the day of the event and the call, and Estelle knows that Jeanette has her day off. Estelle also knows that the event is a newsworthy item, i.e., at one point she says "So find out tomorrow and let me know." Now we could ask how in the world can she figure that it's going to be an item that will be talkable-about tomorrow? She shows this in a rather lovely way, by reporting later on, something she noticed which is

on point to that, i.e., that there was a crowd of employees standing around watching this event. In that those people were watching the scene, you can then know that they have an investment in telling about 'what happened at Bullocks' since any such organization as Bullocks is event-poor in certain ways, i.e., not that many things happen at Bullocks that are reportable by Bullocks employees to *any* Bullocks employee, as compared to that somebody in the dress department can say something of interest to somebody else in the dress department by reference to, e.g., the last customer who walked by, but that would not be of interest to just any Bullocks employee. Any event that can be figured to be one that makes us all Bullocks employees together, i.e., that I can say to any Bullocks employee "Did you see that?" "Wasn't that amazing?" "Were you there yesterday when . . .?" is an event that one can know will be used throughout the place – if you can figure that there was any noticeable number of people who saw it in the first place. So, knowing that there were a dozen people watching, you can figure that by tomorrow it will have spread throughout the store.

The kind of argument I offer is that it can be seen as a Bullocks Event, reportable, then, between any Bullocks employees. The kinds of materials that are relevant are: For large institutions, occasions like this become events in which people who are co-located only as employees of the institution and otherwise not available to each other, can talk to each other about that event. The vice-president of Bullocks could perfectly well be engaged in conversation about that event by a janitor. And if you read through stories of disasters, tragedies, exciting events, then you'll find reports of just that sort of thing – people who otherwise have no business to talk to each other take these as occasions to talk to each other. Whereas, something happening, conceived of as having happened in the dress department, doesn't do that. So Estelle's noticing of the crowd was her seeing the initial cohort from which the news would be diffused throughout the place.

The consequence of that is not just that Estelle is able to see that people at Bullocks will treat the event as news, but she's able to see several other important things relevant to the interaction. One of them is, she's able to see that if she doesn't call Jeanette today, then she will not be the first person to tell her. If she waits until tomorrow, Jeanette will have independent information about this story. For her to be the first to tell, she's got to do it now – though she may not even by now be the first to tell. And 'first to tell' is a special status with respect to news.

And this begins to get at the following sort of question: If Estelle knows that Jeanette's going to find out tomorrow, why does she have to tell her? Why isn't it enough to know that Jeanette will find out tomorrow? For one, Jeanette might bring it up in a conversation with Estelle; "Oh you can't imagine what happened yesterday, I wasn't at work and all these exciting things happened . . ." then Estelle is in a bad position, i.e., of saying "Yeah I know, I saw it." Which is to say, 'I saw it and I didn't tell you.' People can get annoyed if you don't tell them something that they nonetheless find out; they say "Well why didn't you tell me?" And if you say "I knew you would

hear anyway'' they nonetheless figure that you were somehow derelict, that
you weren't monitoring the world for them as you should.

There's another sort of thing with respect to her having seen the crowd, and
it's utterly wonderful to behold. And it's quite unrelated to what I've been
saying so far. Picture the scene: Here's Estelle driving by. She sees these events
happening; she sees some cops and some kind of excitement about the cops.
Now a kind of problem is getting some idea that what she sees happening is
what's happening. A way that you have of becoming assured that what you
think is happening is in fact happening, and of establishing it for others in the
telling of it, is by seeing that there's a crowd there. The crowd serves to make
the event the public event that you think it is. That a crowd is gathered means
that they see what you see. Whereas if you're walking along and a bunch of
people are walking along who aren't seen as a crowd, then one thing you
don't know is what they're seeing. They're walking along minding their own
business; they may be seeing things, not seeing things, seeing what you're
seeing, or whatever, and you have no idea what's on their minds. If you see
a crowd standing and looking, you're able to know that the thing you see as
notable is there. The crowd's existence confirms for you that you saw
something really happening. Conversely, people can become awfully nervous
where they figure that something really extraordinarily notable is happening
but nobody's looking at it, they're just passing by. And you get, then, a frantic
attempt to get individual eyes, though you don't know the indivduals whose
eyes you're seeking, to have them tell you "Yeah, it's really happening." So
the very characterization that something is happening, is aided by saying
there's a crowd watching. It not only says that others saw it, but that it was
what I saw it to be.

I'd like to make a small comment about the word 'report' in "Well I just
thought I'd better report to you what's happened at Bullocks today;" again,
because we might have the idea when we think of word meanings, that if we
could give a list of things that 'report' is synonomous with, then we'd get
'tell,' 'say,' and things like that. I want to suggest that there's a class of what
we could call 'co-participant verbs,' where some word is a word that should
be used as between these two. And in the doing of the activity 'showing I had
my mind on you,' a word like 'report' is relevant. Specifically, I 'report' to you
things about which you are concerned, where it's not particularly in my
interests that I'm telling this. Estelle might have seen cops and crowds in
many places and not thought a thing of it, but this one matters to Jeanette
because she works at Bullocks, and to her, then, the telling is a 'report.' In the
very smallest parts of Estelle's story about Bullocks, then, that she's telling it
to 'you who work at Bullocks' is done. There are more than a few such terms
which we can isolate out to see that they do some interactional job. And a list
of 'synonyms' are not equivalent, at least when one focusses on that they may
or may not have some interactional distribution.

Lecture 2

Conveying information;
Story-connective techniques;
Recognition-type descriptors; 'First
Verbs;' Understanding;
Differential organization of
perception

I'm going through some of the matters that can be raised by a consideration of some actual conversation, treating it in a kind of unmotivated way, i.e., whatever can be found in it is to be given some consideration, as compared to, e.g., dealing with the overall structural organization of conversation. I'm doing this to suggest that a comprehensive analysis of some conversation is not in point and that on the other hand it pays to subject any particular conversation you happen to have your hands on to investigation in any direction that can be produced off of it. The idea was that I would go through a range of such any-direction considerations for this transcript, 'Trio I', and then turn to the theme of the course, not particularly by reference to Trio I.

Now, it should be apparent that the arguments developed or alluded to here wouldn't conceivably have been developed out of Trio I, but Trio I is relevant to them. That is to say, I had been collecting points about greeting sequences for lo these many years, and I had a large collection of rules for them, and I was kind of contented with the ways I had of dealing with greeting sequences. But essentially until I came upon Trio I and a couple of other conversations, I hadn't turned the analysis of greeting sequences into a tactical problem for parties. And I hope I've been able to suggest some of the ways in which the length and components of greeting sequences could be considered a tactical problem in which issues of how soon and who controls when you get out of a greeting sequence into something else, and to what, are in part handled within the greeting sequence. Now those sorts of things are obviously unavailable from just:

J : Hello
E : Jeanette

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J :   Yeah
E :   Well I just thought I'd– re–better report to you what's happen' at
         <u>Bu</u>llocks toda::y?

but require a consideration of some collection of greeting sequences, to
consider them, e.g., in terms of their rules for working, and then what can be
done with a greeting sequence as a known-in-advance object that can be
possibly manipulated. Where, then, an attempted comprehensive analysis of
a single conversation will oblige you to study masses of other material to find
how the sorts of things you've got work.

    Returning now to the data. Going on from the greeting sequence, I
mentioned that the "Well I just thought I'd better report to you what's
happened at Bullocks today" serves jointly as a reason for a call, a proposed
first topic, and a story preface. Now we have this question–answer sequence:

E :   'D you have the day off?
J :   Yeah

placed after "Well I just thought I'd better report to you what's happened at
Bullocks today." The question is, can we say anything about the placing of
"Did you have the day off?" I want to suggest that the information conveyed
in that question is important to have conveyed. That is, with respect to the
issue of what Estelle is doing in making the call, if she did or did not ask the
question, if she did or did not know the answer, then the call stands as a
different sort of event. Let me try to explicate the differences.

    The situation is something like this: Estelle is a friend of Jeanette's. Jeanette
works at Bullocks, Estelle does not. Estelle sees some event take place at
Bullocks and calls Jeanette to tell her about it. Now if Estelle is calling not
merely because she saw some events taking place at Bullocks which she
figured Jeanette might be interested in, but because she saw these events and
pretty well knows that Jeanette wasn't there that day, then she's doing
something like informing Jeanette about events that Jeanette is interested in
and could not have known about on her own, i.e., she's specifically doing a
favor, acting in the interests of Jeanette. In making the call, Estelle can then
be acting in Jeanette's interest, as compared to, e.g., simply telling Jeanette
about something Jeanette probably already knows about, so as to get a
conversation going about that something, which is quite a different sort of
call. So that's one sort of difference; doing a favor or just talking about
something. Further, Estelle can also intend that it be seen that she is acting in
Jeanette's interest, as compared to, even if she figures Jeanette doesn't know
about it, not making anything of that she is now giving her information.

    Now if it's Estelle's aim to show that she's calling not merely because she
saw this event, but because she knows that Jeanette wasn't there, then a
question is, how and where does she do that? She could simply say "I called
because I know you had the day off," in which case she would have made it
overt that there is an obligation which Jeanette has to her, and Jeanette's

business would then be to say "Why, thanks." But Estelle might want to bring off that her action was motivated, without particularly giving Jeanette the chance to deal with the whole thing by saying "Why thanks." And a way to prevent Jeanette saying that (while perhaps feeling grateful), is to not make an announcement but ask a question, since, while Jeanette could glean from the question that 'she knew I had the day off,' the question form will tell Jeanette what to say in return to it, i.e., "Yes." It will not give her a free chance to say anything she might, nor require that she do something like "Thanks." So, she ought to say "Yes" though she may have captured the information being provided, i.e., 'I know you had the day off and I'm calling by reference to that knowledge as well as my knowledge of the events that took place.'

We could of course have a reverse sequence, i.e., "Did you have the day off?" "Yeah" "Well I just thought I'd better report to you what happened." That kind of thing would appear to make Jeanette's "Yes" answer the condition for offering the information, i.e., if she were to say "No" then the news that's offered wouldn't be the sort of news it was intended to be. If she first indicates that she has news to offer and then places "Did you have the day off?" she can perhaps make it more apparent that she *knew* Jeanette had the day off. At this point things get complicated to pull out, and the argument I would make has this difficulty: "Did you have the day off?" must be treated via a consideration that, having done the question, contingent on its answer she might not have been able to do the announcement, and that in doing either a question or an announcement there's a decision as to which, and as to its placing. But the details of that argument aren't now givable. Its rough possibility, however, locates such things as: There can be a choice between making an announcement and using a question, where the question controls what the other will do in the next item, where your interest is to tell them something you convey in the question, which they are then placed in a position to not respond to.

That isn't something you could necessarily pick up from this data, and my materials for it run something like this:

A: Hello,
B: Happy Thanksgiving from Balboa.
A: Why thank you dear,
B: Did you just get up?
A: Yeah,
B: Did you get your newspaper this morning? Mac saw it out in front of your house and put it up on your porch.
A: Oh, why thank you.

The basic thing here is that we have a technique, not for telling A how her newspaper got on her porch, but for saying 'My husband, whom you know left me, came home.' And telling that in such a way as to not require that it be responded to right now. Just consider, it's not particularly a great favor to

pick up a newspaper from the lawn and put it on the porch. But among the things that happened when B's husband was away was that A's husband would bring over their newspaper to B, in that B doesn't get the paper. So the newspaper and the husband have become affiliated in such a way that this announcement, burying the information that B's husband came home, but allowing for it to be picked up on, can be seen as really an elaborately designed event. So, a way was found to design a presentation of the information that the husband is back, without requiring that it be responded to, since responding could be kind of sticky and you may be willing to have the other person respond if they wish, but you may not want to require them to respond, i.e., to make it then and there a topic: "Oh that's nice" "Yes it is" or "Well it's not so nice" or some such thing. Or, "When did it happen" or "How did it happen" and "So you're together" or "Are you together" or God only knows what. But in this sort of sequence the information is specifically buried, and in this case it gets picked up on later on, which is something that can be done with information buried like that, when A says "Well I'm glad to hear he came down."

If one can accept the so-far unseen data and the sketched argument, then you can suppose that it's at least something like a routine possibility that one may use the technical sequential considerations to convey information that need not be immediately responded to, where the way you do it is to give them something else to respond to, while allowing them to see what you want them to see via a question, e.g., "Did you have the day off?" which you would never dream of asking unless you knew about it in the first place. That is to say, a person may have one day off a week; you wouldn't figure that any given day is their day off unless you happen to know that that's their day off. And a similar sort of sense holds for the question "Did you get your newspaper this morning?"

I offer these materials to indicate that there are large differences between things the call can be doing, turning on whether the person is, e.g., saying 'I know you had the day off,' or really doesn't know whether the other had the day off or not – where that's important to such a call.

Let me just make a couple of remarks about the story itself, talking to the story as a unit in the sense of how its parts are bound together, and the way that a story can be designed to allow for various binding-together techniques to be used. One class of such techniques is used here, that class being set up by the initial formulation ". . . what happened at Bullocks." Bullocks is a place. And the initial formulation of the story as being about something happening at a place provides that it is thereafter possible to mobilize a series of place-indexical terms (things like 'across the street,' 'in front of the store,' 'on the other side,' etc.) which are read as applying to the initially named place. Such place-indexical terms are used in pretty much every utterance in the story:

> Well I got out to my car at five thirty I drove around and at first I had
> to go by the front of the store . . . And there were two police cars across

the street, and a colored lady wanted to go in the main entrance there where the silver is and all the (gifts and things), and they wouldn't let her go in, and he had a gun. He was holding a gun in his hand a great big long gun . . . And then over on the other side, I mean to the right, of there, where the employees come out, there was a whole, oh must have been eight or ten employees standing there, because there must have been a— It seemed like they had every entrance barred. I don't know what was going on. Some kind of a killer was in there.

So the story parts are arranged around these places, which are conceived as a collection of places for this named place, each one of which is to be read back to the named place. The terms have no particular reference, but there's an organized set of those things that can hold for large classes of such terms. That is, there is an organized set of terms like 'the front,' 'the other side,' 'the main entrance,' which can hold for a range of things like stores, schools, stadiums, etc., that can be used to organize a story now delivered as a story about the place.
  The story could be delivered 'about' quite other sorts of things than a place, but a place is a good thing to do a story about, by virtue of these organizational components being usable to link the story together as a connected series of events. Consider such a connection as "And then over on the other side, I mean to the right of there, where the employees come out, there was a whole, oh must have been eight or ten employees standing there," as a way to connect up the employees with what's going on in a just-that's-the-way-they-are fashion. That is, the way to bring these other people and these other events into the story, connectedly, is to put them as being "on the other side" – as compared, perhaps, to not putting them in the story at all. So the place-indexical terms bind the story together such that whatever takes place in the course of the narrative is taking place in this story. Such techniques may not be required, nor may it be required that the technique be used as massively as this one is, but it's nonetheless a non-incidental sort of technique to use. A couple of years ago I did some stuff on place and memory,[1] and given those sorts of considerations, place is a kind of ideal object to use to hang a story together around, now having to do with the organization of memory.
  So that's a way that a story can be partially dealt with, i.e., in terms of how does it have its organization built into it, as compared to its organization being found by some hearer. In this story it's built in, and built in via these place terms which are in pretty much every utterance. And such a technique can be contrasted with, e.g., temporal narrative features, where you get stories held together by temporal terms like 'and then,' 'before that,' 'after that,' etc.
  As a kind of side issue, the place organization sets up some further rather nice possibilities which are exemplified in, say, such a fragment as: "and a colored lady wanted to go in the main entrance there where the silver is and

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[1] See Spring 1968, April 17 lecture, pp. 759–60, in vol. I.

all the (gifts and things)." Recall that this is told by Estelle to Jeanette, who works in the store. Now there's a format which exists and which, again, isn't found from this utterance though I think it perfectly well could have been found from this utterance, which I think can be coldly laid out. It involves that among the types of descriptions one can offer, are 'recognition-type descriptions.' And the business of a recognition-type description is to get from its recipient something like a "Yeah," where it will run on until it gets the "Yeah:"

> E: An'there was two p'leece cars across the street, anleh– <u>c</u>olored lady
>   wan'tuh go in the main entrance there where the silver is an' all
>   the ⌈(gifts an' things,)
> J: ⌊Yeah,
> E: And they wouldn' let'er go in,

That is to say, you can start with one characterization of an object, 'the main entrance,' and keep elaborating until you get a "Yeah," which says 'I know what you're talking about.' And where, however, one can then put various sorts of information into that elaboration. This is routinely done on names: "I met John, you know, the guy who works in the office next to me, his wife just had a baby . . ." etc. "Yeah."

The neat thing is that in producing a recognition-type description when, e.g., a place is used, you're enabled to put in information that has as its heard motivation that it enables recognition to take place, but where you can also put in information that you want to convey for the story. Now that's important in this story where you have ". . . the main entrance there where the silver is and all the (gifts and things)." 'The silver and all the gifts and things' is plainly an elaboration on 'the main entrance.' Also, however, it now permits it to be suggested that perhaps the colored lady wanted to go in to where the silver is and all the gifts and things, where what is being suggested then is that she may have been involved in a robbery of the store. If you get the chance to put in what could be there that she could be interested in, then you've used the recognition-type description for the business of the story, i.e., to convey that there may have been a robbery going on. And that can be done where you after all have no idea that the colored lady had any idea what was in behind that main entrance, or that she was going through the main entrance to get to what was right in the main entrance area – in contrast to, for all anybody knows she was going into the store, up to the second floor. After all, Estelle is sitting in her car across the street and watching this lady at the main entrance. She, not knowing the lady, can't know where the lady is going, even if she goes into the store. As it turns out in Trio II, Penelope in effect points out "That was no colored lady, that was an employee!" And it's not that she's trying to get into the store, she's playing around with the cop outside the store. But, in the building of the story, that she's a 'colored lady,' and that that's 'where the silverware is,' can be put into the story by an elaboration on 'the main entrance,' and can be done, not in a nasty fashion,

but simply out of an interest in building a recognition-type description. Place features, with place-affiliated terms, are used, then, to convey information here about what's going on, that 'the main entrance' will not tell you.

Here's another thing. There is no overt information in the data by which I can know that Estelle doesn't work at Bullocks. Aside from a general conviction that Estelle doesn't work at the store, my basis for saying it is that Estelle refers to "the main entrance there where the silver is and all the (gifts and things)," and 'gifts' is not a way, as it turns out, that Jeanette talks about them when she talks to Penelope who also works at the store. In that case she calls it "the giftware." And that's a marked difference. 'Gifts' is the way someone who doesn't work at the store refers to what those who work at the store call 'giftware.' I kind of figure that's enough basis for saying that Estelle doesn't work at the store, but that may be kind of extravagant. At any rate, it might be seen as a kind of *co-participant term* (recall the talk I did last time about 'report' being a 'co-participant verb')[2] which is used by reference to some formulation of who it is that's talking to whom; producing that term as the appropriate way of saying something that, the same sort of thing taking place between others, they would use another way of talking about it.

Let me just note another type of organization; it has nothing much to do with stories but is present here: "A colored lady wanted to go in the main entrance." The term 'wanted to' is an instance of a class of terms I call '*first verbs*.' By that I mean, it having been used, it says that sequentially for this sentence another clause with another verb will come. That is, 'wanted to' is not used unless you're going to say something like 'and they stopped her' or 'they tried to stop her.' It's not, then, just a 'first verb' but one that will indicate that she failed, i.e., it tells that when the next clause comes it will involve that she failed. Now when you begin to talk about something like "She wanted to go in the main entrance and they wouldn't let her go in," you can begin to really attend to the independence of the perceived sequence of events and the story structure. That is, the way in which the story structure is altogether after the fact even though it's delivered as a sequence of events, can be evidenced from the fact that a term turns for its use on the failure that's already known and is used to characterize a failure that has not yet been announced. And you don't get "she wanted to go in and she walked to the door and she went in." It's just not done. If the lady got into the store with no problem it might simply be reported "and there was this colored lady going into the store."

So the sequencing terms do not reflect the perceived sequence of events; instead, they deal with things like the sequential organization of the format being used. So, for example, when somebody says 'I thought X,' by and large they're saying 'I thought X and now it turns out I find it's wrong,' i.e., 'I thought X and then I realized Y' – though routinely when they say 'I realized Y,' they didn't 'realize' it but they 'thought' Y and it turned out later that Y

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[2]See Lecture 1, p. 174.

was correct, so that for the story, Y was 'realized.' 'Thought,' then, is another 'first verb.'

'First verbs' have their interest in this kind of a general problem: A problem for parties talking in conversation is how they go about signalling that some utterance that they're producing will or will not be complete on its 'first possible completion,' which is relevant to telling the other that they should or should not be prepared to start talking on a first possible completion, where by 'first possible completion' I mean completion of a first possible sentence. If there is a rule, as I argue there is, that says 'First possible completion can be treated as actual completion,' then it's a problem for parties to produce multi-clause sentences. It's a problem that they solve by indicating within the first clause of their intendedly multi-clause sentence that this is but the first clause, that a second clause will follow. A way to do that is to use in the first clause a 'first verb,' to indicate that more follows, that this is just a clause not a sentence. And it's not particularly a syntactic phenomenon because, e.g., "A colored lady wanted to go in the main entrance" is a perfectly good sentence. But hearers know that 'wanted to' is going to be followed by something else, e.g., an account of her failure to get in.

Having gotten onto a bunch of small items, let me talk about ". . . and they wouldn't let her go in." Conventional grammatical analysis would say that 'they' is a plural pronoun. It's plain, however, that in this case, and commonly, 'they' does not have to be used to refer to more than one person. "They wouldn't let her go in" may not mean that several people stopped her. Some one person could have stopped her and 'they' can perfectly well be used. A typical instance of this is you're driving down the street and a lady driver cuts you off and you say "They always do that." Where that you're talking about that woman is perfectly hearable, where the point is that by using 'they' you make that sort of categorization of the person that says I'm talking about that person as a member of a class. And in this case the 'they' presumably refers to that single policeman who stopped her, being characterized as 'a policeman.' 'They' is in principle a pronoun not for plurals but for categories (cops . . . ladies . . . etc.). It can work as a pronoun for categories independently of working as a pronoun for plurals.

Let me go through one more technical thing about the organization of conversation as it comes up in this material, which we're just lucky to have turn up in this conversation, as it's of really large import for other sorts of things. The material is as follows:

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E:   U(h)h h(h)uh so fin' out tomorrow an' let me kno:://w.
J:   Oh I'll ca:ll Penelope right no:w. ehh//heh heh heh heh
E:   Call Pen an' call me ba::ck.
J:   Ye:h heh,
E:   Tell'm− 'r a:sk 'er if they fou:nd the ki:ller::,
J:   Wha'//time was thi:s.
E:   heh!
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                (0.6)

    E :   We::ull, ih wuz– --(0.7)-- twunny (tuh) five minnits tuh
            <u>si::x</u>,
    J :   Oh this <u>e:vening</u>.
                (0.6)
    E :   Wel I <u>told</u> you I l– I <u>leave</u> at fi:ve <u>thirdy</u>,

My interest is in the sequence from "What time was *this*." Recall that some
temporal indication of the event was given right off with "Well I got out to
my car at five thirty." I raise there having been an earlier mention of time so
as to get into what happens here. And that is, after the agreement that
Jeanette will make a call to Penelope, Jeanette asks "What time was *this*" and
Estelle now produces an answer, "Twenty-five minutes to six." I take that
answer to have been produced by reference to her figuring that Jeanette asked
the question remembering that Estelle had said 5:30. In that light Estelle now
produces, not just a repeat, but a 'better' time reference than she had given
before, i.e., a 'more precise' time reference.

Her problem is, 'What in the world is Jeanette asking? I told her the time
already.' Since the time that she told Jeanette, 5:30, can be conceived as a
'merely approximate' time, Estelle can find that Jeanette must therefore be
asking for a more accurate time than she'd been given. The issue is that the
time Estelle gave, 5:30, is not the same sort of time that "twenty-five minutes
to six" is. Estelle didn't need a clock in order to say it was 5:30, that's her way
of saying 'when I got out of work,' i.e., 'approximately 5:30.' Now there are
'approximate' numbers and 'precise' numbers, one sense of which is if you
were to say to someone "I'll meet you at five twenty seven" and you arrive
at 5:29 they might well say "You're late." If you say "I'll meet you at five
thirty" you may well arrive at 5:40 and they won't figure you're late. Or, if
you tell them you'll meet them at 5:27 they might ask why you're being so
precise – where, in terms of just a series of numbers, 5:30 is no less precise
than 5:27. It's just a different class of object. But 5:30 in this case is not
merely that sort of approximate time, it's also saying 'the time I got off work.'

So, in the light of that approximateness feature of 5:30, Estelle can produce
an answer to "What time was this" as a 'corrected' time, involving that the
prior time was 'approximate' and what is wanted is the 'exact' time, where,
then, she doesn't hear that Jeanette forgot. And it's important to stress that
in her natural thinking about the question Estelle hears it so as to allow
Jeanette to be one who hasn't yet been found out to have forgotten. She hears
it as a correctly asked question, though it takes work to do so. And that will
turn out to be a fundamental kind of thing, hearing the 'best sense' of
someone else's utterance, i.e., that they have in mind all the things they
should have in producing it.

Now, following Estelle's 'best sense' answer, Jeanette performs an opera-
tion on it; one I talk of as 'showing understanding' of the answer. In this case
it turns out to show she misunderstands the answer. But it is specifically
produced to show understanding, and it's a routinely done thing. A typical
instance is something like this:

A :   How long are you going to be here?
B :   Til Monday.
A :   Oh, just a week.

All that's done is to process the answer in such a fashion as: From today to Monday is a week. Then announce the product, which is a way of saying 'See, I was able to perform that sort of operation so I heard and understood what you said.' And that's what "Oh this *evening*" is. The problem is that "Oh this evening" shows that if that's all she got out of "twenty-five minutes to six" then she in fact forgot that Estelle told her it was 5:30 before. That is, she shouldn't have gotten "Oh this evening" out of "twenty-five minutes to six" if she had asked "What time was this" in the light of the earlier mentioned 5:30. And Estelle's re-producing the 5:30 in her next utterance, "Well I *told* you I leave at five thirty," indicates that she did do the work of trying to find how Jeanette could have asked the question in that light, thereby produced an answer, and then was able to monitor Jeanette's 'show of understanding' to see that Jeanette hadn't produced the question in that light.

Seeing that Jeanette failed to remember that fact, Estelle becomes queasy about the whole thing and now goes through the whole story again, Jeanette's failure to remember the time being apparently sufficient to her to raise the possibility that a good amount of the story was forgotten. Now this matter is of some interest in a bunch of ways, one of which is that it tells us that we can re-look at Jeanette's techniques for showing that she is hearing the story – her "Yeah"'s, etc. – and say that they are perfectly well usable though the story is not being registered, i.e., she can make it through the story without Estelle knowing that she wasn't registering. But now Jeanette has taken on the business of retelling the story to Penelope, perhaps finds that she doesn't know it, and has a way of trying to get Estelle to retell it. But it can be seen that her initial responses are absolutely not to be read as saying 'I understand what you said,' but are to be considered some other kind of object, like understanding that a place for comment has occurred. So that the operation directed to showing understanding, "Oh this evening," becomes a central focus for the retelling of the story, in that the operation flunks – though the way it flunks is separate from the way Estelle works to find an answer that is a good answer given that Jeanette remembers 5:30. And that piece of business of Estelle's is, I suggest, monumental in its import, in terms of how, e.g., people suppose that what we've been talking about all along, you know in the way I told it to you, and I suppose that in producing any next thing I say. And without thinking about it, the work I do is to find for any item you say – no matter how grossly it misunderstands what I say, how well it understands what I say.

Now let's look at the materials in quite a different way, keeping the events in mind, thinking out what was happening and playing around with the talk by reference to some way of considering what was happening. I have in mind something like this: When Estelle interprets the events, she interprets them so as to find how, that the cops were there involves that they were legitimately there. And we can notice that at least nowadays that's become kind of a

distributional phenomenon, i.e., whereas Estelle is able to use the presence of the cops to find what was going on – where the cops belonged there, others might see the same scene with the same parties by reference to that the cops were doing something which they had no business doing. That is, if this took place in a black neighborhood, watched by black people, then 'the very same scene' would perhaps turn into, for the perception of the parties, an altogether different phenomenon. There are places where the cops can count on the presence of two of their cars to provide for their visible, legitimate presence, such that others will then search the scene to find what the cops might be doing that they should be doing, and, e.g., pick up on that someone is 'trying to get into the entrance where the silver is' or that they can imagine a killer is in there, though they of course can't see into the store. Whereas there are others who will not at all see the events in that way, but, seeing two cops on the scene, may now look to see what kind of bother the cops, by being on the scene, are producing – as compared to what kind of bother they are properly responding to.

That sort of differential organization of the sheer perceiving of an event is of considerable importance for, e.g., the way in which the fact of the police on the scene tells people that although there is a trouble things are okay – or that they're not at all okay. For example, that this lady can drive right by the scene knowing that things are more or less well in hand, that something is happening but that the cops will take care of it – rather than that something is happening and the cops are making it happen.

A rather different sort of thing, but again having to do with the status of the thing she sees, is that *which* particular scene Estelle has seen is relevant to that she could have paused to watch it and could have reported it. That is, it's not that we have a scene seen and described independently of the actual scene. It's by virtue of the fact that it takes place in a public street, involving officials seeable as such at first glance, seeable as doing their business, that Estelle could pause to watch and then report it, as compared to the bunches of scenes that, catching them out of the corner of one's eye, one knows that he shouldn't be watching. It's none of your business, you shouldn't be watching, you shouldn't have seen it. To have captured it in your eye is to already have embarrassed yourself, and you'd better not tell anyone you saw it because they might well say "Why the hell were you looking?" or "What kind of person would notice that?" "Why are you so fascinated by that sort of thing?" etc. So one of the things that the features of the scene described in the report tells the hearer is that what was seen was something that the person who saw it had rights to see. It's not that she saw a scene and described a scene, but that the described scene carries with it the legitimacy of her having seen it.

And in that regard, Estelle is perfectly comfortable as a witness to the scene. Yet you can perfectly well imagine how she wouldn't see herself as a witness at all. In her report there's, e.g., no hint of any interest in stopping and helping out, or getting worried about what's going to happen. More importantly, there's no hint that she had any fear that somehow, e.g., that policeman was about to turn to her and ask her what she was doing there. The

massive comfort in her innocence, and in that legitimate audience status that she has, is something that we should give real attention to, in at least this way: It's the kind of thing that we know can be readily shaken. There are times and places where some Estelle would not feel all that comfortable, but, passing such a scene – and you can readily imagine it – she would figure "Oh my God here I am, the first thing that happens is they're going to figure I'm involved." And that never dawns on our Estelle. And until it dawns on her she can have no sense of an empathy with, e.g., a kid in the ghetto. Her sense of innocence affects the whole way she sees the scene. There's no fear on her part at all that anybody's going to mistake her for a party to the scene – though she's perfectly willing to assign others a non-witness, party-to-the-scene status.

And again, there is no feeling on her part that she ought to do anything, and pretty much nobody would figure that she ought to feel that she should do anything. And that sort of trust in the ability of the cops who are there, to handle whatever needs to be handled, and that they will handle it well, is another aspect of the way in which, being a witness she can sheerly be a witness. And one might consider, when one is doing being a witness to a scene, the conditions under which your witness status could be transformed in a series of different ways, one of them being into someone who could be seen by others, e.g., the lady in the car next to yours or the man across the street, not as a 'witness' but possibly as a 'car moving away from the scene,' i.e., as the escaped robber. Or, not that you're a witness to a scene which is being ably handled, but you're somebody who is callously passing it by.

I raise these possibilities because if you read the story you can feel utterly sure that no such issues crossed her mind. You can then think of scenes in which you or others have been involved, in which such issues do or do not emerge, and then focus on what are the conditions that would lead somebody like Estelle here to at least have it cross her mind that somebody else might see her and wonder what in the world is Estelle doing there, or that when the cop turns around with his gun he's going to shoot her or tell her to halt.

Given the markedly distributional character of that sort of phenomenon, you ought to learn to appreciate the difficulty involved in groups talking to each other where each of them figures that all they did was to see what was happening. That is, the notion of there being arguable issues involved is unavailable to either group by virtue of the fact that all they're doing is scanning a scene to see what's happening. They're not arguing anything, they're not imagining anything. They're seeing the scene in some organization. And to tell them that they're imagining it or that they're making a case – since you perfectly well know what was there to be seen by virtue of what you saw – is to put them in a position where they could not readily come to understand what you're talking about.

That turns on the fact that each group is specifically committed to a trust of vision, without any conception of what they understand by 'vision.' This lady is not designing a right-wing report. All she's doing is reporting what she saw. And to tell her that it isn't what happened is to attack a kind of trust that

she has, and should have, in what she simply sees. It would be undermining something which an enormous mass of, say, Western ideology has led her to believe she should in fact trust. The point is, roughly, that it's a culturally and temporally distributional thing that people do or do not trust their eyes, and even such people as those academics of sorts who figure that they are attuned to the 'ideological foundations of perception' may not use that sort of attuning to come to appreciate the distrust of vision that some cultures have – which they see as a kind of anti-empiricism. It may not at all be anti-empiricism, but that in the light of the kinds of troubles that people get into when they take a culturally-ordered orientation to vision seriously, a focus on other senses might seem to pay off better. And the fact that people systematically distrust what they see might well be approached, not as "How in the world do they survive with that magical view of things?" but as a perfectly empirical position.

Lecture 4

Greetings: Adjacency pairs; Sequential implicativeness; The integrative function of public tragedy

I'm going to talk about 'greetings' in conversation. I guess this is my second or third report on greetings, and the basic new thing I learned about them, that occasions the relevance of saying something more about them, is that whereas in the past I thought that greetings begin conversations, I now think that has to be modified to say that greetings begin the *beginnings* of conversations, and that they are the initial part of the beginning sequence in conversations and by no means the whole part of the beginning sequence. And it's by virtue of their status within the beginning sequence that a good deal of their interest lies.

I'll begin the discussion with a restatement of sorts, of some facts, problems, interests, etc. of greetings, starting with some initial sorts of orderlinesses one can observe about greetings – and now we're talking about things like "Hello" "Hello," "Hi" "Hi," etc., or "Joe!" "Hi!," "Mike!" "Harry!," etc. If anyone has an interest in what I have to say about greetings, they can look at a paper called 'Everyone has to lie.' I won't by and large go through stuff I've dealt with there.

A first thing about greetings is their placing. They go right at the beginning of the beginning. Though that may sound like nothing of any interest, it can be turned to a bunch of interests. Putting that into productional terms we could say that for greetings their *placing* is of highest priority. And greetings have highest priority for initial placement in a conversation. Among the things that means is that when we look at the beginning section of a conversation – and it remains to be seen what the 'beginning section' consists of and what sorts of things, if they're not part of the beginning section, should nonetheless be done early on into a conversation – it can be seen that a whole bunch of things that look like part of the beginning section are movable relative to each other. For example, an exchange of 'how-are-you's might be considered a normal second part of a begining section. However, how-are-yous are movable and can be placed later into a beginning section.

Now a central question about the organization of the beginning section concerns what are required parts of it and what sort of ordering do they have. There are a bunch of variable things that can go into a beginning section and,

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if and when they're used, we want to know if there is some ordering for their relevant placement. For example, a variable part of the beginning of a conversation is something like "Where've you been!" Taking something like that, as compared to an exchange of how-are-yous, "Where've you been" can precede or succeed how-are-yous, and we want to know if that's open to all parts of a beginning section, or are there fixed parts of a beginning section. We also want to know how fixed are the fixed parts, i.e., if you take the closing sequence of a conversation, we find that the final parts, e.g., things like an exchange of 'goodbyes,' need not occur adjacently but can be separated by some other utterances, whereas for an exchange of greetings it doesn't appear that they are separatable but should be placed adjacent to each other. We can then ask why are they unmovable as compared to other things which are movable; why are they unseparatable as compared to other things that are separatable.

So, to say that greetings are placed at the beginning of a beginning section of conversation is to say something other than the sheer inspectional fact that, e.g., "Hello" – "Hello"'s occur at the beginning of the beginning. We are saying something analytically about some sorts of objects. We then want to know, e.g., if we could classify as 'alike' the beginning of the beginning section and other things. So, for example, I would say that greetings are instances of a class of objects which I call *adjacency pairs*, and while there are ways in which greetings are quite the same as other adjacency pairs, it seems to be that the other pairs have separatable parts, e.g., for question–answer there are lots of things that can be inserted between the question and the answer, and I've already mentioned the separatable character of an exchange of goodbyes, whereas that doesn't seem to be so for greetings. And that gives an order of relevance to such a question as, Does the first greeting pair item have a fixed place? And then, Given the first, is it the business of somebody to do a next pair item right then and there as compared to using the slot to do something else and then later doing the next pair item for the greeting? So, *placing* is one sort of transparent inspectional orderliness which nonetheless needs a lot of work on it to find out what exactly is involved, and how general to other things is that sort of a feature.

A second, which I've sort of mentioned, is *pairing*. Greetings come in pairs. The pairing of things matters in various ways; for one, that by virtue of the pairing conception, 'first greetings' and 'greeting returns' are different objects. It's not that there are two greetings, but there is a first greeting and a second greeting, and they're quite different. A simple way to see that is, whereas a first greeting gets a second greeting, a second greeting does not work in the way a first greeting does, to get another greeting in return. The observation that that point plays off, I found in Goodenough's monograph on property among the Truk, where he observed about some phenomenon that it's different than letter writing among Americans where, if you write a letter and someone returns a letter then you owe a letter to the person who returned your letter. That is to say, letters are chained in an indefinite fashion. And there are other things that operate that way, i.e., where you give them one and they

give you one in return, but the one they give you in return sets up that you owe them one. Greetings don't work that way.

(To this there is at least inspectionally contrary data: "Hello," "Hi Joe," "Hi!" And in a telephone situation one routinely gets that sort of thing – but there is something else going on. The 'third' greeting item stands as a way to recognize who's done the second item which then serves as a first to the third; the first item simply being the formal thing that a telephone answerer does.)

The fact that greetings are paired has implications with regard to what we can then do by looking to the ways in which the class of adjacency pair objects work. That is to say, we can then cull out features of adjacency pairs and see whether such features, considered programmatically, hold for greetings. If they don't hold for greetings we might, e.g., consider that greetings are not precisely adjacency pairs. But, roughly, among the features of adjacency pairs are that they are organized in such a way that the first item of the pair selects a class of return items to it, from which some return can be selected. It does not necessarily select only a single class of return items; rather, given a first pair member, a second pair member should be selected from the class of alternative second pair members. And a party who speaks second to a first pair part, by doing an appropriate second pair part, exhibits, among other things, that they see that a first pair part was done.

An interesting part of the work of greetings, then, is that there are a series of different types of organization involved. Adjacency pair organization partially handles some of the things that greetings do, and we can say things about adjacency pairs and locate such objects. Then there's this other thing about greetings, having to do with their placing, i.e., that greetings go at the beginning of the beginning section, which is altogether independent of adjacency pair organization and has to do with a different type of organization for conversation, i.e., the overall structural organization. And in those terms there is no information in adjacency pair organization about where the first part of the pair should go in a conversation.

Now there may be, as another thing, the organization of the beginning section of a conversation. For this, the issue is where, relative to the various parts that can be put into that beginning section, should various parts go. And given the possible relationship between the beginning section and what can follow from the beginning section, it may be that the greeting sequence is not determinative of how you get into other than the beginning section, where what can follow from the beginning section turns on the sorts of things that are done after a greeting sequence. That is to say, a greeting sequence may be fixed and irrelevant – or it may not be. It's plain that other things are quite relevant to moving from a beginning section, e.g., the use or non-use of a how-are-you can be enormously relevant. Obviously a how-are-you can elicit a piece of news, e.g., "Fine! I'm getting married" which moves one into topical talk right then and there. And, e.g., I've heard conversations which start out "Hi how are you?" "Oh, not so good" "Why?" then a 20-minute discussion, the parties part, and the other as he's walking away, says "Hey! By the way how are *you*." So that how-are-yous are massively separable, and a

second how-are-you may not come in the beginning section at all, whereas I
don't think you get hellos separated in that way, with a second hello placed
somewhere other than the beginning section.

So we have these series of different types of organization for conversation
that greetings are objects in, and they're all involved in bringing off the
greeting section of a conversation. Now we said that the greeting pair is fixed
in its placement and also is fixed as an adjacency pair, i.e., that the second
should go right after the first. That turns, for its working, on a series of other
inspectional properties of greetings. For one that in a strong way an initial
greeting – and a second greeting also – can be produced and treated as an
adequate complete utterance such that the utterance can be treated as complete
when the greeting has occurred. "Hi Joe" is treatable as a complete utterance
right then and there such that the other party should start talking. So if
somebody produces what could be a complete greeting, like "Hi Joe," and,
e.g., starts to say as well, "how are you?" then you can get an overlapping
return greeting. Like, in the GTS data we have "Hi Jim, // come on in,"
where "come on in" is overlapped by Jim's return greeting. One relevance of
that is that for considerations of the occurrence of 'interruptions,' one wants
to know, about as many sorts of interruptions that you can find, do they have
some orderly base? Can you say how it happens that the other party starts up
where they do start up? And in the case of, e.g., "Hi Jim // come on in"
there is an orderly basis for the occurrence of the interruption.

Now we have this rule that says given a first, a second should be done, and
given that they're pairs, what should be done on the finding of completion is
specified by the pair organization, i.e., some second member should be done.
Recognizable completeness matters, then, by virtue of the rule that says
completion is transitionally adequate, because *on* the completion a second
should be done, such that if it's not done it can be seen to be absent. So, for
example, if somebody says "Hello" and there is no return on its completion,
a repeat can be done quite directly. And returning a hello to a repeated hello
is a different thing than returning to an initial hello and can involve, e.g.,
offering some excuse as to how come you didn't answer the first. Now that
completeness feature for an utterance is, for other things than greetings,
massively problematic. For all sorts of utterances it's a complex question as to
how its completion for transition purposes is to be achieved, and how it's to
be responded to. But for adjacency pairs in general, given a first pair member,
on the recognition of a possible completion a second pair member should be
done. And that an utterance containing a greeting is recognizably complete
when the greeting is done, has various importances. Greetings are routinely
done by people who are otherwise unacquainted, and are done before any
monitoring can be done of what, for this person, constitutes a complete
utterance.

Added to these features is that greetings are specifically heard as directed to
somebody, and they select the somebody they're directed to, to speak. So it's
not just that somebody should talk and should do a return greeting when a
first greeting has been done, but the greeting selects the somebody to whom

it's directed as its recipient and as the next speaker, i.e., the speaker of the return greeting. And plainly it can be a technical problem as to who's been selected, and you routinely get reports like, "I was walking along and this gorgeous girl is coming towards me and she says 'Hi!' with a big smile, and I looked over my shoulder to see who she was talking to, and then I realized it was me."

Now completion and directedness have to do with what can be called the *sequential implicativeness* of an initial greeting. To say, for example, that a greeting puts one into a state of talk or begins a conversation, could be heard as saying that a greeting puts one into a state of talk because it's an instance of a state of talk. The matter is much more pointed than that, by virtue of the fact that a greeting not only involves talk in itself, but it gets more talk – at least another greeting. And if one is doing a beginning section of a conversation, then the second greeting should get something further, but not another greeting.

Earlier I mentioned the issue of greetings having highest priority. A second place where greetings go is on the entry of some party into a conversation that's already ongoing. And to see the sort of priority status greetings have in such a scene, one might look at materials like the following:

> *Tony* :   The head of these United States' gotta be a dynamic person. Forthright. Very forthright person. Can' be– can' be a meek person. Gotta put his cards on the table. See, the guy that puts his cards on the table is– Russia an' all these other countries, Russia an' all these– uh, Hi Matt!
>
> *Matt* :   Hi.
>
> *Tony* :   Russia an' all these other countries . . .

That is to say, a party will do a thing like interrupt their own utterance – aside from that parties will interrupt others' utterances – to do a greeting. And note that the insertion is of a greeting sequence, not just that the speaker says "Hi Matt" and continues. And we could ask for what sorts of things can an utterance that one is engaged in have something inserted into it that is otherwise adequate. Greetings may be among a small class of such things. And that would be a way to see the kind of priority it has for conversation. (It's interesting that this entry-of-a-new-participant thing is kind of parallel for the ringing of a telephone, i.e., if two or more people are sitting and having a conversation and the phone rings, then routinely someone will stop in the middle of their utterance and go answer the phone.)

Returning to the fact that greetings go at the start of the beginning section, a question is, do greetings invariably begin a conversation or are there some conversations in which greetings don't go at the beginning? Also, do greetings mean the beginning of a conversation, definitively? The answer to the second is obviously 'no.' It's obvious that people do simply exchange greetings and don't have more interaction than that, so the fact that greetings have been done doesn't mean that a conversation will take place. One kind of interesting

feature of the accomplishing of greetings-only interactions, where parties are approaching each other on a street, in a hallway, etc., is the way in which parties are able to withhold doing greetings until they reach some space relative to each other such that they can do greetings and have passed on its completion. Now if one party starts a greeting at such a distance from the other as to involve that the other returns the greeting while they are still approaching each other, then more than greetings will perhaps have to be done. And there is more-than-a-greeting which can be done, i.e., an exchange of how-are-yous, but apparently you can screw up on that by starting greetings at such a distance that the how-are-yous are finished and you're still approaching. But for the most part, people do it very well, engineering that thing so that they do not pass each other face to face having ended the interaction, but the interaction is over when they pass.

With regard to the issue of do greetings invariably begin a conversation, I used to have a rule that said 'greetings are ahistorically relevant,' i.e., that no parties' history of interaction removes the relevance of greetings. I was thinking about that in comparison to, e.g., things like introductions where, having been introduced to somebody once or twice, introductions are no longer appropriate, whereas greetings remain usable between parties as a way to begin their conversation though they've seen each other every day for 30 years. And while some such thing as that may be so, there are specific historicalizing techniques which permit the beginning of conversation to take place, as a specifically historicalized conversation, without greetings. That is, a way to say, e.g., we are now doing the second conversation this afternoon, or we are now doing a continuation of a conversation that had closed, is not just to begin without a greeting but to specifically connect this conversation with the last, e.g., "Oh you've put up your hair" as an entering remark on returning to somebody's house having been there earlier, or other such noticings. Or things like "He said no," "She can't go," "She already did it," etc. Such beginnings specifically connect a possibly-newly-begun conversation with a last. And that stands as a particular technique for doing a sort of thing that is done – if not in the beginning section then early on in conversations – which is, bringing this conversation into relationship with past conversations.

I talked about the business of 'turning your mind to us' as a thing one does at the beginning of a conversation (and that's not merely turning your mind to the other, but to 'us'). Now, among the ways you go about doing the job of 'turning your mind to us' in the beginning of a conversation is focussing on its distance from the last, or some business by reference to the last, e.g., "Where've you been, I haven't seen you for three weeks!," "You're looking a lot better," "How's your mother?," "I want to thank you for the lovely dinner," and a whole range of such techniques. (Some of those things should be done specifically in the beginning section of a conversation, e.g., an inquiry about the health of somebody who in the last interaction was reported to be ill.) So, early into a conversation you use some way of showing that you've found at least that part of 'us' that is involved in our last interaction. And it's

always a last. If you deal with interactions prior to the last one you work your way through the last one to the others. That sort of technique is a way to connect up two interactions such that the second is done without a greeting sequence, i.e., it can just begin off with those items I've mentioned, "She wouldn't go," etc., those sorts of things that have to be understood by reference to whatever we were talking about when we last ended.

At this point there's a whole thing that fits in; a type of conversation that begins without greetings, indeed without a begining section. There is a phenomenon that's been widely observed: In times of public disaster and tragedy people in large cities who otherwise do not talk to each other, develop 'comeraderie,' talk to each other. That will turn out to be involved in this issue that we've just gotten to. We have to try to develop some sorts of explanations, characterizations, of why that happens.

In order to arrive at such a characterization a lot of clearing up has to be done. For example, it's reported that strangers now talk to each other, where strangers don't talk to each other in cities. Now there's a way in which that is plainly nonsense. People who are strangers to each other talk to each other all the time. Not, however, as 'strangers.' That is to say, 'cab drivers and fares' talk to each other; people talk to cops, to salesladies, to all sorts of people, and they don't encounter that they're 'talking to a stranger' as a problem they have to overcome, nor one that the respondent treats them as dealing with. So, the characterization of 'stranger–stranger' interaction in a city is equivocal and turns on, for its relevance, that the parties who are now interacting in a time of disaster are specifically interacting as 'strangers' and not as 'cabbie and fare,' 'saleslady and client,' etc.

We'll just play around a little bit with the problems involved. In the first instance, one needn't treat the matter as 'how do people overcome their (acquired) natural unwillingness to talk to strangers,' but one wants to know why they would feel that they want to talk to strangers, such that they have to overcome that they shouldn't or don't. That is, one doesn't want to suppose that people are dying to talk to strangers all along and now they have an occasion to do it, you have to find out why, for this situation they want to talk to strangers; and also, why do those who are approached as 'strangers' allow themselves to be talked to. Initially, then, the problem isn't as simple as 'how do people now get a chance to talk to strangers.'

Let's consider some things about the situation of 'strangers' in the streets of the cities. In lecture 1 I mentioned the status of the crowd outside of Bullocks, and said that a thing about the occurrence of a crowd around, say, a possible crime, is that somebody who sees the crowd and the crime, sees what the crowd is looking at, whereas otherwise what anybody is looking at in the streets is not available. With that, we can achieve a small part of the sense of what is called the 'integrative function of crime,' i.e., in such a situation you know what's on all these people's minds.

We can in similar fashion get at the integrative function of disaster and tragedy. That is, it is otherwise routinely nobody's business on the one hand, and perhaps unsolvable on the other, what's on the mind of the person who's

passing you. Furthermore, it's your business to not make it their business as to what's on your mind by doing something which would cause them to wonder what's on that person's mind, e.g., by crying in the streets. Crying in the streets is not a thing that somebody encountering somebody doing it can solve – except classificatorily, e.g., they can say it's some private problem – and it's something you shouldn't cause them to try to solve. But at least one facet of the integrative status of public tragedy is that somebody standing on the street can cry, and the set of persons who pass him, who don't know him, can know what he's crying about, i.e., he's crying about that public event. Your mind is, then, made available to the anonymous persons who encounter you, who otherwise have it as not their business to figure it out, and who otherwise can't.

So, a sort of thing that happens in public disasters is that persons can express emotions in public places, and those emotions are available to others, who need not avoid looking at the person who's sad, and also can figure that they know why he's sad. And the major thing is that this is for people who are unacquainted, i.e., 'strangers.' Now that operates in a rather pure fashion as compared to crying in front of your friends about, e.g., the death of Bobbie Kennedy, where, in interactions with your friends you find that the account is not sufficiently "I'm crying because Bobbie Kennedy died" but, that, plus 'how come I in particular care.' When people talk among their friends about how they were affected by a death like Bobbie Kennedy's, or Jack Kennedy's, or Martin Luther King's, etc., then they give not just the fact of the death as their account, but their involvement in the life – however small that involvement may be. Whereas for strangers, the fact of the death is all you need display and it's sufficient. You are crying as a member of the public, with public motives and explanations as sufficient. And no one is interested in inspecting, say, the irony of your crying; that you of all people should be crying, after all you hated the guy. Public tragedies, then, make persons' emotions publicly available and publicly explainable to anonymous parties. Also, persons can express emotions in public without having that they are doing that treated as something embarrassing, something they shouldn't do, etc.

Another sort of thing is somewhat off the topic but may be relevant to it: A feature of 'stranger–stranger' interaction in the city apparently serves as a way to show that the initiator is specifically, while talking to the person he's talking to, not 'beginning a conversation' with him. And that is that techniques other than greetings are used to begin the thing. Those techniques consist of such a first utterance as solves the question of how come I'm talking to you; things like "Excuse me, could you tell me where the subway entrance is?," "Pardon me but do you have the time?" etc. Such a 'ticketed' first utterance is plainly a 'beginning,' but is such a thing as when it has been returned to the interaction will be, if not complete, completable with a 'thank you–you're welcome' exchange. As compared to starting with a "Hello" where, for conversations that begin that way the ending is not foregiven, these sorts of things, when they are done as a beginning, announce also what it will

take to bring that interaction to a close. So that people who, if you say "Hello" to them will ignore you, will answer, I take it, if you say "Pardon me could you tell me where the subway is."

So, 'stranger–stranger' interaction can be done in such a way as to indicate that I'm not starting a conversation with you. It will turn out to be a relevant sort of fact because at least one reported way that 'stranger–stranger' interaction in disasters takes place is the following, from the *New York Times*.

> Yesterday they kept asking for news; any news of Kennedy's condition. "How is he?" people would ask a taxi driver, soda jerk, or policeman and they didn't even think of saying who "he" was.

What you get, then, as a conversation beginning is "How is he?" It's a conversation beginning that could perfectly well be done where you're doing the historicalized beginnings, i.e., that sort of thing as connects two conversations. But in this case it has a series of ideal properties to it. It says as between us, interacting as 'strangers,' my business with you is that public matter that you and I ought to have on our minds and nothing else, such that what I come to be doing with it can be brought under control. It also says that it's a matter solvable by an 'anybody.'

Now, the character of 'intimacy' in any event – leaving aside intimacy between strangers – is that one can do firsts like this which are not tied to prior matters. That is, if one can say to somebody "How is he?" without a 'he' having been talked of, then that's a way of doing 'being intimate.' And a way of doing 'being intimate' with strangers turns on that we have an item that we can do it for with strangers, i.e., something like a public disaster. And it may be that the intimacy, the friendliness that exists in the cities during such a disaster does *not* more readily permit a conversation that begins with "Hello" "Hello." That is to say, the non-use of a beginning section may be a specific part of this kind of interaction. And that then assimilates it to standard 'stranger–stranger' interaction and distinguishes it from 'ordinary' conversation. So, when you have an item like "How is he?," "Isn't it awful?," "Will they ever go on again?," etc., as first items usable for anybody in the city, you now have ways of beginning a conversation with a stranger, which announce to the stranger the terms of interaction. And any sort of public event that can be assumed to be on the mind of any other party you happen to encounter can be used that way. But perhaps only such public events as can be assumed to be on the mind of the person you interact with can be used that way.

The question of why people will respond to it deserves altogether separate treatment. Of course on the one hand they know the terms that they're being invited into, and they can know what it will take to bring the thing to a close; that they're being addressed as a member of the public and not as some exploitable object (or they can suppose that until they find out otherwise). But also, if they are correctly found, what happens is that they have an answer occur to the them – as compared to this being a puzzle – and they can offer

the answer, and in offering it they do thereby show their membership; that they are indeed reasonable citizens.

You could figure it might not matter very much. Why in the world does somebody care that a stranger thinks well of him, or thinks that he's a reasonable person. Why should he care that a stranger not think "this guy doesn't give a damn" about something that this guy in fact doesn't give a damn about. Why should he care that somebody think he does give a damn when he doesn't. And yet there are enormous masses of material that tell us perfectly well that people are subject to that sort of embarrassment, i.e., that people care enormously – or enough – what anonymous people think of them. Consider the difficulties of, e.g., having a fight in a public place, deciding that you're going to refuse to stand up for the Star Spangled Banner at a football game (where you might be afraid of being beaten up, I suppose) but there's plainly no issue in principle about people's concern to have the anonymous public think well of them in the terms that the anonymous public has available to use for them, on them, about them. So, without regard to whether you think it's a good thing, a bad thing, or nothing, if indeed you have an answer to "How is he?" you can find yourself offering it.

In any event, my main point is that the reported type of beginning such as "How is he?" with its structural character of requiring some other, in particular a stranger, to know what in the hell you're talking about, and with its feature of not making them have to figure out what kind of interaction they're getting into – as with the "Hello" beginning – is not an incidental sort of way to begin such conversations, and that how these conversations begin is part of the solution to the problem of how it is that comeraderie develops in the cities during disasters. So the lesson is, if we want an answer to the question 'How does comeraderie develop in the cities during times of disaster?' then the organization of conversation is relevant to an answer.

To return to our initial focus, the fixed placing and adacency pair status of greetings at the beginnings of conversation. Plainly enough a problem about them that what we've so far said does not deal with is, how is who goes first determined? It turns out that that sort of a problem has a bunch of diagnostic interests, turning on that lots of cultures find that sort of problem a thing to play around with. And where you have a situation where there is some thing that involves an order as between the parties, and involves that they go one at a time or two at a time but behind each other, etc., you have that situation mobilized for other sorts of structural uses. You will widely find, cross-culturally, solutions that do not just somehow or another solve the one-at-a-time, who-goes-first problem, but solutions which allow other sorts of organizations to operate.

I refer to things like, in jungle tribes a characteristic sort of problem is that a trail narrows so that only one person can walk at a time after, say, having been able to walk in a group of five, and now they have to arrange themselves to manage it. Also, trails involving one person at a time where two people are approaching from opposite directions. Those sorts of problems, like the problem of getting into a greeting sequence, are mobilized for other uses.

They are characteristically solved by a rule that says 'high ranking person goes first' or '–last.' It doesn't matter which, since there's a theory for each way, such that going first shows high status or going last shows high status.

And that's a thing that's done for conversation beginnings, i.e., to some extent this formal problem is mobilized for such considerations as, e.g., in the pre-Civil War South a slave should always greet a white person, or a slave should never do an initial greeting but only a return greeting, etc. Children should always give a first greeting to adults. Now the telephone poses some sorts of problems, since answerer goes first and then caller. But caller can be talking not to called but to somebody other than called, so you end up with situation of caller talking before called, and then such things as caller waiting for called, i.e., "Hello," "Is this X?," "No, hold on a minute." And for some parties, waiting for another party is a status problem. There's a set of people who have developed procedures for managing that so, e.g., when I get a call from the Vice-Chancellor I never get a call from the Vice-Chancellor, I get a call from the Vice-Chancellor's secretary, and the Vice-Chancellor doesn't come on the line until I'm on the line. So if my wife answers the phone she's got to bring me to the phone before the Vice-Chancellor's secretary will put him on the line. And it's now being reported that really elaborately delicate battles go on in the upper levels of organizations, in businesses and bureaucracies, when both parties to a conversation are parties who do not get on the line until the other party is on the line. But I assume that the same sort of thing takes place upon entering the magical hut in a tribe, crossing trails, etc. Indeed, pick up any ethnography and you'll find that who goes first gets routinely assimilated to status hierarchies.

So the fact of a fixed problem of this sort is of interest for the ways in which people go about devising solutions which allow it to be used for some other set of purposes. The point is that somehow it's been found out. It's not just a fact in the world that researchers discover and it happens that conversation has this character or that trails have this character, etc., but it's been diagnosed and a solution has been achieved which allows it to be used for various other purposes.

It's of interest of course that in some cultures, e.g., the Burundi, the whole organization of conversation can be put at the mercy of other interests. And, for example, in the pre-Civil War South, there was a rather total organization of white–slave conversation in which what the slave did and what the white did was fixed for utterance after utterance after utterance to some very considerable extent. Here is a fragment:

> Negroes, for example, usually agreed with any statement made by a white person, so that in many instances they were accused of evasion if not deceit. "Tom," said his master pointing to Y, "This is my brother." "Ah master and very like you." "You did not know that I had a brother, did you Tom?" "No master, him very good brother." "And Tom," pointing to us, "These are my cousins." "All your family, master." "Yes Tom." "All very like you master, what a family you have

master." I need hardly remark that four persons more unlike could hardly have been brought together.

So, for example, saying "Master" at the completion of every utterance was a required thing. Agreeing with any utterance that could be made was a required thing such that that set up games of trying to get a slave to be found to disagree – where disagreeing essentially could be treated as a capital offense, i.e., because it could be seen to be accusing the other of being incorrect, lying, etc. So the conversation system was massively put at the service of the slave system. There were some negative consequences for the masters, in that they could never find out what they wanted to know.

One other aspect of the kind of fixed status of greetings is that it's available for use as a specific pair of items within a conversation that can be occupied emotionally. Imagine there's a place that you can put something into, and you have this item to put into it, where it's also an item that you can fully use for some other job. And while you can put emotions into lots of places in conversation, you can specifically do an emotional beginning for the range of emotions. You can say "Hello" such that somebody will say, e.g., "What's the matter?" That is, you can show with "Hello" that you are high or low, where "Hello" is a specific place to do that. As compared to the fact that you can, I suppose, ask a question glumly, "Hello" is a place for somebody to *listen* to see that you're doing some mood with it.

Lecture 5

Foreshortened, normal, and expanded beginning sequences; Joking relationships; First topics; Close offerings

We've been talking about 'greetings' and arguing that they are the beginnings of beginning sections, not the whole beginning section. Before going on to consider some aspects of the further organization of beginning sections I want to amend some of the remarks I made last time. For one, I said that the first place where 'called' has an opportunity to move for first topic control is in the third utterance, and therefore 'caller' has a prior opportunity because caller can do it in the second utterance, e.g., to "Hello" they can say "Jeanette" which can get "Yeah" and provide for movement into first topic control by caller. There are perhaps ways in which called can make a topical control move before that. It turns on bringing together that issue with something else I said last time, that "Hello" is 'emotionally occupiable,' i.e., one can present an emotion in it and parties are prepared to listen to "Hello" for its joy or its misery, etc. Now considering that sort of possibility it's easy enough to see that called can do their first "Hello" in such a way as to have it elicit "What's the matter?" or such a thing, which would then put called into a position to, e.g., offer their troubles. Or they can do a big happy "Hi!" which could elicit "My, you're sounding chipper this morning, what's up?"

   In fact, that discussion can be made rather more general than just for "Hello"s, and here I'm referring to work that Schegloff has done on greeting sequences in, I think it's the October *American Anthropologist*. Borrowing on his work I just want to note that it's routinely technically done that first utterances of calls are topically controlling of a conversation, presumptively. That is, the presumptive topic-type that the first utterance sets up can work itself out via the control provided by the first utterance called makes. It can also be altered by other techniques. We might think, then, of uses of first utterances which we can say give a candidate typing or a candidate signature to the conversation. Such things as "Morgan, Paint Department," "Police Desk, Haynes speaking," etc., which say "I'm going to listen for your business relevant to the identification I make of myself" such that it's your business now to state your business. And if a call is going to be otherwise, then that will have to be achieved. And Schegloff has found that it can be rather

an elaborate task to transform a called-defined business call. He has material which goes something like:

A :   Police Desk,
B :   Who's this.
A :   Sergeant Brown.
B :   Do you know Sergeant Smith?
A :   Yes,
B :   Well I'm a friend of his, I think we met once. I'm Bill Jones.
A :   Yeah, I think so,
B :   Well look, can you give me some information about . . .

where the caller takes it that he couldn't get the information that he wants if he just started out with "Could you tell me . . ." And they happen to be correct routinely, i.e., when people call to a police desk and just say "Hello I'm calling to find out about . . ." then they don't get it. And they know that the way to get it is to transform it into some sort of private interaction.

So the sheer use of "Hello," or some identification can initially, candidat-edly, signature the type of conversation that's taking place, such that given "Police Desk" a person begins by stating their police-relevant business. If they don't, they try to get the identity transformed so that it's now 'one friend to another,' or that they have special rights, or they're not calling the police desk but somebody who happens to be there who is obliged to answer that way – either the one who has answered the phone or someone who now has to be found by the one who answered.

Those calls have very thin beginnings. There are interactions that have much more elaborate beginnings.

A :   Hello,
B :   Vera?
A :   Ye:s.
B :   Well you know, I had a little difficulty getting you.
          (1.0)
B :   First I got the wrong number, and then I got Operator,
A :   Well.
B :   And uhm
          (1.0)
B :   I wonder why.
A :   Well, I wonder too.
A :   It uh just rung now about uh three ti//mes.
B :   Yeah, well Operator got it for me.
A :   She did.
B :   Uh huh,
B :   So // uh
A :   Well.
B :   When I– after I got her twice, why she ––

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        A :   –(telephoned)–
        B :   –tried it for me
        B :   Isn't that funny?
        A :   Well it certainly is.
        B :   Must be some little cross of lines someplace hh
        A :   Guess so.
        B :   Uh huh,
        B :   Uh,
  →    B :   Am I taking you away from yer dinner?
        A :   No::.
        A :   No, I haven't even started tuh get it yet.
        B :   Oh, you (h)ave//n't.
        A :   hhheh heh
        B :   Well I– I never am certain, I didn't know whether I'd be too early
               or too late // or ri–
        A :   No::.
        A :   No, well I guess uh with us uhm there isn't any – –
        B :   Yeah.
        A :   –p'ticular time.
        B :   Uh huh,
  →    B :   Well I– I wannid to say I enjoyed your class so this morning, and
               too,
        A :   We//ll, thank you.
        B :   Uhm
        B :   Will one of – – where– are those records going to be uh available.
        A :   I don't – –
                          (1.0)
        A :   I don't know yet . . .
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If we're able to say what sorts of things are still part of the beginning
section of, e.g., a telephone conversation, then, if we take it that "Are you
busy?" is a candidate part of the beginning of a telephone conversation – and
there's lots of information usable to argue that – we can note that in a call like
this one, a version of "Are you busy?" i.e., "Am I taking you away from your
dinner?" comes some 25 lines into the transcript, and another 'beginning
item' occurs some 13 lines after that, "Well I– I wanted to say I enjoyed your
class." Among the things I alluded to earlier was the relative placing of these
sorts of 'beginning items' ("Well you know, I had a little difficulty getting
you," "Am I taking you away from your dinner?," "I wanted to say I enjoyed
your class").

I want now to go through some of the types of ways that beginning sections
run off, and I'll initially consider three sorts of things: Foreshortening
techniques – ways of shortening a normal beginning sequence, the use of a
normal beginning sequence (and I'll say what I mean by that), and
lengthening techniques. And we're talking about them as techniques relative

to some first-topic or non-first-topic topic (and I've talked about what I mean by 'first topic').

I already discussed a foreshortening technique in the first lecture when I went through the "Hello," "Jeanette," "Yeah" series, where use of called's name by caller set up that caller would like to move directly, with a minimal beginning sequence, into first topic, and that she would begin first topic, and where called can accept that being done by, e.g., saying "Yeah!" or reject it by saying "Yeah?" which will involve an extension of the beginning sequence, at least such that the caller will now offer their name and called will recognize that person and perhaps do, e.g., "Oh hi! How are you?" requiring, then, further extension, after which they can move to the 'body' of the conversation. I also discussed foreshortening involved in the called's strategy of, after, e.g., "Hello" "Hello," doing "Where've you been!" where that involves called attempting to deal with the caller–called relationship and things like that. And now we can add the possibility of called doing one of these 'emotional hellos' which generate caller responding with an offer to called to say what's up, good or bad. And that's leaving aside the signatured business conversation.

Treating as a normal sequence one which involves an exchange of hellos plus an exchange of how-are-yous, one thing is that the how-are-you sequence can specifically provide a first topic by reference to the sorts of responses that come, e.g., "How are you?" "Fine! I got a raise," where that announcement is turned into first topic. And that possibility turns, for one, on the fact that how-are-you exchanges don't have to be placed adjunctly, and are not infrequently rather widely separated. Where "How are you" has among its businesses that it says "Give me such information as will involve me in asking you what it is that's of some substantial news as between us." That is, you don't have to say "Fine, I got a raise," you can say "Wonderful!" and it's now the business of the recipient of that to say "What happened?" and you can say "I got a raise," they can say "That's wonderful, how much?" etc. Obviously you can have news to deliver which you don't want to deliver as something attached to "How are you?" and you can just say "Okay" and not get the asker saying "Gee, how come?" People don't say "How come?" for any reported state, but, e.g., perhaps just when you report something as an 'exceptional' state. This is all in that 'Everyone has to lie' paper.

Now, given that in the first instance one doesn't have to use "How are you?" but can do one of those foreshortening techniques, the sheer use of "How are you?" is a way of saying "I have no immediate business that I want to offer before giving you the chance to offer something." A way to think about the how-are-you exchange turns on considering who does "How are you?" first. You might think of some of the problems involved in that as something like being an invited guest for dinner in a restaurant. The issue there is that you will definitely order before your host, but in picking out what to order you want to find out what they think is a reasonable item, so you want to find out, e.g., what they're going to have. You get, then, this elaborate negotiational thing when people take other people to dinner, in

which they all discuss "What are you going to have?" which has nothing to do with the sequence in which people will make their orders. That is to say, the waiter can partially decide who's going to order first; in some restaurants women go first, children next, and male adults third. But women may well be in a position of not wanting to announce what they're going to order until they find out what the host figures is a reasonable thing, and if the host doesn't do that, e.g., if they don't give a hint like "The steak is great here," then there are a series of procedures available with respect to a menu, e.g., you can pick some medium item on the list and say "I wonder how X is," hoping to get some suggestion as to whether that's too much or too little from the host.

From the discussions about "How are you?" in the '. . . lie' paper which I mentioned briefly in an earlier lecture, we can see that there are problems involved in being the first to answer a "How are you?" That is, assuming you have no business, it may be better to try to be the first to ask "How are you?" – assuming also that you don't know something that you want to tell the other which would affect their answer if they knew it. Clearly it would be the business of somebody with awful or great news to not put the other in a position of having to answer first, and one way to do that is to indicate 'I want to talk first,' which can be done by caller with "Hello" "Jeanette" or by called with, e.g., a woebegone "Hello::" "What's the *ma*tter." And then, e.g., they need not be in the position of saying something that would mutually embarrass you in that their fortunes are up while yours are down or vice versa. Later on you can say "Things always get better, look at me. Yesterday nothing, and today I'm on the top of the world." And that would be a way to ease their troubles. But otherwise it's better to give them the obligation to answer first so you can then produce your answer to fit theirs. Like, are you going to be intimate this time or distant this time? You may have sometimes had intimate conversations, but this time you know something's been going on with them and you also know that they might just say, to your "How are you?" "Okay," where, then, you don't want to start off telling them about what's intimately going on with you. And of course there's a use of "How are you?" on the stray chance that some topic will be found by reference to it. I show that I have nothing much to say and might try to latch on to anything you'll give me and make talk out of it. So the negotiations about who does "How are you?" are to be watched with care, and also the series of alternatives to its use which we perfectly well might think of as obliged. That is, we want to think of a package of alternatives; not just that there's a possibility of you doing "How are you?" first or they doing it first, but there's a possibility of no one doing "How are you?" And these kinds of considerations might give you an idea that you can look at these incredibly nothing-happening beginnings of conversation and see really interesting mechanisms going on.

Now there are a collection of lengthening techniques, i.e., ways to extend the conversation past an unsuccessful "How are you?", i.e., one that goes "How are you?" "Okay how are you?" "Okay." At that point we're still

nowhere, and neither wants to take this chance to produce a first topic – and I've talked about reasons for not wanting to do a first topic, e.g., you have some news but it's not first-topic status news, and you don't want them to think that's what you think is first-topic news. There is a topic that can go after, say, an unsuccessful how-are-you sequence, that is a non-first-topic first topic, and that has very similar features to "How are you?" in that it may produce another topic – and that's in the first place the interest in producing this one – and also it can be used for any conversation in which "How are you?" can be used. It has separate features in that it is 'transitional' in the specific sense that at pretty much any point into it, it can be dropped in favor of something that happens to come up, whereas topics don't ordinarily have that kind of character. The topic is the *weather*. I'm proposing that the weather is a 'false first topic,' and specifically a 'transitional' first topic. And it is used in just the way "How are you?" is used, e.g., if you say "What a miserable day," that can do the same thing as answering "Lousy" to "How are you?" And people can pick up on that, e.g., "Yeah isn't it. Makes you feel really crappy." Yeah it does. I do." "Oh, what's the matter?" Or, "Isn't it glorious out! Just the day to go shopping." "Yeah, let's do that." I'm not going to go on with further points about weather talk; I only want to notice about the use of weather that its placing after a how-are-you sequence is only after certain sorts of how-are-you sequences, and that its ends can be very similar to the ends for how-are-you sequences, and that with the weather we find something that we can really call a 'transitional topic,' a topic that is uninformative about what's on your mind and has 'exchange' features, in that even people in fairly local juxtaposition can exchange weather reports.

Let me turn to a topic of interest about the beginnings of begining sequences, and that is that insofar as it seems plain that some signaturing or typing of either a relationship or an interaction or both can be done there – and not only such things as "Police Desk" or "Morgan, Paint Division," but also things like "Hello" "Jeanette" do some typing of the relationship and perhaps the conversation they're going to have – one can ask what sorts of relationships can be – perhaps should be – signatured right at the beginning of a conversation; what sorts of relationships are interactionally relevant in some way, over the course of the interaction. And that leads you to look for things that are called 'types of relationships' to see whether they can be made operative from the beginning of a conversation. Here is a fragment which is of interest in that way. Jay enters a lunchroom where Sy and George are eating:

→*Jay* :	<u>Al</u>right s:Sy why d'nche ⌜stop–
George :	⌊(, <u>al</u>right.)
Sy :	Where'v yuh <u>been</u> Jay, I haven' ⌜seen y'fuh three, <u>weeks</u>.
Jay :	⌊–y'know, making,
→*Jay* :	–making love tuh that chair over–over there,

→*George* :	<u>There</u> 'e is, with iz psychedelic tie.
	(pause)
Sy :	Yeh(hh)hehh hh ((clears throat))
Jay :	Yuh:::, – – my good I– ((attempted Irish accent)) MY GOOD IRrISH TAH YIHKNEOW,
	(pause)
Jay :	<u>So::</u>.
	(pause)
Sy :	All yih need now's a <u>tietack</u> tuh hold ih <u>down</u> when yuh, have a <u>date</u>.
	(pause)
Jay :	Mm hm,

Jay's remark to Sy and George's remark to Jay constitute that they are doing, that they have and are now engaged in, from the beginning, a 'joking relationship.' That's not one of my made up terms, there's an enormous anthropological literature on 'joking relationships.' Considering the productional aspects of it makes the thing kind of interesting. Jay is arriving on the scene, and bringing off, on his part, that the joking relationship can be used to start off, involves him in inspecting the scene to find the sorts of materials he can employ to bring off a crack – as George is in return doing the same sort of thing, inspecting Jay for what kind of crack he can make. The gross point is that joking relationships may be such a thing as not only involve an exchange of cracks between parties here and there in the conversation, but involve people in bringing an orientation to it to an interaction, such that they're starting off with that as a specific way of getting into the conversation. We can then look for whatever types we figure might exist and might be interactionally relevant, and see whether there are some ways that those things are brought to bear at the beginning of an interaction.

It ought to be noted about the above conversation that it takes place in the cafeteria of a place of business, and that may be relevant to the doing of a joking relationship. That is, if any of the parties were to approach each other in the office, at their desks, with some business, they might not do this sort of interchange. Now, there are no 'kin' relationship issues here, or anything like that, and I'm not prepared to develop what about these people provides for them finding themselves in a joking relationship, but I want to note that there are some sorts of possible characterizations of a social-structural sort that might be involved in that these people have a joking relationship, other than that they happen to joke with each other.

I've made some suggestions about why someone might want to do a 'first topic' and said that there are ways to classify some item as a 'real' first topic, and I've mentioned such issues as the saying of some item before someone gets a chance to say something else which might be troublesome for that item, and things like that. I want to introduce another sort of consideration that is involved. Here's the data:

Margy : Hel<u>lo</u>::,
Agnes : Hello Margy?
Margy : <u>Ye</u>::⌈s,
Agnes :   ⌊'hhh We do pai::nting, a:ntiquing,
Margy : I(hh)s that <u>ri:</u>ght.
Agnes : Eh!hh ⌈hhh:::::
Margy :   ⌊hnh hnh hnh
Agnes : nhh hnh hnh! 'hh
Margy : 'hh
Agnes : –keep people's pa'r too::ls,
Margy : Y(hhh)! hnh hnh
Agnes : <u>I'm</u> sorry about that <u>that</u> ⌈I din' see that–
Margy :   ⌊Oh::: <u>he</u> didn't need it,

What's involved is something like this: Agnes' (the caller's) husband
borrowed a power tool from Margy's (the called's) husband, said he would
bring it back in a couple of days, and Margy's husband said not to worry
about it he wouldn't need it. And then he turned out to need it, called up to
get it back, and it was brought back. But having to make a request for a
return is altogether different than having the thing returned without a request.
There is in general a difference between requests and offers, a preference for
offers over requests, and people will go out of their way to get the other to
make an offer. And Agnes is plainly embarrassed that a request had to be
made, and wants to do an apology. The question is, how is she going to bring
that apology off?

If she can do it in such a way as to have the other committed to the
lightness of the issue before the other knows what the issue is, then she has a
way of bringing off the apology with a minimum of embarrassment for both.
If Agnes can get Margy into this topic in a giggly mood before Margy knows
that they're into this topic, then, e.g., Margy won't prevent Agnes from
making the apology, and will be in a position of being committed to accept
the apology without making anything of it. And that's what she does here.
She gets Margy to be 'laughing along' before she knows that the list will be
extended to include reference to the power tool that Agnes will be apologizing
about.

Making it a first topic is not so much a matter of, say, getting it over with
then and there, but if it's a first topic then Agnes can control how it comes up;
she's able to design its presentation, whereas in the ordinary course of
conversation she may have to deal with it, without having control over how
it came up. It's not that she might not get a chance somewhere in the
conversation to bring it up just the way she wanted to, but that perhaps before
that point, a spot that stands as a 'natural' place for it to occur will have
occurred, and she won't get a chance to do it the way she wanted it. E.g., the
conversation might be going along and Margy might mention people
borrowing things and never returning them, which gets said lots of times,
especially when such an issue is on someone's mind, and Agnes might be

saying "By the way I'm really sorry about that." (And if we find it hard to empathize with the particulars of this conversation, we might imagine other sorts of things that one can be embarrassed about, need to apologize about, and that you would like the other to be in a good mood about before they knew what you were doing, e.g., ". . . and dent other people's fenders," ". . . and bring undercover agents to other people's parties," etc.) So that's another kind of basis for doing something as a first topic, i.e., the one who introduces it can control how it gets developed, whereas for topics routinely, they are not 'introduced' but, e.g., affiliated to last topics.

Here's another issue. A way to see that you're doing 'content' kinds of considerations, a conventional sort of semantics, would be to focus on a thing like "Well I wanted to say I enjoyed your class so much," "I wanted to thank you for inviting me to the party, it was lovely," etc., and give a discussion involving that what that does is a piece of etiquette; specifically, that what that does is to say something about the other event, etc., rather than that what such a remark does, and how come it's routinely placed at the beginning of a conversation, is that it says 'whereas in our last interaction *you* were the party who did the thankable thing, in this one *I* am.' And indeed it's responded to with "Well thank you." So when people put in thank-yous at the beginning of a conversation for events in a last interaction, they're bringing to the other's attention specifically that last interaction and its relation to this, with this interaction specifically as something *they* are doing. What you want to be asking, then, is what are they doing in this interaction, rather than what are they doing relevant to some other interaction. It's a parallel problem to that when somebody says the sky is blue, saying they're making a remark about the sky, rather than that they're doing something in this particular conversation.

And these kinds of arguments partially would be used in making a case for things like "Well I wanted to say I enjoyed your class this morning" as part of the 'beginning section.' That is, insofar as they, e.g., involve part of the procedure whereby who we are relative to each other is established, which then sets up the talk that we can do. We are then in a position to see that this is 'yet the beginning' although it's the 25th utterance. And then of course we can get at the relative placings of these beginning-section items, where some of them are movable down into the conversation and some are not, such that if they're not done right there then they can't be done later. "Hello" is not movable. And "I had difficulty getting you on the phone" goes at the start and nowhere else. I haven't encountered a call where that gets put in later into the call. I don't see any reason why it wouldn't, but that has to do with the fact that I don't know what it's doing. But whereas I used to figure that for "Are you busy?" and "How are you?," since both have to go immediately after the greetings you could only do one of them, it turns out that each of those items can be placed later on into the conversation; indeed, later on into the conversation but still in its beginning. We want to see which, of a series of items, are movable. And the issue of their relative placement is a real research issue, e.g., we see that greetings have high priority such that a person

will interrupt himself to do greetings, but it may be that that doesn't extend to how-are-yous.

Now there's a bunch of things of which "Are you busy?" is the most characteristic, which are beginning items, which announce that their user has something to talk about. Routinely the caller does them, though occasionally I've seen them done by the called in circumstances where caller calls with specifically a one-topic conversation and called may then say "Are you busy?" indicating that they have something to talk about as well. It need not be done right at the beginning of the conversation, where you might well figure that if you're going to use "Are you busy?" you'd better use it right up front. And it's not even guaranteeably part of the beginning sequence but can occur well into a conversation, since it can say "There's something more I want to say." Indeed, it also has a status as a *close* offering in the sense that if it's answered in the affirmative, then perhaps getting into a closing is obliged. And as a 'close offering' and a 'beginning' it serves to collect the following sort of materials: "Are you cooking your dinner dear?" "I had *just* gone into the kitchen to start it." Then the conversation can go on, and the one who asked it in the first instance can then close by saying "Well I'll let you get back to your cooking." So they can save the answer that allows them to continue, for use in closing later on.

And there's a neat difference between "Are you busy?" and "Am I taking you away from your dinner?" apart from transparent sorts of things that the latter can involve, e.g., that I'm attending your schedule, etc. It has to do with that if you say "Are you busy?" and the other says "No" then the formal use of the item as a preface to something or as a close offerer is all that it can bear. If, however, you say "Am I taking you away from your dinner?" and they say "No," you can treat the item as topically generative. You can, e.g., go on to talk about your dinner. So, we get a thing like the following, after an exchange of greetings:

> *B :* (This is Rhoda Blair.)
> *A :* Well, howareyuh.
> *B :* Fine, how are you.
> *A :* Well just fine.
> *B :* Were you eating?
>   (1.0)
> *A :* Some grapes, ehh ⌈hheh heh!
> *B :*   ⌊heh!
> *B :* I was just lookin' at mine,
> *A :* ehh heh heh heh heh
> *B :* It's so <u>hot</u>.

And here's another, at two and a half minutes into the call:

> *B :* Are you cooking your dinner dear?
> *A :* I had <u>just</u> gone into the kitchen to start it.

B :   Uh huh. Well, I was hungry when I got home, an' I just finished
       I mean my main – –
A :   ⌈Yeah.
B : [[⌊Uh – –
B :   –<u>en</u>tree.
A :   Mm hm,
B :   And I'll have a little ice cream la⌈ter.
A :   ⌊Yeh.

Now my feeling is that these sorts of things are used not merely when you
are signalling that you have something more to say, but to indicate that the
thing you have to say is something you planned to say, as compared to things
that happen to come up in the conversation. It may be that in such a way you
mark that an item is something you had as, say, a reason for calling, if not the
'reason for the call.' This distinction between something that somebody had
in mind before they began a conversation and something that came up in the
course of it is a muddy one in lots of places. But forgetting about the perfectly
obvious instances where somebody says, right after "Hello," "Look, I called
to tell you something," a way to see that there is a difference and that the
difference is attended turns on such materials as the offering of invitations in
conversation. Apparently people have ways of detecting that an invitation
that somebody offers, they decided to offer in the course of the conversation.
And a way that they can indicate that they see that is, not that they turn it
down, but, e.g., as in the following fragment, they make a counter offer. This
call was only partially recorded, so we don't know how far into the
conversation they are:

     B :   . . . Monday?
     A :   Ye⌈ah
     B :   ⌊Yeah he usually comes home but that doesn't matter,
→ A :   Well you wanna come out and have lunch with me?
→ B :   No, let me take <u>you</u> to lunch, some ⌈time.
     A :   ⌊OOOHHH! No. No
            <u>Come</u> on. Come out uh uhh say you get out here 'bout uh
            twelve <u>thir</u>ty.
     B :   Twelve thirty. Don't fix very much though, I just I– uh I eat
            very light anymore, I'm tryina get slim.
     A :   Yea:h?
     B : ⌈⌈hehh heh hh hh hh
     A : [[<u>You</u> get slim, my <u>heav</u>ens. You don't need to get any slimmah,

And another option, which we also see here, if the first one says "No, you
come here" one can say "Alright but don't fix much." Whereas for
invitations that are heard to be planned before this conversation, you
absolutely wouldn't do that. If someone invites you for Christmas Eve dinner
you don't say "Don't fix much." So they're plainly attending to 'interaction-

ally generated invitations' and 'invitations that generate an interaction' as markedly different things which get different responses. Where, then, even though the matter could be awfully muddy about some items, we can say that a difference is attended, though it may not be attended everywhere.

Part IV
Spring 1970

Lecture 1
Doing 'being ordinary'

Usually I start the course by doing what I do in the course, without any programmatic statements, without any indication of why it should be of any interest to anybody. But – and this may be unfair – the course will turn out to be much more severely technical than most people could possibly be interested in, and some good percentage will drop out, and usually that has the consequence that they get nothing out of the class if they last one time. So I decided to spend the first time telling people something that I take it could hardly *not* be of interest to them. Then, when they drop out, they'd at least have gotten what I figure would be worth the price of the course. And I guess I should say if *this* isn't absorbing, you could hardly imagine how unabsorbing the rest will be.

Now, this is in many ways nothing like the way I'll proceed throughout the rest of the course. In the course I will be taking stories offered in conversation and subjecting them to a type of analysis which is concerned roughly to see whether it's possible to subject the details of actual events to formal investigation, informatively. The loosest message is that the world you live in is much more finely organized than you'd imagine. As well as that loose message, there are some really specific things about how stories work and why they work the way they do. I'll do that from next time on. But in this lecture I won't be studying the organization of telling stories in conversation, and I won't be attempting to prove anything. I'll be saying some things about why the study of storytelling should be of interest to anybody. But people don't have to stay around after that to have caught that message, and to have been armed with some materials that would permit them to wander around noticing things that they might not have noticed, and find them ghastly.

I've been studying the organization of stories, how they work, for some time. And one sort of issue is, what do people make stories out of? In particular, given what they *might* make stories out of, what do they make stories out of? It wasn't of particular interest to me why anybody else should be interested in such an issue, but the question arose and now will constitute the business of this lecture: What sort of large-scale interest does what people make stories of or what they don't make stories of, have? A good deal of what I'll say has its obscure intellectual source (I say 'obscure' because if anyone were to read the book it's not likely that they'd find that it says what I say, but with some consideration they might see how it is that I owe what I'm saying to this source) in a novel called *Between Life and Death* by a French novelist, Nathalie Sarraute. The book is absolutely not assigned; I'm just citing a debt.

A kind of remarkable thing is how, in ordinary conversation, in reporting some event, people report what we might see to be not what happened, but the *ordinariness* of what happened. For whole ranges of things that you might figure to be kind of exciting, something like this will be offered (the following sorts of things are not made up but are actual): Somebody talking about a man they met the night before might say "He's very nice. He's very very nice." Or if they saw a movie they might say "It was really good." If they went away for a weekend, they say something like "We went to Palm Springs. Bud played golf with the guys and I sat around the pool with the girls." The reports do not so much give attributes of the scene, activity, participants but announce the event's ordinariness, its usualness. We might figure that lots of these things *could* be stories, but they're not made into stories. And if you think of literature or poetry you can perfectly well know that out of any such event as is passed off as "It was a nice evening. We sat around and talked," really elaborated characterizations are often presented. So I've been wondering about the *non*-production of stories.

Now I come to the central sorts of assertions I want to make. Whatever we may think about what it is to be an ordinary person in the world, an initial shift is not to think of an 'ordinary person' as some person, but as somebody having as their job, as their constant preoccupation, doing 'being ordinary.' It's not that somebody *is* ordinary, it's perhaps that that's what their business is. And it takes work, as any other business does. And if you just extend the analogy of what you obviously think of as work – as whatever it is that takes analytic, intellectual, emotional energy – then you can come to see that all sorts of nominalized things – personal characteristics and the like – are jobs which are done, which took some kind of effort, training, etc. So I'm not going to be talking about an 'ordinary person' as this or that person, or as some average, i.e., a non-exceptional person on some statistical basis, but as something that is the way somebody constitutes themselves, and, in effect, a job that they do on themselves. They and the people around them may be coordinatively engaged in assuring that each of them are ordinary persons, and that can then be a job that they undertake together, to achieve that each of them, together, are ordinary persons.

The core question is, how do people go about doing 'being an ordinary person'? In the first instance there's an easy answer: Among the ways you go about doing 'being an ordinary person' is spending your time in usual ways, having usual thoughts, having usual interests, etc.; so that all you have to do, to be 'an ordinary person' in the evening, is turn on the TV set. It's not that it *happens* that you're doing what lots of ordinary people are doing, but that you know that the way to do 'having a usual evening' is to do that. It's not just that you're selecting, "Gee I'll watch TV tonight," but you're making a job of, and finding an answer to, how to do 'being ordinary tonight.' Some people, as a matter of kicks, could say "Let's do being ordinary tonight. We'll go watch TV, eat popcorn," etc. – something they know is being done at the same time by millions of others around.

We can see, then, that it's a job. You have to know what anybody/ everybody is doing; doing ordinarily. And you have to have that available to do. There are people who don't have that available to do, and who specifically can't be ordinary. If, for example, you're in prison, in a room with no facilities at all – say, it has a bench and a hole in the floor and a spigot – then you find yourself doing things like systematically exploring the cracks in the wall from floor to ceiling over the years, and you come to have information about the wall in that room which ordinary people don't have about their bedroom wall. It's not a usual thing to do, to say "Well this evening I'm going to examine that corner of the ceiling." Of course it may be that prison walls are more interesting than other walls, since among the other things prisoners are occupied with is leaving information on the wall that they've been there, so there's things to read on the walls. But it's perfectly available to anybody to spend an afternoon looking at a wall. You could choose to do that. If you take drugs you're permitted to do that. But unless you take drugs you would not find yourself allowed to do it, though nobody's around. That is to say, in being an 'ordinary person,' that's not a thing you could allow yourself to spend the day doing. And there is an infinite collection of possibilities, of things that you couldn't bring yourself to do; not out of boredom, though that's one way you could formulate it, but in the midst of the most utterly boring afternoon you nonetheless would rather live through the boredom in the usual way – whatever that way is – than see whether it would be less or more boring to examine the wall or to look in some detail at the tree outside the window.

There's a place in Freud where he says, "with regard to matters of chemistry or physics or things like that, laymen would not venture an opinion. With regard to psychology it's quite different; anybody feels free to make psychological remarks." And part of the business he thought he was engaged in was changing that around, i.e., to both develop psychology and educate laymen, co-jointly. So that the laymen would know that they don't know anything about it and that there are people who do, so that they would eventually stop making psychological remarks as they stopped making chemical and physical remarks.

I raise this because while we all can see that that's quite so, there's a related and in a way much more interesting thing that I doubt we've noticed. If one were to pick up the notebooks of writers, poets, novelists, you're likely to find elaborated studies of small real objects. Like in the notebooks of the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins there are extended naturalistic observations of a very detailed sort, of, e.g., cloud formations or what a leaf looks like, looking up at it under varying types of light. And for some novelists what you have is extended character observations. Now, my notion is that as it is for chemistry and physics, so it is for making distinctive observations about the world and its persons. That is to say, that's the job of novelists and poets and not an ordinary person. It's just a thing that, in being ordinary, you don't do. For example, considering the situation of the Palm Springs weekend described as "I sat around the pool with the girls," you don't get, from somebody doing

'being ordinary,' a report of what the wind did to the water in the pool, or some character observations other than "She was nice," "She was not so nice," "She's getting older," of the people with whom the afternoon was spent.

And I think it's not only that one doesn't make the story but does perhaps make the observations, it's that the cast of mind of doing 'being ordinary' is essentially this: Your business in life is only to see and report the usual aspects of any possibly usual scene. That is to say, what you look for is to see how any scene you're in can be made an ordinary scene, a usual scene, and that's what it is.

Now plainly that could be a job; it could be work. The scene doesn't in the first instance simply present itself, define itself, as insufferably usual, nothing to be said about it; it's a matter of how you're going to attack it, what you are going to see in it, what you are going to see in it that you can say about it. Plainly, people are monitoring scenes for this storyable possibility. I'll give a gruesome instance of it, from a book called *An Ordinary Camp* by Micheline Maurel. She reports the first day in a concentration camp. The first hours are terribly horrifying, and then there's a lapse.

> Little by little conversation sprang up from bunk to bunk. The rumors were already beginning to circulate. Luckily the news is good. We'll be home soon. We'll have an unusual experience to talk about.

A way in which this event was dealt with while it was taking place – and which, for an experience which might leave one utterly without hope, we can see as wonderfully relevant for being able to survive it – was that in the end it will turn out to have been a good story. And we've all experienced being in scenes the virtue of which was that as we were in them we could see what it was we could later tell people had transpired. And there are presumably lots of things which, at least at some points in people's lives, are done just for that, i.e., it seems fair to suppose that there's a time when kids do 'kissing and telling,' that they're doing the kissing in order to have something to tell, and not that they happen to do kissing and happen to do telling, or that they want to do kissing and happen to do telling, etc., but that a way to get them to like the kissing is via the fact that they like the telling.

It seems plain enough that people monitor the scenes they're in for their storyable characteristics. And yet the awesome, overwhelming fact is that they come away with no storyable characteristics, where presumably any of us with any wit could make of this half hour, or of the next, a rather large array of things to say. But that would take a kind of effort that could make one feel awfully uncomfortable.

So, there's a business of being an 'ordinary person,' and that business includes attending the world, yourself, others, objects, so as to see how it is that it's a usual scene. And when offering what transpired, you present it in its usual 'nothing much' fashion, with whatever variants of banal character-izations you might happen to use, i.e., there's no particular difference between

saying "It was nothing much" and "It was outta sight." That is to say, we've all heard the usual characterizations of 'our Protestant society' or 'our Puritan background,' which involve that ordinary people/Americans/Europeans are built in such a way that they are constrained from doing lots of experiences that they might do, were they not repressed. And we think of the kinds of repressions that people have that are sociologically based, i.e., the Puritan ethic involves spending most of your time working, holding off pleasure, etc., which we think of as definitively what it means to be a usual person in Western civilization. Though that's manifestly important, it misses an essential part of the thing, which is: Were you to *have* illegitimate experiences, the characteristic of being an 'ordinary person' is that, having the illegitimate experiences that you shouldn't have, they come off in just the usual way that they come off for anybody doing such an illegitimate experience. When you have an affair, take drugs, commit a crime, etc., you find that it's been the usual experience that others who've done it have had. Reports of the most seemingly outrageous experiences, for which you'd figure you'd be at a loss for words, or would have available extraordinary details of what happened, turn out to present them in a fashion that has them come off as utterly unexceptional. So we could perfectly well remove the Puritan constraints – as people report they're being removed – and our utter usualness, the ordinary cast of mind, would nonetheless be there to preserve the way we go about doing 'being ordinary.'

My guess is that we could now take that point with us, and, watching ourselves live in the world – or watching somebody else if that's more pleasant – we could see them working at finding how to make things ordinary. And presumably it would be from such a sort of perceived awareness of, e.g., the ease with which – after practice – you see only the most usual characteristics of the people passing (that's a married couple and that's a black guy and that's an old lady) or what a sunset looks like or what an afternoon with your girlfriend or boyfriend consists of, that you can begin to appreciate that there's some immensely powerful kind of mechanism operating in handling your perceptions and thoughts, other than the known and immensely powerful things like the chemistry of vision, etc. Those sorts of thing would not explain how it is that, e.g., you can come home day after day and, asked what happened, report without concealing, that nothing happened. And were you concealing something, if it were reported it would turn out to be nothing much. And, as it happens with you, so it happens with those you know. And further, that ventures outside of being ordinary have unknown virtues and unknown costs, i.e., if you come home and report what the grass looked like along the freeway, that there were four noticeable shades of green some of which just appeared yesterday because of the rain, then there may well be some tightening up on the part of your recipient. And if you were to do it routinely, then people might figure that there's something odd about you; that you're pretentious. You might find them jealous of you; you might lose friends. That is to say, you want to ask what are the costs, and if people have checked out the costs of venturing even slightly into making their life an epic.

Now it's also the case that there are people who are entitled to have their lives be an epic. We have assigned a series of storyable people, places, and objects, and they stand as something different from us. It may be that in pretty much every circle there's a somebody who's the source and/or the subject of all neat observations, as there are for the society in general a collection of people about whom detailed reports are made; reports that would never, not merely be ventured about others, they'd never be *thought* of about others. The way in which Elizabeth Taylor turned around is something noticeable, reportable. The way in which your mother turned around is something unseeable, much less nonreportable.

The question is, why in the world should it be that it's almost everybody's business to be occupationally ordinary? Why do they take on the job – it's not that others do it for them – of keeping everything utterly mundane? I'm not going to answer that question, but I guess it has some diagnostic interest, i.e., there are presumably a really large collection of what seem to be serious changes in the world – changes in governments, economies, religions – that would not change the business of being ordinary. Across such changes it is enforced on pretty much everybody that they stay, finding only how it is that what's going on is usual, with all their effort possible.

And it's really remarkable to see people's efforts to achieve the 'nothing happened' sense of really catastrophic events. I've been collecting fragments out of newspapers, about hijackings and what the airplane passengers think when a hijacking takes place. The latest one I happened to find goes something like this: "I was walking up towards the front of the airplane and by the cabin I saw the stewardess standing, facing the cabin, and a fellow standing with a gun in her back. And my first thought was he's showing her the gun, and then I realized that couldn't be, and then it turned out he was hijacking the plane." And another; a Polish plane is in the midst of being hijacked, and the guy reports, "I thought to myself we just had a Polish hijacking a month ago and they're already making a movie of it." And a classically dramatic instance is that almost universally the initial report of the Kennedy assassination (the first one), was of firecrackers.

Just imagine rewriting the Old Testament in its monumental events, with ordinary people having gone through it. What would they have heard and seen, e.g., when voices called out to them, when it started to rain, etc. There's at least one place in the Old Testament where that happens. Lot was warned of the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, and given permission to bring his daughters and sons-in-law out. "And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law." And they stayed behind.

Here I'm only giving specifically dramatic sorts of things, as compared to seeing the interesting possibilities in an event that can also be seen to be ordinary – which is really a much more fundamental kind of thing. And when we start considering stories, at least one tack we can take is to treat the overwhelming banality of the stories we encounter – in my data, in our own

experiences – as not so much something that, e.g., allows for statistical analysis of variation, or that makes them therefore uninteresting to study, but as a specific feature which turns on a kind of attitude; say, an attitude of working at being usual, which is perhaps central to the way our world is organized.

Now there are enormous virtues to seeing the usual in a scene. It permits all kinds of routine ways of dealing with it. Also, if you're dealing with an utter stranger, e.g., somebody in an approaching car when you're about to cross a street, it seems to be awfully useful to know that what he sees, looking at you, is the usual thing anyone would see, with its usual relevancies, and not God only knows what. You do not, then, have to make an each-and-every-time decision whether or not you'll be allowed the right of way. So, then, I'm not saying let's do away with the ways in which we go about being ordinary. Rather, if being ordinary is the sort of thing I'm suggesting it is, then we want to know what importances it has.

Lecture 2

Stories take more than one utterance; Story prefaces

I'll be working with this utterly bland fact: Stories routinely take more than one utterance to do. It's conceivable that one could come away from this discussion thinking that that's what I'm asserting as the interesting thing. The whole interest of what I say has to do with what's *done* with such a fact as that a story takes more than an utterance to do. There is also the obscure issue of how you come to find such a bland fact as can be made something of, where there are lots of bland facts, bunches of which it might be difficult to make things of. So it's not quite as bland as it may appear in the first instance. Nonetheless the interest is in what's done with it, not its assertion.

The subject matter of the course is *storytelling in conversation*. A question that one eventually comes to raise is: Although something may be callable a 'story,' is it recognizable as a story? Is it produced as a story? Specifically as a story? And is there some relationship between its production as a story and its recognition as a story? And why should it be produced and recognized as a story?

For pretty much any object it turns out there are various things we could call it. We want to know, not so much is some name correct, as how is it that that name is relevant. And we know that the names that are assigned to particular objects, or on particular cases, can matter for all sorts of treatments of them. Now if, forgetting about conversation, I asked what is referred to with the name 'story,' what one would think of is some achieved historical thing: "An instance of a story is . . ." and one might name a story or give a story. And, for example, with that kind of attention what might then be partially relevant to calling the thing a story is the way it ended, and one might not at all focus on the kinds of problems that occur in conversation when someone specifically tells a story. If, e.g., some hearer didn't hear that a story was being told he might cut it off before it came to an end, and then, had you the intention of looking at the whole thing to decide whether it was a story, and to use the end as one partial criterion, you might not have such an end so as to decide it was a story.

The issue of the production of a story might involve that anybody's determining that it *is* a story is relevant to its coming off as a story. If assigning the name 'story' to some production is an issue, then it may be an issue not just after the thing is done, but perhaps to the teller before he starts and perhaps to the hearer somewhere early on into it. So we don't want to in the first instance suppose that we can examine historical instances of stories to see

what the productionally or recognitionally relevant features of it are. We also want to know if it is relevant for a story's occurrence that, that it might be a story is something that a teller projected. After all, a teller could tell what might turn out to be a story without any specific attention to that he was telling a story, and a hearer might perfectly well hear what's being presented without hearing that it's a 'story.' Is the fact that it might be a story something that matters? I want to insist on that as a criterion of using the name 'story,' and if it just otherwise happens to be that you could call it a story then it's of no particular interest. We want to see: Is the fact that someone is telling a story something that matters to the teller and the hearer? How can it matter, and why does it matter, and of course when does it matter? We're assigning the candidate name 'story' to something for which that name is provably warranted, provably relevant to the thing coming off as a story. If it isn't provably relevant then it's of no particular interest that it's a story or not.

So we have at hand the question: Does it matter that a story is produced to be recognized and that it is recognized by its production? With that, we are in a position to examine – not stories but candidate stories, to see whether it appears that that matters. And we look for some way to find that it might matter. What sorts of facts about candidate stories can be found, in terms of which a demonstration of the relevance of that the thing is a story can be done? And what I'm offering as such a fact is that bland fact that stories take more than an utterance to produce. I want to devote some time to seeing what that fact means. Why do they take more than an utterance to produce? And why is it that if they take more than an utterance to produce, it's relevant that somebody finds out that a story is being told?

In order to make something of the fact, some rules about conversation in the first place are required. I'll deliver these in an informal fashion, and a lot of what I say will be relatively obvious once it's been said. The question is, why do stories take more than an utterance to produce – where the word 'utterance' is equivalent to a turn at talk. We want to look at some rules having to do with turns at talk, and I'm going to give a general characterization of the rules regulating people's turns at talk in American conversation.

First of all, the rules regulating turns at talk are occupied with, have as their business, preserving certain features for conversations that conversations have. A central such feature is that exactly one person – at least one and no more than one person – talks at a time. Now the rules regulating turns are a way that that is brought off. And some of those rules are concerned with achieving such a thing as: At the end of someone's turn, where, say, three or four people are present, that somebody starts talking and not more than one person starts talking, i.e., the rules are, among other things, concerned with getting next speaker selected.

And, again very grossly, there are two general sorts of rules which stand in an orderly relationship to each other, i.e., where the first is preferred over the second in the first instance – though they have a more complicated relationship. The first rule is that current speaker can select next speaker. And a routine way that when some party stops another starts is accomplished, is that the party

who is stopping has selected a next from among the set of possible nexts. There is a very large collection of particular techniques whereby one currently speaking selects another – while one might think right off of using their name, addressing them, that's hardly anything like a small part of the story.

The second general sort of rule for next-speaker selection is that a next speaker self-selects himself. And the rule for that is essentially that the first starter has rights to speak. Now obviously those rules have to be in some orderly relation, i.e., 'current speaker selects next' and 'next speaker self-selects' are not equivalent options, or else the first would be systematically undercut by the second. The second operates when the first hasn't been used. And that poses a problem: When can it be determined that the first hasn't been used? Can a party just keep talking indefinitely and as long as they haven't selected somebody they keep going? Plainly that's not so, and the question is, what sort of a 'when' is it that governs when somebody can decide that they're going to start talking, no one having been selected?

Essentially the situation is that the completion of an utterance for transition purposes, i.e., for the possibility of a next starting, is available on what we could call its 'next possible completion.' And what I mean by 'next possible completion' is that if you considered, say, roughly, an utterance as composed of sentences, then if somebody has produced a sentence and has now gotten into the second sentence, then, though you might have been in a position to treat the completion of the first sentence as a first possible completion from the beginning, if you hadn't done that and started talking there, you wait until the next occurrence of a sentence end.

So the possibilities run in terms of sentences as the building blocks of utterances, with the points of possible transition being at any next sentence end. If you miss one and the speaker continues, then it's not free room to interrupt him anywhere in that next sentence, but as that next sentence comes to completion you get a next possible place to start – if he hasn't selected anybody. If he has selected somebody, then the business of the selected party is not to talk up as soon as he discovers he's been selected, but upon first possible completion after the selection, i.e., the next sentence ending after the selection. The way that works to handle the two rules ('current speaker selects next' or 'next speaker self-selects') is that if current speaker intends to select a next then he's got to do it within the current sentence he's producing, or, not having done it, he can be treated as not having selected, and somebody can start up upon his completion. That is to say, he can't figure that he's going to get a series of sentences to speak since he hasn't selected anybody. So you have that second rule operating to constrain the length of utterances that can be produced if only the first rule were considered. Current speakers don't and can't go on talking indefinitely via not having selected a next speaker, and that turns on that the second rule operates at any point of possible completion of an utterance, which is, roughly, at sentence ends.

That is then to say that if you are planning to produce an utterance about which you know that it's not going to take a sentence, it's going to take more than a sentence, and you don't know how many sentences it's going to take,

then you face a problem. You can clearly, if you get the floor, produce a sentence-length utterance. But at the first possible completion somebody can start up talking, and if you haven't selected someone, then whoever wants to can start up. And they then don't, say, at the end of their sentence-length utterance, have to give the floor back to you; they can, e.g., select somebody else to speak. You might find, then, that intending to tell in an utterance, some bit of talk that lasts longer than a sentence, you can't do it, but that others start up and they give the floor to others, and it takes a while before you get a chance again. We could then imagine a situation in which, intending to tell a story of, say, some n length, you would be dropping fragments of that story into some conversation in which people are talking around, across, through, your story. But storytelling doesn't work that way.

So the situation is, then: If, for conversation, the circumstance is that what you can be assured of if you get the floor is that you can talk in everybody else's silence for a sentence-length utterance, then how do you deal with a situation where you want to talk for more than a sentence-length utterance? How do you do that *methodically*? That is, you could obviously always get a chance to produce utterances of indefinite lengths as long as nobody happened to start up, and routinely, of course, people happen to talk for more than a sentence in an utterance where it's not just that they didn't plan to, it's often that they didn't want to. That is, they produce what they figure is a perfectly good sentence-utterance, and, nobody having started talking, then they find themselves 'continuing' so as, in part, to deal with the fact that a silence had emerged – where, under the more general rule of the turn-taking techniques we're dealing with, silence is a terrible thing. The turn-taking rules say that somebody should be talking all the time; not more than one person, but somebody. So a currently-completing speaker, finding no one's starting, may make it his business to keep off silence by going on, and then may turn out to produce much more than a sentence in his utterance though he did not have that as a project.

Our problem is, how does one produce more than a sentence-length utterance, as a project? An obvious kind of methodical solution would be if speakers had some way, within the first sentence of some projected coherent piece of multi-sentence talk, to say that they wanted to talk for more than a sentence. And of course the kinds of solutions there are, are not the kinds of things that anybody goes about inventing, but there are ways of doing it. I suppose the simplest thing that would come to mind is that they say "I'm going to talk for more than a sentence" and then continue. That isn't the way things get done, and there are lots of reasons why, but it is the case that when more than a sentence is specifically projected, one does in some fashion signal that right off. One doesn't exactly *say* that one is going to talk for more than a sentence, one asks for the right to produce a more-than-a-sentence-long coherent bit of talk.

Now, involved in how you go about making the request is something like this: Insofar as talk is going along in terms of planned one-sentence utterances (which allows of course for more than one sentence utterances or less than one sentence utterances) then, built into that system is a requirement – not as a

matter of a rule that is enforced on you from the outside, but a rule that is internal to the system – that everybody more or less must listen. Among the reasons for that are, e.g., on the one hand, any current sentence-utterance might select you to speak next, and you have to listen to find out whether you've been selected. Alternatively, you might find that, no one having been selected, you're going to get a chance to self-select yourself, and to know when you could start up if you're self-selecting, you have to listen. So, listening is built into the willingness of parties to talk if selected, and to their interest in choosing to talk if no one else has been selected. But that only holds when they know that at any given sentence completion it might be their turn. If you lift the requirement that it's possible that on the next sentence completion they'll have to talk, then you're also lifting a basis for their listening. So if what a party wants to do in producing a more-than-one-sentence coherent bit of talk is not just to have a chance to produce it, but also to keep the others listening, he may have to do more than announce that he wants to talk for a while; he may have to have some way, in that first sentence that engages in saying "I'm going to talk for more than one sentence" to also say "and what I'm going to say may oblige you, if you're going to talk after me, to have listened." That is to say, there may be ways of nonetheless building in a requirement to listen, for somebody who is going to talk, not immediately but eventually. There may also be ways of saying that what's going to be said will be interesting.

The two jobs I've introduced – saying "I'm going to talk for more than a sentence" and keeping people listening, where listening is otherwise only built for one-sentence utterances – are both jobs that should be done in the first sentence. If the first job fails, you may not get the chance to produce the multi-sentence utterance; if the second fails, you may get the chance but lose your audience. Now, how do you go about finding that you have a right to talk and an audience? A way is to build such a first sentence-utterance that will on the one hand arouse them and inform them that that's what you're intending and that it may be interesting, and also will tell *you* at some point that indeed it's okay and they're interested. The consequence of that is that one produces, for what turn out to be stories, what I'll call a *story preface*. It is an utterance that asks for the right to produce extended talk, and says that the talk will be interesting, as well as doing other things.

At the completion of that 'interest arouser' if you like, one stops, and it's the business of others to indicate that it's okay, and maybe also that they're interested, or it's not okay, or they're not interested. If one looks at stories one finds that prefaces of this sort are present. For example, there are sequences with an initial utterance such as "I have something terrible to tell you" followed by some other party saying 'say some more' via such specific obvious technical things that can be done as "What?" which returns the floor to the last speaker with an instruction to say some more. That is, a promise of interestingness is made in this sort of thing, which doesn't *tell* it, and one can, if one buys the sort of discussion I've offered, see, e.g., why people produce such things in the first instance rather than starting the story that will turn out to have been "something terrible" and, e.g., hoping to force

their way through over people's taking chances to talk – or taking it as a time to rest.

So, two features of stories as extended coherent bits of talk are that they're begun with a story preface by the teller, and on the completion of the story preface a recipient of it indicates that he sees that a story is being ventured. They do, e.g., "What?" as compared to, e.g., saying whatever they wanted to say before the storyteller got a chance to start, where they might well have had something they wanted to say before that, e.g., continuous with what was going on before. But they either tell the storyteller to go ahead or tell the storyteller that they're not interested ("Something awful happened to me today," "Big deal"). This place is for acceptance or rejection of the request to tell a story. And there are of course specific utterance types which simply announce stories, e.g., "You want to hear a story?" "You want to hear a joke?" etc. Others are designed with more or less the particular story in mind, i.e., "I have something terrible to tell you" is, while widely done, done only for stories that it can preface.

Earlier we asked a set of questions: How is it that telling a story is relevant to the talk one does? How is recognition that a story is being produced relevant to the hearers? Why does the possible fact that a story is being told matter for the telling of it? I think we developed kind of an answer to that set of questions, which involves that if the talk you're going to do might take more than a sentence to produce, then you need some way to get the floor for more than a sentence, and story-preface building is one class of ways that you can accomplish that. And what that involves is that in order to get the floor for that extended bit of talk, you take the floor and do something that involves giving it away to get it back to tell the story. The fact that stories take more than an utterance to produce involves that tellers should in the first instance see that they're intending to tell a story, and that it might take more than a sentence to produce, and, seeing that, they turn it into at least a two-utterance thing in which they first say they're going to tell a story, get permission to do that, and then tell the story. So it's a systematic occurring fact that stories, taking more than a sentence to produce, turn out to take more than an utterance to produce. And it's not that it just happens that they're taking more than an utterance to produce by virtue of people's happening to talk in their course. If you look at a story, it isn't just that somebody happens to talk up at some point in the telling of a story; they are specifically invited to talk up, where plainly that could be a problem in that having given the floor to others you might not get it back. In storytelling you give them the floor to give it back to you. A sort of orderliness, then, is not just that it takes more than an utterance to do, i.e., more than two people talk in its course, but that's specifically intended by the teller and collaborated in by the recipient. Which is to say that the recipient's talk at various places in the story is talk that deals with the recognition that a story is being told.

We've talked about some coherent bit of talk, some number of sentences. The question now is, how does it happen that the teller is able to show that the story is over, and hearers are able to see that the story is over and can show

that they see that the story is over? The usual constraint – next possible sentence completion – doesn't hold. Everyone knows it's not going to be any next possible sentence completion, it's going to be something else that tells you that the story is over. How do tellers inform hearers what it will take for the story to be complete? Again, you could imagine that they'd say "Now it's over." Among the things that wouldn't give a chance for is that the teller could see that the *hearer* sees that it's over. If, among the things that a teller could do is make it the business of the hearers to show the teller that they see it's over, then they're building in motivation for hearers to listen.

It turns out that among the jobs of the story preface is that of giving information about what it will take for the story to be over. And there's an obvious rationality to putting information about what it will take for it to be over, right at the beginning so that people can watch from there on in to see when it will be over. Just taking the type of preface I've given you, "I have something terrible to tell you," then in stories that have characterizing adjectives like "terrible," the business of such a term is not just to arouse interest but to instruct hearers to use that term to monitor the story – when they've heard something that it could name, the story will be over. Apparently that is not only used to monitor the story, but to indicate that the hearer sees that the story is over, i.e., "I have something terrible to tell you," a bunch of talk, and then at some point, "Oh how terrible," i.e., some utterance by a recipient that has something synonymous with the characterizing adjective used, to say 'I see the story is over.' And there are problematic sequences which involve, e.g., "Something really wonderful happened today," "No kidding," Story. The recipient at various points in the story goes, e.g., "Uh huh," "Uh huh," and after some "Uh huh" the teller says "Isn't that wonderful?," i.e., you missed that the story was over. And a story preface can be more specific than that something was terrible or wonderful, e.g., next time I will consider a fragment in which a story preface directs the recipient to listen for something that could be 'news' on the radio or the local newspaper. You can look at the parts of the preface, then, and decompose it into a series of jobs that it has for the story as a sequenced object. Of course this set of jobs of storytelling are specifically jobs of storytelling in conversation, with no particular place in writing, radio, etc., except for such issues as, e.g., arousing interest.[1]

[1]Attached to this lecture is the following note:

> The materials in this lecture were presented with an interest in accessability for the hearer/reader, and are therefore in a crude form which does not reflect the state of research on these issues. For more detailed consideration, see Pre-draft, chapters 1 through 4, of *Aspects of Sequential Organization in Conversation*.

The projected book did not materialize. The first chapter became obsolete as Sacks' considerations of its materials and issues developed. Sacks distilled the remaining chapters into a 12-page draft entitled 'An initial characterization of the organization of speaker turn-taking in conversation,' which was later augmented and became 'A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking in conversation.'

Lecture 3
Story organization; Tellability; Coincidence, etc.

I'm going to discuss in some detail a particular story.[1] The business of the lecture will be to give some idea about what is involved in seeing how a story works. I'll be talking about some types of organization and how they are achieved in the story. Here is how the thing begins:

   A: Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday,
   B: Mm hm
   A: And on the way home we saw the:: most gosh awful wreck.
   B: Oh::::

An initial type of organization is that the story is fitted into what I'll call a 'request format,' i.e., the teller of the story tells it by virtue of using it as a way to get some information which she asks of the other. She's requesting information, and to get that information she has to tell the story. The story will provide some information to the other on the basis of which the other can satisfy the request or announce that she can't satisfy the request.

Fitting the story into a request format, telling it by virtue of the request for information that the telling permits the resolution of, does some sorts of jobs for the teller and imposes some sorts of jobs on the recipient. One transparent job that it does for the teller is to provide an occasion for telling the story, i.e., the story has to be told to give the recipient that information whereby the recipient can satisfy the request. It's not just being told as 'here's an interesting story do with it what you like,' but 'here is a story I'm telling you so that you can then tell me something.'

Now one thing involved in the use of the request format for this story is that the teller, in using it, will have indicated that she's done some determination of who it is she's talking to, which determination allows her to figure that the other might have the information she wants. Now I have to give some information that's not in the story itself. The teller and recipient live in Santa Barbara, and it's from there that the teller went to Ventura and to there that the teller was returning when the accident took place. The

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[1] Attached at end of this lecture.

recipient, living in Santa Barbara is, then, local to that area in which the accident took place and might have been reported, such that if this thing were in the newspaper or on the radio she would have been able to have heard it. And it's by reference to that that the recipient has been selected to hear the story via a request about an instance of 'possible local news.'

It's perfectly imaginable that the story itself, of the seen accident, could be told to somebody who was not local to Santa Barbara, but if it were told to such a one, then the use of such a request would be senseless, or just not occur. The request for information is designed for somebody who's been identified by the teller as somebody local to where the event took place, and in that way it can be seen to have been *designed for the recipient*, for some identification of the recipient. And the use of the request tells the recipient that in some way the storytelling has been designed for them, for an identification of them that the teller knows. We will see that it is utterly routine for stories, that tellers have ways of showing their recipients that the telling of the story is done with an orientation to who it is being told to. In this case, at least the request is used to do that.

Producing the story within the request format has other interests, some of which were partially developed last time: In producing the story via a request, a basis is given for the recipient to listen to the story. That is, it's now the recipient's business to follow the story so as to be able, on recognition of its completion, to satisfy the request; to say "Yes I heard about it" or "No I didn't hear about it." And also, as I mentioned last time, it provides that the recipient is able to listen so as to know when enough has been presented to decide that they can or cannot satisfy the request, i.e., to decide when something that could conceivably have been 'local news' has been told. It's of interest that the information presented in the story is usable by the recipient even though the recipient didn't hear the story on the radio or read it in the news. It might be one sort of a problem for the recipient if what they had to do was simply to see if they'd heard the story, then when they recognize it they can say "Yeah I heard it" as compared to if they haven't heard it, how do they know when it's been told? But the recipient here is able to say at some point "No I haven't heard that," i.e., to at least indicate that they recognize that the candidate news event has been adequately presented, which is in part, then, to recognize that what was proposed to be a possible news event *was* a possible news event, since it could be recognized independently of having found it in the news.

Now that request format is an altogether independent type of organization from the organization of the story itself. The request could be used to do other things than telling a story, and, as well, other ways of getting to tell a story could be used. One could then collect various other ways that things like indicating that I designed this story's presentation for you, why you should listen, what you should do when the story is over, etc., are done. Some of them, like the request, congeal those jobs in a specific technique, as compared to those things being separately dealt with. But we can say about this request format as it's used here, that it specifically is designed for interactional aspects

of the storytelling, i.e., as between the parties the jobs they should do, etc., for each other.

Now to say that it's independent is not to say that it has no relationship to the story that's being told. There are ways in which the sort of request made may effect the way that a story is told, or what's told in the story. The sort of thing that I mean is, if the request is with regard to a 'possible news story,' that sets some restraints on how the story is to be reported so as to be recognizable as a story that might have been reported on the radio. She might tell the story about the wreck she witnessed in such a way, say by reference to the kind of experience it was for her, as to not permit the one who heard about it on the radio to see that this was the story they heard on the radio. But she also might, as she does here, locate such things as approximately where it took place, that there were some deaths, etc., which can be used by the hearer to compare to some story she might have heard. Doing it as a request by reference to its possible news status can, then, effect the story that's being told. Told in some other format, the story might be presented in quite a different way, e.g., without the somewhat objective information being included within it. She might well tell the story of the wreck in terms of the way in which the glass was patterned on the freeway macadam and what that did to her, which wouldn't particularly give a hearer such information as would allow them to say "Yeah I heard about that on the radio ," by virtue of the fact that they don't report stories on the radio that way. And it needn't be as far out as that – if that's far out.

A second type of organization that the storytelling contains is that the story materials, i.e., the wreck, are fitted into some course-of-action report of the teller's circumstances. What we have is that the story events are fitted into talk which deals with a course of action that could be reported independently of telling this story or any story. The course-of-action parts of it are: "Ruth Henderson and I drove to Ventura". . ."on the way home" (we saw a wreck). . ."We were parked there for quite a while. . ."I was going to listen to the local news and haven't done it". . ."I was listening to the blast off, you know, the astronauts." That is to say, there's a series of teller actions which are in some ways a sequence, which bounds the story.

Obviously the wreck could be reported apart from the presentation of this course-of-action sequence the teller employs, and that course of action could have other features to it than the ones reported. That is, it begins with "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura" but it could presumably begin somewhere else in some course of action that the teller was engaged in. She could make a long story of it, e.g., that a week ago we decided to go to Ventura and we were going to go Thursday morning but it turned out we couldn't because Ruth had another appointment come up that morning and instead I did this and that . . . and then finally get around to "so we drove to Ventura yesterday," and then what we did in Ventura, etc. Or it could begin with "we were driving up the freeway and saw the most goshawful wreck." And it could end in various sorts of places, assuming that a teller-course-of-action is being employed to give that sort of organization to it.

But the course-of-action organization has a great deal to do with the kind of coherence the story has, i.e., that we're still within a course of action at various places, such that, e.g., saying "on the way home" is a way for the teller to require of the hearer that they've kept in mind that she had gone to Ventura. That is, the course-of-action organization involves employing a technique which makes it obligatory on the hearer, if they're going to understand the story, that at each point that a new feature in the course of action is introduced, they organize that new feature by reference to what they've already been told about where she is, what she's doing, etc., because the later parts in the course of action are not done in such a way as to bring one up to date with the earlier parts. It's not said, "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday and on the way home from Ventura yesterday we saw this wreck. . .etc. . . .and when I got home from going to Ventura with Ruth Henderson yesterday and having seen the wreck . . . etc." But those sorts of things are done in such a way as to make it the business of the hearer to keep in mind the sequential status of what's being said. The hearer's business, then, is not to be listening to a series of independent sentences, but to a series of connected sentences that have that connectedness built in such that it is required for the understanding of any one of them. And a course-of-action telling is a perfectly routine way to do such a job of requiring that if you're going to understand it at the end you've got to keep in mind what's been told earlier. The story is thereby built in such a way that it is coherent if you do that and isn't coherent if you don't.

Let me just note a sort of thing that might be so, and is checkable out. A course-of-action report will not involve that at *any* point in the course of action the story is likely to come up, but at *some* point in the course of action the story is likely to come up. What I'm saying is that the phrase "and on the way home" says 'right now the story is about to come,' i.e., that sort of a phrase will not be used in a story unless the story is going to come then. And you will routinely find that in the most abbreviated form of a course-of-action report, it will go "On the way home from work this afternoon . . . " And if there is some rather long presentation before the story, then 'on the way home" is one way of saying 'listen now, the story is about to come.' That has to do perhaps not only with a convention that "on the way home" is the way you do it, but in part by virtue of the fact that "on the way home" is otherwise nothing to report. "On the way home nothing happened." I don't know if that's so. It seems to be so, but it may not be.

I'm going to say more about this course-of-action organization, particularly with respect to its relationship to the story of the wreck. But first I'd like to turn to the story of the wreck itself, then we'll come back. I want to argue that the story that's told is found, and that an appropriate story has been found to tell, of the possible stories that could be told. Also, that regardless of the fact that she tells the story as something witnessed, one doesn't want to think that it's told by virtue of its being witnessed, and that what she witnessed is what she told, and what she told is what she witnessed. It turns out that that sort of argument, which needs to be made in general, can be made rather nicely

for this story. It has importances which involve that if what happened was that from the things she could have made a story of, she found what she should have made a story out of, then we can see that of the possible events there are specific 'storyables' which will turn out to matter for, e.g., how the story events are then characterized.

My argument is briefly this. If we read the thing over we can see that she in fact encountered a wreck *aftermath*, i.e., she came upon an occurred auto wreck. She didn't see an accident, she saw an accident aftermath. She doesn't tell the story of an accident aftermath. She tells the story of an accident. Indeed, she has to do a bunch of work to make the story a story of an accident; work involving, e.g., that she constructs how the accident could have happened – that one car hit a car and then another car hit that one. Now she could perfectly well, if she were telling what she witnessed, tell a story about a wreck aftermath. But on the one hand, wreck aftermaths are not particularly news stories – maybe in the human interest section of a newspaper you'd have stories about the aftermaths of wrecks – and on the other hand she doesn't particularly seem to notice that what she told is a wreck-aftermath-used-to-find-the wreck story. Seeing the wreck aftermath she looks for the story of the wreck. Encountering the scene of the smashed car and the bodies, she's not looking for what is it that, coming on this thing now, is of interest with regard to its state *now*. Her mind is so organized that she knows that what's to be found is the story of a wreck, even though she didn't see the wreck happen. And she looks at the scene in front of her to find how it took place, and tells that.

It can then be seriously said that she finds the story. And that she needs to do some work to find the story. That is, coming on some scene which was a story a moment ago, you may be told "you missed all the excitement" and walk away with really nothing to see and tell about it, though having come a moment earlier you would have had a story to be told. But what she's able to do is to turn the coming-a-moment-afterwards into a chance to nonetheless have a story to tell; that story being the story of the wreck itself. So when we want to move to suggest that the story is put together by her, we have this kind of initial information: That she had to find it, and that she found, not what was available then and there in terms of what's happening now, but what, from what's available now, can be gleaned about what happened. And that plainly should be a natural sense of 'working to make the story.'

We could then ask, is it perhaps the case that in finding the story of the wreck from the scene of the wreck aftermath, she's finding what is *tellable* in what she saw. There may then be some collection of findable stories such that one exhibits, e.g., some sorts of competence at observing the world when one correctly finds one of such stories, even if one has to *find* it as compared to saying "I saw this great wreck aftermath, it was among the more interesting wreck aftermaths I've ever seen." Where, though people collect wrecks, it doesn't strike us that people collect types of wreck aftermaths. And we can start, now, to see that tellability is restricted such that there are tellable parts of events. And we can begin to get an idea, then, about how it is that not

anything is a story, and that people don't figure anything is a story, and see
that even in a scene where there is a story, it's not just any story that could be
made out of it. In some ways, then, we get to the theme of the first lecture;
at least in terms of the restricted storyability of the world under a competent
viewing of it. Plainly enough somebody could tell an interesting story about
a wreck aftermath. Plainly enough it's not much done. And whereas it takes
seemingly no work to have seen the wreck in the wreck aftermath, it would
take special work to see the wreck aftermath in the wreck aftermath.

Let me make a passing remark having to do with just the course of making
findings about such sorts of things. I'd been working on this story for a year
and a half before I happened to notice that in fact she didn't see the wreck,
and to see that she had found the wreck story in the wreck aftermath. I'd been
focussing on the story as a witnessed story – which indeed it is, but it's
witnessed in a different way – and the obviousness of the wreck story is such
that even with rather extended, careful observation it just wasn't noticed, at
least by me.

Now I want to say some things about the way the story works. There are
several sorts of problems I want to deal with. One of them concerns the
descriptors in the story, i.e., the talk about the bodies "laid out and covered
over on the pavement," and of "the worst wreck I ever saw," "I never saw
a car smashed into such a small space," etc. What sort of work would they
pose for the recipient in dealing with them, and correlatively, how does the
sort of work they pose for the recipient pose work for the teller?

It might at least be a kind of mildly interesting fact to consider that
recipients can apparently decide that a story was correctly told without having
to go out to reobserve something the story reports, to see that that was the
way to have observed it so as to tell the story that it contains. We might at
least imagine that a recipient is given some description of what happened, and
in order to know whether that's what happened they would have to see if they
could themselves see what happened, and that what they themselves saw was
what it proposes. But we know that no such thing needs be done; that instead,
a recipient hearing some description can see that 'it must have been like that,'
and given some other description can figure, and sometimes assert, 'that isn't
the story.' I have materials where, in the first minute of conversation between
strangers, some report being presented, the recipient will say "You're lying,"
where all they've been given is that report. That is to say, recipients do not feel
at the mercy of the teller for what the world is about. And apparently tellers
need to employ ways to produce a story that is recognizably correct, or at least
possible.

Again we are returning in a way to the observable story, the possible story
in the event. Now, instead of thinking of the descriptors in a story as things
that simply happen to be so, that the teller saw and that the recipient has to
deal with by deciding that it's logically so or not, or by reserving judgement
in that they weren't there, we might think of them in another way. And that
is, that what a teller presents as a descriptor, a recipient can use as an
assessable criterion for deciding whether any such thing happened. We can

then begin perhaps to get at the kinds of ways that descriptions might be put together, and that recipients make determinations. So, a presented description is dealt with by its recipient as something to use to decide whether a correct story is being told. It may contain information about the competence of the teller to say what he says, e.g., by being utterly conventionalized in the sense that he says such a thing as anyone knows happens – whether it happened or not is another question – or by some other sorts of means.

And I'll talk a bit about some other sorts of means that are used in stories, and in this story, for the teller's bringing off a competence to have observed a wreck that is a tellable. There are a series of *measures* used in the story, e.g., the size of the car in the wreck ("I've never seen a car smashed into such a small space") and, e.g., some way of referring to the duration of the traffic jam that ensued ("We were parked there for quite a while"). Now what I will suggest is that what those things are, are terms from types of measures that people employ, in the employing of which they can exhibit their competence at observing scenes. They are types of usualness or normalness measures. Each such term comes from a package of terms which are specifically used to characterize a scene so as to say that the scene was as it usually in, or that it wasn't what it usually is but some variant of what it usually is. And what the terms report are large variances and small variances, where the specific thing that constitutes what it 'usually' is, is something that is presumably known by the recipient, so that they can see that a usualness measure is being employed.

That is to say, there can be various ways to characterize how long you were stopped in a traffic jam – "just for a second," "seemed like hours," "quite a while," and various things like that. When you pick one of those instead of saying, e.g., "We were stopped there for 25 minutes," then what you're doing is involving the other in appreciating that the how long you were stopped there was known by reference to how long people are stopped at various sorts of traffic jams. And when you say the car was "smashed into such a small space" what you've done is to pick a way of characterizing the impact of the accident in terms of observations people have presumably made about how accidents affect cars. So by virtue of the fact that you employ these usualness measures, you're asserting that you know how to watch wrecks. And by virtue of the fact that the other is figuring out what you're telling them, they will have been required to also employ such sorts of information such that they can see that you're possibly competent at observing wrecks. It's not like you're telling the story of the first wreck you've ever seen, and are now seeking out ways to characterize it. That you know how to characterize a wreck is something you can show from the way you describe one, and if you show that you know how to describe one, then the recipient can take it that you've possibly correctly characterized this wreck.

That is to say, it's perhaps not incidental that one doesn't get a 'more precise' characterization of how small a space the car was smashed into, or how long we were parked there. It is, in a fashion, better to not use those 'more precise' characterizations, which can be equivocal in the sense of is that

a long time for a wreck or is that a small space for a car? Instead what one does is offer the product of what can be seen to have been specifically done as an educated analysis, and thereby be seen to have been done by someone who knows how to look – if it's told to someone who knows how to hear. So that this possible 'vagueness' of the report – "quite a while," well how long was it? – is not a defective kind of vagueness but is the way to show that you measured the thing in an appropriate way to measure, e.g., being caught in a traffic jam.

I want now to start to focus on some ways that various parts of a storytelling other than the reported storyable itself, e.g., the course of action parts of it, are designed for the story that is put into them. What I'll particularly focus on is "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday." Now that needs to be seen as at least possibly something put into the report by virtue of the story it begins, as compared to how what Ruth Henderson and she were doing would be conceived of for some other story, or for no story, but, say, the event projectively. That is, two sorts of things are involved. One is that when she and Ruth Henderson were deciding what they were going to do, then it may be that 'driving down to Ventura' was not the way they formed up the project of the day. What they figured they were doing might have been something altogether different. They might have been 'going shopping,' incidentally to Ventura; 'going to visit' someone who happened to live in Ventura; 'spending a day together' and ending up in Ventura; 'going to Los Angeles' but the weather got lousy so they stopped in Ventura, etc. And, however they projected what they were going to do, when they did it or until the story came up it need not have been that what we did was to 'drive' down to Ventura, i.e., they might not have particularly focussed on that they were 'driving.' Of course they were driving, but that wasn't part of the way that they conceived the event they were doing.

The other sort of thing is, it's equally well relevant that however they did project the day, however they did describe the day until they came upon the accident, it's *a* way to have projected a day or to describe a day, independent of the accident, i.e., "Well let's drive down to Ventura" or "We drove down to Ventura." And it's terribly useful in the telling of the story that "drove down to Ventura" gets said – both that we went down to Ventura and that we drove down, because while a course of action is being delivered that comes off as kind of independent of the story that then happens, it sets up where the event took place, i.e., on the freeway or something like the freeway between Ventura and Santa Barbara – which never has to be said in the storytelling. Saying "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura, and on the way home . . . " locates where the thing took place.

Now there are ways in which both those sorts of facts matter. For one, we will find in due course that a massive *economy* is achieved in stories. What this involves is that parts are put in for use with regard to the particular story, where, then, some of them may be characterized in one way in one story and in another way in another story. And what one absolutely doesn't have is that if a story contains a sequence, then if you were to have stopped events at any

point in the actual sequence, the reports of the events to that point would be as they are in the story. Instead, you can see in stories that while a sequence is employed, that sequence sometimes could not have been known by the teller in the way they report it, and other times they could have known it but then again they might not at all have thought of it that way.

A sort of thing I mean is that you often get things like the following. In telling the story of a missing car a fellow reports, "I came outside and my car was gone. At first I thought somebody must have stolen it. But then I realized that it was towed away." Now I want to suggest that at least two aspects of that, "at first I thought" and "then I realized," are not sorts of things as report how it is that the person understood the events taking place when they were taking place. Instead, when somebody says "at first I thought" or even just "I thought," then that's routinely used to say 'it turned out I was wrong.' And on the other hand, when they say "I realized," it isn't as though, upon it occurring to them, they knew they were right. What they're saying is 'I thought this next, and then found out I was right,' i.e., they called up the police, asked Did you people take away my car, the police said Yes, and they went down and there it was. So that the terminology is terminology for the story in which the events have already happened. The terminology is set up for the way in which it turned out to happen. And you can specifically tell crazy stories by making rather small modifications, like by saying "at first I thought X and I was right," or "I realized X and turned out to be wrong." And in this story we have something like that, when she says "I was going to listen to the local news and haven't done it." When she says "I was going to listen" you can be sure that she'll say that she didn't. You don't get reports, unless they're slightly odd, which say "I was going to listen to the radio and I did."

So there are lots of parts of stories which, while they're placed in a sequence, bear a needing-to-be-determined relationship to what anybody would have or might have reported as events were occurring. They're not a narrative characterization of reality, the narrator telling the story, e.g., into a tape recorder on a day as he's going along, and now simply replaying it in, say, a capsulized version. And plainly "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura" is a lot of use in the story. It tells you where and when the accident took place, at least in a somewhat sufficient way.

Now the following may or may not come off right. I give it in part for methodological purposes, and it has a kind of weird status to it. There's a phenomenon that's utterly familiar to us that the foregoing materials bear on. The phenomenon is that for some stories that happen to a person, in thinking about it, telling about it, etc., they come to see and say such things as "Gee isn't that a coincidence that that happened." Things like "I hardly ever go to Ventura, isn't it coincidental that the day I went there, there was a hurricane!" or "I hardly ever go to Ventura, you hardly ever go to Ventura, isn't it coincidental that on the day I went, you went, and we met." We know of all kinds of stories in which, what it turns out is that participants to it see a striking *coincidence*. I want to see if we can get at the beginning of an answer to how we come to see these coincidences. The interest in the beginning of an

answer is not so much in whether it's an answer – I don't have any idea whether it's an answer – but in some way that the answer is built.

A reason for bringing this thing up now is that it's at least my suspicion that a possible such 'remarkable coincidence' is in the offing in this story though it doesn't come out in this conversation, where that possible 'remarkable coincidence' underlies the search that's going on, perhaps, on the part of the teller. And that is, to find out who died in the accident. The reasons have roughly to do with 'local news,' and the way in which people see freeways. That is, the accident having happened near Santa Barbara, it can be imagined by her that, as she was "on the way home" to Santa Barbara, so, too, were the people in the accident. Now, even though people on the freeway could be going anywhere, there are places where one figures that people on the way to some particular place are. That's specifically observable. Simple enough evidence for that is, e.g., on a Saturday afternoon if you're on the Harbor Freeway in downtown Los Angeles, you can look into the next car and say, "Looks like everybody's going to the ballgame." People you don't know, in another car, are seen to be going to some specifiable place by reference to things like where they are on the freeway, and other things like their age, etc. But people attend freeways in part by reference to where people are going on them, and they can make guesses about it.

So if the accident happened near Santa Barbara, then it's possible to her that it happened to somebody who lives in Santa Barbara, and that then sets up this great possible coincidence, i.e., that she was a witness to the wreck in which somebody she knows died. And that's perhaps the thing to tell and think about, "Oh my God, there I was at the wreck in which so-and-so died." So the discussion about coincidence, while it doesn't wholly turn on what we absolutely know happened here, bears on what might be going on here.

I want now to suggest a series of possibilities, and again, the texture of the argument is of neat possibilities, not of anything sure. We've at least asserted that things like "Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura" are characterizations built for this story in some independence of whether they were projected – i.e., what they, beforehand, thought they were going to do – or what they conceived they were doing while they were doing it. A possibility is – and this, I think, is something we could work out rather sharply – that although people design large parts of stories for the story they know to have happened, independently of the way they'd conceived any part of it on its partial occurrence, they don't know that they do that designing. They're not aware of designing the parts for the story.

So, for example, they design it in an extremely *economical* way, i.e., the story is extremely spare. Any parts put in can be used by a listener to find what further is going to happen. Nothing is just mentioned.

Let me say something about spareness. In a beautiful discussion of it having nothing to do with storytelling in actual conversation but having to do with conventions in fiction, particularly in theater, in a book on Gogol by Nabokov, he's talking about one of the things that Gogol did to Western literature. And that thing is that before Gogol, if, when the curtain rises,

there's a gun on the mantelpiece, you can be sure the gun will go off before the end of the play. Or if one of the characters says at the beginning of the play, "I wonder what happened to Uncle Harry, he's been in Africa all these years," you can be sure that Uncle Harry will turn up. That is to say, that's an aspect of the spareness of the theater. Now what Gogol did was to introduce characters into his fiction who were mentioned in a paragraph and never appeared again. And if we think of the development of the literature of the absurd, then part of it is that sort of de-economizing, where events occur that have nothing to do with anything except that they occur, and you can't, then, latch onto anything to know if you take good account of this – e.g., taking a detective story as an idea – then it will matter. And if you watch stories in conversation, at least for the people whose stories I study, then that economy phenomenon remains and has enormous usage in the telling of stories.

So we have this designed economy which is, however, unknown to the teller who does not see that he's constructing the parts by reference to the story he's telling. What happens is perhaps something like this: Consider, e.g., the people who meet in Ventura, where "I never go to Ventura and you never go to Ventura, and here we are in the same place, isn't that amazing." Again, for each of them, until they meet in Ventura, neither of them particularly conceive that they were 'going to Ventura;' one was going one place, one was going someplace else. When they meet what happens is that the strangeness that they find turns on the formulation of their mutual projects as 'alike' although they didn't figure that they had such alike mutual projects. And again, they don't even see that what they did was to formulate them so as to have them alike.

So there's this organized economy without any specific knowledge that that's what's being done. Such that when a story comes off, and it has an observably marked organization and economy, the very teller can be struck by that. What the teller sees is "My God look how elaborately elegantly organized this is" – but not how 'this story' is, but how its *events* are. Seeing that, he can be struck by "Isn't that odd!" that it all came out so neatly. And that will have turned on that the organization is achieved by him without his seeing that that's what he was doing. Seeing the product of the organization, what he notes is that gee, it's extraordinarily organized; by virtue of the fact that he had no idea that *he* organized it. And then he can be struck by the coincidentality of the fact that its parts fit together so nicely.

So the argument is something like that the observed coincidentality of stories turn on that they're designed for an organized economy for some purposes; that that design is unseen by the designer; that the designer however can perfectly well encounter its organized economy and be struck with it; and that that's what they're then puzzled by. Now I said that the form of the argument is interesting. What I mean by that is that if you took the initial fact that people are sometimes struck by the coincidentality of stories, of the stories they are participants in, and asked how does that happen, then you would be led to think, I think, about why people are interested in coincidences, see

coincidences etc., rather than to, as I did, not be focussing at all on that, but to be engaged in the construction of something altogether different, i.e., the design of story parts to do a range of jobs which ends up providing that they have a striking economy, an economy that the doer doesn't see that he's done.

To put it another way, one of the things that Irvine people spend a lot of time doing in social science is building models. Among the ways that people go about building models is to start with a product and then try to find how that product was achieved, where it's the achieving of that product that the machine is designed for. And there are those who do it rationally or irrationally, but the basic focus is that starting with the product you go backwards and try to build a machine that does that. As a kind of a counter strategy, suppose something like this: Most of the things that we treat as products, i.e., the achieved orderliness in the world of some sort, are *by-products*. That is, there is machinery that produces orderly events, but most of the events that we come across that are orderly are not specifically the product of a machine designed to produce them, but are offshoots of a machine designed to do something else or nothing in particular. And it stands to reason in a way, that if there are some number of machines and some number of products, then by and large we're not going to find things that are indeed products, but things that are probably something else.

It's a much weaker kind of assumption, to suppose that most of the orderliness we ever encounter is by-product orderliness rather than product orderliness. Then let's see if we can build by-product machines, i.e., machines that explain something but had no particular interest in explaining it. As, for example, when I set about to explain why stories take more than one utterance to produce, perhaps I could have built a model that had as the specific project of the machinery, getting more than one utterance in a story. Instead, the model that was built had no particular interest in that; it had an interest in preserving something else, and as an offshoot of that, it achieved this. And the same thing goes for coincidentality – and here what's happened is that the coincidentality is coincidental in, now, a double sense, i.e., a machine is designed to do a bunch of other things which happen, as a by-product, to yield this observable coincidentality.

Now, without regard to whether my explanation of coincidentality is correct, or whether my explanation of why stories take more than one utterance to produce is correct, the endeavor of some extended interest is to see how you would go about building much more conservative types of explanations, i.e., those that explain events without having been built to manifestly explain just that event. The issue is: You have the orderliness to start out with, and it's easy enough to build some sort of model that, having that orderliness to start out with achieves it. It's much more interesting to have the product and then to build a model which seems to do a lot of other jobs, which we know works to do those other jobs, and happens to do this one as well. Then you can see at least a sort of thing that's going on, where you can be fairly weak in your conception of what it is that the world is trying to do.

Following is the relevant segment of the 'auto wreck' fragment. A fuller version is attached to Fall 1968, lecture 1.

    A :   Say did you see anything in the paper last night or hear anything on the local radio, Ruth Henderson and I drove down to Ventura yesterday,

    B :   Mm hm

    A :   And on the way home we saw the: : most gosh awful wreck.

    B :   Oh: : : :

    A :   – we have ev – I've ever seen. I've never seen a car smashed into sm – such small space.

    B :   Oh: : : :

    A :   It was smashed from the front and the back both it must've been in – caught in between two cars.

    B : [[⌜ Mm hm uh huh

    A :   Must've run into a car and then another car smashed into it and there were people laid out and covered over on the pavement.

    B :   Mh

    A :   We were s–parked there for quite a while but I was going to listen to the local r–news and haven't done it.

    B :   No, I haven't had my radio on either.

    A :   Well I had my television on, but I was listening to uh the blast off, you know.

    B :   Mm hm.

    A : ⌜ The uh ah – // astronauts.

    B : ⌞ Yeah

    B :   Yeah

    A :   And I – I didn't ever get any <u>local</u> news.

    B :   Uh huh

    A :   And I wondered.

    B :   Uh huh,

    B :   No, I haven't had it on, and I don't uh get the paper, and uhm

    A :   It wasn't in the paper last night, I looked.

    B :   Uh huh.

Lecture 4

Storyteller as 'witness;' Entitlement to experience

This time I have two sorts of things to say, that bear obscurely on the story. 'Obscurely' doesn't so much mean that it takes effort to relate them, but that it takes effort to see that they bear on it. I'll start off kind of simply, talking to the teller's status as a 'witness.' I'm going to talk about this 'witness' status insofar as I can with the use of this story, and over the rest of the course I'll occasionally say things about the status 'witness.' That is, it will come up as materials seem to require or allow it as a topic. It's kind of a terribly important topic, independently of any interest in the technical considerations in the course.

The initial point I want to make is that in using the fact that she was a witness, for the telling of the story, she employs a way of identifying herself which articulates two types of organization involved in the story: the course-of-action organization that bounds the story, and the story of the wreck. That is to say, the 'witness' identity relates those two things. It's by virtue of that, that the course of action gets into the story, and that the story is tellable as something seen. Notice that 'witness' could be contrasted with, say, 'reporter,' where the reporter of a proposed news story would present it without the use of a course-of-action characterization as to how he comes to tell it. And there could be course-of-action characterizations which generate the story within them that didn't use 'witness' as the way to get at the story. As I suggested last time, it is of particular interest to see how the separable types of organization get meshed, and at least one way that those two things get meshed is via the use of this 'witness' status.

A way we presumably think about being a witness is, having been a witness you can report what happened as what you saw or what you inferred from what you saw. And it turns out that people sharply differentiate how they come to know things, and they make a point of making it known how they come to know something, where that distinction – what you saw and what you inferred from what you saw – is a used distinction, one that is used in this story. The teller makes a difference between what she reports as what she saw and what she didn't see. The way she does it is to say about some of the events, that they "must have been" – "must have run into a car and then another car smashed into it" – where the meaning of 'must have been' is 'what I'm saying, I didn't see.' And that connects, in part, to what you saw.

So, we think of the 'witness' position as allowing you to tell what you saw, etc. But another way to think of presenting something via being a witness is,

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using the witness position to treat that of what happened that is storyable as that which was witnessed, where perhaps not any possible thing one could have seen just-as-one-sees-it would be storyable. Rather, as in this case, she found the storyable thing in what she witnessed, where the storyable thing is something storyable independently of that she happened to witness it this time, i.e., it's a known story, 'a wreck,' which is delivered as 'another wreck story.' What I want to be noticing here is that one could present a story, the events of which one in some way witnessed, without having what one witnessed be what one told. Instead, one could, e.g., report what one *felt* on some event's having happened.

And I want to shift a little, to talk about having experiences; entitlement to have experiences, where, now, I'll be continuing some of the things I said in the first lecture, about doing 'being ordinary.' I want to suggest that in having witnessed this event, and particularly in having witnessed it and suffered it as well in some way, like having had to stop on the freeway in a traffic jam by virtue of it, she has become entitled to an experience. And that she is entitled to an experience is something different from what, e.g., her recipient is entitled to, or what, e.g., someone who otherwise comes across this story is entitled to. Now one may think of 'entitlement' as a matter of having or not having rights to it, but that's only part of it. It's also not coming to feel it at all, as compared to feeling it and feeling that you don't have rights to it.

In part I'm saying that it's a fact that entitlement to experiences are differentially available. The idea being that encountering an event like a possible news story, and encountering it as a witness or someone who in part suffered by it, one is entitled to an experience; whereas the sheer fact of seeing things in the world, like getting the story from another is quite a different thing. A way to see the matter is to ask the question, what happens to stories like this once they're told? Do stories like this become the property of the recipient as they are the property of the teller? That is, the teller owns rights to tell this story, and they give their credentials for their rights to tell the story by offering such things as that they saw it, and that they suffered by it. And now the question is, does a recipient of a story come to own it in the way that the teller has owned it, that is, e.g., to tell it to another? Plainly enough, the recipient doesn't then have the story to tell in the way that the teller has it to tell, and in that way it either just dies or is preserved by the teller for future occasions. And there are materials for that in this story sequence, where the recipient of the first story offers an experience of the sort that the teller of the first story had, that the second storyteller had independently, and that she already told the teller of the first story.

Or, for example, a question is, does the recipient of story come to own it in the way the teller has owned it, e.g., to feel for it as the teller can feel for what the events were? For example, you might, on seeing an automobile accident and people lying there, feel awful, cry, have the rest of your day ruined. The question is, is the recipient of this story entitled to feel as you do? I think the facts are plainly, no. That is to say, if you call up a friend of yours

who is unaffiliated with the event you're reporting, i.e., someone who doesn't turn out to be the cousin of, the aunt of, the person who was killed in the accident, but just a somebody you call up and tell about an awful experience, then if they become as disturbed as you, or more, something peculiar is going on, and you might even feel wronged – though that might seem to be an odd thing to feel. And we can notice in this story sequence that what the recipient of the first/teller of the second does is to indicate that she had similar experiences by telling a story in which she was involved as the teller of the first was involved in this one; she doesn't just latch onto the experience of the first and borrow it for her own emotions.

Now one reason I raise this whole business, and a way that it's important, is that we could at least imagine a society in which somebody having experienced something, having seen it and felt for it, could preserve not merely the knowledge of it but the feeling for it by telling others. Instead of a feeling happening to some random X, if this person X driving along a freeway encounters an accident and feels for it, then anybody they could tell it to could feel for it. Then plainly that stock of experiences that anybody happened to have wouldn't turn on the events that they happened to have encountered, but could turn on the events that anybody who ever talked to them happened to encounter – as we think of a stock of knowledge that we have. That is to say, if I tell you something that you come to think is so, you're entitled to have it. And you take it that the stock of knowledge that you have is something that you can get wherever you get it, and it's yours to keep, but the stock of experiences is an altogether differently constructed thing. In order to see that that's so we can just, e.g., compare how we deal with a piece of knowledge and how we deal with someone else's experience, and then come to see that experiences get isolated rather than are themselves anything like as productive as are pieces of knowledge.

And of course there's no reason to restrict the matter to misery; plainly it holds for joy as well. And plainly it's specifically an attendable problem that joy is not productive. Somebody having such an experience as entitled them to be high, telling it to another they can feel "good for you" but there are rather sharp limits on how good they can feel for themselves about it, and also even sharper limits on the good feeling that they can give to a third with the story. That is to say, if A calls B to tell her a wonderful thing that happened to her, B could feel good for A, but B is not in a position to call C, where, e.g., C doesn't know A, and have C feel as joyous as B felt hearing a story about A. C might feel mildly good that B had a mildly good experience, a lot less good than B felt, and nothing like as good as A felt. And again, if we think about it we can perhaps just see that that's not intrinsic to the organization of the world, but is a way we somehow come to perceive and feel about experience – or the way we're taught to do that – which is altogether different than the ways we think about knowledge. And I presume if one wanted, one could develop some historical discussion in which somehow knowledge was able to achieve a status for itself that is different than experience. And one could presumably find bases for attempts to do that for experience, which

have failed. Obvious instances are attempts at universal religion, for example, which are attempts to preserve a kind of feeling that somebody once had encountering something or somebody, and where the whole history that we have is that it hasn't worked. It's extremely difficult to spread joy. It's extremely easy to spread information.

Now that obviously matters a good deal in all sorts of ways. One of the ways it obviously matters is that if having an experience is a basis for being aroused to do something about the sorts of things it's an instance of, e.g., the state of the freeways, the state of automobiles, the state of whatever else, then plainly the basis for getting things done is radically weakened where those who receive your story cannot feel as you are entitled to feel. And there are obvious virtues to that sort of situation. Here I'm thinking of the following sort of thing. If a trouble occurs in the world somewhere, then a characteristic way it's dealt with is to, e.g., find which family's trouble it is, and, it being some family's trouble it's nobody else's trouble. Sometimes it turns out not to be satisfactorily formulatable as a family's trouble in that it might turn out to be a neighborhood's trouble. But if it's a neighborhood's trouble then it's nobody else's neighborhood's trouble. So, e.g., crimes are by and large historically treated that way. A gets robbed or injured and that's a problem for B and C, but is nobody else's. And thereby, of course, one is not then constantly swamped with the troubles of the world. Instead, it turns out that people can be thankful that the troubles occur elsewhere.

Occasionally a situation is given a kind of abstract status. Occasionally, e.g., when someone gets raped, instead of the rape being seen as the rape of so-and-so's daughter and thereby nothing for anybody else to worry about, it gets formulated as the rape of somebody's daughter, and perhaps it can bode for other people's daughters and maybe my daughter, and then from *a* rape it turns into a national arousal at rapings. This isn't all that current right now, but the story of a famous rape case years ago, that of Caryl Chessman, essentially involved that the way in which Chessman was gotten to be electrocuted eventually was that people across the state were able to be turned to seeing that rape as the rape of anybody's daughter, and to feel that something had to be done to this guy. That is to say, it was successfully transformed into a general thing while preserving the power of its feeling in each family. What was able to be done was to have the kind of anger, etc., that can be felt in each family for an occurred rape, felt for somebody else's occurred rape – as compared to it's just being a matter of general public concern – "Isn't it awful" – or only a matter of some private concern. That's rare, and enormously powerful when it works.

The only parallel that I can readily bring home this issue with is that an attempt is being made with the Vietnam war, to turn the deaths of soldiers into a something that would give it such a status. It turns out that a major way that a war comes to hurt the government doing the war, is by it happening that people from small places die. Not only does it, as we say, 'bring home the war' for the people in that place, it does much more than that. It's about the only way that they can come to seriously feel about it. For

one, if everybody knows the parents of the person who died, then everybody
has occasion to be told about it, to talk about it, and in talking about it come
to talk about the war.

It happens that our military is organized in such a way that even the
relatively small groups that go into battle have a good chance of having a
series of people from a fairly local place on a same team. And a consequence
of that is that now and again, say in an ambush, four guys from the same
town get killed. And when those towns get small enough, then what happens
is that half a high school class has been wiped out. And suddenly, then, 'what
the world is doing to us' becomes a thing that people get enormously aroused
about. And over time, that happens to a lot of villages, where, then, a lot of
villages which were otherwise completely inaccessible to, say, anti-war
movements, are found to be writing letters to the President saying "our kids
shouldn't be in this war" – *our* kids, not so much American kids – "you
should stop sending our high school kids to this war." And all over the place,
then, people who had no particular interest in the war, the theory of the war,
etc., come to be involved by these local deaths. They are then available to
seeing that the local deaths in their town are something like the local deaths
that are occurring elsewhere, and, in that they have their own, they could also
feel for the others. Without having their own, their feeling for the others is not
anything like what it could be.

There are ways, then, whereby the isolating character of experiences can
nonetheless get undercut – if what one is dealing with is that there are others
who have the same experience. Then, you can have more extended experience
than you would have had if only you had had it, or you can see a pattern to
experience other than the one you would see if only you had had it. So, if
we're talking about the ways in which the feelings that experiences generate
can get amalgamated, then, on the one hand if you haven't had an experience
you're not entitled to feelings, and on the other, if somebody tells you an
experience you're not entitled to feel as they have, but on the third hand, if
you've had an experience and now you're told a similar experience by another,
then you can make very big generalizations from it and feel more than you
would have felt in either of the prior two cases.

Now that's one order of thing, i.e., introducing aspects of the distributional
character of experience, and just raising what the import of its distributional
character is for troubles and joys in the world, in sharp contrast to knowledge
and its distributional character. You might figure it would be a severe enough
kind of fact with regard to people's rights, abilities to have experiences, that
they were restricted to those experiences that they had some such connection
to as that they witnessed them. But that's not yet the full story of the kinds
of constraints that are set on the possibility of having an experience.

The second sort of constraint, that deeply relates to this story, is that if
you're going to have an entitled experience, then you'll have to have the
experience you're entitled to, i.e., that ordinary story which can be seen to
have taken place, which can be, e.g., presented as a piece of news. That is to
say, you could figure that having severe restrictions on your chances to have

experiences, which turn on, e.g., that some important thing, even if only in a mild way important, e.g., just an accident, happens to cross your path or you happen to cross its path, well then you're home free. Once you got it you could do with it as you please. No. You have to form it up as a thing that it ordinarily is, and then mesh your experience with that. The rights to have an experience by virtue of encountering something like an accident are only the rights to have seen 'another accident' and perhaps to have felt for it, but you can't turn out to have a nervous breakdown because you happened to see an automobile accident, unless it turned out that, e.g., the accident involved people who, though you didn't know it at the time, matter to you. Or unless you can somehow form it up as there but for the grace of God go I – "If I hadn't been in this lane it would have been me that it happened to." That is, you can't make much more of it then what anybody would make of it. We can, then, think of the way that you're entitled to an experience as that you borrow for a while that experience that's available, as compared to that you now invent the experience that you might be entitled to.

But in that you are so sharply restricted with regard to the occasions of having an experience, then presumably people are happy enough to take them as they come. You're not going to get very much surprizing new feelings or whatever out of this experience, but it's the only experience which you have any chance to legitimately have, so you might as well have it. You might as well form up this wreck story as an ordinary wreck story rather than attempt to make it into something that would occasion such comments as that you're really reaching for experiences. And of course people are readily seen to be reaching for experience with something that anybody knows is 'just a wreck,' 'just an X' and they make it into a life's work.

In that regard, there are a whole bunch of ways that the teller of this story tells us how she went about bounding this experience. What she made of it is not just told in the story, but it's told in other ways in the telling of the story. Among the ways that she goes about locating the kind of experience this story was, is that she doesn't tell it right off in the conversation, but she tells it somewhere in the conversation. And you'll find that stories are specifically differentiated in terms of their importance to the teller by reference to where the teller places them in a conversation. So, for example, among the ways that a teller can make out a story as really important is to tell it right off. And a way to make it even more important than that is to call to tell it when you figure the other isn't available to hear it, i.e., to call them up in the middle of the night and say "I know you were sleeping but . . ." where it's not that they happen to be sleeping but you call them when they're sleeping, in that if you don't call them then, if you call them when they get up, you've already told them something about the story, i.e., it's not as important as you might otherwise want to make it out.

So, stories are ranked in terms of, and express their status by, the placing of the story in the conversation, and the placing of the conversation in people's lives. Clearly if this teller had been injured in the story's event, she wouldn't have told the story well into the conversation; indeed, it would have served as

grounds for making the call; indeed, for making the call despite whatever the other person might have been supposed to have been doing when the call had to be made.

Then of course in the story itself, aspects of its importance are told. For example, while it was an important enough experience for the teller to say to herself I'm going to listen to the radio, other things got in the way of that. She isn't embarrassed to say that instead of that she watched the astronauts – which obviously for some other story would be altogether perverse. But for this story it's perfectly okay, and is a way to locate how the events matter, i.e., to produce the story while indicating that if it came down to trying to find out more or watching the astronauts, I watched the astronauts. Aside from that, we are told that she could go home and go about her business, as compared to, e.g., "I went home and went to bed," or "I had nightmares all night," or that it in other ways interfered with the life that she was engaged in when this happened. "I was coming home, there was the accident, we were stopped for a while, and then I went home and watched the astronauts." That's plainly a way to locate how the story matters, and is plainly an appropriate way for this story. Had she said it ruined the rest of her day, she was shaking, she went to the doctor, she had nightmares, then her friend could say "Well, you're just oversensitive."

At least the initially blandest kind of formulation we might make, then, is that while lots of people figure that experience is a great thing, and apparently at least some people are eager to have experiences, they are extraordinarily carefully regulated sorts of things. The occasions of entitlement to have them are carefully regulated, and then the experience you're entitled to have on an occasion you're entitled to have one is further carefully regulated. And, insofar as part of the experience involves telling about it, then that's one of the ways in which you lay yourself open to having, e.g., made too much of it, experienced it wrongly, not seen the thing you should have seen, etc. The telling of it then constitutes one way in which what you might privately make of it is subject to the control of an open presentation, even to what you thought was a friend. That is to say, your friends are not going to help you out, by and large, when you tell them some story, unless you tell them a story in the way anybody should tell it to anybody. Then they'll be appropriately amused or sorrowed. Otherwise you'll find that they're watching you to see that you're, e.g., making something big out of something you're not entitled to make big, or something small out of something that should have been bigger, etc., or missed seeing something you should have seen, which could be deduced by virtue of the way you requiredly formed the thing up. What we come back to is that of all the things that could have happened on the day that this event took place, this was what she was entitled to bring away, and she did.

Lecture 5

'First' and 'second' stories; Topical coherence; Storing and recalling experiences

Basically I'll be continuing talking off the materials we've been working with, the sequence involving the automobile wreck. There are two initial, unrefined, altogether unsettled observations that I'll take off on. They obviously hold for this conversational fragment. First, that stories come in clumps, and second, clumped stories have an apparent similarity between them. In the case at hand, it's apparent that the similarities involve such sorts of things as that the second story or story fragment or referred-to story involves, as the first does, an accident, and involves also as the first does, some supposition, assertion, about the expected news status of it.

> *A* : Boy it was a bad one though.
> *B* : Well that's too bad.
> *A* : Kinda // (freak)–
> *B* : You know, I looked and looked in the paper– I think I told you f–
> for that uh f–fall over at the Bowl that night. And I never saw a thing
> about it, and I // looked in the next couple of evenings.
> *A* : Mm hm
>   (1.0)
> *B* : Never saw a th– a mention of it.
> *A* : I didn't see that either.

So that we have a slight refinement on the second observation, i.e., there are not just some apparent similarities, but some apparent similarities of the sort that grossly can be said to be topical. Both stories have similar topics.

What I want to do first is to use these initial observations to get some problems, and then to develop a solution to the problem. If clumped stories have a characterizable sort of similarity, then perhaps it's the case that the similarities are projected, i.e., that the teller of the second is in some way concerned to produce a recognizably similar story to the first. We'll try to develop what might be bases for that interest although our main concern is if we can suppose that the teller of the second has such an interest, how does he go about satisfying it? Are there some procedures which the teller of the second uses in order to get such a second story as has for him, and perhaps recognizably for the teller of the first, a similarity? That's a central problem that we want to solve.

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Let me just note that I've already been talking about a 'first' story and a 'second' story, and that raises the possibility that for clumped stories there's some organization as between them so that we can say that one is specifically a 'first story,' that being now a class as compared to it just happening to be a story that came before the other. So that there is a specifically produced 'first story' and a specifically produced 'second story,' where, then, if you look at a sample of clumped stories, we'd find that we could use the classes 'first' and 'second' stories across the sample, i.e., there would be features of 'first stories' and features of 'second stories' that turned out to be somewhat systematically present.

At least two interests of that possibility are: First, harking back to the lecture on stories taking more than an utterance to produce, it's kind of plain that that assertion, though it has some gross obviousness to it, doesn't in fact characterize all stories. Not all stories take more than an utterance to produce; indeed, there's a bunch of stories that take only an utterance to produce. And a problem which carries over from that discussion is, then, are there ways that we can cut into the group of stories left over, so as to find that they're not stories that simply happen not to have the feature we considered, but that there's a class of stories which may not take more than an utterance to produce, and in not taking more than an utterance to produce nonetheless don't raise trouble with the argument we offered about why stories take more than an utterance to produce. Where one sort of interest we have is that perhaps these second stories don't have the sort of basis for taking more than an utterance to produce that obtains for first stories.

Our second interest in the differentiation has to do with that while we propose that first and second stories within a clump have similarities that may be projected, if we say that there's a class, 'first stories' and a class, 'second stories,' then we may be in a position to begin to deal with some aspect of another correlative obvious fact. And that is that within a clump of stories, first and second stories also have dissimilarities. Now, we're asserting and being concerned with the similarities between the stories. But the similar stories are also different. That could either mean we'll focus on the similarities and forget about the dissimilarities, or we can perhaps also begin to look at some differences they have. And at least one possible source of some dissimilarity, which doesn't conflict with our argument that they have similarities, is that some of the dissimilarities perhaps turn on that the clumps are ordered into 'first' and 'second' stories; 'first' being a type, having some features and 'second' being a type, having some features, and thereby at least some of the dissimilarities will have been handled.

Returning to the problem of how it is that a second teller might go about getting a second story to tell which shows a similarity to the first, let me kind of say why I'm interested in solving it. The problem was gotten in something like the following fashion: There are striking similarities between first and second stories. Are those similarities due to chance, or is it not a matter of chance that with regard to within-clump stories, across clumps – across, that is, a variety of topics, tellers, etc. – one finds that second stories are similar to

whatever first stories? If that's not a matter of chance, then perhaps it's something that is achieved, projected by a second teller. Now that would lead us to ask why/how they do it. But just because we *can* ask why/how they do it doesn't mean that we're going to ask it, i.e., to put any effort into trying to solve it. There are lots of questions we might ask where we don't figure there's any particular interest in solving it, i.e., as a matter of where I'm going to devote my work. Now there are reasons for choosing to work here. And the reasons exist before it's known that there *is* a solution. One reason is something like this: It obviously would take some sort of work on the part of the second teller to achieve a similar second story. That work would obviously involve such things as some sort of attention to the first story, some sort of analysis of the first story, some sort of use of the analysis of the first story in building a second. And the variety of types of work that would seem obviously to be involved – before you know indeed what work is involved – would seem to have interactional aspects to it. That is, a second may, in telling a similar story, be doing something to the first, telling the first something. And in the first place, in listening to the first to get a second, he may be doing some sort of interactional attention. So there's a kind of direction to what the solution would look like – if there is a solution – that would involve some sort of interactional technology. And that possibility of work of an interactional sort, which may be also rather generalized work, is what provides the attraction of the problem. What I want to be constructing descriptions of, are procedures of an interactional sort. When I can see such a possibility from some posed problem, then that's the place where I'm going to work. So that's one sort of basis for the interest in this problem.

A second and related source is this: Among the plainest kinds of problems there are in dealing with people talking together, engaging in conversation, is coming to be able to say what somebody heard. There are lots of supposables about what they might have heard, but one specific interest is in coming to say *what* they heard. And if a second story exhibits some similarities to a first, then in examining how the similarity is achieved we may be in a position to say something about how the first was heard – perhaps indeed, something about how the second was heard; something about how people listen to each other.

A third sort of interest is rather more elaborately technical. I'm interested in doing provings. For example, provings of what somebody heard, or provings of that a story is similar. In consequence of that, I'm looking for problems that can have provable solutions. Now let me amend that in a way I intend as altogether general to whatever I say over the course. I don't ever intend to prove that so-and-so heard such-and-such, or that so-and-so produced a similar story. What I intend to prove is that it's *possible* that that's so. I won't always say that, but for me 'possibility' is an extremely strong kind of relationship, and it's the strongest relationship I will ever be intendedly proposing. I want to prove possibilities, and I take it that proving a possibility is other than asserting "Well it's possible that," i.e., I don't intend to be using "It's possible that" as a way to say anything I please. I intend the proofs to

be weak in the sense that they only prove possibilities, but where that takes some sort of proof.

The interest being in proofs, in looking for things that look like I can prove possibilities with them, let's suppose that while some stories had some sort of similarity to them, we couldn't develop that the similarity was, e.g., projected by the second speaker, but, so far as we can tell, they just happened to have some similarities. In contrast to that, consider the possibility that there's some assertable interest of a second teller in, e.g., showing that he understood the first story – to put it even more strongly, proving that he understood the first story. If the job of the second teller, as he takes it, is to prove that he understood the first story, and he has ways of proving that, then perhaps while he doesn't offer his proof procedures but instead offers some product of a way to show he understood, i.e., exhibits something which proves the understanding, we might be in a position to examine how he does the understanding, as something provable. So, insofar as it looks like what the second teller is interested in is proving something, then perhaps how he does it can be characterized, and that could then, say, be a proof of how he proves.

And in the instant type of case there are assertable interests of a second teller in proved relationships between his story and the first story. *Proved* relationships are attended by parties as systematically different than other sorts of relationships, e.g., *claimed* relationships. Things like, e.g., at the end of some first story a recipient says "I know just what you mean." Period. We can say that that's a claimed understanding as compared to having some way to produce some materials that *exhibit* an understanding. And there are other sorts of things that have a similar sort of attended differentiation. For example, if someone tells a story that has a point, or states a certain opinion, then a routine thing that somebody who receives that story or opinion does, is to say "I agree." Again, we could say that that's a 'claimed' agreement. And people are perfectly well aware that though he said that, he might not mean it, and in any event so far as they know, he's just saying it. That might be contrasted with some procedure whereby a party does what can be said to be 'achieving' or 'proving' an agreement. And there are, say, a variety of things that parties can do that are manifestly stronger than claimed agreements. For example, they might say, after some opinion, "I was just telling so-and-so that, myself." Or, stronger yet, "I told you that a week ago." Or, e.g., in the course of a developing opinion, a second chimes in and finishes it off. And insofar as claiming and achieving are different, we can at least propose that there may be an interest of parties in proving some relationship between what they say and what another says; relationships like 'proving that I understand' or 'proving that I agree.'

With regard to 'understanding,' which seems transparently involved in these story clumps, I fix on that as a possibility because I already know from other work that there are nice sorts of means for proving understanding, and that some seemingly obvious sorts of means are not treated as good means. So that, e.g., repeating what a person says is sometimes treated as not a good

indication of understanding. It's known that one can repeat without under-
standing. I have no idea whether that's true or not, and we're not interested
in that, but to give you an instance of its being known, in a conversation a
fellow tells a dirty joke that his 12-year old sister told him. Talk then gets
around to 'did she know what she was saying,' and it's proposed that the fact
that she told it doesn't show that she knew what it meant; she may just be
repeating it. Alternatively, simple ways of showing understanding in some
senses are exhibited in such a sequence as:

> *A*: How long are you going to be here?
> *B*: Til Monday.
> *A*: Oh. Just a week.

Here, A took the announced day, and maybe the current day, and performed
some operation on it which yielded an utterance that has done a transforma-
tion on "Til Monday." Whatever else they're doing, it shows that they've
caught that. That is to say, they do some sort of analysis of it and use that
analysis in producing a next utterance.

A fourth reason that I'm interested in achieved similar relationships
between stories has, like the third, some elaborated technical interest to it. In
other work it seemed obvious that sorts of organizations that were very fine
and transparently methodic – or if not transparently methodic then showably
methodic – could be established for small sequences. Two-utterance
sequences, for example. Like you can build more or less elaborate method-
ologies which describe how it is that there is some organization between the
two utterances "Hello," "Hello" or the two utterances "Goodbye," "Good-
bye" or between "What are you doing?" "Nothing," and various types like
that. One specific interest that I have in dealing with stories is to see whether
there can be an order of expansion in the length of sequences that can be
subject to methodical characterization. And an initial thing I presented about
stories was that they take more than an utterance to produce. They take at
least three to produce. And there was an attempt to characterize, say, a
specifically three-utterance unit. Then we tried to extend things to types of
organizations that stories have, which didn't specify how many utterances
were involved but only involved that they weren't a particularly small
number and might be a very large number, and the number might be
irrelevant. Now when we come to deal with clumped stories we're further yet
expanding the size of utterance sequence that we can hope to give systematic
characterization to. And that plainly is an obvious aim that one would
undertake in attempting to characterize the organization of conversation. So
there's a bunch of reasons why the problem of achieved similarities between
the members of a clumped story group was attacked.

Now we'll proceed to consider the problem. We already know from earlier
discussions that the recipient of a first story listens in a variety of ways to it,
and can use the listening they do to come up with utterances. For example,

they can use the listening to see a 'preface' and produce an 'acceptor' that says 'go ahead and tell the story.' For example, they can use the initial request to listen to the story to be able, then, to satisfy the request. Now does that delimit the kind of listening they do, or do they do other kinds of listening as well, other kinds of listening that we can prove is possible by reference to things that they say?

Let's begin to do a partially suppositional, partially hypothetical consideration of sorts of similarities so as to find such sorts of similarities as would be involved in a hearer/second teller's procedures for constructing a similar story. There is, e.g., the fact that second stories are topically similar to firsts. Does that mean that, e.g., what we want to do is construct a rule that says 'Listen to the first story in order to find the topic and then use the topic to locate a second story'? And if we constructed a rule like that, what sorts of stories would it yield, and what relationships would the stories it would yield have to the sorts of stories that turn up in second stories? I want to propose that while topical similarity is present, on the one hand it's an overly weak feature and on the other hand its overly weak status has to do with the way topical organization operates independent of stories, but also for stories.

'Topical similarity' is overly weak although the following sorts of attention to topic do hold: It appears that people make it their business to attend the *topical coherence* of a next thing they say to some prior thing someone else said. The evidence for their attention to that is extremely extensive, turning not merely on the fact that they often obviously produce same-topic talk, but that they have a variety of ways of indicating that they're going to produce same-topic talk and that they are now producing same-topic talk, and they use them. For example, there are 'topic markers' which say 'what I'm saying now is on topic with what somebody just said.' And by 'topic marker' I mean something that is a kind of formal object that simply says 'same topic' or may say 'different topic.' An obvious complex of topic markers is, e.g., a beginning like "I still say though," where that involves, particularly focussing on 'still' and 'though,' that current speaker is saying: 'It's relevant to what I now say that I am speaking at least third in a sequence on some topic, where I spoke before on that topic and took a position, and somebody spoke after I spoke, and I know they disagreed with me, and nonetheless I am now reasserting what I asserted before.' Where the business of those particular topic markers, aside from signalling 'still on topic,' is to say 'I know I'm being stubborn.' That is to say, the particular action is 'intendedly being stubborn' and its mechanism involves using topic markers to do that by locating where in a sequence one is producing it. Another sort of instance of a 'topic marker' is when, for example, you begin an utterance with an appositional 'anyway.' It can be engaged in saying: 'Without regard to the topicality of the last utterance, returning to the topic talked about before that, I have this to say.' If one wanted to think of it in logical terms, 'anyway' can be conceived as a right-hand parentheses, i.e., it proposes that there was a topic, it was moved off of, it's being returned to.

There is, then, a bunch of business around topical coherence, and people of course note about an utterance that it's 'not on topic,' that it's 'off the subject,' etc. And of course while I'm saying that topic similarity doesn't work, an initially noted similarity was topic similarity. We started with an observation about similarity and refined it into partially topical similarities. Now we're engaged in an attempt to further refine it, and here topic similarity becomes overly weak. The reasons for its over-weakness are that the question of whether there is topic similarity can't proceed by listing the set of topics that the *first* story had and then seeing, 'does the second have one of those?' Topic similarity is something that the *second* story can exhibit, though you wouldn't have thought from the first that such a second would be a coherent topic with the first. That is to say, the relationship 'topic similarity' is one in which the second is crucial. Given the second you can see that they're topically similar. And an enormous range of produced utterances can turn out to have some sort of topical similarity with the first.

In this case, for example, the first story's topic can be conceived to be 'an auto accident' as compared to just 'an accident.' But the second story leads us to see that the first is about 'an accident' in that we thereby see that the first and second are 'similar' as compared to seeing them as topically dissimilar by virtue of the first being about an auto accident and the second being about a fall. We could, in fact, be in as much a position to say about these two that they're topically dissimilar as that they're topically similar. It's obviously, then, our decision to focus on how to *make* them topically similar that leads us to say that they're similar, when under topical considerations we could say that they're dissimilar, where, then, we couldn't figure that the producer of the second intended topical similarity with the story of the fall. So we'd already had to suppose similarity.

And that aspect of the procedure for attending stories – that you *try* to find similarity – is terribly relevant to the way a second teller can proceed. Second teller has as a resource that he knows that a hearer of a second story will be looking for similarity, so that extends the range of things he can do to get it.

Now, what other features of stories can be used to construct a procedure that will yield observable similarity? One sort of thing that lots of stories have is some bunch of *characters*. That a first has some bunch of characters could be used by a listener who operates under a maxim that says: 'Examine a story for its characters and use them to get you another story – where you can get another story that's similar if you find one that has the same characters in it.' For example, for the stories we have, the first involving, say, a witness and victims, then one might collect its characters and produce – if you could find one – a second story that also involves a witness and victims. You'd have, then, a way of looking at a first to know what to pull out of it which you could use to find another. Where that other would have such features as would permit it to be seen that you had used the first to get a second, and that the second was 'similar.'

A next sort of feature, sticking within 'character similarity' shifts our ground slightly and shifts it in a way that I would obviously find attractive.

And that is that a notable thing about some first stories – and reasons for its being in lots of first stories can be thought up by reference to, e.g., the last lecture – is that the teller appears as a character in the story. It's a routine feature, particularly of first stories, that the teller appears as a character in the story. Possibility: If the teller is a character, find a story in which such a character appears and also in which the teller of the second is a character. Finer relationship: If teller is a character, then look for such a story as has that character, and in which you play the same character. The business of the hearer of a first story might then be: Examine the first for whether the teller is a character. If he's a character look for a second story in which you appear as the same character.

Now that could be a procedure; one that has an extraordinary generality of use. That doesn't mean that it will always succeed, but it has an obvious formality to it, such that anyone could try it. They might fail, but they could try it. It tells them how to examine a story to get another. And one fascination with it is its generality and its simplicity – as compared to, e.g., having to do some job of collecting and organizing a set of characters, since often the teller character's features will yield some other characters as affiliated with it, as a witness will be a character for stories involving some determinate kinds of other characters. But not merely that. We've now shifted from *story* features to story-*telling* features. That is to say, it's an analysis in which the hearer of the first figures he's attending the *telling* of the first and not just the first *story*. And there is, then, at least that kind of obvious interactional character to the production of the two stories, i.e., that the second party feels with the *told* character of the first, in producing the second that he tells.

When we get there, we can examine some permutations on it to notice how much they matter. Consider an initial story like this auto accident story, and consider the slightly weaker version of our rule that involved teller appearing in the story, but as any character in it, not necessarily the same character as the teller of the first. Then you could get sequences like this first story in which A was a witness to an auto accident, and some second story in which a witness and victims also appear, but where the teller of the second is a victim. And now the second story might run, "I was in an auto accident, I was lying on the pavement, and here were all these people standing and gawking at us." That is to say, the comment the second story might be making about the first would be something about, e.g., the immorality of the kind of thing the first reported he had done. By shifting the characters that the two tellers take, one can systematically get that the first and second are not merely similar or dissimilar, but that the second agrees or disagrees with the first, and a variety of such sorts of interactional features. If, then, a second teller is not so much interested in achieving 'similarity,' but in achieving some feature that similarity can let him get, like 'agreement,' then the relationship between the characters and the tellers can be quite crucial. If, e.g., it were the business of a second story to deal with the uniqueness of the experience of the first, then again that the tellers stood in similar or different character statuses in the two stories would be relevant to, e.g., the non-uniqueness of ʾa first's experience

being exhibited. And again, in the story we start with, the issue of whether it appeared in the news and perhaps why it didn't is something that the teller of the second can deal with.[1]

Now the procedure we've offered involves the hearer of the first monitoring it in terms of the teller being a character in it, and using that to find a story in which they also appear and are the same character. In order to use that procedure to produce an observably similar story, it's not enough to use it and get a story that can be told sometime. Part of the way of achieving a similar story turns on discovering a candidate within a rather sharply delimited conversation time. That is, the second stories that are observably 'similar second stories' go right after the first story. And that has a kind of a large import to it. Finding a story to place right after a first involves remembering a story, where the story that is remembered may turn out to be something remembered from an extraordinarily divergent sort of past. People will routinely turn up with stories, delivered precisely on the completion of a first, which involve them in remembering events from ten, twenty years before. What that tells us is that it's not just that people can put their memories to the service of a conversation, but they can put their memories to that service and get results within this remarkably short time period.

And with regard to showing that you're attentive to the other party, which is a general matter relating to the sorts of things we've been talking about, it may be that there isn't a better way to do it than to show that the things they say have a full control over your memory. That is to say, you put your memory utterly at their service and it yields results of this speed. Not, e.g., "I'll think about it and come up with a story and next week I'll tell you what it reminded me of," but within the constraints of close to next utterance, a story is produced. That's a kind of way of saying 'my mind is with you,' where it's also known that the mind that I'm saying is with you doesn't produce its remembrances at will, but just produces them. It isn't a self-conscious search for stories, you're not looking to be accommodating, they simply pop into your head. And if one wants to know what the ways are that a conversation can be shown to be 'absorbing,' plainly it would be hard to find better ways of showing that than that one is able to dredge up stories that you figure you haven't thought of in some indefinitely long period, at the spur of this sort of moment. And that we do it is at least one sort of evidence for the fact that one is engaged in these kinds of analyses, using them to find things to say.

Let me make a side comment that I figure is sort of important. Suppose we were going about designing the way minds should store experience. And suppose the experiences we're thinking of are those in which people appear. Now we can think of kinds of rules we might impose for the ways that minds should store those experiences. Obvious possibilities would involve, e.g.: Store the information in terms of what anybody would say was the most important

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[1]There follows "an excursus on the import of tellability" consisting of matters dealt with in Winter 1970, lecture 1, pp. 163–4 and 169–71. It has been omitted here.

aspect of it or the most important figure in it. Then you'd have a situation where, say, the experience would be stored in terms of collections of different characters selected in terms of interest, importance, whatever else. Now one neat and possibly general way to have experiences stored, though it's one that could create lots of difficulties, is to say: Whatever experiences you have, store them in terms of your place in them, without regard to whether you had an utterly trivial or secondary or central place in them. And that might have the virtue of providing a generalized motivation for storing experiences. If it's your part in it that you use to preserve it by, then it might lead you to preserve lots of them, simply in terms of the idea of experiences being treatable as your private property. People can then collect a mass of private experiences that they then, by virtue of their generalized orientation to 'what's mine,' have an interest in keeping. You might, then, design a collection of minds, each one storing experience which is to be used for each others' benefit, though you couldn't necessarily say "Remember all these things so that you might tell them to somebody else." You have to have some basis for each person storing some collection of stuff via some interest like 'their own' interest. Where, then, you get them to store experiences in terms of their involvement, but have them be available to anybody who taps them right. Anybody can get the story if they ask in the right way. And the right way is to tell one just like it.

You have, then, a bunch of stuff stored, that persons have an interest in storing, that's nonetheless available to anybody else who, e.g., has such a problem as wanting to know, "Has anybody ever suffered from this trouble that I suffer from?" In that I organize my experience in terms of my position in it, and don't know that that's an organization I do, I may only find that I suffer from it and don't know that obviously lots of people suffer from it. That is, though I could have formed it up in some other way, I organize it in terms of 'my experience' and that can lead me to wonder whether anybody else has it. If I tell it to somebody else, they having organized experiences in the same way, I produce a response in them which yields that they now will pop up with such a story if they have one. That is, I simply find that there are such, each one having been stored in terms of a 'my experience' focus, but being available to any analytically similar situation. So that though I start with a possible sense of uniqueness I can solve that uniqueness problem by just telling somebody else the story – not even specifically asking them for another – and they will simply come up with one if they have one. And not only will they come up with one if they have one, they will often know one that somebody else has come up with. The consequence of that is the familiar phenomenon of "Until I had this trouble I didn't think anybody had it. When I had it it turned out that lots of people have it." One finds, when something happens to one, that whole ranges of things you never knew existed exist, and that lots of people turn out to be in exactly the same situation. Which is to say that something happens to you, you tell somebody about it, and it turns out that that's an occasion for them to tell you that

they're in the same situation – though all you know in the first instance is that it's your situation.

So again, the kind of simplicity in the organization of experiences for the remembering that's involved in focus on 'your position' can be accommodated to a general availability of those experiences to anybody who knows how to get them. And knowing how to get them involves that people store them in the same way and tell them in the same way, such that if someone produces one, you will come up with another and tell it – or feel awfully frustrated if it turns out that you had it and didn't know it, and remember it the next day. And it's kind of interesting that the commitment to the proper operation of your memory in conversation time is sufficient to make you feel miserable about yourself when you remember a story ten minutes later. It's a way to see that your mind is treated by you as *properly* at the service of others, such that it's mis-serving you when you have a story to tell and you don't remember it fast enough.

If something like the procedure I've suggested is in fairly general use and is fairly general with regard to the way it exhibits understanding, then we might look to whether there are special places where it doesn't hold, and whether those special places have special problems. That is to say, what we don't want to do is to just ask if there are any counter-examples to this. We want also to ask if there are any systematic non-operations of this, and if those systematic non-operations yield expectable problems. Obviously I have something to say on this.

An obvious place in which the procedure is specifically not used – obvious once you think of it – is in places like psychoanalysis and other sorts of psychiatry. That is, it is absolutely not the business of a psychiatrist, having had some experience reported to him, to say "My mother was just like that, too." Now, while that's kind of obvious, if the procedure we suggested is kind of generally used in an automatic way, then it presumably takes specific training for it not to happen that a psychoanalyst has occurring to him as he hears some story, how the same thing happened to him. Some systematic revision of how his mind operates has to be done. Now, to not be reminded is an offered rule. I can give a direct quote from a book called *Principles of Intensive Psychotherapy* by Frieda Fromm-Reichman, used to train therapists:

> What then are the basic requirements of the personality and professional abilities of the psychiatrist? If I were to answer this question in one sentence I would reply, the psychotherapist must be able to listen. This does not appear to be a startling statement, but it is intended to be just that. To be able to listen and to gather information from another person, in this other person's own right, without reacting along the lines of one's own problems or experience, of which one may be reminded, perhaps in a disturbing way, is an art of interpersonal exchange which few people are able to practice without special training. To be in command of this art is by no means tantamount to actually being a good psychiatrist, but is the prerequisite of all intensive psychotherapy.

And maybe at this point we can have some idea of why what she says might well be so. That is, at least why it is that it would take a considerable amount of training to be able to do not listening in the ways that I characterized as the ways we listen, which specifically involve finding one's own experiences. It's not just that it happens that people find their own experiences, it's their business conversationally, to do that. It's not that they're lost in their own fantasies, but that they're absolutely at the service of the person they're talking with when they are lost in their own fantasies, i.e., their own remembrances of rather particular sorts, i.e., of just the sort of thing that the other person just told them.

It's perfectly possible that if this is the sort of thing that psychiatrists have to acquire, its acquiring could have consequences. Like, that being prevented from coming up with the sorts of things one might come up with and say, one finds what other people say boring, for example. Now a classical problem that psychiatry had systematically to deal with was that of psychiatrists falling asleep during sessions. And I wonder whether that they fall asleep has to do with that they know they can't say any of the things that are interesting, that they might think of when somebody might tell them something, and therefore they have no good way to listen to find anything interesting.

A correlate is the problem psychiatrists have of showing people who have told them their problems that they understand the problem they've been told, where one best way of saying "I understand what you've told" is to say "I've been through it myself." And patients have it as their business to say "Well I know you're healthy now, but when you were younger didn't you have the sort of problem that I have?" Patients also routinely complain about the way that psychiatrists might attempt to show that they understand, e.g., where somebody would tell a story in response to the story, a psychiatrist might say "Ah hah." And patients specifically attend the miserableness of "Ah hah" as an attempted indication of understanding. And of course precisely the sort of help that can work for some people who find difficulty in things like psychotherapy is that sort of help which involves exactly that a collection of people get together and tell a series of stories, one alike to the next, i.e., places like AA involve a series of stories where we come to see that we're all in the same boat, and people figure that they're understood and that they're not alone – where among the problems present in therapy is that for all you know, given that the therapist doesn't respond with telling you he had the same experience, nobody had the same experience as you. And in that nobody may have had such an experience, maybe you damn well *are* crazy. That is to say, the way you find out you're not crazy is that people who you figure aren't crazy tell you that they've had exactly the same experience you had. Now they may say "lots of people had it," but that's quite different than saying "I had it and here's the way it went." That's the difference between claiming it and showing it.

Lecture 6

Hypothetical second stories and explanations for first stories; Sound-related terms (Poetics); "What I didn't do"

I'll continue talking about *second stories*. We talked about the relationship between first and second stories and went through some discussion of how it is that a person finds, i.e., remembers, such a second story as they might tell. Now, that procedure might order a considerable amount of the clumped stories one can encounter – as I find in my materials, as I hear in the streets – and I want at this point to introduce another type of evidence for the second story phenomenon, and also for one facet of its interest, i.e., the kinds of attention that hearers give to first stories. I'll be turning to a slightly variant use of the attention they give to first stories, having to do with the following: A thing that people do besides telling *remembered* second stories is, roughly, producing *hypothetical* second stories. And by that I mean materials of the following sort:

> *J*:   Wuhdidju think of, when Romney, came out with his statement
> thet he w'ss um –– thet 'e wz brainwash//ed
> *G*:   I think he wa:s
>   (5.0)
> *J*:   In in uhm what sense.
>   (2.0)
> *G*:   I don'know, b't if he says he wz brainwashed,
>   (7.0)
> *S*:   He's one a' these Rom//ney c'd do no wrong types. hh
> *G*:   He's an honest man.
> *G*:   This much I do know.
> *G*:   En whether'r not he was brain–brainwashed, he believed 'e was,
> so – – that's why he said it.
>   (14.0)

The term 'poetics' doesn't occur in the lectures; it is used in this and several subsequent lecture-heads to capture such phenomena as 'sound-related' terms, puns, etc.

→G: It's like thē uh – – woman who wen' to the <u>doctor</u> 'n – – she wz
       having marital problems. She said uh "My husband always tells
       me that I henpeck 'im b'd I don't henpeck 'im." And the doctor
       says "Now waida minute" 'e said "let's call yer husband in" So
       'e calls the husband in, an' says uh "Y'wife tells me yer
       henpecked are yuh?" He says "<u>Yes</u>" En so he turned t'the lady en
       says "He's henpecked." – – Cuz if he be<u>lieves</u> it then he is. So
       evidently he got the wrong impression of something. If he
       believes 'e wz brainwashed – – then he was. Ez far as he was
       concerned.

J: B'd you're thinking that perhaps uh -- hh in effect he wuss not.
       Ex//cept thet he believes it.

G: No.

G: I'm not saying one way or another. I don't know the facts.

And the following.

K: I had a very intellectual talk with my father.

R: Ah how pleasant.

K: Yes. And it turned out very <u>good</u>.

R: (From) the old man's viewpoi<u>nt?</u>

K: No! In <u>my</u> viewpoint. He– <u>agreed</u>. For once in his life.

R: He agr<u>eed</u> with what?

K: Oh, I don't know I just–

R: heh (He // agreed) hehh

K: He–he grounded me 'cause of my grades, see. I–I know, I
       deserved to be grounded, so–

R: No you // don't!

K: I–

K: I <u>did</u> though. With two fails? You– you're <u>bound</u> to be averaging
       to be– you–

R: But chu don't wanna be grounded.

K: I sure do, because -- uh well w–we starting talkin' // (an' he
       said–)

R: Oh you want him to control.

K: <u>No</u>. No. He–he says uh are you mad at me because I groundedju?
       an' I said no, he said uh are you sure? s'd yeah,

R: ehheh heh

K: He sez uh --(1.0)-- Well then what are you so hap– or w– uh
       unhappy about?

R: heh // You know what he reminds me of?

K: I go Oh, no good reason, // y'know, I–

→R: Y'know what he reminds me of, when the warden takes the guy
       to the gas chamber he sez yer not mad at me personally hehh

J: Hell no!

R: hehhh

K : hhhhh

R : It's the same type of da(h)mn situation hehh I mean it's not my
fault that the society couldn't − −

I want also to consider the constructing of *explanations* for a first story, where
producing a hypothetical second story and building a constructed explanation
for a first story have some closely similar aspects. The construction operates
under very similar constraints in some ways, to the telling of a second story.
Basically, that it has to be done within conversation time, i.e., done right then
and there. And that it's done right then and there may tell us things about
how it could be done; what kinds of attentions to a first are used. I'll be
focussing on the following fragment.

B : I hev a gurripe. hhhnh!

A : What's the gr//ipe dear.

B : And oh boy hhhnhh heh heh heh hhh!

B : Well, eh−eh The trai::ns, Yuh know Theh−the−the people.hh
Uh−why:::, eh dizzat− do not. They. hh respec'. The so called
white ca:ne (bohk). In other words, if they see me wih the ca:ne,
trav'ling the city essetra, hh why do they not give me, the so
called right of way. Etcetra.

A : Well they probably // <u>do</u>, once they <u>see</u> it.

B : Wah dintenehh

A : Uh, The // trouble is−

B : No they <u>don't</u> Brad.

A : Ha' d'yih <u>know</u>.

B : Becuz I've been on th' trai:n before en they don't care whether
I live 'r die hh hh

A : Well,

B : [[Uh−
A :   May−

B : [[<u>Yih</u>know−
A :   Maybe−

A : [[Dear <u>wait</u> wait wait, <u>wait</u>?
B :   (   )

A : [[Wait.
B :   Go 'head.

A : No:w. N: d−d−

B : [[Okay.
A :   Don' ask a question 'n then answer it.

B : Go 'head.

→ A : Uh::, You see what happens, with− specially with New
Yorkers, i:s? thet they get a::ll preoccupie::d with their own
problum::s

B : [[Yes.
A :   −with the::− fallout an' the pollution, en the // b−en the
landlord,

```
B :      Yeah mm hm,
B :      Yeah.
A :   ⸢⸢ And they don't–
B :   [[ (              ) –
A :      Nuh waitaminnit, Lemme finish,
B :      Guh 'head
A :      And they don't notice.
                (pause)
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This is from a radio call-in program in New York called the Brad Crandall Show. B is a lady caller and A is Brad Crandall, the guy who takes the calls. Now supposing that Crandall comes up with his explanation right then and there, one wants to see what kinds of attention he has given to the story to come up with the explanation. We note that what he has to do is to solve the problem posed, 'Why don't people give a blind lady with a white cane the kind of treatment they're supposed to?' And you could give all kinds of explanations. Or you could give no explanation, i.e., he could commiserate with her: "People in New York are miserable, thanks for letting us know, I hope they do better." He comes up with an explanation and I want to focus on the magnificent delicacy of the relationship between the story-problem she poses and the explanation he offers. A virtue of that relationship is that we can see some of the ways in which the second-story phenomenon operates – here in a particularly eerie way.

What I mean to point to is, first of all, the way in which *vision* conceptions or terms kind of pervade his explanation. For example, in the sequence just following her presentation of the problem: "Why do they not give me the so called right of way," he says "Well they probably do, once they SEE it." Then her denial, and then his question, "How do you know?" which is after all directed to someone who is supposed to be blind, and isn't then 'how do you know' in the sense of 'go ahead and tell me how you know,' but 'how do you know, in that you couldn't see whether/what they see.' Again, let me note that, that "they probably do, once they see it" is constructed by him, i.e., he is making this up now. And were *she* to have said to it, "How do you know?" she would be in just as good a position as he is. But he's using some of the information she's given him to start out to construct an explanation, and he's already so satisfied with it that he can use a "How do you know?" in that strong position, i.e., 'if you can't see, how do you know?,' where, as I say, how does *he* know is something that is just as well askable.

Then I guess he gets a little bit of time to begin to play around with producing an explanation, and he produces one that has, as I hope you'll see, this kind of real eeriness to it. He constructs some New Yorkers in the train. Now that's kind of interesting because though indeed it takes place in New York, and the people on the train could be conceived of as 'New Yorkers,' plainly enough, for lots of them, at any given time that they're on the train going somewhere, their identities as they're travelling may only incidentally be 'New Yorkers' – aside from the fact that a lot of them aren't New Yorkers

in any event. But 'the city' and 'the trains' are among the data that he was given, and so now he constructs 'New Yorkers.' Not only does he use the data to find a population, 'New Yorkers,' but he also uses it to locate some class of problems that turn on their identification being 'New Yorkers,' i.e., specifically 'New York's problems.' Whether anybody has such a problem, has such a problem when they're on the train, is another question altogether. But, having located this type from the materials given – and it's a talked-of type – he's able to turn that into 'a New Yorker with New Yorkers' problems.'

Now what he does is not just to find New Yorkers with some New Yorker's problems, but to give them the character of these-problems-*preoccupied*. The character of 'preoccupied' here is more delicate than I think I can confidently say, so I'll just notice it. The term 'preoccupied' bears some kind of *sound relationship* to something like 'having something in the way of your eyes,' i.e., there's a thing like 'ocular' that seems somehow to be involved here in the picking of 'preoccupied' – given, in any event, the way in which he's using visional conceptions here. That is to say, people could perfectly well be 'preoccupied' with a problem without it affecting what they see; particularly they can be 'preoccupied' with problems without it affecting that they see somebody is blind.

But there's a wonderful argumentative relationship here. Talking to someone who's blind, trying to bring them to appreciate the problems of others, a best way to bring them to that appreciation is presumably to find some such problem of others as does to them what yours does to you, i.e., that others face problems which lead them not to see, as you face a problem which leads you not to see. He could, after all, have come up with any number of reasons why they don't happen to give her the right of way, but what he does is to find a parallel problem to hers; some matters which, as a sheer abstract argument, have this parallel to her situation: 'You have some problem that leads you to not be able to see. And now you're complaining about others. Well why don't you then be a little bit more thoughtful and realize that they also have problems which prevent them noticing. It happens that what their problems prevent them from noticing is people who can't see.'

Though again, when we take it apart it's not clear that there is any such person, 'the New Yorker;' that if there are 'New Yorkers' that whatever they're occupied with when they travel the trains are specifically 'New Yorkers' problems', as pollution is a 'New York problem.' A given person travelling on a train may have some problem in mind, but for this package to be brought off it turns out that they have 'New Yorker's problems.' And of course furthermore, while they could have all sorts of problems on their minds, that their problems would lead them not to notice something is another question. And in any event, if they have those problems that lead them not to notice something, that their problems lead them not to notice a blind person is an altogether different thing.

Now the eeriness of the thing is the way in which the explanation is built on the spur of the moment. And perhaps that's the only way this explanation

could have come to be built. That is, doing it on the spur of the moment provides for the kind of examination he makes of what she's done. And that then leads him to produce, using what she's done as his data, an explanation that should satisfy her by virtue of the kind of complaint she has. 'Why don't people notice somebody's seeing problem?' 'They have them of their own – as you should know better than anybody.'[1] So in a way, not being really prepared to have an answer, you might be in a perfectly good position to build a convincing – and perhaps altogether too elegant – answer, given some problem. One kind of question is, after all, how do people go about coming up with answers to the questions they get, right off, just like that? People are asking people all kinds of questions, posing problems of this sort. And they have answers. Do they *have* answers or can they just use the problem to *get* themselves answers? Having more time, he might well not have come up with so elegant an answer. But being strapped for time, it's not that he can't find a solution, it's maybe that the solution he finds will be radically parasitic on the problem, as this one is.

Of course it may well be that there's some kind of filtering that has somebody who can operate on what people give him, with this kind of rapidity, being specifically virtuoso for this job or jobs like it. But one wants to think, then, about what kind of virtuosity it is, and whether having rapid answers of this sort is a virtue that would yield good solutions. And I have no idea whether people who heard it, or whether he or she, felt any of its eeriness. I wonder, because I guess at least on some occasions one feels that the conversation was kind of eerie, and if things are going on like those that are going on here, then you might have some way of seeing that there's some kind of systematic basis for the feeling of it being eerie.

The gross point, then, is if people don't *have* a second story they can *make* one, in just the way they come to find one, i.e., by using a careful consideration of the first story to construct it. A constructed second may work better than an actual second, an actual second, being perhaps somewhat more constrained by what you remember, being, then, less free to being fitted to just what you've got. And I doubt that it would be good theater – it's not too believable.

I'm going to talk now to the following fragment.

Louise: I've got a back house a guest house in the back a' my house?
Ken: Mm hm,
Louise: It's uh you can't hear anything it locks it has a bedroom a kitchen
            and a bathroom. It's a real nice place also a TV.
Ken: Mm⌈hm
Louise: ⌊And a radio.
                    (2.0)

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[1]In an earlier consideration of this phenomenon , not included in this edition (omitted from Winter 1969, lecture 8), a student comments, "Something like she's blind to their problems." Sacks responds, "Right. It's at the edge of overt punning, in his usage of her materials."

Louise : Jo and I go out there some– you know, (1.0) and I've– (1.0) One
night– (1.0) I was with this guy that I liked a real lot. An' uh
(3.0) we had come back from the show, we had gone to the (1.0)
Ash Grove for a while, 'n we were gonna park. An' I can't stand
a car. 'n he⌜has a small car.
Ken :   ⌞Mm hm,

Louise : So we walked to the back, an' we just wen' into the back house
an' we stayed there half the night.
              (1.0)
Louise : We didn't to to bed to– t'each other, but– it was so comfortable
an' so⌜nice.
Ken :   ⌞Mm hm,

Ken : Mm.
Louise : Y'know? There's everything perfect.

The way I go about getting myself a problem is to see, e.g., what sorts of
orderlinesses, similarities, are noticeable in some fragment. Having noticed
them, then I can try to see whether there's something about them that could
be explained. And when I say some sorts of orderlinesses or similarities, that's
kind of different than some of the things one might initially ask, proceeding
in the ways one proceeds in the first instance, e.g., to say "Why did he do
that?" for something you see him doing: "Why did they pause there?" "Why
did they put this word in?" Now at least a reason for starting with some
observations, and some observations which at least tentatively locate some
sorts of orderliness, is that if you have some observations in the first instance,
then it may be that even though your initial formulation of a problem needs
to get rejected, doesn't turn out to be solvable, etc., you have nonetheless seen
something going on in the fragment that you might be able to find in
something else, or you might at least have an observation which needs to be
turned into a problem.

There are some instances of that here. As a lay matter, it's initially
noticeable about Louise's story that she seems sort of defensive about what she
did. And in noticing her defensiveness I'm noticing things like: In the first
instance, she says 'what we didn't do,' "We didn't go to bed." And I have
at least an initial interest in a report in a story, of something one didn't do.
Why does she say 'what we didn't do'? And for that interest I have a kind of
generalized analytic basis which is: Unless there's some discriminativeness
with regard to things you didn't do, then, if you're allowed in stories to say
things you didn't do, you could put in zillions of things. And I guess we kind
of have this feeling that lots of things that you surely didn't do, that you could
propose for some stories that you didn't do, would make the reporting of
them an absurdity.

Now I'm trying to construct a technology for building stories. So I'm
looking for any part of *a* story that I can pull out and say *this* part has a
technology for getting done, for unspecified people telling unspecified stories.

What I want are the most limited sorts of constraints on an item that would nonetheless preserve its observable features. Like, that in a story that says in an obvious way that it's about 'something I did once,' there is sometimes something in it that says 'what I didn't do.' If I can isolate that facet of it, then I may be able to see how that thing is built into stories as a technical part of them, without regard to which stories or which 'what I didn't do.' If so, then we have a gross orderliness, and we can then begin to picture a kind of answer to the question, how do people go about picking some 'what they didn't do' to put into a story – leaving aside the issue of why they put it in, which I initially focussed on in part by reference to the sense that the story is a bit defensive.

So I focus on 'what I didn't do' in order to see, when something is reported as not having been done, whether there's some systematic relationship to the story that's told. If there's any discriminativeness for what you formulate as what wasn't being done, then one could initially suppose that an orderliness I'm going to find in stories is that if there is a 'what I didn't do' part, it will bear closely on what was reported in the story, such that if I took a set of stories each one of which had a 'what I didn't do,' I couldn't exchange them sensibly. And that is to say, there would perhaps be a way of specifying what the story is about, to tell you what sorts of things would go in a 'what I didn't do' part. So, e.g., when you think about it, you kind of immediately figure, well, in a story about sex, that they didn't go to bed with each other is a wasn't-done thing specifically reportable for that story. In a story about something else, something that stood in a similar relationship to 'we didn't go to bed with each other' for a story about sex would be used as a 'what I didn't do.'

You could see, then, that this was a technically picked thing, for which, e.g., you didn't have to specify very much. That is, you wouldn't have to know who these people are in very much of a way.

[*Here the tape runs out.*]

Lecture 7

'What's going on' in a lay sense; Tracking co-participants; Context information; Pre-positioned laughter; Interpreting utterances not directed to one

One of the ways one can attempt to deal with conversational materials is to engage in figuring out what's going on in a kind of lay sense. Obviously 'what's going on' can be dealt with in various sorts of detail, with various sorts of information that you might happen to have about the people involved, or about what they're doing in their talk – in this case, in the following story. I think it pays to try to see what the events might have been in the reported story, and thereby to get some idea about what the various people were doing with/to each other. Indeed, it might have been a good idea to spend some time with the materials I've given out, before I started talking about them; thinking about such matters so as to not have what I say about them be either 'obviously correct' or 'Well, it might as well be that as anything else.'

Let me give a little background on the data. Agnes and Portia are sisters, middle-aged ladies. Portia is more or less long-time separated from her husband, and she went away for a couple of days to visit Kate, a friend of hers. Kate is kind of recently remarried to Carl, a very rich man. Portia has just come back, and she and Agnes are talking on the phone about, among other things, the trip. Now, the facts I give to context the fragment, I obviously picked as relevant to what's going on, and I suppose were something else going on, I might have offered some others. So, which facts, that I have from other conversations or from other parts of this conversation, turn out to be relevant, turn in part on getting some idea about what's going on.

Agnes:	`  ` Where'djuh have <u>d</u>inner:: with them.
Portia:	'hh Oh, we went down tuh, Ra<u>v</u>ina.
Agnes:	<u>Oh</u>:::// ::.
Portia:	Et the El Grande, en this Frank thet <u>owns</u>a place, course <u>Carl's</u> built <u>all</u> these placiz y'//know 'n God 'e knows <u>e</u>verybo//dy.

Agnes :   Mm::hm,

Agnes :   Mm hm,

Portia :   <u>He</u>– Oh:: God <u>whatta</u> guy, <u>that</u> guy is absolutely
                 go(hh)rgeous 'hh en so last night, <u>they</u> were, feelin' pretty
                 good//je know,

Agnes :   Mm hm,

Portia :   They had quite a few drinks et home en then when we went
                 down there tuh <u>eat</u> they ad // quite a few drinks 'n this
                 fella, Frank thet ownsa place, <u>he</u> goes tuh, downa Rancho
                 Cordova, so we adda lot in co//mmon yih know,

Agnes :   Mm–hm,

Agnes :   Mm::hm,

Portia :   'hhhh So <u>he</u> w'z kinda feedin'm drinks en so finally (hh)he–
                 'hh his uh, wife thet died's name's Ellen (hh)yih(h)know'hh
                 (h)en hheh 'hh so 'e sez "Well now Ellen? uh you jus' (hh)be
                 quiet" en s(h)he s(h)iz Kate (h)yihknow en she's so funny
                 'hhh // she siz "O<u>kay</u> Ted," hhh//hah ha:h!

Agnes :   (   ),

Agnes :   She– Oh did she,

Portia :   'hhh en Carl is a <u>genn'lmun</u> yihknow =

Agnes :   = [(   )

Portia :   [oh <u>he</u> doesn't like anything like that =

Agnes :   = [n::No.

Portia :   [course Kate, <u>she</u>– she watches 'er Ps 'n' Qs // you know,

Agnes :   Mm hm,
                                    (0.9)

Agnes :   He's crazy about 'er,
                                    (0.6)

Agnes :   'hh//hh

Portia :   Oh:: <u>God</u>, en I <u>told</u> im, eh so when she wen't' the restroom
                 I sez "Boy there goes a great gal" 'n 'e s'z "Boy I sure l:love
                 'er 'n I hope I c'n make 'er <u>happy</u>" so, when, 'hh we came
                 home why he wen'tuh bed 'nen we went <u>swim</u>ming again
                 'fore w'w(hh)en'tuh//bed–'hh

Agnes :   Oh:: God, isn'at fu::// n?

Portia :   Ahhheh! Yeh. So, 'hh I <u>told</u> Kate 'e said 'at 'e sez y– "Oh yer
                 a liar" I s'z "Well <u>no::</u> at's he said the::: they– he <u>said</u> that
                 to me" he s'z "Well 'e never tells'me" en I sez "'e said that–
                 tuh//me"

Agnes :   Mm hm,

Put kind of straightforwardly, what I figure is going on is that as Portia sees
it, an event took place on this evening which she, at that time, saw as being
possibly dangerous for Kate's relationship to Carl. And at that time she took
steps, both to check out whether indeed a dangerous thing had happened and
whether she might do something to help Kate's position in the situation. That

is, she thought then and there that Kate might have done something that embarrassed, maybe angered, annoyed, Carl. She then proceeded to tell Carl how good a person Kate was, in some aid of Kate.

Now that's an altogether informal, unproved, perhaps unprovable, perhaps irrelevant to prove it, characterization of what took place. And it's just the sort of observing that, when it appears in a student's paper, we thoroughly discourage. However, it is one legitimate and fruitful way to approach materials, for the initial observations themselves, and in that that sort of sophisticated lay observation of a scene is one way that you come to find items that can be extracted and developed quite independently of the observations one initially made, where the initial observations need not, then, be presented. One needs to see if those sorts of observations, that sort of a discussion, can lead to something that could perhaps transcend it and turn into some sort of serious statement, other than the statement I offered, which perhaps Portia herself could offer.

So, for example, a kind of thing that one could notice in stories is that at least some of the time a teller will keep track of the co-participants to the conversation at various points in it. It is done several times in this story, i.e., when Portia reports "and I *told* him, eh so when she went to the restroom I says..." she provides for the absence of Kate. Then, when she reports that she told Kate about what Carl told her, she provides for the absence of Carl: "when we came home, why he went to bed and then we went *swi*mming again...so I *told* Kate..." What she told Carl, then, she told him in the absence of Kate, and vice versa. Moreover, she tells Agnes that she told each one in the absence of the other. And in that regard, we can note a kind of routine thing: When she reports to Kate in Carl's absence what Carl said, she doesn't tell Kate what *she* had said that got Carl to say what he said. She says "I told Kate he said..." and not "I told Kate that when I said X, he said Y." So, Portia having done a compliment about Kate, Carl returns a compliment about Kate, but when she reports to Kate, she can report just what Carl said and not what she said that got him to say it – or for that matter, why she said what she said that got him to say what he said.

Having noticed that tracking of who is present in reported talk in this story, we can find that it is a kind of recurrent feature in stories. Here's another instance.

    Kim: What's even funnier is, his father said, "Well, after 25 years, I don't think we're gonna give presents." And that's just ridiculous!

    Bob: It's just that, becuz presents are so important to her, and so, he uh she was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources cuz they'd also my mother went to Florida twice and my father had to go to New York. So jeez! they were pretty low! And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it. "Well you know we just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it,

→   you know." So, the day before, Christmas afternoon, we were
            over there, and, Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim
            came out to me and said that my mother had gotten my father
            just scads and scads of presents. And she said that, uh, and Kim
            said that my mother was afraid that my father hadn't gotten her
            anything. So I was supposed to go out and feel out my father to
            see if he'd gotten her anything. (laughs)

So here's a situation where it's reported. "Kim was in talking to mother. And
then Kim came out to me...So I was supposed to go out and feel out my
father." It's not just that a series of exchanges are reported, but who was
present for each exchange is reported. And it's plain that each of the
exchanges reported were two-party matters for what is being done with them.
It may then be that stories serve us as a resource to see ways in which people
take it that, e.g., who is present, or the number of persons present, matter for
what's being done with some piece of talk. And these may overlap, i.e., at
some places it might be who's present and for some things it might matter not
merely who's present, but that only two people are present or that more than
two people are present. At least the initial materials from stories that are
relevant to such considerations are that people keep track, for single utterances
or utterance exchanges, of who was present. And the question could then be
raised as to why they do that in stories, and whether that tells us about ways
– not in stories but in the events the stories report – that they attend such
matters.
      Let me focus on some other facets of the materials; that remark of Portia's,
"I told him, eh so when she went to the restroom I says 'Boy there goes a great
gal'." An initial question is, can we come up with some consideration of a
then-and-there which will be relevant to why she said that, or to what she's
doing with what she said? Not knowing any of the the context, not knowing
much about it at all but what one can glean from the fragment, she seems to
be offering a compliment. And if we know that she's offering a compliment
to the husband of the person referred to, then that's a reasonable recipient of
such a compliment. And plainly, to offer the compliment in the presence of
the one being complimented can be doing something a bit different than
offering it on their absence. That is, to have produced some such compliment
in Kate's presence, then at least one kind of difference involved would be the
way in which it could affect what Carl could say in return – not that Carl
couldn't say what he says here, but perhaps he couldn't say negative things.
And, e.g., though it was addressed to Carl, it might well require that Kate
say something also. In any event, the presence of Kate would plainly shift
the sort of thing that Portia is doing. And the compliment is plainly
designed for the fact that Kate is leaving for the moment, i.e., it picks up
on that 'going.' Presumably she's walking off when "Boy there goes a great
gal" is done.
      Now, forgetting about what's happened so far, and at this point not
knowing whether Frank, the guy that owns the place, is still around, the

situation is now perhaps one of Portia and Carl and Frank, or of Portia and Carl sitting there by themselves. And if it is Portia and Carl there is now an issue of what are they going to say to each other, or what are they going to do with each other in the time that they are by themselves. For one, Portia could have some interest in, say, making her position plain that all she's going to do is get into such a conversation as involves Kate and Carl and not Portia and Carl. And also of course, if she figures that Carl might have been embarrassed by or annoyed with Kate, then she now has an occasion to check that out. Indeed, if she doesn't say something about it right off, then he might. That is, he might, finding this an occasion when Kate's not there closely after the scene that's taken place, find it necessary to apologize to Portia for the way Kate behaved. It's possible, then, that Portia is not only intending to pick the topic that they'll talk about while Kate is gone, but to take a position on that topic, and perhaps, then, to indicate that she wasn't bothered by what happened and that she hopes he wasn't bothered, and in any event he shouldn't be bothered by reference to *her* being bothered. That is to say, what took place, took place in her presence, and in that she is something of an outsider to that couple, then a routine kind of thing is that a party of the couple can feel that the person present was put in an embarrassing situation and feel the need to apologize, which he could have done right then and there. So there may well be bases for Portia waiting for Kate to leave and then offering her compliment so as to, e.g., check out things with Carl and to state what she made of it to Carl – and also to bring that up as soon as Kate leaves, if what she's doing is connected to what's transpired.

Now whereas if we only had a transcript of what took place we might only figure that that might be so, the way the story is told makes it rather more plausible. That is to say, these are the events presented in the story. And that's important in this sort of way: The usual sorts of connectednesses we can set up in dealing with a transcript of something like the events that this story talks of, are most easily done when the talk that's being examined is very closely adjacent talk, i.e., when one utterance follows another directly or connectedly. It's very difficult to establish connectednesses between utterances that are fairly distant from each other. And that kind of problem is particularly touchy. As a technical problem, it will weaken analysis by virtue of the fact that there are some utterances which are intendedly connected, which cannot be done directly upon what they're connected to without losing their effect. If the exchange between Kate and Frank took place: "Well now Ellen? uh you just be quiet," "*Okay* Ted," and then directly thereupon Portia were to offer to Carl some such compliment as she offers here, then plainly she would be doing a connected remark which would have to be seen as attempting to do something to a scene that's emerged. The fact of the connectedness would be transparent, and would then locate the sorts of things that Portia could be doing. Her offering a compliment about Kate right then and there would indicate that she figures Kate has either done something bad or will be seen to have done something bad. That is, although she does it

because of what she saw Kate do, or what she thought Carl might think of what Kate did, she can't have it be seen by Carl as being done by reference to what happened, or being done just by reference to what happened, if it's to be at all effective. And if she can wait to do the compliment, then that occasioning of the compliment can be lost. But that of course will pose problems for us when we pick this utterance up two or five minutes later into the talk.

It's precisely a kind of burying job that she's trying to do. And stories can give us access to the fact that such things are done. Not that we don't know it in some way, but perhaps in stories we can isolate types of things that get done at a distance and see whether they can be connected as, say, instances of A in the presence of B and C, doing something that embarrasses B, and at some specifiable point thereafter but not directly thereafter, C doing something which is directed to raising or lowering the status of the embarrassing person. Obviously it doesn't have to be a compliment, it could perfectly well be a dig. And, as well, the effectiveness of a dig would be different depending upon its placement. There is, then, a kind of large gain that the organization a story has gives us for problems that are otherwise difficult to get at. Here, a connectedness between utterances that may be minutes, perhaps much longer, apart, but which are specifically intended to be connected in some way, while also having their connectedness not directly available in other ways.

We're lucky for other things that the story has, that we don't have in a transcript of the story's events. These turn on the ways in which stories may be designed for their listener, now not simply in the sense of what their listener knows and doesn't know in general, but what their listener might or might not have in mind at the moment, over the course of the story. One of the things that Portia is doing throughout the story is, in various ways, dealing with relevancies that she knows of that turn out to be important for the last thing or the next thing said. It's not just that sometimes a fact might be asserted which the other party doesn't know, but that whether the other party knows it or not, the issue is would they *use* it now. So what we have is a sense of context being employed by the teller, which involves fitting to the story, in carefully located places, information that will permit the appreciation of what was transpiring, information which involves events that are not in the story sequence at that point. An obvious sort of thing is, e.g., the pre-assertion of who Ellen is, before any Ellen gets mentioned. It's a thing that, having been said by Portia she can apparently figure that Agnes will hold it for the moment, assume it to be relevant, but not worry right then and there "Well why mention Ellen?" Sometimes such bits are stuck in in advance, and sometimes, like the remarks about Carl's being a gentleman, they're stuck in afterwards.

I think there are some reasons why these kinds of context information designed for the listener are used, and that is, to keep them attentive to how to read what they're being told. And there is reason for those things to be put directly before or after. In considering the matter, I think I've come up with a partial answer to a question that was asked last time: Why do people do

these "hehh"'s.[1] I think an answer is something like this. Let me give another instance from the same conversation. Agnes is asking about the house.

> *Agnes*:   I bet it's a dream, with the swimming pool enclosed huh?
> *Portia*:   Oh God, we hehh! we swam in the nude Sunday night until about two o'clock.

Now what I take it that "hehh!" is doing, and what I take it a bunch of "hehh"'s are doing is something like this: Something is about to be reported which the teller takes it that the hearer should know what the teller's attitude towards it is. The kind of event being reported could be specifically equivocal as to whether it is something awful, embarrassing, serious, non-serious, etc. And there are ways for the teller to let the recipient know which the teller thinks it is, so as to guide the recipient in figuring out what's happening, and also in figuring out things about the teller's participation. So, for example, in the report about swimming in the nude, by using "hehh!" before reporting it she's saying "I took it lightly." Where it could be read as a kind of obscene event, it is rather to be treated as something light-hearted. It was funny. Where it perhaps could be important for the teller to have the recipient know or believe that the teller thought it was that sort of thing.

And it's important to put the "hehh!" beforehand so as to not have to await the recipient's response to it. That is, the recipient could, if you didn't put the "hehh" in there, laugh themselves and then you might laugh, and then the recipient might figure that although you laughed when they proposed it was funny, you may not have thought it was funny. That is to say, you awaited my response to do your own appreciation of it, and had I given another response to it you might have gone along with that, too. Or, if you don't give the information, then the recipient might well figure that it was something else that happened, and that you're not such a good person as they thought, or whatever.

We can notice that in this story Portia is rather elaborate in doing these sorts of things. She knows damn well that it's equivocally a chuckleable sequence, she thinks it's a kind of dangerous sequence, with her remark about Carl's being a gentleman who doesn't like anything like that. But she starts chuckling right off, and before offering Kate's remark she specifically says "and she's so funny," which is to say 'hear this as funny as compared to hear it as something a vulgar person does.' She can do that here, as part of her argument about what took place, and presumably she could have done it on the occasion of its happening, i.e., laughing in the hope of bringing Carl to see that it was funny, or at least to see that she thought it was funny and not something that engendered simply her silence. And in the telling of the story, she doesn't put Agnes into quite the same situation as she was in, where the funniness of it was something that she could try to achieve after it, but which was specifically an issue – for Portia, anyway, i.e., she has no idea about what Carl indeed felt.

[1]Not in the unedited transcript of lecture 6.

So the "hehh"'s in stories may have some bunch of jobs that they specifically do, and one of them can be of the same sort as asserting things like "she's so funny" and "Carl's a gentleman," i.e., directing the recipient's hearing of some next or prior story item. And then presumably tellers could offer other classifications of something they report than that it was funny, e.g., by sighing or other sorts of sounds, or by asserting it.

Let me now address the particular question of why Portia sees what happened as something that would embarrass Carl. An exchange takes place between Frank and Kate. Neither Carl nor Portia are recipients of either of its utterances. The remark is directed to Kate and the return is directed to Frank. The question, then, in some generality is: In various conversations there are more than the people who are direct recipients of an utterance present, and they are engaged in making out what's happened. Do they use some procedure?

What we see here is that for Portia it's not simply a situation in which Kate and Frank are talking and she and Carl are listening and each of them is freely entitled to just see what happened and make of it whatever they want as an audience to it, i.e., they could see themselves as an undifferentiated audience, each one hearing the thing as an independent party listening to what has happened. Instead, in this case Portia seems to take it that in order to see what's happened, her business – whether obligatory or optional – is to see what Carl made of the event. And she figures what Carl made of the event is not only relevant, but is something that, e.g., he would do in a different way than she would That is to say, at least it wasn't in the first instance Carl's problem to figure out what *she* might make of it. But her view is that Carl would make something of the event, and that she would make something of the event by reference to what Carl made of it. And while it may be a problem to figure out what Carl made of it, that she *should* figure out what Carl made of it is something she accepts.

Of couse that's a fairly simple possibility, that of the two listeners who are legitimate listeners in that they're parties to the conversation, one of them makes it their business to figure out what's happened by reference to an attempt to figure out what the other made of it. And the more general question is, again, are there procedures whereby, for any size conversation, the various parties in it go about deciding – not only what's happened, but what's happened that's relevant for them. That is to say, Portia isn't just abstractly examining the thing as "Well, what did Carl make of it?" she's using what she thinks Carl made of it in order to herself do something in the conversation.

Now let me try to begin to propose that there is a format for parties interpreting utterances not directed to them. Thereafter I'll go on to what some consequences of that format are. In this case it's kind of simple. You have Frank, the owner of the place, and Kate and Carl, husband and wife, and Portia, a friend, present. Frank is 'feeding drinks to them.' Kate is presumably getting very loose. Frank then rebukes her, maybe jokingly maybe not. The rebuke doesn't quite come off, but it is something that, while

it elicits a return from Kate, could perfectly well have elicited a return from Carl, i.e., his wife being rebuked, though the utterance was directed to her, he perfectly well could come back with something to Frank. It plainly is an occasion for a non-recipient to talk up, when someone has insulted his wife. A presumable attention of the parties to the interaction could then be to whether Carl is going to have a chance or be given a place to respond to what Frank said, i.e., to tell Frank to lay off his wife. So that while Portia can see that what Frank said is not anything that will occasion her saying anything then and there, she could be attentive to a way that Carl will hear it as an insult to his wife, or a rebuke or a rebuke-insult to his wife, that he might respond to it, and that in any event his way of hearing it can be presumed to be by reference to what's been done to his wife by somebody. Alternatively but relatedly, it can also be that with Frank being perhaps a friend of Carl's and Kate being a new wife of Carl's, Portia could imagine that what Carl sees is that Kate is being embarrassing to him by having to be rebuked. He might then have something to say to Kate.

In any event, right upon the first utterance Carl becomes a possible talker. And Portia isn't. And it might be her business to be attentive to possible talkers since she has to know, e.g., if she herself has something to say, is now a time to say it? That is, attending the organization of talk in which turns are assigned so as to see whether, e.g., there's a free space to talk, any party to a conversation can and should analyze an utterance in order to find out who should speak next. And a way to do that is to find out if anything has been done to somebody that would involve them in speaking next. One 'anybody' who would be looking for such things is Portia. Simply out of an interest to see whether she can or should talk, she would then see what's been done and to whom and thereby can see that a rebuke was done, was done to Kate, so that in the first instance it's at least Kate's business to talk and not Portia's.

Now I want to suggest that if we can suppose that one kind of question that any parties to a conversation can have for any utterance in that conversation is "What's been done with that utterance to me?" then there need be some systematic ways that anybody can solve that question. And that doesn't involve simply a matter of looking at a rebuke and saying "There's a rebuke in the room," but using to whom a rebuke was done as a first step to then finding out "What's been done to me?" That is to say, the first step to finding out what's been done to you is to find out what's been done to whomever something's been done to – i.e., that person who is a recipient in the first place – and then applying, say, relationships that one has to the recipient, to find what's been done to you.

That sort of sequence will account for one class of things that happens in conversation: Some party is the recipient of an utterance that does something to them, and somebody else talks up, where among the things that that somebody does is to deal with "What's been done to me" via what's been done to the person who's been talked to. Transparent instances involve series just like this one where somebody insults a wife and a husband talks up to the

insulter, or where a little brother is threatened by somebody and a big brother talks up to indicate "If you want to fight with him you've got to fight with me." So that a secondary party hears an insult to somebody they stand in some relationship to and uses their relationship to find themselves speaking up and, say, defending the spoken-to party. In an instance that occurs in one of the group therapy sessions the therapist rebukes one of the fellows, who has gotten into a brief conversation with another about some outside business. So we get "Ken, why don't you make these arrangements out of here" at which point one of the others, not in the outside conversation, says "Yes teacher." I take it that he is, for one, seeing that the sort of thing that was done, was done in such a way as to pull rank not merely on the fellow on whom rank was pulled, but on any of such people of which he, himself, is one. So that this kind of sequence in which any party tries to find who's been addressed and what's been done to the addressed party, and uses that to then see 'what's been done to me,' tells us something about when some people come to say something though they haven't been addressed – specifically, to say something which deals with what's happened. And if there is some kind of formality to the way in which relationships are used to find 'what's been done to me' for secondary non-recipient parties, then, e.g., it's no particular surprise that Portia could do that, without regard to whether she should do that.

Now let's shift the consideration around somewhat. Just as it's the business of secondary parties to use what's happened to recipients to find what's happened to themselves in some chain that can get variously elaborated, so it turns out to be the business of *speakers* in producing an utterance, to attend not merely its consequences in terms of how it affects the person they're addressing it to, but also to attend how it affects others. In that there are these non-recipient parties, and in that they have the business of analyzing an utterance to see what's been done to them, it is, then, the business of a speaker in producing it to know not merely what it's doing to the one it's addressed to, but what it will do to others who will analyze it by reference to what's been done to them through the party to whom it's been done. And that is plainly done in conversation, i.e., it's plain that parties design their utterances not merely by reference to who is receiving something they're doing, but what it's doing to third parties.

A favorite sort of thing I have for this is a phenomenon I call 'safe compliments.' By that I mean that if you're engaged in building a compliment to some party present, in the presence of others, then a problem you face is how to build a compliment to that one without thereby doing something like a denegration to the others. If, e.g., you say to one person out of four or five who are present, "You're the smartest person I know," then you're saying to the others that they're not as smart. There are ways of designing 'safe compliments' which involve, e.g., finding a characteristic that no one else present has, so that in seeing what's been done to them they don't find that they've been put down by the compliment to another. So, compliments and other sorts of things can be designed to handle just that sort

of issue. To take another simple, obvious sort of thing, if three parties are present and A flirts with B, then A can be flirting with B in order to tease C. Though not interested in flirting with B, A has a possibility of doing 'flirting' in order to be 'teasing,' by virtue of the way in which C is going to be seeing what's been done to B in order to see what's been done to himself. And plainly parties will attend how they do their flirting by reference to who else is present in the conversation. And, for that matter, possible conversationalists will attend features of the conversation to decide whether they should become a party to it, by seeing what would happen if they did. That is to say, if, e.g., at a party, people are more or less paired off, then you can figure that any pair you happen to latch onto is going to spend some amount of time doing things that you will find unpleasant for you, or that you're going to be engaged in pushing someone else out.

Now if it can be supposed that a speaker will have attended what he's doing to third parties who will find out what's been done to them by reference to what's been done to a second, then you could begin to have rather complicated tasks, mutually involved, as the size of a conversation goes up. That is to say, the sheer fact of number could begin to impose rather elaborated tasks on any given speaker, who could be held responsible not merely for what he's doing to B, but what he's doing to C through B, or to D through C through B, or to E through B, etc. And that procedure we've been considering, which may work in three-party conversations, and might work in four-party conversations, could work for any-sized conversations. It may be a procedure in which *any* party feels entitled to figure out what's been done to a recipient and then use that to find out what's been done 'to me,' and then hold it against the speaker as someone who should have known what he was doing 'to me.' And it may further be required that one consider not merely what they're doing to the one they're talking to, or to some particular other, but to any of the others that happen to be present.

To that sort of fact some other sorts of facts need to be added, e.g., that the relationships that are used to find these sorts of things out can *change* in the course of a conversation. (Not that, e.g., Carl and Kate will get divorced in the course of the conversation, but that some utterance will make it not relevant that Carl and Kate are husband and wife, but relevant that they're rich or that Carl's rich, or that they're guests, or that Portia is a guest, or that Portia is unattached, etc.) When that is added we begin to have rather technically awesome problems involved in a situation of, say, an ordinary five-party conversation. Further, add this sort of fact: When a conversation reaches a size of four it can split into twos, i.e., as the number of parties increases, the number of possibilities for split-off conversations increases. There is then a chance for the fifth, sixth, and seventh person in a conversation to move out of it – where they also have to be held into it by having things happening to them, and unless you're talking to things that they could be kept interested in, i.e., things that they can figure that something's been done to them, they're liable to move out of it. One begins to see, then, that for the mechanisms that work in two- or three-party conversations, it may well

become altogether inconceivable that they could be in operation as soon as the conversation gets slightly larger. It may be unreasonable, may be known to be impossible except under special circumstances, for parties to do what they do and hold others to do what they ought to do in two- and three-party conversations, in much larger conversations.

What you might then get is a kind of transformation of the structure of the conversation. It may no longer be a matter of each person standing in their complex relations to anybody else, i.e., it may be that parties no longer can or do attend what happens as happening 'to me,' and speakers do not have to worry about what they've done to some such parties. Rather, some much simpler splitting now takes place, in which you have current speaker(s) being engaged in some sort of performance for others who simply treat themselves as an audience, and who appropriately so treat themselves, even though they may come up for talk. Then you could get a kind of talk taking place between the two parties in which neither figures that the people are talking to each other, and they can do things to each other that could otherwise be delicate, since not only is it that the rest of the group is an audience, but they are audience to each other as well. That is to say, in a seven-party conversation it might perfectly well be that this kind of exchange could take place without it ever passing through Carl's mind that his wife had been insulted. Rather, the two of them, Frank and Kate, were staging something – though that, too, could bother Carl. I'm suggesting that you cannot simply expand the kinds of considerations that operate in two- and three-party conversation and suppose that they hold in five-party conversation. It may not be the way in which conversations operate, simply by virtue of such a fact as that the mechanisms requiredly operating in two- or three-party conversations, while they could conceivably be managed in larger conversations, couldn't in principle be imposed on people's minds. Now that may be a kind of theoretical argument, but there are some sorts of evidence that they do proceed differently. Then of course, among the ways that we conventionally run conversations, the numbers don't increase *relevantly* when the numbers increase, i.e., three couples could still be something like a three-party conversation if, e.g., a rule which assigns women the job of laughing and not talking were preserved.

So the idea was roughly something like: There's a legitimate and required sequence of interpretation that parties engage in. If, e.g., Carl didn't do it then he could be taken aside afterwards by Kate and complained to about how come he didn't defend her, and if he says he didn't hear what was happening, that's no excuse, it's his business to be attentive to what's happening to her. But that business plainly becomes an extraordinarily complicated thing when the size of the conversation becomes large. And that's not merely in the sense that Carl couldn't do it, but supposing that Carl could do it, do we have grounds to assume that Frank should have done that sort of consideration? That is to say, the rules of conversation are designed for anonymous parties, i.e., people can perfectly well conduct a conversation who have never met before. Then, the kinds of general tasks that can be built into it may well turn,

not merely on what somebody could do, but on what anybody could reasonably be expected to do.

This sort of line has a variety of interests to it. One is that one might suppose, having found what seem to be central mechanisms for conversation, that those mechanisms would of course hold over various numbers of parties involved. And that may simply not be so. The number may well be a specific consideration. There is, e.g., that number from which conversations can split off. Three people are locked in together – one can leave to be sure, and the conversation continue, but that one can't get into another conversation off of this one. So the problem of speakers to keep a third party in is less then that of a four-party conversations which, if it turns into a two-party conversation, permits the others to drop out; where, then, some amount of talk is designed to keep people who are not talking, in.

So, taking as an initial tack trying to find out what someone like Portia is doing, can pay off if you extract and construct the procedures whereby they come to do what they're doing and attempt to give those procedures a general characterization. Then you can arrive at the general conditions under which everybody and anybody in such positions could do that job and under which anybody could find what's being done to them. That is, you will be finding and characterizing general organizational, relational, etc., features of interaction.

Lecture 8
Asking questions; Heckling

The bulk of this class was given to back and forth discussion. Eventually one of the students complains about a lack of honesty and responsibility in the question-asking of other students. That generates the following.

You seem to have the view that question-asking as a students' skill is something that they could perfectly well do, just by trying. And I might behave that way. But some people figure that you perfectly well could make it your business to do one of two things: spend a lot of your time showing people what might be questions they could ask, or finding how the question they ask is a question to ask.

Now, I don't see the sharp break between questions and other things said, in which, say, you're educated about one thing but the other is natural. And I think that you may not make the effort to find what sorts of ways people might be trying to find out how to do whatever they're trying to do, like treating a question they have as, 'Is this an instance of a question? Let me hear what I say in order to find out whether it's something somebody would say.' And I think that that's utterly a reasonable thing. You could always figure if it's on your mind it's on other people's minds. It's like a fly that's moving around the room and now it's on your shoulder; it just happened to settle there, and nobody's going to say it unless you say it, so go ahead and say it and then we'll see whether that's something to have said. And unless we see whether it's something to have said, nobody's going to know it isn't, because they will have thought it and then not said it.

There's a real virtue to asking anything while you're around, just as there is to thinking anything at some point simply in order to know what people are thinking. And that could be as much a responsibility as the other, because I'm sure that everybody has had the experience of saying something and thereafter finding that it was a weird thing to say, but you wouldn't have that experience had you not said it and heard somebody say it. So I think that a plenty good case could be made for being responsibly irresponsible. And it would take as much inner strength if you like, to ask an absurd question which pops into your mind, which you might know is absurd but which you know a lot of people think, yet you know you might get laughed at even though everybody feels that way. And some people are able to do that.

Aside from which, for an expert answerer there's a range of ways to deal with questions, in which an answer shifts the question so that nobody knows but that the answer was the answer to the question. And indeed the person who asked it could feel that. There's a nice instance in a conversation between four or five guys who work at an insurance company. One of them, George,

in response to a crack about what's he trying to look like, has said "I try to look like what I am. A liberal." And the others are saying things like "You're going to have to work a little harder to make it," "I think you're trying to look like a hippie," "Not with the crew cut. Now if you had long hair," and he says:

> *George* : Didju hear that fella on Les Crane show las'night I only saw the very beginning. -- But 'e innerduced some uh, -- pro<u>d</u>ucers? of TV s–shows, -- en <u>one</u> of 'em was a <u>hi</u>ppie.
> *Jay* : Uh huh,
> *George* : Can' remember his name. The others weren't. But uh there were four producers. -- An:d, he quoted this <u>hi</u>ppie ez s–saying when 'e wz, when the hippie w'z asked a question by the, by the, <u>news</u> media, if it came to::, whether, he c'd keep his jo:b, as a producer,
> *(Sy)* : Yeah.
> *George* : in television, -- or, -- or keep his, <u>bea:</u>rd. In other words would 'e shave off his beard tuh keep his job.
> *(Sy)* : Yeh.
> *George* : And he said I would shave off my beard, my eyebrows, my <u>head</u>, -- and my <u>arms</u>. tuh keep my job.
> (pause)
> *Jay* : Mm <u>hm</u>, mm–hm,
> *George* : How 'bout that.

Now the hippie producer is asked an extremely conventional question, where the news media is doing their job of having integrity in a kind of peculiar way, i.e., it's a question that everybody wants to know the answer to, in the sense that after all it's because he's a TV producer that he can afford to be a hippie. And when such people claim that in that they're hippies they're free, and show the world that they're free of kinds of constraints, they're only free of the constraints because of other circumstances, and therefore to flaunt that on the rest of the world is unfair, since if they were in other circumstances they wouldn't be free to be free in that way. So it was really an elegant question, which is why not only did the news media ask it, but it was quoted by Les Crane and then quoted by George to his friends. That is to say, it was really fitted nicely to what people wanted to hear, and George uses it to say that that's why he keeps his hair cut short. Because he has a job in an insurance company and would get fired if he wore it long. Now this is without regard to whether that's the reason he doesn't wear long hair; it's also that, that he's embarrassed into a position of feeling that he ought to wear long hair in order to be a free person, he needs a reason not to wear long hair though he'd just as soon not.

So it's a very neat question, though it's in a way also a very nasty question. And its focus is on the beard. The answer, however, works over the question, and answers a rather different one. What it answers is something like: 'If a job

required it, would I not merely give up my hippie-like beard, but would we not do utterly unreasonable things, like shave our eyebrows and all the hair off our head, as you, too, could be asked to do. If they required that of me, might not they require that of you.' So he focusses off of the particular hippie-attribute aspect of it to the more general facet of it – that things like jobs set constraints on how you can appear. And it may well be that people hearing that answer now see the question for the way in which it's partial or unreasonable. Where, in the first instance when you're asked a question like that, you can't say it's an unfair question. You can try to say it's an unfair question, but that does other sorts of things. The question is, how can you, by an answer, make it an unfair question, or teach people that the question is one which, while it doesn't seem to implicate them, does so. The answer can do that, and thereby affect the question. And that's a used procedure; one that can change the question that had been in the asker's mind, and change the question that had been in the audience's mind.

I'm going to talk now about a thing I haven't talked about this quarter, and that I'm not going to say very much about here, but I've been giving a very partial account of storytelling in that I've been mostly focussing on tellers and not other parties' activities during stories. And that involves as a consequence that I haven't focussed on the really obvious fact that often in stories the listeners talk up, apart from things like "Mm Hm" and responding to a preface and appropriately responding upon the story's conclusion. Where it will radically misformulate what happens in stories to not appreciate the fact that listeners may and do talk up in stories, with regard to the way that, that they may talk up in stories affects the way stories are told.

One thing to focus on then, is the phenomenon of 'heckling' stories, which is kind of common. We can take as a characteristic kind of thing, the following, from a group therapy session. They're talking about self-concepts and plans.

> *Ken*:   I mean I'm thinking about what someday I'm going to be, and
>   stuff like // that
> *Roger*:   heh Wh(hh)en I grow up! heh hhh hheh hhh hh

That "heh When I grow up heh" stuck into some ongoing talk is the kind of thing I'm talking about. It's enormously common that people do such sorts of things, not at the end, but in the course of a story. And without giving even the beginning of an extended consideration of what heckling can do, I just want to say some things about it.

Recall that the chance to tell a story is a chance to do a rather more elaborate package of things than one otherwise gets a chance to do. Now that fact can get employed in a specific way, to get a chance to do what you couldn't otherwise do. An instance of that occurs immediately following the hippie-producer story.

George :   How 'bout that.
                  (pause)
Sy :   Very honest <u>ma:n</u>,
Jay :   Well, uh, I c'd see <u>that</u> if he really, wanted that job, 'n' if he
              felt he c'd do much more goo:d er -- y-y 'know fer 'imse:lf,
              er d'world, uh, <u>doing</u> that. I w'z <u>having</u> this kinda dis<u>cu</u>ssion
              with, this, <u>friend</u> of mine. –whose, so:n, recently turned, in,
              his, <u>draft</u> card.
                  .
                  .
                  .

Jay :   A:nd uhm, -- oh he turned it in s:some, some weeks ago, --
              a:n', he hadda de<u>fer</u>ment. He 'adda Two S k– uh, classification
              'e w'z a studen' in Pennsylvania. -- A:nd uh, -- en she w'z in
              conflict yuh know, -- uh, aboud it, -- y'know at, <u>one</u> point
              y'know she, she realized thet he 'ad certain principles thet,
              y'know he felt he had to uphold, -- en the other s– h–uh, on
              the <u>o</u>ther s– hand, y'know, she w'z, con<u>cern</u>ed. about y'know
              the trouble she would– she would get <u>in</u>to. –he would get
              <u>in</u>to.
                  (pause)
Jay :   So::, uh:::m, -- in <u>any</u> case it turned out that thē uh Selective
              Service, re<u>turn</u>ed, <u>uh</u>, the draft card. Now what <u>he</u> expected
              was thet they were g'nna re<u>turn</u> the <u>draf</u> 'card, but take away
              his deferment. Give 'im One A staytus.
George :   Yah but they, <u>they</u> only threaten that, they never do // it.
Jay :   They–
Jay :   Well they <u>didn</u>'t, in <u>this</u> p'ticular case <u>any</u>way.
                  (pause)
→*Jay* :   And uh:::, -- any case <u>that</u> got us intuh conversation about --
              uh::: many of the <u>young</u> people. Against the war, -- uh:::, --
              uh, -- going tuh <u>jail.</u> On–on that account or, for the–
              n–n–demonstrations or for, turning the draft card or burning
              the draft card'n so on 'n <u>so</u> forth. Uh, on– on that principled
→   <u>ba</u>sis. A:n' I was <u>say</u>ing, y'know, it would be a <u>pi</u>ty, y'know
              fer <u>this</u> guy. -- –to, spend, uh, a half a year, a year, what have
              you in jail. –for something like that. When 'e c'd be <u>so</u>– much
              more pro<u>duc</u>tive. –<u>for</u> his principles.

   For a bit of context, the guy who tells the story is among those guys in the
business of getting into conversations about the war. And the others don't
particularly want to talk about it. Now what he does is, the hippie story
having come up, involving perhaps something about people and their
principles, he then tells a story in which he can offer what he had as his
opinions – not as his opinions now, but as opinions that he can put into the
story as opinions he told somebody. So that the story gives him an occasion

to tell his opinions in a way that preserves them from immediate criticism. They can be told by reference to 'what she said, what I said,' etc., without having to deliver them in such a way that at each sentence-end in an opinion he could be quarreled with. So what he can do is have one occasioned conversation about the war, and thereafter deliver his views about the war as a story of something that happened, which then allows him to tell his views without interruption.

Now that's the kind of thing you can get to do with the story form. Plainly that's a considerable amount of power for storytellers, since at the end of the story no one is in a position to counter the opinions offered in it, in the way that those opinions were delivered. Somebody could try to argue, if they happen to get first chance to talk, but their argument is subject to different treatment, i.e., at every utterance-end *they* could be argued with. They don't get two minutes when he had two minutes. They get an utterance, then they can be argued with, etc. And of course by delivering the other person's opinions, he can already have shown story recipients that some of the opinions they might offer are not too good, etc. Not only do stories allow for this kind of packaging of *opinions*, but they allow for packaging of *events* in terms of, e.g., a view of what happened which, if offered otherwise, could be put into various sorts of doubt. The sheer organization of descriptions in stories is another kind of packaging that the storytelling possibility provides. So there's an enormous amount of power in the packaging that a story has. The question is, then, is it the case that recipients are in no position to do anything about the kind of packaging power that the story form has? In which case, of course, storytellers would expectably employ such kinds of techniques for all sorts of purposes, unrestrictedly. So it's important to see what kind of constraints there are on storytellers putting whatever they might please into a story. And it's in that interest that the 'heckling' phenomenon should be looked at. Because, for one, perhaps the possibility that heckling can be done can serve as a constraint on the story that will be told.

A key sort of thing is that plainly a listener is in a different position with respect to the other parties if he is constrained to offer his view of what's been said after the story is over, than if he can, not simply offer his view of what's been said while the story is going on, but talk in such a way as to show the other listeners how to listen to the story. If a listener can, by inserting cracks into a story, not simply have made a joke, but have pointed up how to listen to what's being said in a way other than the teller intends, then a kind of power is given to listeners that a storyteller would have to take account of. Now one kind of thing that heckling specifically deals with is pointing up ways that things have been said, which focus on them differently than teller intends. The gross break is that whereas the teller has said something intending it to be utterly serious, a listener can by his remark show other listeners that the teller said something funny. Not that the listener who interrupted has said something funny, but that the listener has pointed out that something the teller said was funny. In the case at hand, "I mean I'm thinking about someday what I'm going to be and stuff like that" is intended

as a perfectly serious remark, where "When I grow up" points out a conventional and funny-in-that-way aspect of what was said. And that that's done in the course of the story provides that with it the heckler can affect the other listeners. Now, things like a listener laughing might not sufficiently do that, since people might not know what he's laughing at. But by finding a thing to say that points up that something was funny, he can bring other listeners to find what else is funny, and thereby begin to weaken the kinds of power the teller has. And thereby, in that that's then a known capacity that listeners have, tellers have got to be aware and perhaps design their stories so as to not invite heckling, or to be in some way invulnerable to heckling as a possibility. And they thereby may do, e.g., less controversial or less conventional stories.

So a kind of central thing about the heckling possibility is what it can focus on. You could imagine that if it were perfectly well agreed upon by everybody, overtly or not, that what the teller was talking about was serious, the teller would be in an invulnerable position. That is to say, if he were talking seriously on a serious subject, then he couldn't be heckled. It turns out that a marked separation is attended between a serious subject and the way a thing is being told, where you can heckle the way it's being told without affecting the seriousness of the subject. You can heckle that it's being told too seriously for the subject, or that it's being told in an utterly conventional fashion, so that you're heckling the how-it's-being-told, and not implicating the what's-being-talked-of. So one use of heckling serves as a kind of check on the sort of seriousness that a story gets delivered with, such that any disproportionate seriousness put into a story can be heckled out of it, and it can be brought back to some view of the appropriate way to tell that story. So, e.g., a teller does not have the power to deliver something serious as though it were the end of the world. The heckling possibility which monitors the how-it's-told can keep storytellers in line with anybody's view of the subject they're telling the story about. And I think one can find that when tellers try to build it up more, that's a thing they get heckled down about.

Now one wants first of all to treat the fact of heckling as something that is to be seen not only for its actual occurrence but for its possible occurrence, where stories can perhaps be designed so as to avoid heckling, and being designed to avoid heckling they might be different than were they built without fear of heckling. At least one way to see that would be to imagine, say, some possibly controversial story being told to audiences of different characteristics. When, say, some political figure is telling a story to an audience that he knows is altogether with him, he may tell it in an utterly more extravagant way than when he tells it to an audience he figures may be hostile. The sheer design of it may be affected by such a possibility as that he could be heckled down to a reasonable position. So you don't want to treat heckling sheerly for its occurrence.

I'm suggesting that people heckle in the course of a story as compared to making remarks at the end of it so as to affect other listeners' hearing of the

story, and in doing that, affect the teller; to indicate to the teller that he doesn't have the kind of control of the way the audience hears things that he can suppose he has if he has no hecklers. In that way, the heckling job can be an utterly serious kind of job, in which the storyteller's view of his story, e.g., that it's serious, that it's this serious, is something that he wins or doesn't win. It isn't that a story told as serious is serious, but that if it comes off as serious it's a matter of the others acknowledging that, or not arguing it.

Part V
Winter 1971

February 19

Poetics; Tracking co-participants; Touched-off topics; Stepwise topical movement

Portia :   But we wen' in, uh the Billy Michaels place on the way back,
            en uh, had– uh, they had en after dinner drink God there
            wasn't a soul in <u>we</u> were the only ones et the <u>bar</u> en there w'z
            about two parties in the // dining room–
Agnes :   Yeah
Portia :   En I didn' wanna say– eh:: Kate said she always wanduh <u>see</u> it
            so, ˙I never said anything but– uh Carl said t'day he sez
            "Wasn' that the dirtiest place?"
Agnes :   [[Yeh.
Portia :   En I said "Yihknow? I felt the same thing? But I didn' wanna
            <u>say</u> anything to yuh, but I jis' f//elt–
Agnes :   Yah.
Portia :   –dirty when I walked on the <u>car</u>pet.

Portia has just come back from a vacation and is talking to her sister. She
has been visiting a friend of hers, Kate, and Kate's new husband, Carl. Let me
just point out a few things.

We can notice the "they" in "But we went in uh the Billy Michaels place
on the way back, and uh, had– uh THEY had an after-dinner drink" as a
curious sort of thing, where a specific point is being made. If she were to say
"We went in on the way back and had an after-dinner drink" she would not
be necessarily making any statement about herself drinking. To say "We went
in . . . and they had a drink" is to specifically mark that she didn't.

Another thing. Looking at the occurrence of ". . . God . . . soul . . . only
ones . . ." in ". . . God there wasn't a soul in *we* were the only ones at the
bar . . ." one might say – after having it pointed out – Well, we're just
playing with something that really has no orderliness to it, it just happened
that "God" and "soul" are closely juxtaposed here. There's no import to it.
There's no real relationship in terms of how the talk was produced, i.e.,
there's nothing that would have involved "soul" being produced by reference
to the fact that "God" was said. Not to mention the utterly absurd
relationship between "soul" and "only", in the s-o-l-e sense of the word. But
all I'd like to get at is this: When you have such an investigative aim as mine,
which is to try to discover sorts of detailed relationships that might turn out

to exist, then, when you notice these sorts of juxtapositions of things that are otherwise known to have *semantic relationships*, the question is then to be asked, Well, is there anything to it? Does "soul" get used somehow by reference to the fact that "God" was used? And does "only" get used by reference to the fact that there is this ambiguity between s-o-u-l and s-o-l-e? Then you can just pull it out, and say, Well, who knows? Noticing it, you get the possibility of investigating it. Laughing it off in the first instance, or not even allowing yourself to notice it, of course it becomes impossible to find out whether there is anything to it.

In particular, we're trying to find out things we don't know about how delicately people use their language. Then, any possible extended delicacy is something to look into. And I certainly can say at this point that I find an awful lot of such things. And usually, once I find an awful lot of something I wonder if there isn't something to it, and begin to develop an account of how it would happen. Finding one, you could just say, Well, I'm just being artful in finding it, there's no reason for it to be. Now there is a tremendous temptation on the part of people doing social science in general, to not notice a possible fact unless they already have an explanation for it. And in a way, of course, that's awfully silly, and it's plainly of rather more interest to get in a position to be able to notice possible facts for which the question is, then, what in the world could explain that? Where you don't know why it's there, but you can see if there were a recurrence of that sort of a thing, then you would be able to describe it as a fact of some sort.

So we can point this one out just to see whether, having noticed one, others can be noticed. And what can happen is, you might, for example, find that there is some kind of not universal but common recurrence of a relationship between, not the use of "God" and "soul," but between the use of something that "God" is and some other word that occurs. What I mean is, "God" is used as a kind of an expletive. And there are a lot of other expletives, of which some are related semantically, like "God!" "Jesus!" "Heavens!" and others of which are not, e.g., "Shit!" "Wow!" "Gee!" and lots of others. And you might then say, Let me look at the environment of expletives and see if there aren't, within that enviroment, words that stand in some interesting relationship to a particular expletive's use. It might turn out that the relationship isn't always semantic; you might begin to find out that there were other ways in which expletives were related to later words – and not merely somewhere later, but within a rather close environment. They might be related in such a way as:

Bob: Oh, GOD! Christmas has GOTten so damn painful!

Where, for "God" and "gotten" there might be some kind of *sound-sequence relationship*, and you might begin to be able to see that perhaps there's something to *that*. You might begin to notice that there are often sound relationships between expletives and words around them. If you collect your "Jesus"s and your "God"s and your "damn"s and your "gee"s, then you might be able to put together a package of relationships between them and some rather closely placed other words. So that expletives, which are after all

selected, might have some relationship to other things in the talk that can be gotten to. There might be a family of relationships; sometimes semantic, other times sound. And you could begin to see a kind of loose but not ineffable not-to-be-explained thing happening with the use of expletives, which says that they may have some position in an utterance in relation to other parts of an utterance, other than that this is the particular expletive someone happened to use.

And in that regard, picking out an expletive is not just picking *a* word, but is picking a word that has *free occurrence*. Expletives can occur in lots of places, independent of the syntax of the utterance they're in. So that in terms of which one can occur, they're not constrained by the talk around them. We can then begin to notice that sort of fact: There's a special freedom. Now, in that they have a special kind of freedom, and in that there are a bunch of them, are there any principles to their selection? Where we can observe that there are other words or word-groups that you couldn't subject to that sort of treatment.

But in the first place all we did was start out by saying "God . . . soul" – is there anything to it? Then the question was how to find if there's anything to it, where the key thing is there's no particular reason for these things being related. That makes it of interest to ask if there is some possible relationship. And you can look at a whole range of them and find that more than you might expect, it turns out that there are connections between words like "God!" – now call them 'expletives' – and words around them that have no reason to be related. Again, sometimes it's a semantic relation, other times it's a sound relation. And then you could ask if there is anything about this kind of a word which suggests that it could take such a relationship. You get, then, to this 'freedom of occurrence' where, of a list of alternative expletives one or another of which could get used and it wouldn't matter particularly for the course of the talk which of them were used, "God" or "Hell" or "Boy" or whatever else, it just happens to be that one of them was used. So the task is to find bits of orderliness where isn't any reason to expect it here. And that's also what puts one off about it. There not being any reason to expect it, you might find yourself embarrassed to have noticed it or congratulating yourself on your artfulness, but not convinced that it could be a matter of some real event that you are in a position to be noticing.

Turning now to another sort of thing, I want to notice the word "parties" in ". . . we were the only ones at the bar and there was about two parties in the dining-room." It's rather special, and there's an instance of it in the materials called Trio that have been handed out.[1] It could be seen as giving away a piece of information, or as a way in which an identity of a person overcomes the topic of the talk. Portia talks about two "parties" in the dining-room. She happens to be a waitress. The usage "parties' for the people in a restaurant is something that a waitress or somebody like a waitress will do but other people don't particularly do. And in Trio, in the first

[1]See Winter 1970, lecture 2, p. 181.

conversation the caller, who doesn't work at the department store, says
". . . and a colored lady wanted to go in the main entrance there where the
silver is and all the gifts and things." In the second conversation, the two
women talking both work at the department store, and talk about it as
". . . where the giftware is." "Giftware" being a term that people who work
in the place will use to refer to it, and not a word that the purchasers would
use. So, terms like "parties" and "giftware" are technical terms, and it could
turn out that, having an habitual way of referring to something, people might
use it in other environments.

   Another point of interest is the following. Portia says "Kate said she always
wanted to see it so I never said anything," Kate being Carl's wife. Then she
goes through an exchange she had with Carl the next day:

> . . . but Carl said today he says "Wasn't that the dirtiest place? And I
> said "You know? I felt the same thing? But I didn't want to *say*
> anything to you, but I just felt dirty when I walked on the *car*pet.

Now, you have a sequence reported: Carl comments on the dirtiness and she
agrees. Okay, there are many such sequences: A does something – a question,
a greeting, whatever – and B does something. But here you also have some
other sorts of things. One is that she reports "Kate said she always wanted to
see it so I never said anything," and the other is she quotes herself as saying
to Carl, "I didn't want to say anything to you." What I want to deal with is
why when this sequence occurs, it occurs in the way it does as compared to,
e.g., Portia coming out on that evening and saying "God this place is dirty"
and Carl then saying "Yeah, isn't it?" In either case we have some remark and
an agreement, and yet there are bases for the sequence occuring in just this
way and not the reverse way.

   One of the issues I have in mind for this conversation is related to a sort of
thing going on in a conversation we will be looking at next time:

> *Bob*:   . . . so, the day before, Christmas afternoon, we were over there,
>   and, Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim came out to me
>   and said that my mother had gotten my father just scads and scads
>   of presents. And she said that, uh, and Kim said that my mother
>   was afraid that my father hadn't gotten her anything. So I was
>   supposed to go out and feel out my father and see if he'd gotten her
>   anything.

Where you have a report of a sequence of conversations, each one accompa-
nied by some indication of who was there, i.e., Kim had a conversation with
mother, Bob wasn't there and father wasn't there. Kim came out and told
Bob, in the absence of mother. Bob was to go out, in the absence of Kim and
mother to talk to father, and then Bob and Kim and mother would get back
together again. This is not simply a report of who happened to be there; it's
that who happened to be there was relevant to what was happening. And

when reports like that occur they signal specifically that something delicate interactionally is taking place.

There is a similar sort of tracking at another point in the Portia conversation. One evening Kate had said something which might be an embarrassment. Then we get:

> *Portia*: . . . en I <u>told</u> him, eh so when she want to the restroom I sez "Boy there goes a great gal" 'n he says "Boy I sure love her 'n I hope I can make her <u>hap</u>py' so, when we came home why he went to bed 'nen we went <u>swim</u>ming again before we went to bed . . . So I <u>told</u> Kate he said that, she sez "Oh yer a liar" I says "Well <u>no::</u> that's— he <u>said</u> that to me" she says "Well he never tells me" en I says "He said that tuh me."

Again, what Portia says to Carl, she says in the absence of Kate, and what she says to Kate she says in the absence of Carl – and these details are selectively reported.

And we have a conversation where a woman is describing meeting a man at a gathering. There is a rather elaborate accounting of who was where at any given time, ending in a situation where the two of them are together outside. And in that case what you have is a way in which things get *managed* so as to have some particular grouping. It goes roughly like this:[2] A recently divorced lady is invited over to an older friend's house because the friend's husband hasn't been well and he's grumpy and doesn't want to talk, so the friend feels lonely. When she gets there she finds that another older woman is coming over to get some business matters taken care of, and her nephew is driving her. The recently divorced lady says something like "Why didn't you tell me, I wouldn't have come" and her friend says "I wanted you to come anyway." And it turns out that the nephew is, say, an eligible male for the recently divorced lady. Okay, everybody's there. At some point the nephew, Rick, says "That's a real cute car you've got" and asks if he can go out and take a look at it. She very naively tells him to go ahead and look at it, which he does. And she stays inside. After being out there "quite a while" he comes back in. But about an hour later she gets into an argument with her friend's husband Kevin, about a 6,000-mile service requirement on her car. And she's insisting that it says such-and-such "right in my owner's manual." Then:

> *Nancy*: So <u>fi</u>nally I said to Kevin well dammit <u>I'm</u> gonna get up en I'm gonna go out'n get that <u>man</u>ual, out of my glove compartment 'n I'll sh— <u>tell</u> you. what it <u>sa:ys</u> yihknow or you c'n <u>read</u> it. 'hhhh So I went out 'n G<u>o</u>d the first thing I knew there's Rick. right ahh huh huh 'hhh right be<u>hind</u> me

[2]The following description is taken from Spring 1970, lecture 8, (D) pp. 15–16; a back-and-forth discussion not included in this edition.

And he asks her for a date – where, as she says, after all he couldn't do it in front of God and everybody.

And in the fragment we started off with, there may be something like that going on. It may be that Kate was not present when Carl said to Portia, today, "Wasn't that the dirtiest place?" And on the other hand, there could be a connection between Portia reporting "I didn't say anything," and that Kate may have been present when Portia could otherwise have said it, i.e., at the restaurant. Where what we have is, Carl is the "host," Kate is his new wife, and Portia is a 'guest.'

Now it's a curious feature of the adequacy of local collections of people – and that means whoever just happens to be together on some occasion – that even when one is doing things like talking about something else, an initial issue is: What is it that's being done about the current collection of people? So, to take an example I routinely use, it's an extra special person who, having gone to a restaurant with some set of people, and having found that the meal was wonderful, would make it his business to go tell the chef. Instead what people do is tell whoever it is that brought them there that the meal was wonderful. And that's not heard as something to be relayed to the chef, but is heard as a compliment to the person who brought them there. So it's not merely that you compliment or complain to the ones that you're with, but that compliments or complaints about anything can find some co-participant(s) as the correct and adequate recipient. And they are then in a position to feel good, or whatever. You can perfectly well imagine that last Tuesday morning there were lots of people who, having guests in their houses, would have been apologizing for the earthquake. And on the other hand, there were people who, being guests, found themselves saying, e.g., "Oh that's alright, I don't hold it against you" or whatever. That is to say, without regard to the earthquake's just happening, nonetheless it happened while people were in such a position that one was responsible for the other. And there are a large number of events of that sort, where you can get the credit for taking somebody to see something that somebody else did – an art show, a restaurant, a movie, whatever else. And on the other hand, you feel a need to apologize, and they know that you have to apologize and they hold you responsible when it turns out that the earthquake, the lousy movie, the fire, the rain, the automobile accident, whatever else, happened while you and they were together and you were in the position of being 'host.'

And what's involved in this fragment is, perhaps, that while everyone suffers the dirtiness – or it's perfectly possible that nobody suffers the dirtiness – there's a complex relationship involved between the speaker, the host, and the host's wife which is relevant to their treatment of the dirtiness. So, the host see the dirtiness. Now to say that the host sees the dirtiness is not to make it out that the host is somebody who is sensitive about dirt. If he went out there by himself, maybe he wouldn't notice, or if he did, he couldn't care less. But having guests in tow, he's now viewing the place by reference to how the guests would make it out – and, making it out, how they would make him out as a host. I also don't mean that while he isn't sensitive to dirt, he knows

that the guests are sensitive to dirt. You could have a situation where the host apologizes and the guests accept the apology, where neither of them care about the dirt. It's just that the host has to look at the place now, to see it by reference to that he's carrying somebody to whom he's responsible. And the guests on the other hand, are involved in acknowledging the attention that the host is giving them. A way, then, that the host looks at the carpet – not even in his own home – is a function of that he's bringing somebody there. The carpet is now a something that, it somehow happening that we got to this place, a restaurant I've never been in before, somebody told me about it, nevertheless I could blush as though it were my own home. So, e.g., it could happen that in the course of some meal at a place they've never been, a person will start apologizing for the food – that indeed they like.

So there's that. But there's also that the host is bringing this guest to this place at the suggestion of his wife. It's not, then, merely that he's bringing the guest here, but that if she says anything to anybody about the place she's commenting about Kate. So that she can choose not to mention the dirtiness by virtue of the fact that if she did she would be embarrassing Kate in Carl's eyes. And now, though she doesn't care about the dirt, she could come away feeling terribly good-natured about not having said anything about it, by virtue of the fact that not having said anything about it, she's done a good deed to Kate. So here's a way in which, nothing having occurred, nonetheless someone can feel generous about not having made something of a thing that is structurally available to be made something of. But, then, it is the very fact that she withholds her activity of mentioning it that leads Carl to have to make the remark. That is, if Portia could have noticed and been bothered by the dirt on the carpet but isn't mentioning it, then it's Carl's business to mention that dirt and apologize for it, lacking which he is seen to be some sort of clod. And at least a facet of Portia's agreement is that it's a way for her to tell Carl that it wasn't a mistake of his to have made the apology, i.e., that inded an apology was appropriate.

Again, then: We have a sequence here where there's a complaint about a place and an agreement. And you could have the same sequence with the parties turned around. But for Portia to have done the first part of the sequence, the complaint, would be an altogether different event than it was with Carl having done it. In doing a complaint about the place, Carl is apologizing to her. If she did the complaint, she would be complaining to him about him or about Kate. So her agreement to his complaint is a rather different thing than her doing the complaint in the first place. And in that regard, then, which sequence they do it in matters. What we're talking about a good deal of the time is, does the sequence that people do things in matter? My position here is that the same sequence, i.e., 'complaint–agreement,' is altogether different and has altogether different bases for occurring, if Portia does the complaint and Carl does the agreement. And, again, what her views are and what his views are about, e.g., the dirt, can be altogether independent of what they happen to say.

Now here's a major problem for working out any research. If all you had was, e.g., Carl saying "Wasn't that the dirtiest place?" and Portia saying "Yeah," you could mark it down as a sequence of 'complaint'-'agreement.' But materials like ours give you some way to get a rather more elaborate characterization of what is involved in some particular sequence, among those which are all similar in the sense of having a first part which is a 'complaint' and a second part which is an 'agreement.' And you can begin to have concepts about which such particular sequences can occur or do occur. But you have to turn the relationship of such things as "I didn't want to say anything," "Kate said she always wanted to see it," "The next day Carl said to me . . ." to use, to see how those things permit you to elaborate on the transparent complaint–agreement sequence. We can also pull out a more general thing, which is to get an idea of how it is that for the different collections of people walking into a room, the inspectable features of that room are a function of who happens to be with you.

Let me shift now to some other materials. We have a conversation involving a young couple being visited by their parents. They talk about food for a good deal of the conversation. At some point we get the following.

Bill: The other day we were goin t'the <u>library</u> en we <u>just</u> happen'tuh get there– <u>just</u> et the r– time thet the DAR w̲z̲ serving lunch t'everybody.
Lori: Yeh // we–
Ethel: OHH khhHAH//HAH! hnh!
Lori: En' we–
Lori: Then so we hadda fr//ee,
Bill: We hadda free <u>lunch</u>.
Ben: Yuh <u>did</u>?
          .
          .
          .
Bill: They had some nice <u>things</u> they even had like <u>chicken</u> liver. Y'know chopped chicken l̲i̲v̲e̲r̲ . . . I tasted it, it wz really horrible 'n Lori said I better not eat it becuz,
Lori: I didn't // trust them // (   )
Bill: –they proba//bly (   )–
Ethel: Lori en Bill I have something tuh tell you you probably heard about it already but just in case you haven't, you must not use any'v the pottery you picked up fer any– tuh cook in. Or fer anything edible, -- haven'tchu heard the news?
Bill: –from Mexico // (   )
Ethel: Becuz uh they have discovered, thet the coating, the glaze is so thin . . .

She goes on to describe the possibility of lead poisoning. Now, the juxtaposition of the talk about the DAR's chopped chicken liver and the

Mexican pottery have a kind of interest to them. It is not at just any point in the conversation that food is being talked about, that the Mexican pottery comes up, but where food going bad is being discussed. Now this raises an elaborately interesting issue which has to do with the general topic of the way that people can rely on the natural course of conversation to bring them to remember things they wanted to say. Here is an item that Ethel, the mother/mother-in-law, has wanted to warn them about – leaving aside that she didn't immediately call them up and tell when she happened to find out about it – i.e., they have the stuff and they shouldn't be using it. It was able to be kept in mind in such a way as to have it placed when the conversation kind of brought it around. And people can apparently allow items that they ought to say, want to say, etc., to be kept in that kind of storage that will be elicited by the conversation rather than, e.g., going to it with a list of things that need to be said, and saying them right off. This is a way in which, on the one hand memory can be trusted, and also that the natural course of conversation can be employed to turn up occasions to say certain things that you had wanted to say. That's kind of an interesting thing about the uses of conversation.

Anyway, they get to talking about this Mexican pottery. In the course of that, Ben, the father/father-in-law begins to talk while Ethel is still talking, which for a while involves two separate conversations, Bill and Ben, and Lori and Ethel. Ben says "I was gonna make some *chile* sauce but I didn't have time . . . I worked last night . . . I was up all night fighting fires so I went to sleep when I got home." (Ben is a fireman.) Bill says "You had a fire last night?" Ben says "Yeah" and they talk about it a bit. Okay, so in the course of the talk about Mexican pottery, Ben announces "I was going to make chile but I didn't have time." Hold onto that for a moment and consider the following, from a point later in the same conversation. Lori and Bill have had some trouble with vandalism.

Ethel :	Have the kids harrassed you er anything lately?
Bill :	No,
Ethel :	That's good.
Sam :	Didju put a sign out 'don't touch'?
Bill :	[[Mmheh
Lori :	Nehh//no.
Ethel :	So you put up yer timer you said en it worked?
Bill :	Yeh but the, the <u>photo</u> cell is on that light, an' the <u>ti</u>mer is on the out<u>side</u> light.
Ethel :	<u>Oh</u>.
Bill :	Then we have the <u>burglar</u> system too,
Lori :	[[Muhhh!
Ben :	hhh!
Bill :	En the alarms en the uh, ˙hh
Sam :	I bet if you put a sign out "beware of dog,"
Bill :	We <u>had</u> one,

Ben :   That doesn' // (do anything)
Bill :   But they, look et <u>he:r</u>

They have a tiny dog

Bill :   But they, look et <u>he:r</u> and y'(h)know

            .

            .

            .

Bill :   We aftuh get one a' those phony signs 'hh // uh,
Ben :   "This place is protected by photo scan"
Bill :   Yeah, or // uh
Lori :   Really? What is // that. Some new kinda thing?
Sam :   They'll tear the wires out.
Ethel :   Yeah, tha//t's a,
Ben :   Surveillance by photo scan which is y'know a television camera =
Ethel :   = Whatchu sh'd get is jus' d– a li'l baby ti:ger hhmh! hmh! 'n
            t(hh)ie it ou//(h)t there,
Bill :   hnhh
                    (1.0)
Ethel :   Don't ferget tuh watch Born Free tuhnight.

In both cases you have a situation in which the way topic moves, which is stepwise, is used to make a jump. That is to say, in the first case, the party who mentions the chile is engaged in getting the conversation around to talk about his fire-fighting. And in the second case, perhaps, the talk about getting a baby tiger is engaged in bringing up the reminder to watch Born Free.

Now, the character of the *stepwise movement for topics* is that if you have some topic which you can see is not connected to what is now being talked about, then you can find something that is connected to both, and use that first. So that the chile is in some way on topic with talk about the Mexican pottery and food, and can be used in an utterance that it becomes a first part of – in this case, via a structure 'I was going to do X but I couldn't for reason Y.' And utterances can be built in such formats, starting with something connected to the prior topic, with, then, the second part using something else which is connected to the first part of the utterance, not to the prior topic. So there is a routine stepwise movement, which is to say that any next utterance is built in such way as to be on topic with a last. That then becomes a thing which can also be used to make jumps. But to notice that a way of making jumps is via using the steps, is one way to see how the stepwise movement operates in general, and also provides for tasks which are in some way characterizable.

In that conversation where Nancy talks about meeting a man, the first talk is about her friend Agnes' toe operation. As the toe-talk comes to a close, we get:

Agnes :   Ah::, it's not worth it tuh be on my feet.
Nancy :   ⸤Yeah.
Agnes :   [[Yihknow.
Nancy :   Right. Uh huh? 'hhhhhhh Wul I̲ wz just out washing wi̲ndows, uh–a:nd uh, my mother called, so I came in I thought "Well while I'm in here," I looked et the clock 'n eleven thirty en I thought "Wul, they're–" 'hhhhh "they're un–" "su̲rely they're u̲p" yihknow, I knew it // w'z kind of a, // sleep in d̲a̲y,
Agnes :   Yeh.
Agnes :   Uh huh,
Nancy :   But uh I didn't get home til, 'hhh t̲w̲o̲ las' night I met a v̲ery, v̲ery, nice guy.

What she does there is to start in a way which is not connected with what went before. But she gets to her topic via setting up a chain that, when the topic is arrived at, it is arrived at in ways that connect it to earlier parts of her own utterance. So she can build something at the end of which she is where she wants to be, and which by its elaborateness has made up such a kind of stepwise movement.

Now the stepwise kind of movement is the most routine thing, and ordinarily involves nothing particularly noticeable. But the way you build a jump is to produce elaborations which often have to do with the standard construction techniques for utterances. For example in the above case there are the standard components "I was just out washing windows and my mother called," where a routine sort of thing for telephone conversations is that a party – characteristically the called, not the caller – can volunteer or be asked what they were doing before the call. In this case caller does it, but notice that the way caller does it is to turn herself into a called. In any event, 'what I was doing' is a sayable. And, roughly, she is involved in the following: She is offering something now which might well have been a first topic but which she passed on, and something else became first topic. By that I mean that at the start of the call, asked how she is by called, she doesn't say, e.g., "Great! I met a very, very, nice guy." What we get is:

Agnes :   HI: HONEY HOW A̲RE y//uh.
Nancy :   Fine ho̲w'r you.
Agnes :   'hhhhhhhhh OH: I'm p̲retty goo::d I ha̲dda liddle ope̲ra̲tion on my t̲o̲e this week

They then come to making arrangements for getting to maybe go shopping. And arrangement-making is a way that you end conversations, and of course the topic which has been involved in that conversation. So, via making arrangements it is at least available that the toe topic is coming to an end:

Agnes: W'l listen I'll tell yih what I could do: dear, uh: if Guy goes to
           the boat he c'd drop me off et th' trailer.
Nancy: 'hhhhhh Hey now that's en idea?
Agnes: 'hhh A:nd uh I just'm not gonna walk around a lot be//cuz
           uh
Nancy: No::::.
Nancy: No::. Huh//uh.
Agnes: Ah::, it's not worth it tuh be on my feet.

Now there is an issue about how does she go about introducing the date. She
could just say "By the way, I met a man." Or she could make a new topic of
it. And what it looks like she does is, again, to treat it as though it were in
first-topic status. She goes through a 'how I came to call,' which then gets to
her topic: "I was out washing windows, my mother called, I looked at the
clock . . ." which brings us in a sense back to the point where the conversation
began. So it looks like she's redoing this thing as first topic. And in order to
get it into this first-topic status, she has to get back to the making of the call.
Now, in part, you have got to get at the detailed workings of this utterance
in some independence of the question of why in the world would she do it that
way. And although it might look over-elaborate, it may turn out that it is no
more complicated than other things she or anybody else might do.

March 4

Produced similarities in first and second stories; Poetics; 'Fragile stories,' etc.

Bob: Oh, god! Christmas has gotten so damn painful! You know there's always this great no one likes what they're getting. You know what I mean? So you say, "thank you," and like my mom, "shit, when's that guy gonna learn that I don't want an electric skillet, I wanna coat, or I wanna sweater," and uh–

Ted: Well, doesn't she make any attempt to even hint, or even–

Kim: What's even funnier is, his father said, "Well, after 25 years, I don't think we're gonna give presents." And that's just ridiculous!

Bob: It's just that, becuz presents are so important to her, and so, he uh she was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources cuz they'd also my mother went to Florida twice and my father had to go to New York. So Jeez! They were pretty low! And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it. 'Well you know we just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it, you know.' So, the day before, Christmas afternoon, we were over there, and, Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim came out to me and said that my mother had gotten my father just scads and scads of presents. And she said that, uh, and Kim said that my mother was afraid that my father hadn't gotten her anything. So I was supposed to go out and feel out my father and see if he'd gotten her anything. (laughs)

Kim: We should've just left everything alone!

Bob: No. I'm glad we didn't. But, my father'd gotten her a lighter. (laughs) a little Zippo. (laughs)

Ted: At least it was for her use.

Bob: Yeah, yeah. She liked it, sure.

Kim: ⌜So we went out–

Bob: ⌞So we went out and bought her a bracelet. And then, we had this tremendous problem of how, now we don't want my mother to know that we did this, but how are we gonna give it to my father without hurting his feelings? Oh, shit! And we finally got it to him. I don't know, we spent about an hour and a half trying to figure out, "Now, how the shit are we gonna manage this thing?" I don't know how we did, but–

Jan: He probably knew.
Ted: I know just what you mean. We go through this thing every year. My father said, "No gifts." And we tried to analyze what–
Bob: Does "no gifts" mean no gifts, or does it mean more gifts?
Ted: No, he, he gave us one reason why "No gifts." And I was questioning the reason. I didn't think it was his a legitimate reason. I don't think it was his real reason. He said, "Well you know how the Christmas, all the stores, uh well, make such a big killing over Christmas, killing, and Christmas is becoming commercialized, and therefore I don't wanna be sucked into this thing. I'm not giving gifts this year."
Jan: "You spend your money and buy something you really want. And I'll spend my money and buy something I really want."
Ted: But we figured there must be somethin' deeper, because if a guy is aware of, that Christmas is becoming very commercialized. Uh must he submit to this idea and reject it entirely and end up giving no gifts, or is it because he really, doesn't, he's not a person that likes to give anyway?
Bob: Yeah.
Ted: And this is just a phony excuse for not giving. And finally, I think we figured out it must be some kind of a, a combination, and he really isn't that stingy.

Last time we dealt with some of the things involved in these data. This time I'll deal with a different range of problems. Let me just first note that aside from what's kind of obvious, that the two stories or reported conversations, one told by Bob and the second by Ted, have as similarities that they are about Christmas presents and problems in the family, there are a variety of other possible relationships or similarities between the two stories that are much finer than that. For example, you might note that the quotes of father in each story have him saying "Well you know:"

> *Bob*:   So jeez! They were pretty low! And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it. "Well you know we just haven't got much . . ."

and

> *Ted*:   No, he, he gave us one reason why "No gifts". . . He said, "Well you know how the Christmas, all the stores, uh well, make such a big killing over Christmas . . ."

And the two stories kind of come to a conclusion in both cases with something having to do with "finally figured out . . . :"

Bob : And we finally got it to him. I don't know, we spent about an hour
and a half trying to figure out, "Now, how the shit are we gonna
manage this thing?"

and

Ted : And finally, I think we figured out it must be some kind of a, a
combination, and he really isn't that stingy.

In both stories the father is, on some occasion at least, referred to as a "guy:"

Bob : And like my mom, "shit, when's that guy gonna learn that I don't
want an electric skillet . . ."

and

Ted : But we figured there must be somethin' deeper, because if a guy is
aware of, that Christmas is becoming very commercialized. Uh
must he submit to this idea and reject it entirely and end up giving
no gifts, or is it because he really doesn't, he's not a person that
likes to give anyway?

That's leaving aside a collection of other sorts of things, having to do with
Christmas presents, etc. So there's a beginning of a possible surplus, if you
like, of detailed relationships, beyond what might be expectable in telling
similar stories. We'll see what such finenesses can add up to – if they are
indeed to be given any attention as possibly *produced similarities*. If there was
one, then you could say, "Well, that could just be a coincidence." When you
start to add them up, then perhaps its's not that, e.g., "Gee they've had
remarkably similar experiences," but that the second one is heavily sensitive
to the way the first was told, just in terms of the words it uses.

And that raises a kind of question that has been alluded to, anyway: In
what way does the occurrence of some word, at some point in talk, set up
possible future uses of it. I've pointed out that there are these short, local
sound sequences in which it looked like, if they were to be found with any
reasonable regularity, perhaps the selection of words was history-sensitive for
a conversation. Not simply in terms of things like, that a word previously
occurred, but that the sound of some word could be used to find words later
which had similarities in sound to it. That's one thing. Then there is the
contrast-pair phenomenon, where one could begin to make some kind of
prediction of the sort that if a term from a marked pair of contrasts occurred,
then, forgetting even about semantic considerations, it becomes at least
weakly expectable that its contrast term or one of its contrast terms would
occur close by. And when I say forget about semantic considerations, what I
mean is that when somebody says "I got up this morning and went down to
the market," then 'up' and 'down' are contrast-pair terms, but not semanti-

cally. It's not the same as "I got up this morning and lay down again," which would be a semantic contrast usage. But the sheer use of 'up,' a term which has a marked contrast term, sets up a use of its contrast member where that member can be used, though other ways can be perfectly well found for saying "I went to the market".

Now obviously ways of checking such things out need to be discovered. And a preferred procedure for me is too see if things found in the materials can then be extracted and used as possible rules. For example, here you have:

"Oh, God! Christmas has gotten so damn painful . . . no one likes what they're getting."

And when you get the sound-row "God . . . gotten . . . getting," you wonder is there anything to the use of, say, "gotten" in terms of the prior use of "God," or for that matter the reverse, i.e., it's known that the story is going to be about "gotten" and "getting" and things like that, and maybe "God" was used by virtue of its being found as an expletive via the tale that was about to unfold.

A neat kind of relevant material might be the differences and similarities between that fragment and one that occurs later:

"all the stores, uh well, make such a big killing over Christmas . . . and Christmas is becoming commercialized"

In the first place, "is becoming" is as perfectly well usable in the first instance as "has gotten" is usable in the second. So, you could perfectly well say "Christmas is getting commercialized," but between "big killing," "becoming" and "commercialized" there is again a kind of relationship that's similar to that of "God" and "gotten" and "getting."

Another environment for developing a consideration of such things which has a systematic basis for exploring it, can be found in the sequence that goes:

"She was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources cuz they'd also my mother went to Florida twice."

You might notice that there's this "really" and "resources." Well, so what. Then there's also, now that you look at it, "cut" and "cuz." Then there is "really cut" and "resources cuz." I want to focus on "cuz." There's a term that, forgetting for the moment about alternate *words*, has specifically alternate *pronunciations*; say, "becuz" and "cuz." Now, a way of seeing if sound considerations are relevant to selection would be to see whether "cuz" is used in an environment in which it stands in, e.g., some historically sensitive relationship to a prior 'k', and "becuz" is used when there isn't such a thing, or when there's some historically sensitive relationship to a prior 'b.' Then you could take the range of things that are like "cuz" and "becuz," of which there

are lots, and see whether the way they're done has some variability that stands in a relationship that looks like, e.g., a developing sound-row. And it isn't a matter of that "cuz" is used in 'informal' speech and "becuz" is used in 'formal' speech, which is a way that people might be led to talk about it. But "cuz" and "becuz" both occur in this fragment:

> "It's just that BECUZ presents are so important to her, and so, he uh she was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources CUZ they'd also . . . ."

And when you've got "God . . . gotten . . . getting" and "big killing . . . becoming . . . commercialized," issues of whether some sounds have systematic historical differences involved seem to be raised in this data, where pronunciational differences have not to do with, e.g., lapses, but turn on systematic differences within the data.

Now plainly we're not only talking about sound relationships, and that makes matters more and more complicated, as there is also the contrast relationship and selections from among relatively synonomous words – as well as the selection of variable pronunciations for a same word. And note that all the stuff we're talking about now is extractable from this particular fragment, where it's in part by adding up the pieces that we begin to get some kind of feeling that some such thing is happening; that the stuff is woven together in such ways.

Sometimes you can focus on a particular usage, and say about it that it seems slightly off – or maybe altogether off. For example, the following piece of data.

> *Ken* : She came in there the other night with <u>Scotch</u> tape an'– every inch of the room. You couldn't– the <u>roof</u> I think she's got done in Beatle pictures.
>
> .
> .
> .
>
> *Louise* : Well they need some kinda idol you know, something to look up to

Let me just mention the interesting relationship of having Beatle pictures on the "roof" and having "something to look up to." But now, notice that "roof" is plainly a wrong word, 'ceiling' being the right word. And we can see that, on sound-selectional considerations, we get something that's close, i.e., "room." So that a way to account for the occurrence of "roof" as a noticeable slight error is to say that searching for a word to refer to that thing, sound-selectional considerations were involved in finding it. And not merely sound-selectional where any relevant recent word might serve, but sound-selection plus some obvious semantic constraints – here, e.g., a collection of architectural terms.

With that as a direction, I want to note that I was slightly puzzled by, or came to focus on as possibly interesting:

> "Well you know we just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it, you know."

Where "forget" is not quite the right word there, strictly speaking. Perhaps it is a perfectly good idiom, and in that case we have another way to focus on specific usages, i.e., where idioms, like expletives, have a certain freedom of occurrence and one might then be led to ask why this one now? At any rate, I began to wonder if there was any good reason that "forget" might have been said – using my manifestly strange sense of 'reasons.' Well, we've got things like "haven't got much," "get things for the kids," "you and I'll forget it." And immediately prior to "forget" there is a use of "get . . . for." Now is there any reason to attend as a way that things possibly work, that there is some relationship that involves *reversals*? We can look a little further on in the data. "And THAT'S JUST ridiculous" says one, and the next says "It's JUST THAT because . . ." And then someone is saying ". . . we had this tremendous problem of HOW, NOW we don't want my mother to know . . ." and then, "NOW, HOW the shit are we gonna manage this thing?" So it isn't altogether an isolated object, even within, say, one minute of talk.

Now it's no issue that we can find such sorts of things. Sure we can find them. But in making something of them, the possibility that we could find another one somewhere is something other than can we get *batches* of them – which of course is not to say that some things don't occur only rarely. And again, all of these have to be kept in a candidate status because we don't know that there is such a thing as a procedure of getting a particular word by reference to various sorts of environmental considerations. But we are trying to get at some collection of procedures whereby the words that people use come to be selected; procedures which involve that things like them in sound, or things that contrast with them in meaning, etc., have been recently stuffed into the person's head by something someone else, or they themself, just said. And the general thing is, then, to begin to see if we can't specify some procedures which have the same character. Where we now have a whole series of possible procedures which operate within the argument that words are selected in an historically sensitive way, and where we can maybe specify some of the historically sensitive ways they are selected. That there are whole series of such procedures would account for the fact that in short fragments one can find materials like these. And I don't think that this is a particularly odd short fragment, though that remains to be seen.

Another kind of thing, which now deals with both semantic and sound properties but in a different way than we've seen so far, turns on one feature of words, i.e., that some words have multiple meanings. Now if sound is relevant to selection, then a thing that you might be led to expect is that you'd get small *flurries* of the use of a word, where what is involved is that a word, getting used for some reason, fitting some place, now starts to occur, running

through the range of meanings of that word. So, taking 'got' and 'get,' which have rather variable meanings and for each of which you could use some other word, e.g., 'receive' and 'become,' what you have apparently is a collection of uses of 'got' and 'get.' So, e.g., a kind of dramatic difference here is "Christmas has GOTTEN so damn painful . . . no one likes what they're GETTING," where the use in each case is semantically different. And you find such small flurries of a word's use. It keeps popping up – and popping up with specifically different senses of it involved, leaving aside it having consequences in sound terms for the selection of other words, so that words that sound like it also recur.

Let me turn to something quite different for a while. Let's look at Ted's "He gave us one reason why no gifts" which is followed by "And I was questioning the reason." Now, that he was questioning the reason is something he tells us not merely by saying "And I was questioning the reason," but by his formulation "one reason." The sheer counting of it does as much as to say "I doubt it." To say "he gave us eleven reasons" is to give a plainly doubting position on the reasons, and "one reason" works the same way. There are specific alternatives to "one reason" which have not to do with numbers, but with other things that express a different view about the reason. So, e.g., to say "he gave us one reason" is to say something altogether different from "he gave us his reason." And the talk is pervaded with things like that. For example, a characteristic instance is "My mother went to Florida twice and my father had to go to New York." Where to say he "had to go" is to say "whatever his reasons were, which I knew of, I'm telling you they were okay reasons." "All I'm telling you about the reason is that I accept it." And this is constrastive to "My father said he had to go to New York." That kind of distinction, between "he had to go" and "he said he had to go" does a markedly different locating of the position of the speaker. And an import of that is that the sheer fact of doing quoting can be the expressing of a position.

Q: What would be the distinction between the fact that the mother "went" to Florida and the father "had to go" to New York?

HS: You got me! I don't know – now. Now, it's just, "there it is." The task of making a problem is such that I couldn't even say whether the dimensions of this thing have to do with why does he say mother "went" and father "had to go," and then, what does that distinction do. I don't know. It's not as if there is a list of problems and the data is approached with it. Even the question of how a word is selected is something that began to be posed because it looked like some answers could be found to it, by virtue of the things that were emerging as little bits of "What's that?" "Is that something?"

Okay, I made a distinction between reports like "he had to go" and "he said he had to go," the latter being some sort of *quotation*. Quotations are terribly interesting things, and if you start to ask why do people do quotations, then it isn't at all an issue of, for example, they do quotations to be more accurate. Because if he says "My father said he had to go to New York" that's not more accurate than "He had to go to New York." It specifically differs in that it says "I doubt it" or "I don't know whether that's

so." And quotations are an environment for doing a variety of things; for example, mimicking. So that if you say "He said" and deliver what the person said in some mimicked fashion, you can also express your position vis-à-vis what they said.

Now in this fragment there seems to be a curious feature where Ted is quoting his father:

> "Well you know how the Christmas, all the stores, uh well, make such
> a big killing over Christmas, killing, and Christmas is becoming
> commercialized, and therefore I don't wanna be sucked into this thing.
> I'm not giving gifts this year."

Ted is arguing that he didn't believe that that was the real reason. And now I'm wondering whether, in that it has a noticeable awkwardness of delivery – searching for a way to say it, not saying it right, stumbling over it, etc. – whether that's to be heard as a feature of Ted's trying to remember what his father said, or if it stands as a way – and I'm not saying that he's consciously producing this – a way that Ted can exhibit the hard-to-believe character of his father's talk. Now that may sound kind of dubious, except that now having said it you could easily enough make one up and do it just that way. So if you say "I asked him where he was and he said 'uh, well uh, I was– I was n– uh– *no*where I was right here'," then we could say it looks like you can perfectly well exhibit the hard-to-believe character of a proposed account with such things as the delay and awkwardness of its delivery. Now I don't have a tape of these materials, I just have the transcripts, so I don't know how Ted delivered this. In any event, whether or not he's designing his delivery to exhibit the hard-to-believe character of his father's talk, we have stuff where somebody quoting can be found to be doing a mimic of the quoted one's voice without even knowing that they're mimicking. And that seems a relatively routine sort of occurrence. Anyway, that's a possible intriguing aspect of this quote, and perhaps of quotes in general.

What you could say then is that Ted would have a series of ways of supporting his position in the argument with his father, other than that he delivers stronger reasons than his father did. There are ways of telling a story in which someone's chance to be given a hearing by the recipient of the story isn't a matter of the recipient now having in their hands a correct or incorrect version of what somebody said. That is, it's not that you have to worry only about the fact that a person will bias what somebody said, merely sketch their arguments etc., but there are a serious of ways, besides that, of rather unnoticeably conveying one's position on the other's position. And they are ways that we would hardly think of as having anything to do with 'incorrectness,' e.g., there may indeed have been one reason, but to say "one reason" is already to be doubting it.

Now that line, about the ways a story is cast, raises some rather interesting considerations about this conversation. There are some facets of these people's talking to each other, complaining in an accepted way about their parents, that might be looked into a bit. The theme I want to develop

is the relevance for these two tales of a *'good listener.'* And also, what a good listener can get out of being a good listener. I'll start off with some relatively rough remarks in order to give us some idea about possible other hearings of either story.

Begin by noting that Bob is talking about being involved in some interactional offshoots of a conflict between his parents in regard to giving or not giving presents to each other, and what he should do about it. And that is the proposed source of the painfulness. He isn't complaining about the fact that *he* had to end up spending money buying his father a present for his mother, he's complaining that he ended up spending an hour and a half figuring out how to do it. And it could be wondered if what he's annoyed about is that he ended up buying the present. And for Ted's story, it could be wondered whether he is kind of annoyed about not getting any presents (and in that regard it's rather neat that he says his father 'gave us one reason why no gift's,' i.e., what he 'gave us' was reasons, not gifts). But the thing he's reportedly puzzled about is whether his father is stingy. That is, he rejects his father's *reason* for the decision, not the decision. So he's involved in calling his father 'stingy' in this conversation, although plainly were he to raise that way of talking about his father *to* his father, then his father might well counter with "Well why do you care about my reasons?" That is to say, the freedom to analyze his father's reasons is something that he can secure only with an audience that will permit his father to be treated in a way that Ted will not be treated. Where, should Ted get treated in the way that he treats his father, if he's asked "Well why do you care?," then as soon as he starts giving reasons, the question is – as his question was – "Are those your real reasons? After all, what he said is that you're not going to get any presents. Are you bothered about that?" And that possibility has, in some way, to be potentially felt by somebody like Ted. You could at least wonder: Should he not know the formal character of what he's doing to his father as something that can just as well be done to him, and if done to him have consequences for the way he makes himself out here? That is to say, everybody present in this conversation comes off awfully clean out of what are plainly a series of messy situations.

Leaving that aside, a kind of neat facet to the whole business is that while a key thing about the character of this conversation is that these people would be said to be 'intimate' – revealing family problems and things like that – and doing 'intimate complaining,' yet they are intimate to a point that is still altogether distant. That is, there are no conflicts raised about anybody present, though the same problems could perfectly well accrue to persons present. Like, how did Bob and Kim, between themselves, negotiate dealing with Bob's parents? It comes off with only a hint of possible difference when Kim says "We should have left everything alone" as though, say, she doesn't have exactly the same attitude as Bob does.

So there are ways that these are 'fragile stories.' They come off, however, as in no way fragile, but as correctly experiencing the world in a way warranted by their listeners. If that is the case, then the ways that they are

fragile may be related to who is selected to be told them. And who is selected to be told them may be someone with an equally fragile story; someone in a position, then, to be happy to accept the first in order to have the opportunity to – in a safe way – tell a second. That is to say, when Ted says "I know just what you mean" he could be seen to be accepting Bob's story. But in accepting Bob's story he's also offering his own, where his story's acceptance turns on its having as good a listener as he was for Bob's. That these are two young couples complaining about their parents may then be not so unrelated to the way in which Bob's story works, with Kim in talking to mother, coming out and talking to Bob, Bob going out and talking to father, etc., in the sense that now, the story having been put together out of all these partially hidden conversations, it is to be told only to selected audiences.

Let me mention in passing that the mother's mobilization of Kim to tell Bob to go and feel out the father is an altogether unspecial matter. You have here a prototype of the sorts of phenomena that are talked about in the psychiatric literature as 'the family as a spawning ground for paranoia.' This has to do with the notion of families as an environment for conspiracies. And we have here such a conspiracy. The mother-in-law enlists her daughter-in-law as an ally to deal with what she delivers as a thing she's afraid of – not merely that she's afraid her husband hasn't gotten her anything, but she's afraid to tell him that she's afraid he hasn't gotten her anything. Now, you could read considerable psychiatric literature on paranoia as a natural outcome of the way that families generate conspiracy, but it's preserved for us, in its artifacts, in this kind of a conversation. And not simply in the conversation reported, but in the ongoing conversation that the report is part of, i.e., it is also that sort of a thing. That is to say, for one, they apparently aren't in a position to go talk to the parents about these reports and find out what indeed happened with the parents. What they can do is find friends with whom such information can be exchanged. Where, while it appears that they're doing terribly intimate kinds of talk, revealing deep secrets, their fragile positions can nevertheless be preserved.

Again, what I mean by the 'fragility' of the talk is simply, in the first instance: What would happen if the way that speaker A characterized non-present party B's doings were applied to speaker A by his listeners? So that you could ask about Bob and Kim, "And you don't have any problems of that sort – having to find somebody else to tell your spouse what's going on?" Also, the marked difference that's proposed between what the parents care about – giving or not giving presents, and what the kids care about – not the giving or getting of presents but the problems involved in people's caring about giving and getting. And what I'm intending to be saying about it is that the way the talk comes off turns on their having found an audience who will not subject *their* reports of the circumstances in the story they're telling, to the ways that they've dealt with those involved in their stories. And at least an interesting aspect of how that fragility doesn't get burst is that they're able to find people who will have a same circumstance to present and who, in accepting the one, set up a way of getting a second also passed. So that it

seems that "we both suffer the same troubles," "we both understand our circumstances," as compared to what might happen if someone were to simply apply to *them* as a way of analyzing *their* circumstances, what they've offered as their analysis of someone else's. Then you've got quite a different scene. And of course that happens. But it's not like I'm offering a recommendation or a criticism, because we can treat it as how in the world do perspectives which are delicate and tender, like a seven-layer cake or a flickering candle, get passed on for generations as a reasonable characterization of the world, without getting smashed, burst, dropped, ruined. And that makes the finding of someone to tell a distinctly relevant part of the enterprise of getting to preserve a version of what happened.

Now, with regard to this complaining about parents, I just want to mention another nice fragment. It occurs in one of these teenage group therapy sessions, where Louise comes in late and one of the boys shows her a plastic beer bottle that he brought from his new job at a liquor store:

Ken : See our added exposition this morning,
  (/)
Louise : In't that nice.
Ken : 'S to remindju of last night.
  (/)
Louise : Not me, I went to my sister's hhh hhh Junior High Show.
  (/ /)
Louise : We wen' out fer <u>ice</u> cream.
  (/ /)
Roger : That // sounds like a // <u>scream</u>.
Louise : D'you–
Louise : You think it's fun, takin'::, Two girls who are twelve years old? -- With makeup on?
  (/ /)
Louise : A brother, a liddle brother an' a liddle sister who's ten? -- Out for ice cream?
  (/)
Ken : whhew
Louise : Cause my parents didn'wanna do it.

Again, that sounds like a viable complaint that she might have about her parents. Let me give some material. She's one of four sisters. She's 17, there's one who's 20, one who's 15, and the 12-year-old. Now it comes to Friday night, and there are various things these girls could be doing Friday night. Preferred number one choice would be having a date. And the 15-year-old does date. Now thinking it out, how does Louise get selected to be the one to take the kid sister? Is it plausible that within the family scene where there are three sisters eligible to take the little one, Louise is picked by virtue of the fact that . . . what? They just pick on her? The parents don't want to go, so she of course goes? Or is it that of the three sisters there is some way in which at least

one, maybe the two others, are so occupied that while Louise does not have the excuse "I have a date," maybe they do?

Now Louise says nothing about "and I had to cancel a date to do it," which would make her complaint rather more powerful than it was – though that's not to say that her complaint wasn't powerful. But what you might then see is a scene where older sister and maybe younger sister have dates, Louise doesn't have a date and has nothing to do, the parents either have something to do or they perfectly well could get up something to do. Then Louise is arrived at as the one to take the kid sister. Now, to be put in that position is to be given something to do Friday night, so that she indeed ended up doing something as compared to staying home Friday night. But it's not just that she's been given something to do Friday night; she's given something to do which she can complain of in a quite different way than she might complain of not having a date. So the parents' solution to getting someone to take the kid sister to her Junior High Show provides a thing that Louise can complain of to other people, though complaining about it in the family would be a quite different complaint. But to other people she can focus off how she came to be selected, onto what she ended up doing. So you want to watch the relation between the way a complaint is put together and the non-presence of the people complained of. And again, the interest of the audience one has in the acceptance of complaints like that, by virtue of their then being told that they can deliver such.

Let me pick away some more at our initial fragment. I talked a bit about the ways that talk gets topically connected, and I want to point up another facet of ways that talk gets connected which is present a good deal here, and picture a way to think about it that might alert one to its occurrence.

> *Ted*: Well, doesn't she make any attempt to even hint or even–
> *Kim*: What's even funnier is . . .

and

> *Kim*: And that's just ridiculous!
> *Bob*: It's just that, becuz presents are so . . .

Not exactly the same, but in a fashion related:

> *Bob*: . . . and see if he'd gotten her anything. (laughs)
> *Kim*: We should've just left everything alone!

and

> *Bob*: . . . I don't know how we did, but–
> *Jan*: He probably knew.
> *Ted*: I know just what you mean.

The kind of thing I'm pointing to is a phenomenon where what turn out to be the last words of a current utterance are picked up by a now-starting speaker who uses them in starting his utterance. I talk of it as 'latching on.' You might think of it as something like a relay race, where two runners come together and the baton is exchanged and one runner continues and the other one stops. Now it's not necessarily that a given speaker intends to stop, but that the next speaker latches on and seems to be continuing, or might be making a gesture of some sort towards continuing, picking up on, the current state of the talk. Latching on is a common close connection between adjacent utterances, i.e., the terms of the ending of one and the terms of the beginning of another, independent of whether the last was looking to close or not, have this relay feature.

Quite another thing: The father says "Well after 25 years, I don't think we're gonna give presents." I want to make an observation about things that go 'After X years,' because you can come up with kind of a neat rule for the way in which those things are interpretable. Let me give some more of them and we'll see what's involved in them. "After 25 years they got divorced." "After 25 years they moved to New York." Now a question is, after 25 years of what? One has the subject of the clause "after 25 years" being, as they say in linguistics, 'deleted;' it's not present. They say 'deleted' by virtue of the fact that they suppose that in, say, the planning of the sentence the subject was present, and in its delivery it was deleted. Maybe one oughtn't say it was deleted or it is absent, but plainly there's a question in interpreting the utterance, of "after 25 years of what?" And what seems to be involved is something like, with "after 25 years" you're told by the speaker "hold off trying to figure out the 'what' until the following clause, then suppose that its subject will tell you *by contrast* the 'what' that 'after 25 years' is about." You can then get "after 25 years [of giving presents] he decided no presents." "After 25 years [of marriage] they got divorced." The interesting thing about it is the way that that phrase, and maybe other things, incorporates a *delay-interpretation rule* for a hearer. So that a knowledgeable hearer doesn't, e.g., interrupt with "Of what?" or find himself trying to figure that out now, but will treat that as announcing the delay rule.

And it's interesting that among the kinds of rules that people might employ would be rules that said 'hold off trying to figure out X until Y,' so that it wasn't an operation of interpreting the thing as the words come out, but one in which there would be some storage. And furthermore, what was to be stored for further work would be indicatable by the talk that was posing the problem. Now I offer that in that it looks like a kind of simple, straightforward thing, and it would be lovely indeed if any reasonable group of problems could have what look like relatively easy solutions like that one. Another interesting character to the solution is that it involves contrast. That's nice, and we're interested in attention to contrast because if there is some kind of formal attention to contrast then that's supporting to the notion that when these contrast pairs occur in close connection they're occurring by reference to an interest in contrasts. What a word means is then, in some reasonable way,

something that needs to be gotten in part via a picture that allows for its contrasts as well as for its 'meaning.' That is to say, its contrasts, its sound, and a variety of other things are attended when it's done. And you could build rules that relied on that possibility, i.e., nature could build such rules.

Another thing: The mother is reported to say "I don't want an electric skillet, I want a coat, or I want a sweater." What's interesting is that she says, not 'I don't want an X, I want a Y,' but 'I don't want an X, I want a Y or a Z.' A first sort of interest to that sort of thing is if she said "I don't want an electric skillet, I want a coat," then at least one thing that could be involved is that picking a particular alternative might be seen as posing the problem too sharply. Like, "I can see how you don't want an electric skillet, but how can you expect somebody to know that you want a coat?" They would be wrong not merely if they got you an electric skillet, but if they got you a sweater. So in proposing what's wanted and what's not wanted, it's a not-unreasonable strategy to do it in such a way as to give options to what's wanted while rejecting a singular. The presence of options in 'what I want,' where it's done complainingly about 'what I get' is, I think, expectably regular, and is part of the way to do the complaint in such a way as to have it come off as reasonable.

An interesting feature of having two options to the 'what I want' part of it is that whereas having said "I want a coat" you may be heard as saying you want a coat, if you say "I want a coat or I want a sweater" then you can be heard as saying, not "I want as coat or a sweater," but "I want a coat or a sweater or a dress or a pair of slacks or something else." So that the two can be heard as not simply a different quantity than the one, but, whereas the one can be heard as unique the two can be heard as instances. Giving options in the 'what I want' is, then, to be giving more than you've given.

Finally, focussing on Bob's report: "And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it." It doesn't sound like a thing that has any serious import. It could be, e.g., just a grant to the father, saying "I go along with what he did," rather than that 'rational' is descriptive. Now, occasionally it pays off to say, okay let's look at it. He says he was being rational. Is it rational? How is it rational? And maybe you find that it's kind of rational, i.e., you could build a decent model about how to make decisions. So perhaps when he says "rational" here, there's something to it. Let's consider the problem. The father says "We just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it." (I kind of like the utterance because of other aspects of what is said, having to do with "we" and "let's," and then "you and I," where the "you and I" are markedly different than the "we" and "let's.") Now we could imagine an alternate scene where the parents, under a condition of having minimal resources, are going to buy presents – for each other, for the kids, for whomsoever. Then there's a problem of how to allocate those resources. And neither can know, e.g., whether what they bought for the other would end up being anything like what the other bought for them. That could be okay where there's not a specific attention to minimal resources and their distribution. But plainly there can be a problem where, while you've

spent as much as they've spent, you've spent markedly less on them than they've spent on you, you having spent more than they have on somebody else of the same group. A solution to that could be if they all agreed on the sum and then just broke it into equal parts, but I can't imagine a family that could assume that; they would have to tell each other.

The problem then is, how in the world are we to get into a situation where we can discuss what we're going to do. And the way we can get there is to say "Let's not buy presents for each other, whatever we have we'll spend on the kids." That ends up with no problem of a marked skewing relative to each other, or relative to one of the kids, for that matter. So there is a way in which the combination "we'll buy for the kids" and "neither of us will buy for each other," under a situation of specifically asserted minimal resources, is 'rational.' It's at least culturally rational, in that he could conceivably propose "We just haven't got much, you and I'll forget it and let's buy presents for my girlfriend" or "let's give money to charity."

I don't know how much it pays off, but it's payed off for me at least occasionally to say: Somebody says 'he was being rational' or 'he was being such-and-such,' okay, let's suppose it's so. What might people be reporting on? How would people go about doing 'being rational'? Can we find a characterizable procedure that they go through, a problem that they solve? So you take a characterization and imagine that at least for research puposes it's not just a casual remark, but that he might have picked it with some care; that it talks about something that has a describable character to it. Then you try to construct that describable character. And you may find things out in doing that. You may find out that there is a thing which has, independent of their use of it, features that we could call 'rational.'

March 11

Poetics; Requests, offers, and threats; The 'old man' as an evolved natural object

The following sequence occurs in the course of a conversation between a middle-aged couple, Ethel and Ben, their son Bill, at who's house this is taking place, and Ethel and Ben's stepfather-in-law, Max.

Ben :	You haf to uh, Uh,
	(1.0)
Ben :	Hey this is the best herring you ever tasted I'll tellyuh that right now.
	(1.5)
Ethel :	Bring some out // so thet m–Max c'd have some too. =
Ben :	Oh boy.
Max :	= I don'wan'ny
	(0.5)
Ben :	They don' have this et Mayfair but <u>dis</u> is // delicious.
Ethel :	What's the <u>name</u> of it.
	(1.0)
Ben :	It's the <u>Las</u>ko but it's uh, this Herring <u>Snack</u> Bits. En' there's <u>reasons</u> why– the <u>guy</u> tol' me once before thet it uh wz the best.
	(2.5)
Ben :	'Cause it's Nova Scotia herring.
	(1.0)
Bill :	Why is it the be:st.
Ben :	((through a mouthful)) Cause it comes fr'm cold water.
	(1.5)
(Bill) :	⌈(Oh.)
Ben :	⌊S::–col' water fish is always // better.
Max :	( ) when they uh, can it.
Ethel :	⌈MMmm it's–
Ben :	⌊Cold water fish // is–
Ethel :	Ouu Max <u>have</u> a piece.
Ben :	This // is,
Ethel :	Gesch//macht.
Ben :	–the best you ever tasted.

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Ethel :	<u>MM</u>mm.
	(2.0)
Ethel :	Oh it's delicious Ben w'dyih hand me a napkin please,
Bill :	Lemme cut up a' little pieces of bread.
	(2.5)
Ben :	I'n that <u>good</u>?
Ethel :	It's duh::<u>li</u>cious. It's geschmacht Max.
Max :	What?
Ethel :	Geschma:cht,
	(0.5)
Ethel :	Max, one piece.
Max :	I d'n want.
	(4.0)
Ben :	Yer gonna be– You better eat sumpn becuz yer g'be hungry before we get there Max,
Max :	So.
	(0.5)
Ben :	C'mon now I don' wanche t'get sick.
Max :	Get there I'll have so//mething.
Ben :	Huh?
Max :	When I <u>get</u> there I'll <u>eat</u>.
Ben :	<u>Yeah</u> butche better eat sumpn before. Y'wan'lay down'n take a nap? =
Max :	= No,
Ben :	<u>C</u>'mon.
	(1.0)
Ben :	Y'wan' sit up'n take a nap? B'cuz // <u>I'm</u> g'n take one,
( ) :	( )
	(1.5)
Ben :	–inna minute,
	(1.0)
Ben :	Det's, <u>good</u>.
	(2.0)
Ben :	Det is <u>real</u>ly good.
	(1.0)
Ethel :	<u>Mm</u>//m.
Ben :	Honestly.
	(4.5)
Ben :	<u>C</u>'mon,
	(1.0)
Max :	((very soft)) (I don't want.)
Ben :	Max, please. I don' wanche t'get <u>si:ck</u>.
Max :	I (won't) get sick,
	(3.0)
Ben :	<u>OO</u> that's // so–
Ethel :	<u>MM</u>m. It just // sorta–

Ben :	Isn'at— // Isn'at—
Ethel :	—<u>ti</u>ckles the tongue doesn' <u>it</u>?
Ben :	Mm hm?
	(4.5)
Ben :	Mm ((through a mouthful)) Maybe we oughta take one take
	one <u>home</u> with us.
Bill :	Where'dejh <u>get</u> it.
Ethel :	Alpha <u>Be</u>//ta.
Ben :	Alpha <u>Beta</u> (up here).
Bill :	((through a mouthful)) Right <u>here</u>?
Ethel :	Mm, <u>hm</u>?
Bill :	<u>Hm</u>.
	(2.5)
Bill :	<u>Hm</u>.
Ethel :	You better put s'm more in the dish Ben,
	(10.0)
Ethel :	((sigh)) W'l you, be g'd enough tuh empty this in the:re en'
	then I'll fill it (h)u<u>p</u> for you again.
	((eight metallic bangs))
Ben :	Yeah I // (know that whole --)
Ethel :	Thankyou.
	(3.0)
Ethel :	Max doesn't know what he's missin'.
Bill :	<u>He</u> knows,
Ben :	I don' wan' him tuh get <u>sick</u> I wannim tuh <u>eat</u>.
Max :	( )
	(1.5)
Bill :	Whadidjuh think a'<u>this</u> you wanna take this?

The sequence itself is really sharply bounded. Bill's utterance, "What did you think of this you wanna take this?" has to do with another matter entirely, and Ben's first utterance is a self-interruption of talk on another matter, which is altogether a lawful thing: "You have to uh, Uh (1.0) Hey this is the best herring . . ." That is to say, for things like various sorts of noticings – noticing the taste of food or noticing a plane passing, or a sound, or something falling, or all sorts of things like that – one perfectly well can properly interrupt an utterance that one is oneself making, or indeed that someone else is making. There are sorts of noticings for which you want the timing to be such that it indicates that they're *not* being placed in adjacency to some other utterance, are not responsive to it, shouldn't be figured out by reference to what's been said, but have to do with things that have been proceeding in some independence of the sequence of talk. Self- or other-interruptions which involve remarking about food belong, then, to a special class of interruptions that are, in a way, properly done 'interruptively.'

Before getting into the sequence itself, let me suggest a way to approach a piece of data. A kind of easy way to start out is to pick out various sorts of

sound sequences, and just mark them out on the transcript. That might give you some beginning feel for at least whether there's perhaps more sound density than you'd expect. Having gotten some sound relationships, you might look around to see if something can be done with them or with related things. In this fragment we get a possible extension on a sort of thing I talked about earlier, which involved a focus on words like 'because' which are variously pronounced in conversation, e.g., "because" and "'cause," where one can look to see how that word is said, and see of it's at all, for example, sound-coordinated with things in its environment. And we can find here a use of "'cause" which is affiliated with closely occurring 'k'-beginning words: "'Cause it comes from cold water," and a use of "because" in an environment of beginning 'b's: "You're gonna be— You better eat something because you're gonna be hungry before we get there." There are also a couple of other instances of that sort of thing present; relevant then to the issue of *is* that sort of thing a 'sort of thing'? And can we take it that the whole variety of such words are adapted to their local scene? For example, just as a way to extend things, the word 'this' gets, in one particular utterance, a "this" and a "dis" pronunciation: "They don't have this at Mayfair, but dis is delicious." We can begin to suppose that a class could be marked out which is sound-adapted to its environment, and that some sorts of organization can be found to the relative distribution of "this" and "dis", "'cause" and "because," etc., where at least perhaps partially there are matters of sound considerations and not, e.g., considerations of formal-informal speech. So from this transcript we get 'some more of the same thing,' that 'more' helping to put together a possible class, and some aspects of the way that class may operate.

At one point in working with this, I started to look at the use of "Honestly" here. I began to wonder about what was involved in its use, in the light of what had been taking place in this sequence where Ben was trying to convince Max to have some herring, hadn't been successful, said "That's good. That is really good," and then says "Honestly," And one might readily propose something like: It might be that Ben figures that Max's not having eaten any herring is due to Ben's failure as a salesman, and he is now trying to deal with some possible failing of his sales job. However, at that point I was in a position to play around with some stuff on the sound locus of "Honestly." Ben has begun a series of prior utterances with sounds involving ". . . ON . . . :" "Yer gONna be–," "C'mON now," "Y'wAN'lay down," "C'mON," "Y'wAN' sit up," then the "hONestly," and then another "C'mON." We have a relatively extended, relatively unbroken string of Ben's beginning sounds involving ". . . ON . . ." So there's a patterning of those, independent of "honestly," within which "honestly" fits. And that now adds to the kinds of sound-sequence patternings that we're accumulating. This one says there may be patterning which can be selectively relevant, which operates at particular junctions in utterances, for example, the initial word of an utterance.

We haven't much looked at *cross-utterance patterns*. This particular kind of cross-utterance pattern, i.e., the string of "on"'s, is of some interest because it

doesn't involve directly adjacent utterances, though it does involve adjacent-to-same-speaker utterances. And that is not much of a movement from adjacent utterances, particularly in a case like this, where the same speaker is essentially speaking in every alternative utterance. Now, if such sorts of things are operative, the relevance of that is that you then need partially to weaken any argument you might make about what is somebody doing with, e.g., some such words as they use which also have the feature of being consistent with a sound pattern that is developing within the sequence. So you don't want to make too much of what somebody is doing by saying "Honestly," where it is perhaps partially selected via the way he's going about building the beginning of his utterances.

Looking at the relationship of "take one" and "tickles the tongue," it seemed that "take one" preserved some facets of "tickles the tongue." I puzzled about that for a while, as to whether anything could be said, until I saw that one utterance says ". . . sorta tickles the tongue" and the other one says ". . . oughta take one home," i.e., that "sorta" and "oughta" are kinds of nice things for those particular adjacencies. And then up at the beginning we get ". . . the guy told me once before that it was the best." I was semantically puzzled by the occurence of "once before," which in this talk seems unmotivated. Now this sequence begins with "Hey this is the best herring you ever tasted I''ll tell you right now." So now we have "I'll tell you that right now" and "the guy told me once before," where there is an exceedingly close parallel between those two things, where the "once before" may be, for him, completing a thing he has been saying which starts with the first utterance of this sequence.

Sticking with this words-as-objects kind of thing, later in the transcript Ethel says "Will you be good enough to empty this in there, and then I''ll fill it (h)up for you again." She's talking, by the way, about an ashtray. Now, "Will you be good enough" seemed in the first instance to be an awfully formal way, if you thought of it in its semantic sense, to be saying to her husband "Will you empty this?" so I was looking at it, and noticed something which I've been intrigued with and which this seemed to be another instance of. The other instances seemed to be partially conjectural also, until I had a bunch of them, and then they looked like a possible way of connecting things which was not made up but which was indeed operative. "Enough" is a member of the class, 'measure terms.' I want to notice its membership in measure terms because then I can notice things about measure terms, forgetting about "enough" specifically, which are obvious for this utterance. For one, if we were marking the local occurrences of contrast terms, then "empty" and "fill" would have been isolated out as such an occurrence. And "empty" and "fill" contrast as measure terms. Now there is a just prior use of a measure term when Ethel says "You better put some more in the dish Ben," and there is a just consequential use of a measure term, when Ben says "Max doesn't know what he's missing." So we have flurry of measure terms occurring.

Let me hold off the argument I want to make, and give another fragment, from a different conversation.

What's been happening is the past three times she's been over here, she's been feeling us out by saying, oh, she'll say, like this morning "Oh I'll come over and we'll all have supper together." And then about ten minutes later she said "Well, I'm not gonna come because you two never get a chance to be alone and I feel that I'm intruding." And I said "Well come on over Kit, we'll all eat supper here." And uh she's been doing that now for three or four days.

When I looked at that I was wondering why in the world would he say "What's been happening is the past three times . . ." rather than, e.g., "recently" or something like that. It seemed to me that you could say "the past two times," but "the past three times" begins to get awfully precise, i.e., you don't indefinitely count events. Now "three times" might not seem all that peculiar, but if you listen to number uses for counting events, then after "two" you begin to get approximates, or something special is being said.

I began to wonder if an environment of number words made a place for more number words; that is, if "the past three times" turned on that the problem being talked about is that there is a couple, and two girls live next door to them; one of those girls is very friendly with the couple, comes over all the time, and is now embarrassed that those two never get a chance to be alone, but are involved in this threesome. That is, her problem is focussed by those numbers. And in telling this story about the "two" of us and the "three" of us, that focus might provide some kind of source for an extension of number uses around it; specifically, some surplus of number uses. The idea roughly being that you might be able to look for flurries, for some class, of its terms. When perhaps not all the terms of that class that are occurring in some small fragment had equivalent sources, but that some are occurring by reference to the fact that a bunch of the others had already occurred or were going to occur in the already-planned talk. And in the data at hand we have, not a flurry of number terms, but a flurry of measure terms ("more," "enough," "fill," "empty," "missing").

Here is a similar sort of thing, occurring later in the same conversation. The topic is altogether changed. Ethel is telling a long story about some friends of hers and Ben's who have a son around Bill's age. The story involves a complaint by the friends about their son, which Ethel delivers very sympathetically to the friends' complaint. At one point in the story the son is in Los Angeles and has to go down to La Jolla, and Ethel is telling how her friends came to go down to La Jolla with him.

Ethel: but tuh, he kept sayin' "Well how'm I gonna get down tuh La Jolla. How'm I gonna get down tuh La Jolla." A:nd uh,
Ben: W̄'they've got, // they, ha:ve two ca//:rs.
Ethel: I guess they could–
Ethel: I guess they could have uh– uh given him a ca:r,// y'kno::w,
Ben: There's two cars. They're only dri//vin' one.

> *Ethel* :   But they were prou– This is the f–<u>first</u> time in <u>m</u>any yea:rs thet
>   they've been alo:ne with him fer say <u>two days</u>. En I guess they
>   wanniduh <u>be</u>, <u>with</u> him. ˙hhhh So, you haftuh view it from both
>   si:des.

Now the "both sides" business might be kind of weird. It's not that she's
been viewing it from both sides. The qustion is, is the "both sides" some kind
of takeoff from this series of twos that they have just gone through?

The rough idea is that if you don't always read the transcript contentwise
– where if you were looking at "good enough" contentwise you wouldn't see
the "enough" particularly as a measure term – you might come to find small
flurries of some class of words. And if you find them, you can make kinds of
issues for how you would come to be explaining, e.g., why she said "Will you
be good enough" or "You have to view it from both sides." And my feeling
is that you ought to be allowing the possible development of a picture in
which at some point in utterence sequences people are partially assembling
their talk in a way similar to the way you do it in some kinds of board games
– out of what we've already built. They're doing some sorts of recombinations
and are exceedingly sensitive to historical developments and extensions on
what we've so far said. And this is not talking about it in terms of what they
topically say, but, for whatever they say, in terms at least of where they get
the words they're using.

Q: Are you saying that "Will you be good enough" is not selected out of
a bunch of things like "Would you be so kind," but is sound-selected?

HS: What I am wondering about is whether it's at all appropriate to say
that the alternative class members are to be derived from "Will you be good
enough" by considering what sort of a polite object it is and saying "Would
you be so kind" is another, but that "Will you be good enough" is partially
selected, e.g., by reference to the massive ongoing occurrence of terms like
"best," "better," "delicious," "good," and by reference to the local flurry of
measure terms like "more," "fill," "empty." It might not be anything like
that, but if someone were going to make something out of the measure terms
and the assessment terms that they've so far used, then they can do it in this
request form with "good enough," and "Will you be good enough" pops
into her head independent of a search for something like "Would you be so
kind." Now I don't really know if this is the case, but as a matter of aesthetics
I would prefer that it were. and I would be, e.g., stacking things in that
direction in my re-examination of it.

Q: Could you include the "wanna"s and "gonna"s and "inna"s that are
going on, aside from the beginning of utterances there?

HS: Yes, you could stick them in as another development. I wasn't tracking
the internal "... on ..." sounds, I was looking at the track that ran for
beginnings of utterances. But sure, that's another. I used to figure that I ought
to put everything I could see onto the board. Then somebody remarked the
fact that people were finding things for themselves, and it became obvious
that if I didn't put up everything I saw, there would be room for people to

find them themselves. They could say "Oh look at that. There *are* things happening here." Where, if all that has been done is to assert what I see going on here, it looks like maybe it's there, but you get more convinced if you see that thing happening yourself than by my pointing them out. But in fact I hadn't noticed those internal ". . . on . . ." sounds.

Q: Couldn't that be carried too far?

HS: The whole problem is that it's nowhere in the first instance. And the issue is to pull it out and raise the possibility of its operation. It might be that the only basis for doing that, which would get anybody to do it, would be under the hope that it was really much more important than it would turn out to be. So the fantasy that leads you to try to work on it is that it might turn out to have some really outrageous operation. I guess I don't think so, but while I'm working with it I'm going to propose that it could be. Otherwise it's kind of boring. Now one virtue for going through this sort of thing is to establish for yourself that there is a texture to what these people are doing, that can be put on the transcript in just these sorts of ways, before you begin to get much involved in what might be more difficult aspects of the thing. You might otherwise find yourself looking at a transcript that you didn't have any way to begin working with.

Turning now to what's going on in this sequence, I eventually want to get at why Ben and Ethel keep reasserting that Max should have some herring. I want to deal with a variety of aspects of the sequence they employ, beginning with Ethel's first utterance, "Bring some out so that Max could have some too," to which he says "I don't want any." So when it looks like the herring will be made available for him to have some, he turns it down. And, an offer being turned down, that can be that, routinely enough. Here we don't have that kind of a development. It's turned down, it's nonetheless brought out, and it's reoffered (it gets reoffered and reoffered, but at first it's just reoffered). So the question is why, in that it's turned down, is it brought out and reoffered? And there is a real point to taking the thing step by step.

Let's focus on Ethel's "Bring some out so that Max could have some too," considering it first of all by reference to a possible dilemma of sorts that Ben could be in, given that Ethel has told him to bring it out for Max and Max has said no. The dilemma being should Ben bring it out or shouldn't he, i.e., which one of them should he listen to. Now this is forgetting about whether Ben would have wanted to bring it out in any event. That is to say, an argument could readily be developed that Ben was perfectly well going to bring the stuff out, he didn't need Ethel telling him to bring it out, and, that Max said he didn't want any doesn't then make any puzzle for him about whether he should bring it out. So I'm not going to make a case for Ben's bringing out the herring because Ethel told him to, but let's initially consider it that way, as though at least part of the basis for Ben bringing it out is Ethel's telling him to, and the way she tells him to. Under that circumstance, Max's "I don't want any" might be relevant to whether Ben should bring it out or not. That is, if he brings it out he's listening to Ethel not to Max, and

if he doesn't, he's listening to Max not to Ethel – or so it might be said on some literal interpretation of what Ethel and Max have said.

Now, that sort of dilemma doesn't occur for Ben, in part by virtue of a consideration of what both Ethel and Max could be doing. Ethel could perfectly well have said "Bring some out so that we can have some too," or "Bring some out for me," etc., i.e., she could perfectly well be entitled to be a recipient just as much as anybody else, or needn't locate some particular recipient. And the relevance of that is that some people might choose to ask for something to be brought out, intending to eat some, but ask for it on behalf of someone else. So that Ethel could be heard by Ben as saying, in the way that Ethel likes to say such things, that she wants some but she doesn't want to ask for herself, and has here used a way of making a request which involves attending to someone else – that one being the person present to whom others owe most deference, i.e., the oldest one there, which Max happens to be. That is to say, in asking not for herself, there may be some observable orderliness to whom she asks on behalf of. That some such person as Max would get picked is, I think, an orderly aspect of the choice involved in a request that is 'not for myself,' i.e., someone to whom, in bringing things out, one could be paying deference. In which case, not only the bringer, but the asker can also be paying deference, aside from using Max as a vehicle for getting the herring out.

Under that situation, Max's "I don't want any" can be an equally allusive thing, in which he's saying, not "I won't eat any," but "Don't bring it out on my behalf." That is to say, in the first instance saying "I don't want any" when none is there is quite different from saying "I don't want any" when something is there. And that is known, i.e., a common, known, pattern is: Being offered something that isn't present, people turn it down. They turn it down under the auspices of "I don't want to be a bother," "Don't go to any trouble for me." And that difference can partially account for the reoffering of the stuff when it's there. So, if someone says "Would you like some X?" when the stuff isn't there, someone can say "No thanks." If the stuff is then brought out, that they said "No" doesn't provide that they're not asked again. And when asked again, they may well say "Yes." At least one difference, then, between the scene of the first offer and the scene of later offers is that the stuff is, on the occurrence of the first offer, not present. So in a way, Ethel's request could be perfectly well to be recognized to be for something *she* wants, and Max's turndown could be seen as something you shouldn't take seriously.

So at least in part one can account for the occurrence of a reoffer by noticing that in the first instance the stuff wasn't there and in the second instance it was, where the initial rejection doesn't count for the reoffer. You can, then, do a reoffer in the same terms as the offer, though there can be some change; e.g., "Have some," "Have a piece," and as we get here, "One piece" – where the "One piece" is now something that attends "I know you don't want any, but you don't have to *eat* it, just *try* it." Again, the reoffer can be done in more or less the same terms as the offer, whereas, as occurs later on, when the

second rejection "I don't want" is done – in more or less the same way as the original rejection – then the offer-form changes. Later offer-forms take account of the second rejection's being "I don't want any" and fit the issue posed by it, i.e., they no longer provide for it as a reasonable rejection, where the reoffer has allowed for the reuse of "I don't want any" as a reasonable rejection. That is to say, when the person has said, now in the food's presence, "I don't want any," you don't repeat "Would you like . . ." or "Have some." But that doesn't mean you can't do another offer, because you can find another way of doing an offer; one which doesn't provide for "I don't want any" as its rejection. Such things as "You'd better have some because we're not going to eat for a while," for example, to which "I don't want any" is not an appropriate return. Those sorts of shifts take place and, again, that they don't take place right from the beginning has to do with the difference between the stuff being there and not being there. So there is at least some orderliness to why the offer-form can be preserved across its first two occurrences, and when the offer-form gets changed.

Now I want to pick up on something relevant to how Ethel gets the stuff out, and her "Oo Max have a piece," because there are some nice similarities between those two things. Ethel, having asked that the stuff be brought out for Max, is now eating some. However, what she does in her appreciation of the stuff is to turn herself into someone who's not 'eating' it, but 'tasting it for Max.' So she retains her position, first of having it brought out for Max, and then eating it as a taster for Max. And that kind of a thing is not altogether odd. There are people who can find a whole range of things to be doing not on their own behalf but that others might enjoy. She could be in a position of, having had this stuff brought out and now eating heartily, feeling for herself that she's making sacrifices, i.e., that she's done this thing not at all on her own behalf. I don't say this terribly lightly, in that a great deal of what's involved here has to do with how these people, Ben and Ethel, while eating and enjoying this stuff, are finding themselves burdened by Max. And that's part of what we want to be getting to when we ask the question, why do they go on and on in their reoffering? So the "Oo Max have a piece" as Ethel's first response on eating and liking the stuff, is in some possibly nice relationship to the way she gets the stuff out, "Bring some out so that Max could have some too."

We get a movement from a variety of offers, to a request – not to eat but to taste, "Max, one piece," through the warning format, "You better eat something because you're gonna be hungry before we get there," to, finally, some sort of quasi-threat, "I don't want you to get sick." (In parallel to that, the herring becomes transformed to "Eat something.") I want to deal with the relationship of the offer-transforms to some changes in identities of the parties. And what I mean by changes in identity doesn't have to do with changing from identities they had at the beginning to identities that they didn't have at beginning, but it's a changing of *operative identities*, where the identities they end up with are identities they have in the world, but that they weren't employing earlier on. And we'll find that the sequence of

offer-transforms operates via a series of identity changes that progressively provide further transforms. That is to say, at the various rejection points, in order to proceed one has to find not simply another offer-form to proceed with, but a form which is usable for and by the one to whom you are offering.

Now if we go back to the beginning, then some initial bases for making offers are at least and maybe nothing more than that the people who are making the offers have eaten the stuff and liked it, and there is somebody else present who hasn't. Somebody in a room with a bunch of people and stuff on the table that isn't segregated onto various people's plates can, tasting something, remark on it in such a way as to have it be heard not simply that they're congratulating whoever bought it or made it, but that they're inviting everybody else to eat it. And any person who thereafter eats it can comment on it in just such a way, i.e., appreciate it, and appreciate it in such a form as to have whoever else has not yet eaten it hear themselves being invited to eat, just by virtue of that the current eaters commend the thing. So, for the initial series of offers, there need be no more between the people than that they are gathered together and this eating has begun, and the food is available to all of them. That situation doesn't require, e.g., that one isolate people who stand in a relationship to you of 'child,' 'spouse,' etc., though those sorts of things would be involved if, e.g., the food were distributed on various people's plates. In that case, though there perfectly well might be offerings, they would be fairly restricted. But when things are not arranged that way, any member of the group can say "Boy this is great, everybody ought to have some," i.e., not mobilizing any more particular relationships than that we're all here together.

But there are some facets of this sequence which involve some sorts of sharper things in it. For one, while Ben announces that the herring is wonderful, Ethel takes over the job of having the stuff brought out, at least in the management sense. Now Ethel is not the hostess here; she's mother of the host and wife of the one who made the announcement. But the hostess, her daughter-in-law, is not present and Ethel, the only currently present adult female, takes over the business of having the snack brought out. She also has it brought out in aid of Max, who is her stepfather-in-law and is now also a widower. And not just anyone would choose to say "Bring some out" or "Bring some out so that X can have it." That is to say, these sorts of statements occur with serious restrictions on them, having to do with whose place it is, who this is relative to whose place this is, who it is that's being referred to, who it is that's being ordered, and various things like that. Not anybody in a room with persons gathered around on some social occasion says something like "Bring out the drinks" or "Bring out the herring" or "Bring out the herring so that X can have some." But that Ethel does it, she does by virtue of a series of positions she has, relative to this place and to the absent hostess.

Now some person having been offered and having turned it down, the offer having been made by virtue of that the stuff is here and available, there

are ways to reoffer. And you can try to play out, if you like, some of the ways that reoffering can be done, under various relationships that parties might have to each other. If the parties are unrelated, then it may be that once you get beyond, e.g., pleading with them in a non-serious way, you're at the end of the line. Even to take a step like "It's going to be a while before we get there" is to invoke managerial work, and not just anyone will choose to do so. Nor, for that matter, might there be any reason for them to do so, i.e., they've offered, so that's that. That is to say, one doesn't want to simply ask *how* could they go about extending this sequence indefinitely, but one also wants to wonder at least as much, why in the world *would they?* I want to be suggesting that as between Ben and Ethel and Max there is a relationship which allows future forms, like warnings and threats, to get done, and which can at the same time provide part of the source for them to fail.

Max is recently a widower. A thing that Ben and Ethel – his kids, so to speak – can be in a position to be now attending, is that they have become responsible for him. It's not that he's old. That's not at all the issue. It's that he's old and newly widowered. Because if he was old and his wife was there, then she would be the one, if anyone, to be insistent that he eat. But in that he's widowered, the question of who's responsible for him is one that Ethel and Ben can come to figure they have. And it's on just such occasions as when he does something like refuse an offer of food, that the phenomenon of their possible responsibility for him can come into operation for them and lead them to see that they ought to do something about it. That is to say, it's his turning down what in the first place may be an offer to anybody that provides for them focussing on *his* turning it down, and focussing on that by virtue of its making for them a question of their satisfying of their responsibilities to him – which is something that would otherwise never occur to them. If he was offered some food and turned it down when his wife was sitting there, it would never occur to them that he's going to get sick or any such thing, and it would just pass by. Maybe the wife would say something, maybe she wouldn't but if she didn't, that would be that. When he turns it down and he's now a widower, they can see their relationship involved in it, and find that they have to go on insisting.

Now this situation of being responsible, which can be actuated so to speak by his turning food down – i.e., they get reminded of it when he says "I don't want any" – would not perhaps be the sort of thing that would have led them in the first place to offer it. I'm trying to separate out what would lead someone to offer something in the first place, and what might lead them to reoffer it on its being turned down. You get, then, a picture, not of a sequence that unfolds as though I planned it this way, i.e., "I'll make an offer and if you turn me down I'll do the following," but one in which I make an offer to somebody and when they turn it down I can look at the rejection to see what to do; I can then notice who did the rejection and can then think about the rejection and find that, e.g., in that *that* one did a rejection I ought to do another offer, and find a way to do another offer, maybe, or find that I ought to change the offer in some particular way.

As they proceed through the sequence and Max keeps doing the rejections, that status of his – that he has no one to take care of him – can be made more alive. Their reoffers can be specifically turning him into a 'stubborn old man.' Seeing the stubborn old man, they can see that he's the stubborn old man that they're responsible for, i.e., that he doesn't take care of himself. In part, then, the person he becomes in the sequence, the person they have got to take care of, is an identity that the sequence brings into focus. It's just a person who's sitting there. He is offered something, he says "No," it is offered again and he says "No" again, and we can imagine him ageing in the reoffering, with them saying "Oh my God it's that old man sitting there not eating anything, he's going to get sick for sure."

Now as it can happen that they see he's now the person they're responsible for, we can have the reverse of it. He can be finding something happening as well, which can be something like this: To use words that he more or less uses on another occasion, for 35 years someone has been telling him what to eat and when to eat, and now that he doesn't have a wife to tell him what to eat, he'll damn well eat what he wants. But as soon as he happens to be in that position, somebody else figures "He's all by himself, somebody has to watch out for him." That is to say, the battle can have in part to do with the fact that what, for them, is that Max has no one to take care of him, is for Max a situation of he can do what he wants. And to allow them to win in such a scene is to acknowledge that they are the ones who are now responsible for him, in the sense of, they can tell him what to do. So it's kind of an awfully neat scene. Whereas they can figure that they're doing as they ought, and that he's being obstinate for no good reason, he can indeed have a principled issue on such occasions; that is, that he's damn well got to get them to recognize that they can't force him to do things or he's going to be turned into their little boy.

But in that battle, whatever its outcome, he will properly become the object that he inevitably has to end up as, whatever he does, i.e., a burden on them. And if you know an old man in a family, then you know he's a burden. What we want to do is think of 'the old man, burden in the family' as kind of a naturally evolved object. We want to see how it is that the burden he ends up being can be the product of some series of ways that he is pushed into doing things like being obstinate, stubborn, laconically rejective, by virtue of the way that things that are re-insisted for him extendedly, are not ever re-insisted for anybody else. And that has its ultimate possible irony in that it's kind of neat that they after all are the heirs, and to properly inherit his money they should suffer and he should be a burden so that when he dies there's a kind of relief involved. It's not like when he dies they will be in the sheerest misery. Coming to inherit, they will have been relieved of the burden that he had become when he was left alone, and they will also get something that's kind of a payment for having taken care of him. Though in this case the story is turning out quite differently; he isn't letting himself become that, he's spending all his money.

Let's look at another sort of thing that's involved. We think of an 'offer'

as something different than a 'request' or a 'warning' or a 'threat.' But in some situations the offer is simply the first version of getting the person to do something. A person can say yes to an offer which is heard as the first version of something, where they say yes in order to accept the nicest version of what's being given. Alternatively, someone can use the offer-form when they and the other know that if you don't 'accept the offer' you'll do it anyway. One wants then to reconsider these objects – offer, request, warning, threat – not as though they're a series of different things, but to see them as sequential versions of a something. That they are sequential versions of a something can operate to account for how come the sequence gets stopped at any stage, i.e., at the initial stage, that of an 'offer,' somebody who's good enough to do the offer instead of right off doing an insistence, may well get an acceptance. You can then have A saying "Would you like . . . ?" and B saying "Yes," where A is saying "Would you like . . . ?" as their specifically first version of something, and B is saying "Yes," not by virtue of "Yes I want" – you can't read this to see that they desire this thing because they accept the offer – but by virtue of the known sequence that will eventuate if they don't. That is, they accept the courtesy, and the courtesy is what is offered in an 'offer.'

Perhaps it is sufficiently early on into Max's widowerhood so that they have not yet run him through enough of these sequences so that he sees that when he gets this offer he should accept it right off or else he's going to be run through the rings until he does. And eventually, then, you have the ideal socialized seventy-year-old who, whatever they're offered, very nicely accepts. They don't see an offer as at all the same sort of thing that you might see if you're a guest at a party: If somebody offers something, you think "Do I want it or don't I want it?" But they know it as "That's the first step." So the sequential development here is not simply some possible natural sequence in which one object is replaced with another, replaced with another, replaced with another, but the initial one is treatable by parties as a version of the later ones, and dealt with by reference to what it might become, where eventually you don't get these elaborate sequences, but just "Have a piece" "Okay, sure."

Part VI
Spring 1971

April 2

Introduction

Let me give some introductory remarks. The course is about conversation. While for some people it could be a first course, for somebody else it could be a fifth course or whatever it might be. I haven't made it a practice for about the last three or four years to use this course to teach people how to analyze conversation, for a variety of reasons, some of which I'll mention. What I tend to do is to analyze conversation in the ways that I analyze conversation, which involves that I come in each week and put a bunch of stuff on the blackboard, or on brown wrapping paper, and consider it. And if you wanted to learn how to analyze conversation, then it appears that if you watch me do it enough and try the exercises that we give out, then over time you develop some facility at that. What the virtues are of that facility, I really couldn't say.

One reason why I don't have the course as one in which I teach you how to analyze conversation is that courses in how to do things, academic things, seem to me to have some massive institutional support for their getting done the way they get done. That is to say, I could teach you calculus beause that's something the university has decided you ought to know how to do. But nobody has yet decided that you ought to know how to analyze conversation, and certainly I wouldn't make that decision. And on the other hand, I'm teaching in the university, and what I do is study conversation, and what I teach is my work. All the stuff I present is my research. And I tend not to present stuff that I presented last year. I tape record the lectures, and the past courses are kind of available; anybody who wants to read some past course can go up to the office and get a copy of one of them or four of them or whatever they want. Now some of the courses are geared to an introduction; like I'd wanted at that time to do an overview of where I was. But recently I haven't tended to do that at all. Recently I've been tending to bring into the class things that I'm pretty well currently working on. So I take a bunch of stuff that I've been working at for the last three months or six months or whatever, and organize it for the week before the class and then deliver an organization of it in the class. And that tends to be about specific fragments of conversation. And it tends to have, over three or four weeks, some thematic connection; like there are some problems which I will be working on in the class, though I won't much be developing a thing over the semester. You could, I guess, come in any time and see an instance of the sorts of things I do. And you could stay for three or four semesters, or one semester, and see a lot of instances.

Now I feel kind of equivocal about doing it that way. That way I get what I want out of the class, which is to organize my current work and get it down

on paper and then let my friends see where I am. The lectures get taped, they then get typed, and then they get sent around to whoever it is that writes me letters saying they're interested in seeing what's happening right now. And that's my audience. That is, the audience that I think of being directed to is not here – or it's only incidentally here, if you choose to be one of them. It's an audience of people some of whom I know and some of whom I don't know, and it grows and changes. And I feel a bit equivocal about that; like why don't I spend time trying to address the particular people who are here?

And with regard to teaching you how to analyze conversation, I'm not too clear on why people would want to learn to do that. I don't figure it's all that useful – I mean useful for doing better conversation, or useful for figuring out "what's wrong with my conversation?" or figuring out what somebody was trying to do to you when they did something or other. Aside from which I have deeper reasons, having to do with that I feel pretty confident that whatever you would think is useful is probably not very useful. And even though I guess I could show you things that you would think are useful, I don't want to be doing that because I don't think they're useful, so I'm not going to sell them as useful even though that could work out in its fashion.

I guess I also figure that people just take a course for an hour, for whatever reasons there may be. And the choice of how to spend an hour is made from within some rather narrow constraints; it's not like some passerby picked up the catalog of classes at a bus stop in Santa Ana and said "That's the way I'm going to spend the next hour." But it's among the set of courses that you could take, given that you're a student spending your time now taking courses, "which one should I take?" And then it gets chosen in a variety of ways which involve eliminating various things, etc., etc. It's not a matter of someone waking up in the morning and deciding "what I want to know is calculus" or conversation, and then going and finding out where to get it. But that's *my* view of it. That's what I do. I wake up in the morning and want to study conversation, so I get up and do it. And if I knew that there were such people listening, then I would teach to them. Now there are such people listening, but they're not here. So I teach to them. And anybody else can come listen in. That's okay. I want you to know that I understand that you're listening in. And you, if you're not kidding yourselves, know the same thing. I don't have any feeling that the particular collection of people who come here are 'coming here,' i.e., coming because they know what's going on and that's what they want. And to treat them as though they are, is kind of a mutual con game in which I pretend that you came to take this course, picking it out of some collection of courses because that's what you wanted to learn, and maybe you pretend that's so, also. And then we play along with each other that here's this class and they're all interested in what's going on, when I don't have any reason to believe that, and you certainly know that's not so. So it would be kind of silly for us to go through a thing of "Okay, I'm going to teach you how to analyze conversation and you're going to sit there and learn

how to analyze conversation" when you couldn't care less about learning how to analyze conversation – except if you *cared* to learn how to analyze conversation you could probably learn by listening to enough of the work, and also by coming around and letting us know that you're intrested in learning how to analyze conversation. And we have people who will help you try to do it.

So, since I don't really want to spend our time conning each other, I try to find that sort of thing that I can do, and you know how to listen for an hour, so you can spend your time listening for an hour, or any way you please. If it turned out that some bunch of the class decided to spend the time learning how to analyze conversation, it would be easy enough to get me to try to teach you how. Among the kinds of things you could do would be, when I run through something you could ask me to go over it and develop it a bit more closely, or you could ask me why were those decisions made about what's happening rather than some others. And I'll do that. I mean, I'll do it if it looks like it's not one person's aim that they want to learn a little more, because if it's just one person or two people, then the class will let them know that, and those two people and I can go off and have our party somewhere else and some other time. And I really don't want to bother the bunch of people who happen to be here, with what may or would or will seem to be dreary details. So that's kind of the mess that I see us as being in; here together for no good reason.

You have rights to ask for clarification, ask for better statements, ask me why or how I did that, or is there more of that or is there a better way of doing it, and I will try to help you out. At least one kind of rule that I would like to have operating is, while you're free to argue and question and all that, I would appreciate it if you don't do it in the course of the lecture but do it at the end of the lecture. The reason for that is, if you do it in the middle of a lecture then I get completely disoriented. Since I normally have a big package of stuff I'm trying to keep in my mind to lay out, if you interrupt me then I'm liable to pick up what you're saying and forget where I was, and not be able to get back to it. And somebody will surely do it, and I will surely take them up and I will surely get lost. I hope it's early in the course rather than later so that we don't have to go through it too many times before we learn it works that way. I'll give you as much time at the end as you need. Nobody ever asks for such things anyway, but I'll give you as much time at the end as you need, and occasionally I'll begin the class by asking if there are any things that you've had in mind that have been bothering you, if so please tell me what they are and I'll talk to them.

So it's not a terrible constraint. All I'm asking really is that if you have something that bothers you, that you write it down while the class is going on and ask me about it afterwards. That's not too much of a delay between when you get a thought and when you express it. I take an awful long time between when I get a thought and when I express it. The character of conversation is that you'd better say whatever you have to say fast or you'll forget it, but I would appreciate it if the class didn't run that way. It's a little bit of discipline,

that you learn that when you have a thought, somebody who's been thinking about that thing might have had that thought already and eventually they will solve it (or get into worse trouble). And if you wrote something down you might think about it, wonder about it youself a little bit. So bring it up afterwards. And everything is on tape: if I say "I didn't say anything like that," you have a chance to say "It's right there in black and white."

Is there any business that people have? Oh. There are things like what do you have to do to get a grade. We hand out a bunch of assignments over the course of the class. You're expected to do the assignments – and people can do them – and there's a last assignment and your grade is some version of your last assignment. There's no exams. Is there anything anybody wants to know about?

Q: If we are incidental observers to what is your primary interest of appealing to your principal audience, why bother spending time with the class? Why bother stifling yourself with 40 people? Why can't you do what you do?

HS: Well, there's a variety of reasons. I get paid. It turns out to have worked kind of well for me, in that it's a good vehicle for me to organize my work. And in some ways it's much more uplifting for the class. That is to say, instead of being treated as the people you think you are, you might be being treated as the people you might let yourselves be. I suppose that people are more serious than they are, and I therefore don't spend much time talking down to the class. That's justification, which only turns on that I heard an aggressive sense to your question and didn't feel like being counter-aggressive yet. But I've been saying what my experience in teaching, which is a long time, has led me to feel. And I just don't choose to pretend otherwise.

But there are reasons which we could work out, which would make doing it this way just the perfect way to do it. Some people consider it the perfect way to do it. And I'm only saying that you're incidental for some unspecified people who could choose otherwise. The class has plenty of power. They can make me miserable, make me hate to come here, and on the other hand they can make me feel kind of willing to come here, and also make me fly a little better. If you're worried about my effort, it's harder to do it this way than to talk to where you are, because then I could spend the whole semester doing things I've already done in past courses, or introducing you to stuff that you can have access to otherwise. And here I've got to work. That's why I do it, in part. So I can force myself to work.

Now, when I take a fragment and put it on the board, it's gone through a very elaborate filtering process and has ben isolated because I figure there's something new in that fragment that I've learned. So it's not designed for teaching you everything about conversation. It's put up because there are some new things – typically altogether new things for me – that I've been able to get my hands on from that fragment. So each one will be attacked in different – sometimes drastically different – ways. I will also pick out and talk to other things than the core thing I'm interested in a fragment for. There are a series of topics that I'm kind of working on, that a fragment may more or

less permit me to deal with, and I'll tell you about them in some sort of way when I'm telling you about that fragment.

The gross aim of the work I'm doing is to see how finely the details of actual, naturally occurring conversation can be subjected to analysis which will yield the technology of conversation. So the idea is to take singular sequences of conversation and tear them apart in such a way as to find rules, techniques, procedures, methods, maxims – that's a collection of terms that more or less relate to each other and which I use somewhat interchangeably – which rules, procedures, techniques, methods, etc., can be used to generate the orderly features we find in the conversations we examine. The idea being, then, to come back to the singular things we observe in a singular sequence, with some rules that handle those singular features, and also necessarily handle lots of other events as well, other than this fragment. So what we're dealing with is the technology of conversation, and we're trying to *find* that technology out of actual fragments of conversation so that we can impose as a constraint on some technology that it actually deals with singular events and singular sequences of events – which is a reasonably strong constraint on some set of rules.

And I'm not particularly going to contrast the way I operate on conversation with the way other social scientists operate on anything else. If you take other social science courses you may see similarities, differences; that's your business.

April 5
Poetics; Avoiding speaking first

The following minute or so of conversation happens to be from a group therapy session for teenagers that was recorded in 1964. There are three teenaged males present, and a therapist. They've been talking for maybe an hour and a half, and one of the fellows, Ken, has been starting to say something about what he did "last night" – last night being Friday night, this being Saturday morning. He's said something like "I went with four guys to the Pike," an amusement park in Long Beach. Okay, that's where we are. The names we're using are not their real names.[1]

Roger:	(Isn't) the New Pike de<u>press</u>ing?
Ken:	hhh The Pike?
Roger:	Yeah! Oh the place is disgusting. // Any day of the week.
Jim:	I think that Pop is // depressing, it's just–
Roger:	But you go– you go– take.
Jim:	Those guys are losing money. hehh
Roger:	But you go down–dow–down to th'New Pike there's a buncha // people, oh:: an' they're old, an' they're pretending they're having fun, but they're really not.
(Jim):	((cough))
Ken:	How c'n you tell. Hm?
Roger:	They're–they're tryina make a living, but the place is on the decline, 's like a de//generate place.
Jim:	So's Pop.
(Roger):	(Y'know?)
Jim:	Pop is just – –
Roger:	Yeah i–it // it's one of these pier joints, y'know?
Jim:	It's a flop heh
Roger:	An' (there's) all these depressing people an'they're– an' they getting worse an' worse y'know becomin' alcoholics an' all kindsa– all kindsa things an' uh y'know they're tryina make a living an' m–having–making people have fun an' pretending <u>they're</u> having fun, an' they're really not. They get unhappy, an' they– an' they're stuck in this small little circle this w– y'know this little sea place, y'know, I mean–
Jim:	((very softly) Have y'ever been down there?

[1]In the original April 2 lecture, Sacks started to work with this data. The introduction to the fragment and some of the subsequent discussion comes from that lecture, the unedited pp. 7 and 12–14.

(/)

Roger :	It–it's just wild. It's another way of // life y'know?
Jim :	heh
(*Dan*):	(No,)
Ken :	I thought it was a ball. I– // (don't care if you–)
Roger :	(Awright now an' look at the–) buh–an' I walked outta there man, It's just uh– it wasn't like fun, (it) just ( ) // ( )–
Jim :	These old decrepit ladies in these litle pizza joints an' never makin any // money, y'know
Roger :	Yeah an' – an' you know they– eh people you know they c'm fr'm these horrible pasts an' everything y'know w't I m'n? They're walkin' around drunk wi' tattoos 'n all kinds 'n <u>fun</u> houses y'know 'n this– this is where they live.

An object in this fragment which is partially responsible for the fragment's being isolated is instanced by a series of words used in it that begin with 'de;' not necessarilly spelled 'd-e': I'm talking about the spoken language: "depressing," "disgusting," "decline," "degenerate," "decrepit." And a notable feature, besides that a run of them occur, is that they are all 'negative' words in this instance, while of course it's not the case that all words that begin in that way are 'negative,' e.g., 'delightful,' 'divine,' 'delicious.' And furthermore, it's not just that they have 'de' in the words, but the 'de' occurs at a same place in each word in which it's used, while of course the sound can occur at other places in a word: in the middle, e.g., 'fundamental,' at the end, etc. Those words are said by at least two parties to the conversation. It's not, in principle, that one guy happens to get on a thing where he starts using words like that, but that two of the primarily three people who speak use one or more of those words.

So there are, then, at least these features: There's a bunch of words that begin with 'de,' and they are all 'negative.' Now a question is, what's to be done with those initial sorts of noticeable aspects of the fragment? Now, characteristically what I'll be doing in the course is taking some observation and posing a problem and then trying to find a technology for solving the problem. And a kind of problem we can pose here is, how in the world do people find the words that they use? Where it seems reasonable to suppose that people are engaged in finding the words that they use in conversation, in the course of the conversation in which they're using them. And by 'finding them' I don't mean finding them anywhere, but using those they know. So that there are questions of how, *within conversation time*, like within the course of an utterance, do they get the words that they then say. Can we build any kinds of rules that will tell us how they might do that?

Plainly we could build lots of rules that could tell us things about how people get the words they then say. The most obvious and well-known class are rules that have to do with syntax, which tell us, e.g., that at a place after 'the' as an article, then only certain sorts of words will occur; nouns,

adjectives, etc. So there are a variety of ways of imposing constraints on how people go about selecting the words they use. Now those constraints don't get all that fine in yielding what words people *do* use. And it's in that light that we can focus in on what might be interesting about "depressing," "disgusting," "decline," "degenerate," "decrepit." Like we can ask, is it possible that in searching for words, people use a *history-sensitive* procedure? That is, do they engage in employing recent words as a source for finding new words? And if that's a possibility, how would they go about using the recent history of their talk or somebody else's talk in order to find new words? Words have lots of properties, and the idea is to see if we can't find some property that words have, that could be fixed on by a speaker in using what's happened in the past in order to get new words. For example, words have a bunch of sounds, and they have an ordering of the sounds in them. Suppose people used the sounds of words to find words. That's plausible. And there is a procedure that we know that people use when they're looking for something like a name that they know but they can't recall. That procedure is, essentially, to take the alphabet and start to go through it: Does the name begin with an A, does it begin with a B, etc. And that often works to find the name you're looking for.

Now, if you used the alphabet in some fixed order at every point in which you were searching for a word, then we could say that's not a history-sensitive procedure. And it would plainly have a variety of consequences to it that could be checked out. Like if the word that was found began with T, then we might expect that there would be a longer delay between when it was uttered relative to a last word, and when a word beginning with C was uttered. So we could rule out this kind of a thing if there was no noticeable difference in delay time relative to what a word began with. That is to say, we're not simply making up possible procedures but we're making up ones that could be checked out. One aspect, then, of the arguments one wants to develop about the 'de' series has to do with how a word is found. What I would argue in due course is not only that things like the 'de' series will emerge at a point in a conversation, but that they will then stop. That is, you want as well to account for why words like "depressing" don't end up occurring with the same sort of regularity throughout the rest of the conversation once they get started. And what one does indeed get is not that sort of continuity, but a kind of disjunction between sorts of things that go on in small fragments of the conversation.

Let me just for the moment point up some of the facets of sound and suchlike relations involved in this fragment; for now, only as a texturing device, and then I'll talk about what particularly interests me about this fragment. (And in passing, a reason for collecting the series of sorts of things I'm collecting and that I'm going to be just mentioning and dropping, has to do with a kind of justification that might be seriously developed for asserting that some sort of fragment has an elaborated organization which warrants pulling it out and working it over.) A thing you can notice about this fragment is that a bunch of the words that occur in it, that have marked

contrast terms to them, have such contrast terms occurring within this same fragment. So, for example, we find here: "these" and "those," "go to" and "come from," "in" and "out," "you" and "they," "man" and "ladies," "new" and "old," "ever" and "never," "pretending" and "really," "depressing" and "fun." That's another facet of a way in which things are operating closely and with some sort of density here.

And the one *sound* thing I pulled out is by no means the exclusive sound thing occurring here. There are other relationships, some of which, were they to be asserted right now would seem implausible as produced phenomena – whether artifactually produced by reference to some way in which words are found, or intendedly produced doesn't matter – one just wouldn't figure that to notice them is to notice something going on there. So, for example, there's a possibly notable relationship between *"degenerate"* and *"pier joint,"* having to do with *r-j-n-t recurring* in these. Admitting it for the moment just as, "Well, that might be a possible thing" – certainly it's a thing in poetry – then things like that happen to have more than a little occurrence within this particular fragment. For example, a similar sort of thing is perhaps "walkin' around drunk" and "all kindsa fun," or "alcoholics" and "all kindsa things."

The idea of picking these things up is, as I say, that of getting a sense of the textured character of a small fragment. By which I mean that the thing is put together in some way that has its parts – hopefully obviously – more closely connected to each other than you might suppose on participating in it, reading it over, listening to it, etc.; a connection which a not too close but not altogether incidental attention would begin to give you. Don't forget, we're talking about spontaneous conversation between three or four people. It's not a script, and it's not that somebody says something and then there's some marked pause and another person, looking to make a piece of poetic theatrical return, does something. There's essentially no pauses going on – and we mark them when they occur, say, at more than half a second between utterances. So this is talk at its usual rate. And the idea for now is just to get some idea of how closely attentive in some fashion people are to each other, where picking up the sounds, doing simple contrasts, etc., are ways that they may be doing being attentive to each other.

One also wants to get – not now but eventually – some idea of where these compactions of local organization occur. They don't build up in a conversation to some kind of finale where, say, at some point all people are doing is producing variants on what's so far been done. Though it can happen that within, say, a topic in conversation, there are places where people are almost exclusively employing the resources-so-far for the topic, to produce a next utterance. As in the following utterance, where there's relatively little that can't be locked back into what's already been said: "These old decrepit ladies in these little pizza joints an' never makin any money." For "pizza joints" we have a prior occurrence of "pier joint" and the last part of "decrepit." "Decrepit" comes back to the 'de' series. "Old" and "these" contrast with prior items, "new" and "those;" "ladies" contrasts with the just prior use of

"man," "never" with "ever," and "makin'. . . money" with the prior "losing money." But if conversation were proceeding simply in a step by step historical development in which parts are being picked up and put into a different organization, we might suppose that it would just continue that way, additively, and it does not. So one wants to deal with the disjunctiveness as well as the way things get put together within flurries or short sequences – or, as I might eventually get to claim, within a kind of unit within conversation that we otherwise talk about as 'topic,' but where we don't think of topics as having this sort of intensity of organization. And when we begin to collect the sorts of things that I'm noting here, we can feel that a serious attention to the way the talk is put together might pay. These sorts of things at least suggest some sort of close development.

Let me now begin to focus on what happens in this thing as a piece of sequence, extracting from it some aspects of the way it works sequentially. A kind of thing one can look at is Ken's question "The Pike?" At least a first reason for giving it a bit of attention is that it's a question that follows a question, where we have in mind that a usual sequence is not Q-Q, but Q-A. And when you get Q-Q, that second Q will often be a thing like "The Pike?" where some aspect of the prior question is isolated and returned as another question. Where, then, you often get as a characteristic pattern, something like Q-Q-A-A, in which you have an internal sequence. Something like this:

A :   Did you tell Mary we moved to the beach?
B :   Why, was she here?
A :   Yes.
B :   Yes.

As it happens, we don't have the pattern in this fragment, though we almost could have it. If Roger had stopped after this "Yeah," then he would be returning the floor to Ken to answer the original question: "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" "The Pike?" "Yeah." And then we might get Ken saying "Yes," or "No," or whatever. But that doesn't happen.

Now I want to do more than focus on a pattern that doesn't happen to be fully used here; I want to focus on some other aspects of this thing. I started off by saying that just before this question, "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" Ken had said something like "Last night I went with four guys to the Pike." Now I will informally say that it appears that Ken was going to tell a story about that last night's event. In due course, later on in the conversation he does indeed tell that story. What happens here is that Roger picks up on the mentioning of the place with a question of a sort. For sequential purposes it's better to think of it not as what he does is ask a question, but one might say he uses the *form* of a question to do some variety of things. We can then ask what might he be using the question form to do, and there are a lot of things we could say about it.

The thing I want to focus on is this: Roger is plainly indicating but not asserting that he thinks the New Pike is depressing. To say "Isn't the New

Pike depressing?" is sequentially altogether different than saying "God the New Pike is depressing." The way in which the two things are altogether different has to do with something we can begin to think of as the issue of who goes first and who goes second with respect to some possibly arguable matter. And I want to assert that you can take it as a first policy for examining conversation that people prefer to go second. And if you look at conversations you can look for people's strategies for avoiding going first. There are technical ways of developing that 'avoiding going first' is a thing, which I'm not going into here because I want to be focussing on this particular fragment. But to ask the question "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" has that character by virtue of the way such a sequence can work. And that is that if Ken then states a position about the New Pike – that it is depressing or that it isn't, and maybe why – Roger is then in a position to take that apart, and Ken is placed in a position of having to build a defense. That is to say, if you can put off going first, it's not just a matter of your going second, it's that you don't have to state your position or argument; instead, you can criticize the prior party's.

Now, the question "Isn't the New Pike depressing?," while it does not assert Roger's position, plainly reveals it. And if Ken is going to answer the question, he's got to answer it with knowledge that Roger is going to attack him if he says, e.g., "I like the place." That is information that Ken will plainly have, given the question. Further, that the New Pike is depressing is specifically a thing that Roger is raising knowing that Ken would, if he were free to, say otherwise. There are a variety of reasons for my saying that; among them, as a kind of intuitive point, that Ken has started to tell a story about what he did last night, Friday night – where Friday night is not just any 'last night.' And Roger can know that one kind of common thing about people, that happens to hold for Ken, is that unless he had a good time last night he wouldn't have started to tell the story. So the fact that he started to tell a story about what he did last night – involving going to an amusement place – could inform Roger that Ken was going to say he had a great time. Indeed, in this case he happens to say "I thought it was a ball," but I'm suggesting that that eventuation is one that Roger already knew would be developing.

In that regard let me sketch something out kind of briefly, just to give some further backing to the sequential movement here. Ken went to this place and had a good time. Roger has obviously been there and had a lousy time. Now, Roger has never mentioned the place. He could have come in some time and said he went to this place and had a lousy time. That could involve him in reporting some kind of a failure of an evening, and it could lead to various kinds of discussions of the ways in which he goes through the world. That is to say, leaving aside that this is a therapy session, if you're reporting an event and you're trying to make a case for both "I had a lousy time" and "the place is lousy" then you face certain obvious difficulties. On the other hand, Roger can save up the failings he has at evenings, and employ them as ways of debunking other persons' experiences. He doesn't have to tell us about an

evening he had. What he does instead is to talk about this place and its properties as negative in response to somebody else who proposes that they had a good time there. If we were to ask what's to be gained by saving lousy times that you've had, then a thing you can do with saved lousy times is to employ them in dealing with other people's happy times. And that as compared to feeling that if you don't tell the story it's not ever going to be usable.

Again, then, what Roger has done is to provide for Ken's having to defend a position as compared to himself stating a position that he would then be the one to defend. Now, that Roger does this doesn't mean that he's going to win the strategy sequence. You can try, via some technique, to get to go second, but it's by no means guaranteed that you will get to go second. There are tactics that permit someone else to avoid that outcome. And such a question as "The Pike?" can do that. It throws back to the other, who, should he then go and develop what he indeed had to say, can then have *his* position attacked. Though that can fail also, since it can be followed with "Yeah" period, and then Ken is back where he was when he tried "The Pike?," i.e., back to now stating his position and having it attacked – though again, he could move in other ways. But the idea is to take a question like "The Pike?" which might be treated simply as 'he isn't sure he heard what was said,' and give it a position within some developing argument with respect to some controversial matter – about which, if you watch conversation at all, you can see maneuverings. Looking at it, then, in terms of a simple distinction between going first and going second, we can begin to see that those are not equivalent positions, and also begin to see *why* they're not equivalent positions, i.e., that it's quite a different thing to develop a critique of someone's position than to develop a defense of your own.

Let me now pick up some further sorts of notably delicate aspects of the way this fragment moves. I want to point up a relationship between two utterances, "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" and "How can you tell?" Looking first at Ken's "How can you tell?," I want to say that what he's done is to focus on the more or less core possible weakness of Roger's argument. Roger's argued so far that the people at this place are "pretending they're having fun." Now to argue that people are pretending is kind of a delicate thing to argue, and the weakness that such an assertion can have is revealed by such a question as 'How can you tell?'' Ken's question here is not one that says "I disagree," but one wants to see that he has listened to Roger's position, not so much for whether he agrees or disagrees, but for wherein does its particular weakness lie, so that that weakness might be used by him without ever getting into the question of whether he agrees or not. "How can you tell?" is technically appropriate to the assertion "They're pretending," as Roger's "Isn't the place depressing?" turns out to be the appropriate way to criticize the New Pike. That is, the specific character of the Pike is that it's a "fun" place, and it's that specific character which is focussed on by calling it "depressing." So in these aspects of the way they deal with the place they're talking about, and with each other's talk, there is an orientation towards each other which is at least mildly going for the jugular. And again, this is taking

place in 'no time' we might as well say. It's not that Roger spoke and Ken sat down and tried to figure out what would be the best possible attack he could make; it's the attack he makes on the completion of Roger's utterance. And that paralleling of the attention to a distinctive weakness can suggest that they are moving with a kind of close attention to each other in a conflictive way.

April 9
Technical competition

I want to talk about something I'm going to call 'technical competition in conversation.' I want that understood in a very special sense: It is *technical* competition in conversation. Forget about the word 'competition' however you might normally use it about people competing in conversation, e.g., that in Roger and Ken's argument they are 'competing.' I'm not thinking of anything like that. I'm going to develop something called 'technical competition in conversation,' and talk to how that works and what its sources are.

Last time I mentioned that this fellow Ken had begun what we can think of as a possible line of development, one that I suggested would have eventuated in his telling a story about his trip to the New Pike, a story which he does indeed tell later on, a story which involved him having a good time. He doesn't get to tell it in this fragment. Roger, while taking him up on an aspect of the line he might have been developing, shifts that line of development slightly. And one wants to have in mind a conception of possible lines of development that a conversation can take for now, as things that speakers are attentive to in terms of whether they're going to go along with such a possible line as they can see developing, or whether they're going to change that possible line.[1] Now, I don't much want to focus on any possible competition between Roger and Ken with respect to the line of development that gets taken. Rather, I want to focus on the competition between Roger and Jim in that respect. Early on in the fragment we get:

> *Roger*: ((about the New Pike)) Oh the place is disgusting. // Any day of the week.
> *Jim*: I think that Pop is // depressing, it's just–
> *Roger*: But you go–you go– take–
> *Jim*: Those guys are losing money. hehh
> *Roger*: But you go down–dow–down to th'New Pike there's a buncha // people, oh:: an' they're old, an' they're pretending they're having fun, but they're really not.
> *(Jim)*: ((cough))
> *Ken*: How c'n you tell: Hm?
> *Roger*: They're– they're tryina make a living, but the place is on the decline, 's like a de//generate place.
> *Jim*: So's Pop.

[1]Much of these introductory considerations comes from the April 5 lecture, original pp. 12–13.

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(*Roger:*) (Y'know?)
Jim :   Pop is just – –
Roger : Yeah i–it it's one of these pier joints, y'know?

If we just take the row of initials of the speakers, we get roughly, R, J, R, J, R, etc. I want to deal with a variety of facets of that, for which, for some purposes, just this kind of line-up will do to isolate some aspects of what is happening. As the series starts off, Roger's remarks are about the amusement park called the Pike, and Jim's are about Pacific Ocean Park, another amusement park that gets called "Pop." We could diagram it as:

R : Pike
J : Pop
R : Pike
J : Pop
R : Pike

And the relationships that they have to each other are at least that both speakers are talking about amusement parks, and both are talking negatively about the places they're talking about.

Now, until Ken's utterance, they're both proceeding in a fashion that's slightly noticeable, in that they are essentially doing something that we give the name '*skip-connecting*' to. What I mean to refer to with that is that a speaker produces an utterance which is indeed related to some prior utterance, but it's not related to the directly prior utterance, but some utterance prior to the directly prior utterance. And if you look at skip-connecting utterances, two prominent sorts of facts about them are: First, that when speakers skip-connect they tend to skip-connect to themselves, i.e., to an utterance of theirs; characteristically to the last utterance of theirs. Second, they don't much skip-connect unless their own utterance was last-but-one, i.e., the one that directly preceded whatever utterance preceded their current one. That is to say, they don't skip-connect over long distances.

Now it's perfectly plain that speakers do things like reasserting a line that they earlier started to take, that got nowhere. But if they do that over any distance, then they tend to do it by reference to a *re-beginning*. So, a characteristic sort of thing involves someone saying, very early in the conversation, "I was at the police station this morning." The talk that follows does not take that up. No questions, no comments, no invitations to say more. Instead, some sequence gets developed about something else. On the completion of that sequence, say, six or seven utterances later, the speaker reintroduces this thing, and reintroduces it in the same fashion he introduced it in the first place, by saying "I was at the police station this morning." And then he gets an invitation to go on, and does develop whatever it is, or a version of whatever it is, that he seemed to have planned to tell. But both parties here are skip-connecting – and doing it mutually. That is to say, you can perfectly well have one party skip-connecting to their own prior talk

across the talk of a series of others who are alternating. But a facet of competition in conversation is that parties do mutual skip-connecting. Two people competing for the development of some line in a conversation can proceed by alternating speakerships, each engaged in skipping the last and tying to his prior – his prior being the last-but-one – to develop the line that he began to take.

If this is at all approximate to how things proceed, then a thing that is obviously set up in a circumstance of mutual skip-connecting is that other participants to the conversation become distinctly crucial. If a party to the skip-connecting is able to mobilize any third to talk, then the distance between the last utterance of the one whom he's competing with, and that one's possible next utterance, is increased. That is to say, if at some point in a sequence of alternating skip-connecting, somebody other than one of those who are doing it can be gotten to talk, and to talk to the business of one of the skip-connectors, then if the other of those is to skip-connect again, he's jumping a larger distance.

I leave aside for the moment questions of what kinds of complicatednesses those sorts of things involve. But at least a possibility is that some third speaker can intervene in a sequence of skip-connectings, and connect directly to a last. And that he would connect directly to a last is not at all puzzling since under the usual way topical talk proceeds parties do connect their utterances to lasts, so the third party coming in is perhaps doing a perfectly ordinary sort of thing. Now he can connect to a last in a variety of ways. One way that's of distinct interest is that he does not simply produce an utterance which connects to a last, but produces such an utterance that connects to a last as on its completion provides for some further talk, directly, by one of the competitors – ideally the last before him, thereby further extending the distance between the other competitor's prior talk and next chance to talk.

So, for example, what happens here is: R, J, R, J, R, and then K talks. At this point if J were to try again to skip-connect – and he'd have to skip-connect to continue his line since neither R nor K talk to it – then he's got two utterances between. And if it happens, as it does here, that K does something that provides for R to talk again, in this case a question to R, then there's now at least three utterances between J's last and his possible next. Of course K having asked a question of R, then, for example, R's answer can provide for K to talk next, further extending the distance between J's last utterance and any next possible utterance of this, making it that if he's going to try to bring off taking up his line again he's got to move across a whole series. So possibly any way that a third party can be led to select a prior-to-him to talk, can be crucial for ending a possible competition sequence, i.e., by picking out one of the parties as the one whose line he's going to go along with, and making that the group decision by virtue of the way in which it complicates the problem of the other party to get his line reinstated. That then turns K's question, which may perfectly well have been a hostile question to R, into one that nonetheless gives R back the floor, permitting him to

continue the line he was trying to take, and shutting J out for a time. So the fact that it's hostile is secondary to that it nonetheless operates to preserve the line R was trying to take.

Now let's look back at some of the details of the thing, from the vantage we've so far gotten, rough as it may be, and notice that when J comes in again after R's answer to K's question, he's now talking differently than he was. What he does now is to produce a connected piece of talk, no longer skip-connected at all, but connected to R's last utterance, i.e., "So's Pop." However, although connected to R's last utterance, it nonetheless keeps alive his interest in Pop as a possible topic. In negotiational terms he's done something that is in effect to say, "Okay I'll go along with Pike as the topic, but I want to have Pop considered along with it"– but now 'along with it' and not in alternative to it, which is what was happening at the start. And with that, we get a possible resolution of a sort of competition; the resolution being that the parties might find, and agree on, a way to *assimilate* the competing lines and talk them together. And it appears that J having seen that he's losing out, making a gesture of acquiescence while holding onto Pop, gets from R an acquiescence in including Pop in the talk. That is, in R's next, "Yeah it's one of these pier joints," he connects to J's last. And J can then produce one that's unlocated as to that it is or isn't competitive; it's now an additive development.

That there should be a possibility of resolution turns on what the sources are for competition in the first place. And here's why I'm emphasizing technical competition. You might think of parties as competing in conversation when what they want to do is to talk about different things. You might then imagine that they compete for the floor where what they're intending to do is talk about altogether different things. It appears that when they do that sort of competition which is characterizable in something like the sort of way that I characterize it, the sources of competition are that the two parties are intending to talk only about very slightly different things. And they get into the competition in that each, in the first instance, has started to take the line they do by reference to a line that's just been taken by somebody else. And when I talk about 'taking a line,' I don't mean what they say in this or that utterance, but that they produce something that looks like it's something they want others to talk to. At least one evidence for that being that when no other talks to it directly, they themselves talk to it in a next utterance. And when anyone does talk to it, they continue talking to it.

What we're saying then is that the sources of competition are, first, that parties are intending to talk to only very slightly different lines, and second, that the lines they intend to talk to take off on a line that someone else has just begun. And they will fight over the floor by virtue of the fact that if what occasions their talk is the talk of a just-preceding speaker, then, if they lose out on their line now, there is no reasonable expectation that such a place will occur again for the line they're starting to take. That is to say, the line they're taking being specifically occasioned by the talk of another, the question is *which* line will get going from that preceding utterance. The line that gets

going will end up somewhere, a somewhere understandable as not likely to be an adventitious spot for the line that lost out. Whereas, if parties were talking about altogether different things, then one could perfectly well leave the floor to the one who beat you out, who talked faster, who got his utterance on the floor. Since you didn't in the first instance use the course-of-talk-so-far to place your own utterance, you might as well save it to place it somewhere else equally arbitrarily. But the thing is that by and large talk is very closely placed, and persons are engaged in finding that line of development which talks to whatever it is that's just been talked about, and not simply introducing topics wherever they happen to choose to introduce them. If what were being done were introduction of topics wherever one happened to introduce them, then the source of competition for talking *now* would dissipate. So it's a concern to place one's utterance in such a way as to have it take off on a last, that provides for these sorts of technical competition in conversation.

We're dealing in a particular way here with one enormously general theme about the organization of conversation, which can be said in a sentence as: Speakers specifically place almost all of their utterances. Where, by 'place,' I mean they put them into such a position as has what's just been happening provide an obvious explanation for why this was said now (where, when they don't, a question could arise of why that now). They do use ways of indicating that an utterance is off-topic, e.g., "by the way" or various other sorts of things which say "don't attend the utterance I'm now producing by reference to what's just been happening." But lacking that, the effort is to find such talk as provides for the slightest possible movement. Indeed, a rough observation which goes along with the kind of line I'm taking now is: The relative frequency of marked topic introduction is a measure of lousy conversations. That is to say, when you're in a conversation which you find is dragging, uninteresting, embarrassing, lousy in varieties of ways, then you might find that one of the ways in which that's happening is that new topics need specifically be introduced, and they get recurrently specifically 'introduced.' Whereas in, quote, a high conversation, a good conversation, what you would find is that new topics are never 'introduced,' they just happen along. Though at any given point we're talking to something more or less markedly different than what we were talking about a minute or five minutes ago, it didn't happen by virtue of people saying, characteristically after a pause, "So what have you been doing?" or varieties of things that say "Let's start a new topic." In a way, the measure of a good topic is a topic that not so much gets talked of at length, but that provides for transitions to other topics without specific markings of that a new topic is going to be done. The richness of a topic is, then, not to be characterized by the fact that there's lots to say about it, but that there are lots of ways to move from it unnoticeably. Whereas a lousy one is one that, the end of it having come, we know we're at the end of it, and if we're going to go anywhere else we've got to start up again. And that's the character of, say, 'embarrassing' topics and 'controversial' topics; that to get *off* of them one has to specifically do 'getting off of them.'

The upshot of this is in part that a consideration of some facets of the detailed sequencing of the speakers is informing us about things like how they do competition and why they do competition; things that turn out to be characterizeable as due to the way in which conversations are sequentially organized, moving utterance by utterance, in which, primarily, persons are engaged in producing talk that connects to directly prior talk.

April 12

Long sequences

Let me take some time now to say what I figure I was doing last time. One kind of basic direction that the investigation of natural conversation properly takes consists in attempts to extend the length of sequences one is able to package. By that I mean in part, not simply the length of sequences one is able to deal with in some way or another, but the length of sequences one is able to put into an organization that deals with at least some parts of each, or almost each, utterance in that sequence. There are plainly ways of dealing with parts of the fragment we've been looking at, which do not contibute directly to putting it into a package. If, for example, I were to develop a characterization of that Q-Q-A thing, or some question–answer sequence as just a question–answer sequence, then while I will have brought to attention or remarked on or partially characterized some two- or three-utterance sequence that is a sequence in this fragment, how the sequence is part of the analytic package that's being developed is completely ignored by such a consideration.

It turns out that one central problem in building big packages is that the ways the utterances that turn out to compose the package get dealt with as single utterances or pairs of utterances or triplets of utterances, etc., may have almost no bearing on how they're to be dealt with when an attempt is made to build a larger package. That is to say, the operation is not at all additive. It's not an operation in which one develops adequate characterizations, interesting characterizations, of some utterance or some small sequence and then assembles them into a package. It doesn't work that way at all. So, e.g., information about utterances and their organization for smaller units might be developed which would yield a discussion of all the utterances in this fragment and not tell us anything about some such larger package as I've been trying to get at. Certain aspects of the work you might do on a small sequence won't do you any good in trying to package longer sequences. Indeed, they might be misguiding in that you would figure that you've dealt with some pair in some fashion, and even in a sequential fashion, and thereby not see the potentiality for building a larger package for which the way you had studied the smaller sequence didn't have much bearing, or had only some relatively intricate bearing.

So work on small sequences and work on large sequences can go on kind of independently. Packaging larger sequences is a different and in some ways rather more difficult task because one thing you're engaged in doing is *finding* what sorts of large packages there are, where analyzing the workings of, e.g., question–answer is something that at least begins with a relatively firm, common, intuitive knowledge that there are such things and this is the way

they work, and you can look to the materials in order to see whether this thing works the way we think or not. Again, then, a basic sort of investigation is that of long sequences as a coherent matter as compared to simply studying, utterance by utterance, a long sequence which you then have as an in-some-way connected series of small fragments. And such investigation is, if it's going to develop at all, at a rather primitive stage – leaving aside obvious sorts of things where you're dealing with relatively gamelike situations or other sorts of known, pre-organized matters. The sequences we're dealing with are not pre-organized sequences.

To say such investigation is at a relatively primitive state is to say something like: This sequence here may be the longest coherent package that's ever been investigated in terms of its relative coherences, and for which we have mechanisms of some sort for putting the whole thing together. A sequence of that length has never been given anything like a characterization which says it all works, and where one starts at the beginning parts of it and characterizes them in ways that organize the beginnings by reference to possible developments that take off on them. And the term 'possible' is altogether crucial because in talking about, for example, lines of development, they are *possible* lines of development. I am not at all arguing that the collection of linked mechanisms that I roughly described run off automatically given the initial one. At each point things could go specifically differently – and one can characterize some of the ways they could go differently.

But what happens is that bits and pieces get characterized in one or another ways; like we began with some allusion to an utterance just preceding "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" which is done by this guy Ken, something like "Last night I went with four guys to the new–to the Pike." From that we went on and didn't give much consideration to it in its own right. All that I wanted out of it was that it was an utterance that laid out a possible line of development. Now, it happened to do it in a characteristic, describable way, which is roughly that it was a specifically *transitional* utterance. There was another topic altogether being discussed, sex. At some point there's a long pause, then Roger says:

> →*Roger*: Awright. Tell us about your sexual problems.
> *Ken*: Me?
> *Roger*: Yeah, you // c'n cry on our shoulder.
> *Ken*: I had a–
> *Jim*: She–
> *Ken*: I had a nun to//day,
> *Jim*: He's mad because she wouldn't do it last night.
> *Ken*: I didn't go out with anybo(h)dy last night. I went with four
> → guys last night, we went to new–to the Pike.
> *Jim*: You're mad cause he didn't do it last nigh(hh)t hehh heh heh
> *Ken*: hhunhhh hhunhhh hhh
> →*Roger*: (Isn't) the New Pike depressing?

The transitional character of Ken's "I went with four guys to the Pike" has to do with the connection between what was going on before, i.e., "Tell us about your sexual problems" and what follows, i.e., "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" Where, for one, if it works it closes whatever has led to it while also opening up another direction. That is, he's setting up a story about what happened last night, using the chance to talk he was given, to talk in such a way as to involve him in responding to where we are, but to end up in some new place. And that's a way that topic change takes place. It's interesting because it isn't the specific introduction of a new topic in such a way as to involve no relation to what's just been happening, though it ends up with a new topic emerging, one that's unconnected to where we've been. Now if topics are gotten to this way, it might well be the source of a nice technical problem about topical organization in conversation which is, why is there some sort of extended relative amnesia for last topics? People can know what they talked about earlier but they routinely have a relative amnesia for specifically the last topic. And there may be ways that transitions between them take place which serve to break the connection between last and next, and perhaps these sorts of transitions are involved in doing that.

Anyway, Ken does this transition, and now Roger comes on in a perfectly routine way to be dealing with an opened topic, which is to preserve that topic while making a slight shift in its possible line of development. And Jim does exactly the same sort of thing, i.e., he talks to the topic being talked of while making a slight shift in its possible line of development. Either line of development might well emerge here and continue, or another party could perfectly well take up talk, doing precisely what these guys have done, and get another connected but slight shift. But all that we want out of it is that what would be minimally involved in getting into a possible competition sequence is that two slightly different possible lines of development have been mutually generated from a prior sequence. That then sets up a situation where some attempt might be made to preserve one or another of those lines of development.

And for that attempt, we have the skip-connecting technique used. Now, you could perfectly well have a competition sequence emerge and skip-connecting not be employed but some other device, and it's not the case that skip-connecting is specifically a mechanism for doing competition; it is used widely and for lots of other things. As it happens here, it is a part of the mechanism for doing competition and as such happens to be preserved in a way we would otherwise talk about it for consideration of a competition sequence. In any event, we have the skip-connecting device used here. Just how long such a thing could go on, I can't say. But for the skip-connecting to have its character as a mechanism in a competition sequence given two alternative lines having been offered, it would seem that at least a pair of skip-connectings would have to be involved.

What we're getting now is a kind of a bare bones competition structure. And once we're into a competition sequence we begin to have a real problem of how such a competition can be won – it could just die out, it could move

in other directions, but at least a possibility once you're into it is that it could be won. And a way it could be won turns on somebody other than the two who are doing the skip-connecting coming into the sequence in such a way as to link to the last utterance of one of the competing persons, and to provide that after they've completed there be more talk on the same matter by the person they've linked to. Now, coming in with a question that is linked to the last utterance is such a device, which is what we have with Ken's "How can you tell. Hm?" Though again, such a question sequence has no particular distinctive connection to a competition sequence. Asking a party a question about something they just said, which involves them in answering when you've finished, is a sort of phenomenon that is not at all distinctly located in competition sequences. But it can be a mechanism for a competition sequence by reference to the stuff I gave last time about the distance between the last and possible next utterance of one of the competitors doing skip-connecting, if the one who has now had that distance emerge between his utterances is to try to preserve his possible line via skip-connecting.

Now there can be some other ways of preserving one's own possible line of direction, and in a fashion we get Jim using some other way of doing it, which is to link to the last utterance with "So's Pop." That then allows Roger's line, while hoping that something can be done with the line Jim wanted to take. And we do then get Roger going along with it. In its fashion, then, that pair of accommodations constitutes a way that, the competition having been intervened in, it can get resolved. We then get the conversation running on with the parties roughly alternating about their new mutual topic. And again, for the purposes of the package the minimal components here would be that they do things which attend each interest while making some talk to the mutual line of development that's been gotten going.

The idea is that, characterizing these things in terms of the whole package, we are able to say things that involve us in noticing facets of its utterances that are not transparent. We come to see, e.g., that Jim's "So's Pop" and Roger's "Yeah it's one of those pier joints" are not just characterizable by reference to, e.g., "This is an agreement" and "This is an acknowledgement of the last," but that these things are productively done by reference to the whole package. As we saw the relevance of Ken's "How can you tell. Hm?" in the way it links up to Roger's prior and gives him the floor back, where it's otherwise just some question to be dealt with in some fashion or another. But we saw that the character of that question as linking is crucial. We might then come to see that Roger could attempt to *elicit* such a sequence – not that he does it here, but that could be a resource for somebody in a competition sequence, i.e., to attempt to get a question addressed to them on their intended line.

Having the package, we were also able to give it an examination which would tell us something about the circumstances under which competition emerged in the first place. And that had to do with the characteristics of Roger's and Jim's first utterances as being placedly alike – each having as it source a just-prior thing said – and only slightly different in line of direction. And that, being technically altogether relevant to that a competition sequence

emerged, was then of great interest in that it permitted us to consider the not too obvious possibility that when competition would emerge in conversation, it would emerge not about matters that involve people talking about totally different things, but about only slightly different things, where the only slightly different things that they wanted to talk about were each having as its source a just-prior thing said.

And once we could begin to see that, we could begin to see why in the world they would get into competition at that point, and that they would not particularly need to have a competition where they were intending to talk about totally different things or things that did not have a local source. That is to say, the very phenomenon of their talking about things that took off on a last and were only slightly different, would be what would provide that they would fight for the position to talk about that line of development, given that the way that talk procedes means that if they lost a chance to take the line of development they were trying to take as a placed matter, such a line of development is not expectably reocurrently placeable somewhere else. So that we have, then, not simply a rough characterization of a sequence and its mechanisms, but an explanation for how come that sequence got going, though the explanation for how come the sequence got going wouldn't particularly tell us where it would go once it got going.

I want to emphasize that this is by no means to say everything about the package's components, and I've said hardly anything about a lot of its utterances. Even the ones I talked about, e.g., about the fineness of "How can you tell. Hm?" or the fineness of "Isn't the New Pike depressing?" I was dealing with in a rather different sort of way. There are, of course, a variety of ways that any of these utterances can be dealt with; ways that can all live together or separately. But a next order of aim would be to see how many of the facets that one could isolate out of such a sequence can, if you could develop a package for it, be put back into the package. That's another, yet more elaborate kind of operation, which is also at a kind of primitive state, and it's just absolutely unknown how much of what can be found out about any utterance, any fragment, any sequence within a fragment, etc., can be locked into some package, if some package can be found.

And after this there are a whole range of other directions one can take with such an organization of findings. Only as an instance, one direction would be that we can now see the specific relevance of more than two parties for the ways in which a competition sequence could develop. That is, we can see a business that the sheer status 'third party' would yield, and, say, an interest that the two would have in mobilizing the third. And again, that could perfectly well be a matter of three with a fourth, or three now attempting to get one of those three to join with a second, etc. Those are now up for grabs as possible ways things can operate, and they can be thought about. But before we have this rough construction there's nothing to think about.

Now you want to watch when I say "Okay, now we can, from this, begin to think about it." Until then it's not that we're not thinking, but we're trying to find how some things are happening in the world which permit us to, or

stop us from, thinking about them in interesting ways. And when I say that from now on we could think about something, that's an argument, and you could begin to see if there is anything to reason about or not, and would it be safe. It happens that the fundamental question in social science is when in the world do you have things in such a status as to be able to think about them. The difference between different sorts of model-makers is specifically when it is that they start saying "Okay, now we can theorize; we have enough data so that we can put our minds to work," and you can look at different areas just to see what sorts of materials are treated as adequate for reasoning; at what point people figure "From here on we can reason."

April 19
Caller–Called

This is a phone call. A and B are male, C is female.

A : Hello?
B : Yeah is Judy there?
A : Yeah just a second.
C : Hello
B : Judy?
C : Yeah.
B : Jack Green.
C : Hi Jack.
B : How ya doing? Say what are you doing?
C : Well we're going out, why?
B : Oh I was just gonna say come out and come over here and talk this evening, but if you're going out // you can't very well do that.
C : "Talk," you mean get drunk don't you?
B : What?
C : It's Saturday.
B : What do you do. Go out and get drunk every Saturday?
C : hm hehhhh Well my folks are helping us to do it this evening.
B : That's why you look so bad on Monday morning.
C : hehhhh No not that long.
B : Hehhh No I just uh I didn't realize the library closed at five on Saturday 'n–
C : Yeah, I got booted outta there too.
B : Today?
C : Yeah.
B : Uh were you there?
C : I was up in the grad reading room.
B : Oh. Oh I was in the bio med library and I had big intentions of working all day and they flicked the lights and kicked me out. Well that's just– I was just gonna call and see if you 'n yr husbn would like to come over – –
C : Oh:: // Thanks Jack cn we take a raincheck?
B : But uh g'wan out as long as your parents are footing the bill kid, you just go right ahead
C : Yeah you're not kidding hehhh
B : Don't miss any of those opportunities. Get 'em while you can.
C : heh Yeah you know once a week we eat.

B : hehh Why is it every Saturday night out there?

C : No

B : Well I wouldn't want you to do it every Saturday night, but once
in a while it's okay. Well lis–

C : We might get spoiled. yeah.

C : [[Food's bad for you.

B : [[Yeah well get on your clothes and get out and collect some of that
free food and we'll make it some other time Judy then.

C : Okay then Jack

B : Bye bye

C : Bye bye

One kind of central purpose I have for bringing this in and talking about
it is as a differentiation from stuff I've been talking about so far, where a
package involved a sort of sequence which has essentially no breaks in it, for
its operation. That is to say, we haven't been moving from one place in the
conversation to quite another place and talking about *sequential relationships*
operating at a distance. And also, while there have been some sorts of
mentionings of who the people are, a consideration hasn't been offered of their
identities, and specifically of such of their identities as have the peculiar status
of being features of the conversation. One way I'll be proceeding will be to
focus on *caller–called as identities for conversation*, where, further, those are
such identities as operate over distances, i.e., at places that are not directly
connected in the conversation, for example, at the beginning of the conver-
sation and at the end.

At least one relevance of talking about such identities as caller–called if one
can, is that perhaps we can say something about how a conversation operates,
with relatively minimal introduction of who the parties are. Obviously if one
can attribute something of what the parties do to each other in a conversation,
to no more than such a thing a caller–called, then one is in a position to say
that some part of a sequential organization of a conversation has to do with
identities that the conversation itself makes relevant, such that for at least those
facets of the conversation one needn't make reference to other sorts of
identities that parties have which are, so to speak, exterior to not simply the
conversation, but to its sequential organization. If, however, we found that
such other identities were central to almost anything one could say about a
conversation, then there would be a way in which conversation could not be
said to have an organization independent from such other aspects of the world
as yielded other identities, e.g., the names, sexes, social statuses, etc., of the
parties. You could imagine a world where some social status the parties had,
operated in such a way as to determine how they could talk to each other, and
in that world conversation would not be an independently organized
phenomenon.

Now, one question involved in the study of any possible domain of social
organization is, is there some extent to which it is independently organized?
And one way to determine that conversation is independently organized –

from such other things as social class, etc. – is to find, e.g., that it has a sequential organization which employs identities that it determines, and that it does proceed to some extent in terms of its identities. So that's a kind of interest that could derive from an examination of how much it matters for the way conversation proceeds, that a party to a telephone call is a caller and another is a called. Where those identities might seem in the first instance ones that wouldn't cut too much; it happens that so-and-so is a caller and it happens that so-and-so is a called, but so what.

So we've tried to set up the import of there being some consequence to these conversational identities caller–called, for the way conversation proceeds. Now a seemingly trivial facet of the caller–called identities, but one that at least shows a way that such identities are usable in setting up aspects of the organization of conversation, is that one can state a rule in terms of those identities that tells you how telephone conversations begin. The facts are not particularly newsy in the first place: If you're trying to say how telephone conversations begin, then you can say the rule is 'called speaks first.' So if you took an indefinite set of telephone conversations, with, thereby, a possibly immense set of possibly relevant identities that the parties might have, leaving aside that for *any* conversation the parties might have more than a few possibly relevant identities, a rule which ignores *all* such identities operates, and operates to describe how conversations get started. All you need is caller–called and 'called speaks first.'

The rule has a series of strategic consequences for persons in a variety of other sorts of identities, having to do with, for example, how one can introduce considerations of social status into the beginning of a telephone conversation. And the fact that the rule 'called speaks first' operates generally, is not undercut by the techniques that have been introduced to deal with it in accord with other considerations, but the rule determines how it is that parties go about dealing with it, given other considerations. So there have been a series of institutions developed in an attempt to deal with the rule; things like secretaries. Now one might think of the secretary simply as a device whereby some people are prevented from getting through to some people. That's plainly a thing it does, i.e., the secretary serves as a filtering device, allowing some calls through and not others, according to various considerations. But another business of the secretary is to be someone who routinely answers the phone but who isn't the person who is called. That is, a business of the secretary answering the phone is to be not-the-person-who-is-called. Other persons are the intended recipients, and those persons don't answer the phone. That can set up a way whereby relative to the called, the *caller* speaks first, though in actual conversation the secretary speaks first.

Then, a sort of thing that operates most nicely in some relatively rarified statuses, is where two secretaries encounter each other. That sort of problem emerges in high business and bureaucratic situations, i.e., if you call the President of the United States or of some business firm, you will never get them directly on the line. That means that whoever you are as a caller, called will never be first speaker, and you will then be selling yourself to whoever is

the first speaker in order to get through. And a first step in dealing with that problem is to have the intended caller never call. The caller's secretary calls the intended called's secretary. At that point there is a problem which, so far as I know, has never been given a systematic solution, i.e., the people involved in it have not found a way to deal with it except through more or less elaborated negotiations as to who will be put on the line first – whether it will be the intended caller or intended called who gets put on the line to talk to the other's secretary. And at that point there can be an infusion of outside considerations, i.e., if your secretary gets a phone call from somebody who is plainly superior to you, then it's her business to put you on the line to that person's secretary, and you having been put on the line to her, she will put her person on the line. The categories caller–called are then being dealt with via the operation of outside considerations, such that if called comes on the line first, that is incidental because the same parties involved but caller–called reversed, then caller would come on the line first. That is, the secretaries are operating in terms of their notions of the positions of their respective people – sometimes clear, sometimes not clear. Sometimes one secretary will concede to the other, sometimes apparently the battles go on for quite a while, e.g., the caller's secretary says "This is John Smith, president of X calling the president of Y. Do you have your party?" "Yes I have my party, do you have *your* party?" "Yes I have my party will you put your party on the line?" "Will you put *your* party on the line?" etc.

Now the point of introducing all this is that this is about all you *can* introduce in order to show the ways in which outside considerations can operate to modify the 'called speaks first' rule. And this is plainly altogether special, and plainly doesn't ignore the rule but is an attempt to find some way of dealing with it. So even with this exception, this is about as far as we can go in finding a way in which caller–called doesn't yield the consequence that called speaks first. It then looks like caller–called is a relevant identity for characterizing aspects of telephone conversation, and characterizing aspects of turn-taking in a telephone conversation (first turn, second turn, etc.) independent of any other considerations.

Once having gone through the sort of sequence that caller–called generates directly – a greeting sequence and a variety of other things that I won't go into right now – one can get to a place for which caller–called is quite irrelevant. But, while there are identities that you might imagine can serve at a place and then no longer be relevant as others come to the fore, caller–called operates at the beginning and then may disappear from relevance, and then operates elsewhere; in particular, at the close.

Now, 'at the close' is kind of a complex phenomenon because the way conversation operates is that once having gotten going there are rules and techniques which serve only to keep it going – things like, at the completion of anybody's utterance someone else should start talking. That rule, which we talk about as a 'transition-relevance rule' and which has all sorts of problems and techniques involved concerning how completions are determined, etc., simply serves to provide for more talk on the completion of anybody's talk.

It provides no way for finding out when talk should *end*. For that, there has to be a series of other techniques whereby a place can be arrived at, at which the transition-relevance of a completion is lifted, i.e., a place where, on somebody's completion nobody talks and talk is not 'absent.' There are plenty of places where, on somebody's completion nobody talks, but what happens there is that talk is missing. And that has to do with that while there is nobody talking in the conversation, it is not over. For it to be over, it has to be brought to a completion. Now the problem of bringing it to completion in the sheer sense of getting to lift transition-relevance, is trivial. There are a relatively universally used set of techniques for lifting transition-relevance, and that involves using things like "Goodbye" "Goodbye." What those do is to say 'After we're finished with that, nobody needs to talk.' But that doesn't solve the central problem, which is how do you get to the place where "Goodbye" "Goodbye" works? The question is, where do you put the first "Goodbye"? Plainly the first "Goodbye" is not stuck just anywhere in a conversation. But to say that it goes at the 'end' of a conversation is to say that *that* matter is decidable, which it isn't. The question is, then, how is it that where to put "Goodbye" "Goodbye" is dealt with. And at least for telephone conversations, that problem is partially – though not minorly partially – a business of caller.

It is caller's business to find a place to stick in possible endings. And by possible endings I don't mean a first "Goodbye," I mean things that go before it, which serve in such a way as that at their end they can be followed by "Goodbye." We can talk of "Goodbye" as a *terminator* and then look at things that are *closings*. Among the things in telephone conversations that serve to close are making an arrangement or confirming an arrangement that's been made. At some point in a conversation somebody can say "Okay so I'll see you Tuesday," or somebody can propose an arrangement; "Well then let's get together, how about Tuesday." And terminating items can occur directly on the completion of an arrangement sequence. So then the question is, where do you put the arrangements. And at least one thing that can be said is that it may be caller's business to place them.

A characteristic sort of thing that's used in placing a closing is something that can be elicited at the beginning of a conversation, where it has one sort of job. When it is used, then, for placing a closing, the talk can be seen as connected at sometimes very large distances. So, at the beginning of a conversation – telephone or face to face – having gone through greetings, etc., someone can say "So what are you doing?" to which varieties of answers occur, e.g., "Nothing much" or "Oh I was just about to make dinner" or "Oh I'm going to the library." Now, if the respondant to such a question gives such answers as the latter two, which we call 'tickets,' then the other can use those answers at some point in the conversation to say "Well, you'd better go to the library" or "I'd better let you fix your dinner." They have then not simply done the job of proposing to close, but have done it *by reference to the interest of the other*. A specific routine technique which holds for both telephone and face to face conversation is for the party who introduces close

to do it by reference to interests of the other. And a way they can get those interests is from something the other has said earlier in the conversation. Those things are seemingly saved and used at some opportune time.

Now in a telephone call, if caller hasn't gotten such a ticket, he has things like it available which he can introduce; things like "Well I'll let you off the phone now," where the sheer fact that I brought you to the phone permits me to now use that I'll let you off the phone as a caller-specific closing proposal. And it may be caller's business to watch, or to appear to watch, for any move on the part of called that seems to indicate that called is ready to close, in order to introduce an offer to close. Though called can then reject the offer to close by saying "No no I have nothing to do," though rejecting a close in that way can have the insensitivity of taking seriously something that caller did as a way to get off the line themselves. But called is being shown that they're being closed off by reference to their own interests, on their own behalf, without, then, a basis for complaining by virtue of the fact that they figure that the other party wants to get off.

In this conversation called has announced, to a question at the beginning, that they're going out. Talk goes on, and at some place in it caller says "... well get on your clothes and get out and collect some of that free food ..." Now that is not a proposal as to what called should do in the future. It isn't that if called takes them up on the closing, then after the close it's called's business to put down the phone and rush around getting dressed, or any such sort of thing. It's the form of a closing that takes up the kind of information that called has given caller, that caller can use now to do closing, i.e., a 'ticket.' And in that same utterance there is a reference to future getting together, "... and we'll make it some other time then." We have then, both a 'ticket' and an arrangements-making, and those can be packaged together, separately, one can occur and not the other, etc.

Now a thing one wants to see with that close offering is, not "Isn't it outrageous that this guy tells them what to do," or cute of him or whatever, but that what he's done is to indeed attend such materials as have been given, and use them to bring off a close, where it's his business to propose a close, and to propose it in terms of the other's interests if he can, and perhaps to do it in such a way as to also involve some arrangements. And that's the business of his utterance as compared to its being some sort of command. Where, then, "Okay then Jack" is not an agreement to do what he 'commanded,' but is a way of agreeing to close. It's an acceptance of the close form and not an acceptance of whatever has been proposed in that close form.

One wants to see a systematic differentiation here between a 'command' where nobody ends up doing activities by virtue of what's proposed in it, and things like "Is Judy there?" which is a 'question' to which you might imagine an 'answer' would be done, "Yeah." Where that is not just a question but a 'request,' and it's heard as a request, to be dealt with not as "Yeah she's here" but "Yeah, just a second" and that party gets off the line and does an action by reference to the request, i.e., puts Judy on the line. What is involved is a massive difference between what looks like a 'command' and what looks like

a 'question,' where the 'question' is a 'request' and the 'command' is a 'close offering.' And it's the 'close' character that counts for the latter, as it is the 'request' character that counts for the former. Neither have anything like the way in which they would be grammatically characterized, as sufficient information about how they're dealt with. The one could be characterized as a 'question' and the other as a 'command,' and that would be wrong for both.

The point is, then, that there is a place to deciding what the language-form import is of something, but plainly some facets of the language-form import are not operative and others are, and you couldn't tell by looking at them which facet was operative. That of course is not to say that "Is Judy there?" is always a 'request.' And the question, then, of how it's found to be a request is seriously askable, in contrast to this other thing which nobody would ever treat seriously as 'command' – nobody who knows English, anyway. You could conceive of someone who knows the language but not how it works, feeling obliged to do something, or feeling like being stubborn and saying "No." It's these sorts of differences that make the problems of things like Anthropological Linguistics serious, since if you're an outsider, for example, studying a language, then the difficult thing is, even if you know something is a 'question,' to know what anybody does with it. Why doesn't he just give a question-return, "Yeah." And if that's a 'command,' why does she accept it? Where you could then imagine that a perfectly reasonable thing one would be led to do, would be to try to find out who could give commands to who in the culture, when no such things are involved.

But here it's caller's business that, with a series of constraints, caller should offer closing, caller should, if he can, use materials called has given him, etc. It being, then, an altogether routine, produced, close, which attends what's happened in the conversation to get out of the conversation. In this case it all takes place in less than a minute, but it can also operate at very long distances, i.e., the same sorts of materials can be used after a ten minute call or a half hour call, etc. Now, called can hint at such things as involve caller in picking up that close can be made. And of course furthermore if it's caller's business to do this, one has a kind of simple explanation of why callers feel lousy when called does the closing, or why calleds are hesitant to do closing. And that is to say, how it is that conversations should go on longer than any particular party in them wants them to, can have to do with whose business it is to bring them to a close.

April 23

Characterizing an Event

B: Oh I was just gonna say come out and come over here and talk
   this evening, but if you're going out // you can't very well do
   that.
C: "Talk," you mean get drunk don't you?
B: What?
C: It's Saturday.
B: What do you do. Go out and get drunk every Saturday?
C: hm hehhhh Well my folks are helping us to do it this evening.

I want to talk a bit about the utterance "Talk, you mean get drunk don't
you?" How is it that his use of 'talk' is for her hearable as a possible allusion
to 'get drunk,' or if not a possible allusion to it that he intended, then a
reading she would choose. That is to say, whereas 'in' and 'out' and things
like that have an obvious kind of contrast, 'talk' and 'get drunk,' while they
can contrast, might not look like precisely the same thing, and I'm not saying
that they're precisely the same thing.

We can begin by noting that 'talk' is a formulation he makes of the
business of the invitation, i.e., "I was just going to say come out and come
over here and talk this evening." A first kind of thing that might be relevant
to the replacement operation, not 'talk' but 'get drunk,' can be developed by
considering the status of formulations of invitational businesses. It's plain that
the terms used for invitations only partially formulate such businesses. If
somebody says "Come over for dinner this evening," then that's one way they
might *describe* what we're going to do, but hardly does it *constrain* what we
will do. "Come over for dinner" doesn't mean that there will be no talk or
no anything else. So invitations partially formulate what the invitation is for.
That means that other formulations are available, so that something that
could be called "Come over for dinner" could be called something else as
well, and that, too, would be true. However, it's nonetheless not so that one
can choose any possible partial formulation of an evening and have that be an
acceptable invitation. One can readily come up with more or less silly versions
of a correct partial formulation of an evening which are not appropriately used
ones, e.g., "Come over and have a drink of water," "Come over and sit on
the living-room couch," etc. But how they differ from 'talk' and 'have
dinner,' which are appropriately used, is not by virtue of that the former are
partial and the latter are not. They are all partial.

Further, among partial ways to formulate evenings which are appropriately
used, there are *preferred* uses. That means that if one is inviting somebody for
an evening in which dinner will be served, then apparently that sort of

information should be included in the invitation or they will have reason to
assume that dinner is not going to be served. On the other hand, if someone
is doing an invitation for an evening in which talk will occur, then one needn't
include that information. That is to say, if something other than dinner is
mentioned, say, 'talk,' then what's being said is that dinner will not be served,
whereas if something other than talk is mentioned, say, 'dinner,' that's not to
say that talk will not be present. So what we get is that 'dinner' is a
'first-preference invitation' – not in the sense that one would prefer to be
invited to dinner, but if someone is inviting you for dinner they had better say
so – and 'talk' stands as an alternative to 'dinner' in the sense that 'talk' being
what one is invited for, one understands that dinner is not going to be served.
In neither case is it that the way to choose the terms of an invitation is to fully
describe what you're inviting the person for. Both formulations are partial,
but now we can see that although there are a series of partial formulations for
an invitational occasion, there can be another set of rules that tell you how to
choose the terms of an invitation, and how to interpret some actualized
invitation. Specifically, there is a way of selecting from among partial
formulations which says 'select first preference' such that if the partial
formulation you select is not a first preference, then you're indicating that a
first preference is not present. 'Talk' not being a first preference, a way of
hearing it is to hear that it's not an invitation for what it otherwise might be,
such that you *find* from 'talk' that dinner isn't being served. Whereas,
'dinner' being a first preference, hearing it, you are not to be engaged in
finding what you're not being invited for.

So then, the invitee here, hearing that she's been invited for 'talk,' it's her
business to see that the invitation 'lacks something;' is to be read for what it
says she's not being invited for. Now, having made an investment in that
operation, it may be that that operation is now used to get a further piece of
talk on her part; one which finds not only an absence of dinner, but an absence
of something else. That is to say, 'talk' is in the first instance not alternative
to 'get drunk,' but alternative to 'dinner.' But having found that 'talk'
provides for an absence, she is then in a position to use that operation to get
some other item that is also a what-the-invitation-could-be-for that is absent.
How she gets the particular item she does get, turns, however on the use of
other information. What we have so far is a way she might attend being
invited for 'talk' as it involves a focus on 'something missing' in the
invitation. Now to get at what particular something is missing, we have as a
serious resource her use of "It's Saturday."

We can notice that her assertion "It's Saturday" is a relatively peculiar one.
It states such a fact that she can assume he knows. And it's a general rule
about conversation that it's your business not to tell people what you can
suppose they know. If the rule were relaxed there would be no shortage of
things to say. You could read from a physics text to somebody; you could
announce the date, the weather, the time; you could say your name again and
again; you could point things out: "This is a chair," "Today is Saturday,
tomorrow is Sunday, the next day is Monday." The conditions under which

some fact that is known is assertable, are then problematic. But at least a first remark in that regard is that one asserts some fact one supposes a listener knows, not when one is trying to tell them that fact, but where that fact has some relevance which they seem not to have noticed, and one is pointing up its relevance, not telling them the fact. And given that you wouldn't be asserting that thing that you assume they know, they will then be inspecting it for other than whether it's so, but for how does it bear on what we're talking about. Which is why we can think of things like "It's Saturday," "My name is Joe," etc., as 'reminding' somebody of something. So that announcing "It's Saturday" she's engaged in saying "Look at this assertion to find out what bearing it could have on what we're talking about." So, for example, if one begins a conversation with "It's Saturday," then a hearer can suppose that they ought to know what its relevance is for what we talked about some other time, i.e., they're liable to say "Oh yeah we were supposed to go somewhere, I forgot."[1]

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[1] It is very likely that the bulk of this session was given to dealing with student questions, and that the discussion of " 'Talk,' you mean get drunk don't you?" started well into the hour and was curtailed due to lack of time. The next session takes up this utterance again.

April 26

An event as an institution

B : How ya doing? Say what are you doing?
C : Well we're going out, why?
B : Oh I was just gonna say come out and come over here and talk this evening, but if you're going out // you can't very well do that.
C : "Talk," you mean get drunk don't you?
B : What?
C : It's Saturday.
B : What do you do. Go out and get drunk every Saturday?
C : hm hehhhh Well my folks are helping us to do it this evening.
B : That's why you look so bad on Monday morning.

I want to give a bit of perspective on the discussion I began last time with regard to "Talk, you mean get drunk don't you?" by asking why in the world should people get into some sort of battle over a characterization of an evening to come; indeed, more particularly, over an evening that's not to happen. She's already turned down the invitation, and no matter what it would have been, it's not going to happen. Nonetheless she initially quarrels with his characterization, and subsequent talk is disputatious on his part; they are in a sense having it out over what started as a questioning about how to characterize this evening that's not going to happen.

We might try to consider that as a curious topic of dispute. I don't think, were someone to have looked at the conversation, they would have found it a strange thing to be battling about in that I suppose you could perfectly well find yourself in such a dispute, and participate in it. However, suppose we were talking about some assertably primitive tribe, proposing that it's a kind of routine thing among these people that, for something that's not going to happen, that they acknowledge is not going to happen, if someone calls it X, then another is not unlikely to say "No, it should be called Y" and, that having been done, it wouldn't be treated as "Okay you call it X, I'll call it Y," but that people will then rather directly pass into fighting about it, verbally anyway. If that were proposed about some group of natives, it would be something we could take home as a strange custom, while here it is quite unnoticeable, in that it is altogether not strange – strange only to have seen such a thing happening, and to have seen it in this utterly ordinary conversation.

Now to say they do battle is to notice that it is apparently an issue for him to find some way of dealing with her seeming superiority over how to spend a Saturday evening, i.e., going out and getting drunk, where he has proposed talking. And that he finds, from the materials she gives him, a way to turn that initial, seeming superiority, into something which ends up with him

calling her "kid," i.e., formulating her evening as something she's just doing with her parents: "But uh go on out as long as your parents are footing the bill kid, you just go right ahead."

We have an initial situation where this guy calls up this girl. Apparently they're both graduate students; that is how they come to know each other and in part how he comes to make the call to her. As he puts it eventually, he was planning to spend the day in the library; his plans to work being frustrated he devises a scheme which would involve that he spend the evening talking with another student, presumably about what they have in common, i.e., school. His proposed occasion stands, then, in a very neat relationship to what he might initially have had in mind, i.e., studying.

So they start out as co-students. She then seems to pull some sort of rank on him, having to do with his invitation being stodgy or unadult or whatever, not a way to spend Saturday evening. That is, when she says "Talk, you mean get drunk don't you?" there are plainly a variety of hearings he could give that utterance. He could, e.g., focus on that she's saying what he really meant, to which he could respond as to whether he meant that. He could say "That's what I meant" or "You've got me pegged!" etc., or he could be directly disputatious, e.g., "I didn't mean any such thing!" Now apparently he heard something in her format different than that, where what seems to be going on is that somehow 'mean' can have different ways of meaning. He heard that she was proposing some characteristic project of her *own*, which she kind of assents to as what she was intending with "Well my folks are helping us to do it this evening."

He then gets oddly intimate in a way that only a conversational sequence can rapidly provide for, i.e., it's only by virtue of its locus in a conversation in which a place for it has occurred that he could say to her "What do you do, go out and get drunk every Saturday?" That question plainly relies on its context for it to be seen as not drastically insulting but intendedly light and funny. And he continues the insult with "That's why you look so bad on Monday morning," which invokes that time when we know each other as co-students – although the conversation could have other statuses for occurring, for the invitation, for our knowledge of each other, etc.

In due course we get into the business of her going with her parents – which she had initially introduced – which is, for her proposal that Saturday is go-out-and-get-drunk time, an altogether drastic reformulation of what it had sounded like. That is, when one is a student, 'going out and getting drunk' and 'going out with one's parents' are drastically differently characterized events – though they could be the 'same' event, i.e., she could perfectly well do the same thing – sitting and talking and drinking – with her parents as she could with him. But she having introduced 'parents,' he now exploits that to make her someone still dependent on, and using, her status as a 'kid' as a way to find things to do on Saturday night, or to have things to do found for her.

Now what in the world is matterable enough to have this run through? Why in the first instance should she have jumped at his characterization when

she isn't in any event going to accept the invitation? And what is it that her jumping at it did to him? Those questions can provide us with resources for focussing on "Talk, you mean get drunk don't you?" and for seeing that in focussing on it we're focussing on something that seems to have considerable impact, at least for the conversation. And that is then to say that there is a lot of life in this conversation, and not merely as to what's happening between the two people involved, but what can be found out about a society in which just such things routinely occur.

What I was looking to focus on was sorts of arrangements in the world; apparently referable-to *institutions*. Where by 'institutions' I don't mean events, like evenings spent, but some characterization of them, like 'an evening spent talking' or 'an evening spent getting drunk.' And to talk of an 'institution' is then perhaps to say that characterizations of some event, like an evening, can be correctly or incorrectly done in the sense that parties might find themselves disputing whether that's the way to characterize it or not. And their characterizations can have some independence from whether what they're talking about is some actual evening or some merely possible evening, though what those investments are remains altogether obscure right now. But it's not too difficult to at least begin to pick out what could be involved in considerations of what characterization is to win out.

One wants initially to think of things like religious events, and thereby find that it would be familiar to you that people might dispute how to characterize something that could be seen as a *ceremony* of some sort. With that as a familiarization, you might come back to 'an evening together' as something like a ceremony in the sense that what should be said about it, what should be thought about it, is something that parties can have interests in getting some consensus on, even if it takes that they have to fight over it. Now 'talk' and 'get drunk' as characterizations of evenings have a plainly marked difference between them, having to do with that they name hearably different types of evenings — one possibly having to do with the world of work, and one possibly having to do with the world of fun and sin. And that's a familiar thing that people might well battle over. Again, this is in full independence of what it is that takes place during differently characterizable evenings, since it's at least supposable for purposes of argument anyway, if not on the basis of one's familiarity with such evenings, that they could involve a mixture of such things as eating and talking and drinking and keeping silent and touching and looking, etc., any one of which could be available for use as a characterization, leaving aside such further ways of characterizing them as boring or exciting, etc.

At least a first way to address the question of why she picks his characterization as something that she's going to behave sensitively towards, is in terms of a sensitivity to how he characterizes what she's being invited for. Specifically, by reference to that he would be saying that he thinks she is someone who would be happy to spend Saturday evening in a way so characterizable. And that could be an insult to her, as much as if the call had started as it does, and then:

B: How ya doing? Say what are you doing?
C: Well we're going out, why?
B: Oh gee, I was just gonna say my kid sister wants to go to the movies tonight and I wondered if you'd take her.
C: Who the hell do you think I am!

Where the "Who the hell do you think I am" can be rejecting not merely the evening, but the characterization of the evening offered, since apparently you had some view of me which you used to generate the invitation, and insofar as we are in some relationship in the world, like we get together and you make looks at me on Monday morning, I would like you to know that now that I know what's on your mind I would just as soon you'd change your mind.

Now that can give us that sort of grip on why they would be engaged in a dispute over the characterization of an evening that's not going to take place, having then to do with the way in which such a characterization could be treated as revealing what one party thought of the other – a matter that parties are not, apparently, insensitive to. For one, on a no-pause basis she's ready to jump with a critique of his characterization. And also, the rest of the conversation is specifically concerned with what each of us should think about each of us. That is to say, he then engages in an elaborate characterization of himself as 'serious student,' and in due course 'serious student on his own,' not having such opportunities to be a frivolous child as she apparently has and makes use of. Which is then to say, he's accepted a re-characterization of herself which he's seen in her critique of his characterization. He's seen, 'What do you do, go out and get drunk every Saturday? Oh, that would explain why you look the way you do on Monday mornings' – as if that had been some long-term puzzle for him. And again, he has that immediately available; whether it's hypothetical or not is irrelevant since the evening itself is hypothetical.

In that regard, then, a possibility is being extracted that, be the events under consideration utterly imaginary, an attention to 'what you think of me' is right at the surface – as a dispute, gone through with full seriousness, could perfectly well take place with "If you got two tickets to the moon, would you take me or not?" But that puts it in an overt way, where here, and commonly, no suggestion is made that he's intending to besmirch her or indeed that he's characterizing her. And of course it's utterly imaginable that the thing would go quite differently were his talk done by virtue of some sensitivity to being other than allusive about what he wanted to do, and once she'd said "Talk, you mean get drunk don't you?" he heard it as saying "You needn't be allusive" and he would say "I'm sorry, yeah let's get drunk."

It's possibly something and possibly nothing that if you examine this invitation for any such ambiguity as it might contain, as might be some partial source for her focussing on what he means when he says something, then about the only thing I think you can come up with that is demonstrably so in the conversation itself, is who is "you" in the initial invitation. In our

language 'you' can be nicely ambiguous as between some singular and some plural. It could conceivably be unplain as to whether he is inviting her or her and her husband – as he eventually says in a way that doesn't have that ambiguity, "I was just gonna call and see if you and your husband would like to come over," though I don't know whether he knew beforehand that she has a husband, or what his intentions are. But plainly if there were that sort of an ambiguity involved in the "you," then it might well mesh with the kind of relationship that 'talk' and 'get drunk' have, i.e., he could be heard as proposing quite a different thing if he's proposing it for just her than if he's proposing it for her and her husband.

I'm not convinced that there's any fragment of her response, "Talk, you mean get drunk don't you?" which turns on that there is that sort of possible ambiguity in his initial invitation. As I said last time, technical sources for finding trouble in the characterization 'talk' have to do with 'talk' being hearably a second preference, something missing, and then being used to focus on 'talk' as a non-preferred event replaceable with some preferred event, 'get drunk,' which is other than the obvious preferred event, 'dinner' – which in the end it seems is what she's going out for anyway. That is to say, she seems to say in the first instance that she's going out to get drunk but it seems to end up that she's not going out to get drunk at all, she's going out to have dinner with her parents.

Now, in attempting to give a consideration of how "Talk, you mean get drunk don't you?" can be heard as a preferred characterization of Saturday evening, we go through a consideration of an understood world in which these terms 'talk,' 'get drunk,' 'Saturday' are not so much names of events, but names of things that if you know any sociology or anthropology, should be thought of as names of institutions. And Saturday is a sacred time for fun, in the ways in which she's intending – apparently successfully – to refer to it not as one day of the week, the day after Friday, but a day which has attached preferred characterizations of how one spends it. And that's a thing which he plainly picks up. That is, he uses it to make a describable day of his own out of it, i.e., in that Saturday is a day to be devoted to fun, it's now sayable that he had plans for working all day. Were it some other day, e.g., Thursday, this statement "I had big intentions of working all day" would be unsayable, in the sense of well, what else could one do on that day?

In that regard, then, they're not talking of days in their lives, they're talking about what some days are to be characterizably devoted to, however anyone happens to spend them. And that's then similar to what some evenings are to be characterizably devoted to, without regard to how anyone happens to spend an evening. Where one can perfectly well be offended at how someone reveals they figure you might be happy to spend some evening, even though in the end, not merely aren't you going to spend it in a way that's better in the sense that you characterize as 'better,' i.e., that you might go out and get drunk Saturday evening, but it turns out that you're doing something that you could probably accept to be yet feebler than what had been proposed. That is, he had at least proposed that they get together and

spend the evening talking with colleagues and she's ending up having an evening going out with her parents like some kiddy. And even though that's what she knows she's doing, she can be insulted at the idea that he would think she'd be doing anything less than going out and getting drunk.

April 30
Calling for help

The materials I'll be talking about now were taped on New Year's Eve, 1964. It's a telephone call made to a psychiatric operation which advertised itself for receiving calls from people who, for example, feel that they're suicidal, or people who are concerned with someone who is suicidal. During the day they operate as a regular emergency psychiatric clinic devoted specifically to people who are suicidal, and after hours and on weekends they had a system where somebody calls the place's number and an answering service routes the call to whoever is on call at the time. There are usually two or three people on call. They are not psychiatrists but are characteristically graduate students in clinical psychology, or other more or less trained personnel. None of them are specifically lay persons, they all have some professional training. But they are not yet professionals as is the staff during the day, all of whom have various degrees, PhDs in clinical psychology or MDs in psychiatry. It's a very large and well known operation, and people can know about it just by reading the newspaper. This is one call made on, as it happens, New Year's Eve.

> Go ahead please[1]
> This is Mr. Smith (pt; Hello) of the Emergency Psychiatric
> Center; Can I help you.
> *pt.*   Hello?
> *dr.*   Hello
> *pt.*   I cant hear you.
> *dr.*   I see   Can you hear me now?
> *pt.*   Barely   Where are you,   in the womb?
> *dr.*   Where are you calling from?
> *pt.*   Hollywood.
> *dr.*   Hollywood.
> *pt.*   I can hear you a little better.
> *dr.*   Okay. uh[2]   I was saying   My name is Smith and I'm with the
> Suicide Prevention Center.
> *pt.*   Your name is what?

[1]The class was given copies of a transcript which, for reasons of space, is not included in this edition. Instead, segments will be shown. The transcript was produced by Sacks in 1964 or 1965, and the segments as they appear here are attempts to reproduce Sack's original. The tape itself hasn't turned up.

[2]Initially the line went: "okay. I was," then the "I was" is struck out and "uh" added, so that the line now reads: "okay. uh   I was saying." It may be that a decision was made to include such a thing as "uh" in a transcript. It may also be that, as it happens with such items as "uh," it wasn't attended on an initial hearing.

dr. Smith
pt. Smith?
dr Yes
dr Can I help you?
pt I dont know hheh   I hope you can
dr uh hah   Tell me about your problems
dr I   uh   Now that you're here   I'm embarassed to talk about it.
I dont want you telling me I'm emotionally immature   cause I know
I am

The "Go ahead please" is the answering service's operator speaking. Now the
matter is slightly different than in other phone conversations because the two
parties are essentially put on the line at the same time. That can partially
account for the overlap that occurs at the start:

Go ahead please
This is Mr. Smith (pt; Hello) of the Emergency Psychiatric Center;
Can I help you.

That is, "Go ahead please" is unclear as to who should go ahead, and both
parties sometimes speak up at the same time, where it would be extremely
odd in telephone calls otherwise occurring that two parties would say hello to
each other at the same time.

I want to begin by focussing on one central theme of conversations like this
one, involving people calling this place and in a more general way, involving
people calling an institution of some sort for some sorts of assistance. And a
first way to catch that special status of this sort of call happens right at the
beginning of the call. It doesn't always happen in the same way for all such
calls, but it is so characteristic a problem for such calls that there have been
articles written on the matter. The matter being that on the one hand, one
party introduces themselves and on the other hand, the other party doesn't.
It may seem in this call that it's just happenstance that she doesn't give her
name and that he does give his name, but that's at least possibly not a
matter of happenstance. In any event, the situation of the institutional
person giving his name and the other not, is a problem that occurs for such
circumstances.

I'll talk a bit about some aspects of that. What we have is, Mr Smith
introduces himself and then there's a variety of 'can't hear' complications.
Now, I make an argument that she specifically isn't giving her name, and that
she has ways of avoiding giving her name. In any event she doesn't give her
name here, and it later turns out that she doesn't want to give her name when
she's specifically asked for it. Though, while she isn't specifically asked for it
here, the sheer fact that he introduces himself involves that it's her business
to introduce herself, too. That's a kind of general institution for phone calls
and for other situations of parties getting into an interaction who haven't been
in an interaction before, so that they aren't, then, recognizing each other. And

it is something that this place and places like it use. When I say 'use,' I mean to notice that the two names differ severely in their import. Whereas it would appear that there would be nothing noticeable if one said "This is Mr Smith" and the other then said "This is Mrs Jones,' the information received by either party in getting the other's name is altogether different. And that differentness can partially account for one party's perfect willingness to give his name, using it to elicit the other's, and the other's hesitancy to give a name.

What are the differences? What use does the name of the person who answers the phone, i.e., the person in the institution, have for the party who calls? Well, there are some altogether obvious uses. One thing is, when he says "This is Mr Smith" he's thereby providing a name that the caller can use throughout the call, insofar as they choose to address him. She can thereafter call him Mr Smith, and she does here and there call him Mr Smith. As a kind of side aspect to that, in calling himself Mr Smith, there are some obvious alternative things to call himself, which are interesting. He could call himself "Bill Smith" which would give her the opportunity to call him either Mr Smith or Bill; making, then, for possible informality, for the conversation to appear to be more intimate than otherwise. He doesn't give her that opportunity, though in some of the calls some of the answerers do indeed say "Hello, this is Frank Smith" as compared to saying "This is Mr Smith." Now, if he called himself Bill Smith, he would not only be gving her the opportunity to call him Mr Smith or Bill, but he might also be concealing something which Mr Smith reveals, something that is relevant for the call, i.e., a difference between Mr Smith and Dr Smith. That is to say, in saying to her "This is Mr Smith," he's saying to her "This is not Dr Smith." And in such calls, if a person is a doctor they always say "This is Dr Smith," where that conveys not only information about a title that should be used in the call, but about their professional status. So that on the one hand "Frank Smith" says "You can call me Frank," on the other hand it does not say whether I am or am not a doctor. And then "Mr Smith" says "You can't call me by my first name because you don't know what it is," but it also says "I'm not a doctor," as compared to "This is Dr Smith" which says "You can't call me by my first name but you know I'm a doctor." And indeed when someone says "This is Frank Smith" the caller may well ask "Are you a doctor?" and with some characteristicness, if he said "Frank Smith" he will turn out not to be a doctor.

We have, then, a series of alternatives that are not transparent, i.e., Frank Smith turns out to be alternative to Mr Smith, and not Dr Smith. And Dr and Mr are alternative by reference to the issue of 'Is he a doctor or isn't he?' So that the "Mr" part of Mr Smith says "I'm not a doctor" and the "Smith" part gives a name that he can be called, and the whole thing, "This is Mr Smith," besides saying what my status is and what you can call me, does a job of saying "Tell me what your name is" − not by virtue of this institution's way of working, but by virtue of how phone call and other interactional beginnings appropriately work.

The caller is also being given some other things in this kind of place and

in other places as well, and that is, they're being given the name of a person in the institution which they can use for later dealings with the institution. Calling back some other time they can say, "I spoke to Mr Smith last time," asking to speak to him again. Or they could be asked if they've spoken to anybody before and if so to whom, and then find that they're referred to that person again. They can also use that they have his name to do things like register complaints or provide plaudits to the organization. In other institutions that matter can be a bit more delicate, in that personnel might be more sensitive to the possibility that their behavior may be complained of. The obvious sorts of instances are things like policemen taking off their badges when they go to do things that they don't want anybody to be able to complain about them by reference to, so as to make themselves unidentifiable except as somebody in the organization.

Now, on the other hand, when the caller gives his name, while he's surely giving such a name as he can be called by in the conversation, he also takes it that he's giving such a name as he can be found out from; that will permit somebody to go track him down. If, for example, someone calls and says "I'm suicidal," then they can figure – and this is not something I'm making up, but something they say in such calls – that it's possible that if the call doesn't seem to be turning out too well, then people from this institution will call the police and have the police pick up the caller and take them to a hospital. People calling will give that as a reason for not giving their names when they're asked to give their names, not having given a name at the beginning. And when that's asserted, the people from the institution will say "Look, we don't do that. We never do that." And they don't for various reasons, among them being that the police won't do it.

Another sort of reason people have for not giving their names is, people who kill themselves are sometimes interested in not having it known that they killed themselves. They merely died. If they call and the call doesn't work and they decide to kill themselves, then if they die under possibly problematic circumstances and there is no reason to suppose they might have killed themselves, then it might well be figured that they just happened to die. If, however, they told their name, it can be known that they had been suicidal. And that can focus on the possibility that it was suicide, and they can end up being classified as a suicide.

Persons are deeply concerned about whether they will or will not be called suicides once they're dead. And over the span of sociology there's been an enormous interest in this phenomenon, having to do with why in the world are people who are killing themselves out of the world concerned with that the world figures that they did or did not kill themselves? Where, when you kill yourself, dying out of the world that you are in, you are doing an event in the world other than happening to die out of it. So that people are seriously oriented to the terms on which they leave. It is plain that people care either to make it certain that it is known that they have killed themselves – and calling this place is one such way, saying "I'm going to kill myself and you can find me at this address..." etc. – or to see if they can possibly survive, but

to hold as a contingency that they may not be able to, and if they are not able to, wanting to not have it known – for insurance, the children, the family, etc. – that they did indeed kill themselves. So their name is known by them to be a relevant aspect of what they would perhaps be leaving.

And in that regard it's an immensely curious fact that routinely they will not give their names, but also they will not lie. That is to say, they will be exceedingly hesitant, argumentative, etc., about giving a name, they will refuse to give it, when they could perfectly well just give any name. Now, that's something to puzzle over. I don't know whether it doesn't occur to them that they could just give any name, or whether while knowing that they could give any name, they will not give a name at all if they're not going to give their own. But again, it has perhaps to do with some way in which they are indeed more or less seriously involved in this world that they're in.

In any event, asking them to give a name by offering your name is to ask of them something that you and they know is much more of a thing than you're giving them. You're asking them for a commitment of a sort that can be more or less problematic to them, and which is distinctly more problematic to them right at the beginning of the conversation. And that has a very considerable interest to it. From the way he proceeds in the conversation, we can see that the recipient of the call, this Mr Smith, treats the call as the project that the party who is calling is engaged in, i.e., she's calling for help, and having called him she's done what she should do to call for help, and he's prepared to give her the help that she's looking for. Whereas for her, that this place is the place to go is not obvious, and the question is that she wants help, but that she called here doesn't constitute a solution, only a possible solution, and she'll see whether it's so. And we can get into some of the details of how, that he supposes that she's gone to the right place and she doesn't suppose that she's gone to the right place, work their way out.

One of the things involved in that is kind of simple, and that has to do with, having introduced himself he says "Can I help you." Now, there might be nothing noticeable about "Can I help you" but for the way in which she in the first instance deals with it. That is, "I don't know . . . I hope you can" is a notably curious response to "Can I help you" in the sense that having introduced oneself as a member of an institution, "Can I help you" is delivered as a format affiliated to the way that, calling Bullocks' rug department, you'll get "Rug department Jones speaking can I help you?" to which you say "Yes" or whatever. That is to say, it's a purely etiquettal thing which says "Okay tell me what you called about," whereas she hears it as something rather different. She hears "Can I help you" as "That's indeed a problem."

Aside from these routinized initial usages, a first kind of thing I want to point out about the ways in which he deals with her concerns a series of questions, somewhat interspersed, that he makes to her in the beginning part of the call. Right off we've gotten "Where are you calling from?" and "Tell me about your problems." A bit later we get the following:

pt   I guess   I just wish somebody'd   help me   I been helping myself
for over a year and I'm worn out
dr   you're not married
pt   no, not now
dr   you're divorced then
pt   yes
dr   I see   (she sniffles)   have any children?
pt   no (very low)
dr   we   how old are you by the way
pt   sigh   I'm 40.
dr   you're working   are you
pt   yah (same tone as 'no' above)
dr   are you satisfied with that?
pt   oh its a very nice job   mediocre   but very pleasant   no problems
dr   how long've you been divorced?
pt   oh a long time   maybe   about 11 years

These are essentially things that are called, in the mildly technical jargon, 'face sheet data.' They are things about which, whether it's so or not – and whether it's so or not can be irrelevant – one can imagine that the institution person is sitting with a list of matters he wants to get answers on, which are matters not merely for helping him do a diagnosis, but, characteristically, for some statistical investigation that the organization is engaged in. They might be running a study of where people are suicidal in this city; are people who live in Hollywood versus West LA suicidal? Are people who live in Hollywood who are unmarried suicidal? etc. They also want to know with whom they have more success. And in order to be able to do an appropriate medical investigation they have got to get some body of answers to questions. And for a variety of institutions, having not necessarily to do with suicide but pretty much anything to do with medical and social problems, if you call them, then you'll find that you're being asked a same series of questions somewhere in the conversation.

Now there's some neat aspects to that. If someone calls and presents this variety of information, then by virtue of investigations that have been done on prior such matters, the called can more or less make an assessment as to the seriousness of the problem. I'm not saying the called will be right, or the called will be wrong. But the way those places work is that they can use that information, by virtue of the information they've collected and other general census data, to decide how much they need to worry about a case. If, for example, the caller is a 13-year-old girl and she's living at home, then they can figure it's not too serious, and know how to deal with it, e.g., they can be reassuring, they can try to find out what the problem is, but they can know that she's not going to kill herself tonight. Whereas if it's a 57-year-old divorced lady with no children and no family here, etc., then it might well be that they can know that how this call works out is relevant to whether she will or will not kill herself. So the collecting of that information is on the one hand

relevant for assessing how this person is likely to behave and how important it is that you deal with them now as compared to saying "Come in Monday morning," and also it's relevant by reference to use in later cases. All of which gets relatively interesting in that each new piece of information can affect the corpus of earlier information. For example, if it turns out it's a 13-year-old girl who goes indeed kill herself, then that adds a bit of weight to any next 13- or 15-year-old girl who calls, even though for this one you figured you wouldn't have to worry about her very much since, given our earlier ones, they either rarely attempt to kill themselves or are rarely successful.

But a thing to be focussed on is that the information is not collected as "before I know how to deal with you and for other purposes than dealing with you, I'd like to have this information." Instead, it's dealt with as though it were fully part of the help that I'm giving. That is to say, its interests are partially concealed. A question then is, how can they be concealed? And at least one way they can be concealed is by at least partially placing the questions in such a way as to have it appear that this conversation is as spontaneous as any other, i.e., I'm asking you this question only by virtue of the last thing you said. As, for example, when she says "Where are you, in the womb?" he then says "Where are you calling from?" which can have to do in some way with the prior question and with the fact that we're having difficulty over the line, which could be explained by knowing where you're calling from. And, for example, when she says "I guess I just wish somebody'd help me. I've been helping myself for over a year and I'm worn out," he says "You're not married." Now that sounds like a picking up on her indication that she's helping herself. On the other hand, and while it's doing that, it's also providing an item on the checklist which says things like 'married, divorced, single,' etc. And the checklist character of it can be drastically revealed by a kind of routine thing he does thereafter. She says "No, not now" and he says "You're divorced then," whereas a more optimistic and non-institutional hearing of it might be "Oh you're going to get married." But 'going to get married' is not a title on the classifications available censuswise, 'married,' 'divorced,' 'widowed,' etc., and there's an of-course hearing of "not now" as meaning 'in the past,' 'was,' for which 'divorced' can be one obvious reading.

So there are ways that under some hearing she can find that she's only being partially listened to in the sense that she says that she wants somebody to tell her that they care, "somebody that would just, just listen for a minute." And while there's a way in which he is offering himself as such a person, she can see that she's being dealt with as 'a somebody,' not as the unique person she'd like to have people recognize that she is. Now that can be no problem in some places, but in this kind of place it's a distinct problem. The people calling are in a position of wanting to know if anybody in the world cares for them; as she says, she wants to kill herself for the same reason everybody else does; you just want to know if anybody cares. Now it's a seriously problematic thing when, in order to find out if anybody cares, you have to call, not a friend, but an institution, a phone number. And where, then, the

way they deal with you is not in the first instance "Who are you, I want to know you," but "Which are you?" That is to say, part of the thing that they're doing is getting that information, and regardless of the outcome of this call it will have been useful to them. Which is not to say that that information wouldn't help them to help you, and of course it's deeply believed by them that that's so – and it may be so. But it involves that they have a problem of collecting information within the call which is, at least in part, not for use in the call. And though they don't say "Look, before we get started I've got to know the following things," that they're doing some such thing has a kind of apparency to it which could be some source for some of the discomforts that are involved in these calls.

May 3
Problem solving; Recipient-designed solutions

I want to talk this time about two things that are related in a slightly obscure way. There's a specific substantive problem which, stated kind of generally, has to do with conversation as a vehicle for problem solving, and there's another, more methodological problem which has to do with collecting observables and putting them into some such relationship as permits posing and solving problems with them. So I want to sort of reproduce a procedure I used in getting to this problem of a way in which conversation is relevant to problem solving, by making a group of observations that in the first instance don't particularly have anything to do with each other and don't particularly have to do with the problem that eventually gets dealt with and where, then, there was some effort to see if there weren't some way to collect those observations and get from them a posable, solvable problem, that problem coming in the end to some ways in which conversation is specifically relevant to problem solving.

I'll state the general problem we eventually get to, right off. It's noticeable about problems that people face, that they can know that they have a problem, suppose that there are solutions to it, and feel unassured that if, say, somebody offered them a solution, they would be able to assess it, recognize that it was right. That is, there are problems that you have, where you have techniques for recognizing when you've got a solution to it, but there are others where you have a problem, you suppose that there's a solution, but you don't know how you would recognize a solution. And that can put you into a relatively difficult situation, common aspects of which are that you never know when you're being conned by somebody who tells you how to solve it. If you go to an auto mechanic with a problem and he tells you what the problem is technically and how he'll solve it, then you can often feel uncomfortable as to whether that's what the problem is. There are lots of things like that, and lots of them have roughly to do with possibly technical areas. If you go to a doctor feeling some malaise and he tells you that you're suffering from this, and this is what should be done, then while you might go through with the treatment and it might turn out that you feel better, you don't have some way of deciding, from what he tells you, before you do what he tells you, that he's right or that that's a solution. I eventually want to say that there are kind of obvious ways in which that applies in some circumstances of people feeling suicidal or otherwise mentally disturbed, and it can be readily enough supposed that they might be in a position to

not feel able to assess an offered solution and yet be concerned with its correctness.

So we're going to look for ways that people might have of assessing the possible correctness of a solution whose correctness itself they can't assess in the first instance, i.e., before ever trying out whatever it is that's proposed that they do, where conversation can perhaps be not merely a vehicle for telling problems and receiving answers, but can provide resources for assessing answers. That being said, one can easily enough think of some obvious ways that it would be so. For example, if you could find out from attending the talk of the person you're presenting your problem to, that they're being inconsistent, then you might have a way of saying that they're changing their mind or they don't know what they're talking about, and things like that. That is to say, there are obvious ways of monitoring their talk so as to assess the possible quality of their solution, even though you don't know what a solution would be. You could feel confident that you could at least rule out one or another solution by virtue of features of the talk that it was delivered within, or features of the scene that it was delivered within.

Now then, let me try to get to where this goes, without saying that what will be *looked for* is how conversation can play some part in finding ways to deal with that problem. We can look at the circumstances out of which the problem came to be focussed on, as both a way of collecting a variety of observations, and in terms of which that variety of observations might be used to describe a solution that people might employ for the problem.

I noticed that right off in the conversation she says she's having difficulty hearing him. And, forgetting about whether she is or isn't, there are a variety of virtues to announcing at the beginning of a telephone conversation, that you can't hear. One virtue is that having established that there is some difficulty in hearing the other when they've said "Hello," i.e., at a point where there's no particular connection between what they're saying and any obvious interest of yours in not hearing what they're saying, you've set up the reusability of that you can't hear for future occasions on which it might matter that you could say "I can't hear" for other purposes, i.e., seeking a delay or avoiding answering a question, it not now being an obvious strategy on your part, to have asserted that. And let me say in passing that my remarks on the usability of "I can't hear you" turn in part on that we have a transcript and a hearable tape, so that we suppose that, both the voices on the tape being hearable, it's at least some sort of possibility that it was other than that the voices are not hearable that was involved in her saying "I can't hear you."

There's also quite a different possible way of looking at somebody proposing right off in a conversation, i.e., when greetings are taking place, that there are difficulties in their hearing you. When someone picks up the phone and starts talking into it, they use a voice that they figure the one they're talking to can hear. Now, a feature of the voice you use talking over the phone is that it is effortless. So if they're insistent that you can't be heard, then it's not just that you speak louder, but you put that sort of effort into your talk which is involved in attending whether you can be heard, i.e., you

attend the sheer production of sound as something you have to work at, whereas when you're otherwise talking over the phone that isn't treated as part of the job you're involved in.

Turning that slightly around, at least a possible use of saying to someone "I can't hear you" is to have a way of making them put more effort into their talk than they otherwise planned to. Now that way of looking at an insistence on "I can't hear you" has as an obvious correlate that you could at the same time make for some further effort in their participation by yourself talking in a way that would make it difficult for them to hear you. So that you could skew the effortfulness with respect to talking and hearing: You insisting that they're not talking loud enough, and recurrently noticing that they're not talking loud enough, they're then engaged in watching for each utterance, not only what they're saying but whether it's loud enough. And you're talking in such a way that they have to make an effort to hear you – where again, in their routine talking over the telephone they don't think of listening to another's voice as effortful with regard to hearing it.

Another sort of thing. There's a place in the conversation where she says to him "Doesn't it bore you to have people like me talking to you?"

> *pt*　and I somehow I'm feeling that　I'm a nothing (smiling sigh)
> *dr*　uh huh
> *pt*　And I know nobody's a nothing　but I am　Its like everybody else is somebody　or something　and somewhere along the line　I muffed up
> *dr*　uh huh　This this proves your need for psychological help doesnt it?
> *pt*　oh　I know
> *dr*　I think it does
> *pt*　Doesnt it bore you to have people like me talking to you?
> *dr*　pardon me
> *pt*　doesnt it bore you to have people like me talking to you?
> *dr*　no it doesnt
> *pt*　doesnt it bore you on New Year's Eve when you want to go out and get to your party?
> *dr*　no not really　but there is uh uh I have this strong feeling that you need this psychological help　You could get it through a clinic
> *pt*　Like　like down at County hospital　can go in there with all the poor people　the people that have just never made anything out of their lives

Now, if one can use as a procedure trying to see what it is that he's been doing that could lead her to say "I notice your being bored," then a possible thing to find here is that he's reasserted a series of times that she should get help at a clinic, and she's rejected that.

> *dr*　you were in therapy with uh private doctor?
> *pt*　yah

dr   have you ever tried a clinic?
pt   <u>What?</u>
dr   Have you ever tried a clinic?
pt   sigh   no   I dont want to go to a clinic

and:

pt   I try so hard not to be emotionally immature and I am and I know
I am   and I hate it   I hate it   its a disgrace uhhg sometimes I cant help
it   I just am
dr   why   why wouldnt you be willing to go to a clinic for help?
pt   oh   Cause I dont want to identify with the poor people (sniffle)

and again:

pt   I've had some therapy   and I've had some group therapy   I know
I got a damn good picture of myself (dr I see) n its much harder than when
you dont know
dr   you you know then that you should get this clinical help, then dont
you
pt   Know but I dont think it would help me
dr   well uh
pt   It would take me down a step further
dr   (talking along with her a bit) over the telephone
pt   What?
dr   if you're not willing to work at this and help yourself in a clinic or
somewhere   how can I help you over the telephone?
pt   you cant   I guess nobody can   Was just a wild (laugh) stab in the
dark

Where at least an available interpretation of somebody presenting repeatedly
a solution to some problem that's posed, that they've offered immediately
upon the problem being posed, is that at some point they're exhibiting that
they're bored. All they're doing is, whatever I say, they offer the same thing.
She's not at this point assessing the offered solution 'Go to a clinic,' she's
assessing something about how that solution is being delivered, i.e., that it
was offered first and has been offered again, and again, and now again, across
a variety of things that she says about her circumstances.

Still another sort of thing. There's a place early in the conversation where
we get:

pt   I've got a date coming   in a half hour and I (sob)
dr   I see
pt   I cant go through with it   I cant go through with the evening I cant
(sniffle)

dr   uh huh
pt   you talk   I dont want to talk
dr   uh huh
pt   (laugh sob) It sounds like a real professional uh huh uh huh uh huh
sniffle

Similarly to the last thing I pointed to, she is attending that "uh huh" has
been undifferentiatedly used to a lot of the things she's said. And that
recurrence is otherwise characterizable as 'professional listening;' 'professional'
here being intended in a derogatory way. So again there's an apparent
attention to things he says which focusses on their patterned, undifferentiated
– in a way, for now, 'effortless' – presentation, though in giving that as a way
to think of it I'm already skewing in my favor a line of consideration we
might take. That is to say, there is a plain sense in which, having come up
with, on the first thing she says, that she should go to a clinic, and proceeding
with that thereafter, he can be seen or thought or said to be making no
particular effort other than whatever it is that he first said. And again, to say
"uh huh, uh huh, uh huh," while it might perfectly well involve that he
differentiatedly understands each thing and only uses a same way to express
that, it can also involve that he doesn't differentiatedly hear. It at least
involves that he picks the same, i.e., the most effortless, way to respond. And
she tells him that she sees that and doesn't like it.

What we're noticing here is that to things he says, she is giving hearings
which can have to do with a problem for her of "how carefully are you
listening to me?" And she's ready to complain when it appears that he isn't
listening to her sufficiently carefully, and further, she is letting him know that
she can find out when he isn't listening to her sufficiently carefully. That is to
say, aspects of his talk may give that away, and it isn't to be supposed that
he himself notices, since he wouldn't then do such talk. And she can be found
to be listening in such a way as to attend not just what he says and its merits,
e.g., the way that "uh huh" can possibly be understanding the last thing she
said, but, doubting that, listening to find that though he doesn't know it he's
shown that he's being casual or professional or bored – which are plainly
things that if he knew about it, he wouldn't choose to do. He might then
come to figure that she can pick those things up if he is feeling them, so that
if he cares, he had better do something, perhaps not merely to try to conceal
that but to change it.

She also tells him that she's aware – whether it's so or not is kind of
irrelevant – that he thinks he knows a bunch of things about her given
what little has so far transpired, or given just that she has called, i.e., she
says she knows just what he thinks about her even though he doesn't know
her:

pt   I known damn well theres nothing wrong with the world   I know
its me
dr   uh huh

pt   oh I am not blaming anybody else   Thats why its so hard for me to talk to you because I   I I know what I am (dr uh huh) I know just exactly what you're thinking and I know exactly what you see without even knowing me

dr   (chuckle) I see

Now, if the line I took about the series of questions that he asks her is anything like so, then there are ways in which he's going through a relatively precast conversation. He has a bunch of things he wants to get out of it from her: her name, her age, is she working, is she married, does she have any children, etc. And in that way the event is one for which he is partially engaged in making a routine for himself. And one can think of this series of things I've noticed as a possible collection of attempts on her part to take a situation which she can suppose is one that involves him in dealing with what she will say in a relatively precast way, and make it one in which if he's going to emerge from the conversation in a comfortable way, then he's got to put a lot more work into it than he had supposed. That is to say, at least one thing that runs through the matters I've noticed here is that remedying them makes talking in this conversation a lot more effortful for him than it might well be, in a series of different ways. He has to attend whether his talk is hearable. He has to see whether some way he uses to appreciate a thing she says captures that it appreciates the thing she says – and in later parts of the conversation he gets much more elaborate in his indications of 'I know what you're saying' than "uh huh" is. He makes paraphrases of what she says, he may generalize what she says, etc. He is then engaged in exhibiting some understanding, which may well be the understanding that he otherwise would have used "uh huh" for, but is at least different from that in that she can look to it to see that the work has been put in.

So we have a variety of conceivably technical things she uses for making his participation effortful – specifically making it more effortful than it had been at any point at which some complaint of hers gets raised. And that can connect back to how she deals with "Can I help you?" and varieties of other such things. Now then, what kind of interest is there in the issue of 'effortfulness' as an achievable feature of a conversation? And it's not simply effortful in the sense that he's going to, e.g., start varying; saying instead of "Uh huh" things like "Yes," "Mm hm," "I see," "Surely," "I understand," "I get you," etc. so that a pattern cannot be found. It's not so much that which is involved in the effortfulness as that she can come to see that he is working at her case, i.e., that he's now trying to *design whatever he's going to say by reference to what she's telling him.*

We're plainly, then, dealing with conversational matters, and indeed very heavily telephone matters where she's restricted to the phone and its properties in order to deal with him. Now the question is, what can be the virtue of doing this to this guy? And that question sits. To that question, then, the task is to devise a problem for which the kinds of observations I've made, and their possible connectednesses, would constitute the makings of a

solution. That is, starting with a bunch of seemingly unconnected observations, seeing that they have some technical relationship to each other, that there's a way to put them into a package of sorts, we then ask 'Is there some problem in the world that that set of things could be a solution to?' Now the problem itself can be a relatively familiar one, and indeed the terminology of the solution can be a relatively familiar one. What we wouldn't have known is what the technical means are; what people *do* in solving the problem. And the problem that I offered was how to assess a possible solution when you can't assess it on its merits. We can now reconsider that problem in the light of the sorts of things she seems to be doing, and we can perhaps then come up with what, in some theorized way, an answer would be for somebody. And perhaps an answer would be something like: If you can get the other party to feel that you have ways of deciding that the solution they offer is not fitted to the problem you've posed, then you may get them to work at putting together a solution that *is* fitted to the problem you've posed. Aside from the sorts of things we've seen, that could also set up strategies for persons with problems, involving things like giving a specifically wrong version of the problem first, getting a solution to that, and then changing the problem. If the solution changes, then you can figure that maybe they're listening. Of course there are no guarantees involved at all. The idea is what kinds of things do people have to latch onto, that, furthermore, they do seem to latch onto?

In a way, you could ask what would be the difference if he designed it for her or not? It appears that if in offering a solution you can show that it's a solution devised for just this person, then they will routinely feel happier with it than they will if you deliver it as soon as they say "hello," though you could perfectly well do that. And indeed it's well known among medical doctors that, while you can often diagnose a patient as they walk into the room, before they've even sat down at your desk, i.e., you can look at them and see what specific disease they have, you will normally ask them for a set of symptoms and ask them such sorts of questions as will indicate that you're attending their proposed symptoms with care before you tell them what your diagnosis is, since their problem is how in the world are they to believe what you're saying. So I'm not arguing that the solution is better that seems personally designed and is thereby asessable as 'better,' but that there are such procedures, and one can make use of a variety of otherwise available conversational features.

May 10
Agent–client interaction

I want to introduce some considerations, which will turn out to be relevant to this particular conversation, that involve some of the sorts of possible differences in two-party, caller–called conversations when one party is speaking as an agent of some organization – by which I mean that in the conversation they are in some way doing the organization's business – the other being in some way a client. And in this case we plainly have a situation where somebody is not calling this Mr Smith but the organization he works in, and he certainly treats the call as having that character in the first instance, in the way in which he identifies himself – where presumably were you calling him at his home he wouldn't identify himself the way he does, i.e., "This is Mr Smith of the Emergency Psychiatric Center, can I help you?" Now, that status of his matters for more than how he introduces himself, and I want to talk to some facets of that.

One relatively delicate way in which a facet of that appears in conversation is the promonimal way that a party refers to themselves. So that, for example, if you call a store and say "Do you have any potatoes?" then on the one hand it's not unlikely that the party you're speaking to will say "No we don't" not "No I don't," and on the other hand it's also likely that when you tell another what happened you'll say "They didn't have any" not "He didn't have any." So, in a noticeable way, though only two parties have participated, the third-person reference to one of them will be a plural. One can say, e.g., "They weren't (or were) helpful" as compared to preserving the singularity of the person, "He wasn't helpful." If one then were to think of 'first and second person,' 'plural and singular,' etc., those sorts of facts might be puzzling. But a simple solution to it is to say that 'we' and 'they' are not only plural references, but also, among other things, 'organizational references,' where their organizational status operates independently of whether the number relationship – plural or singular – happened to be present for the person or persons being described. So, attending the fact that an agent of an organization is being talked to or of, locates an otherwise anomalous feature of conversation, i.e., that some person is referred to as 'they' when he ought to be referred to as 'he,' and he ought to refer to himself as 'I' and not 'we,' in the supposable way that grammar works. There happen to be other ways in which one can and does use 'we' and 'they' when doing singular reference; I introduced this only to say that there are relatively delicate and technical ways that, that an agent of an organization is being dealt with, matters for conversation.

What I want ultimately to get to is, roughly, that it seems that one possible eventuality of this conversation might be, she's called and said "I need help"

and he's said "Go to a clinic," that she then says "Okay" or "No" and that's that. That is to say, it appears that what he is prepared to do at the outset of the conversation is to offer that sort of help, i.e., help her to find a place that will give her help. Now it doesn't turn out to come to that. And I want to raise as an issue, how can she get him to do differently than he seems initially prepared to do? And that he is an agent of an organization may be variously relevant. That is, he could say to her "Look, that's all my job is. I'm here to tell you where to go. If you don't want to go there, well, I've done my job," but on the other hand there may be organizational considerations usable to get him to do more than he's initially prepared to do, and some of those could be readily extracted.

Suppose that this conversation is one on which he's going to make a report, i.e., it looks like while participating in the conversation he's taking some sorts of notes on it, if only to check various things off – age, sex, occupation, etc., and also presumably such things as if it looks serious or not. And one can feel rather certain that there must also be a place to note the disposition of the call, i.e., "I advised her to go to County Hospital and she said yes," where, on the other hand he might have to note, "I advised such-and-such and she refused." Now, one thing the place to note 'disposition of the call' does is to provide a way that the organization can assess his work. So if, after some time, someone were to look at the series of papers he'd returned, and some reasonable proportion of them said "I advised such-and-such and they refused," then the question of whether he was doing his job well might be raised. And now suppose that he were to get her name also – which definitely becomes a non-happening only when the conversation ends, i.e., for the course of his participation in the conversation he can't be sure he won't get her name – the name would also serve as a datum in considering the disposition of the call. That is to say, if it turned out that he had put in some names and those names appeared on the coroner's list of people who had possibly committed suicide, then the question of whether he had done his job right would surely be raised.

That is to say, to be sure he has some considerable leverage over her with regard to treating her as someone whose fate does not implicate his own, i.e., he could write up a report which indicated she was hopeless. But if his reports showed that more frequently than others' reports, then it seems reasonable to suppose that although the organization would back him up in various instantial cases, it would make him justify his presence in it rather more seriously than were he able to propose "I suggested such-and-such and it was accepted" or were he to have a long list of names none of which turned up on suicide lists. Now, particularly where careers are involved, those sheets can matter a good deal. They can be used to decide whether to promote somebody, whether to fire them, etc. And it's also possible that a client can know or suspect that, and can use it to gain some leverage with the person they're dealing with, insofar as they can bring the possible disposition into focus as one that would not be happy for the organizational agent.

Plainly there are also other techniques available to a client, to affect the

position of the agent they deal with. They can write a letter to the organization afterwards saying "I spoke to Mr Smith and he was very helpful," or a complaining letter. And in the case of suicides it's imaginable that they can do rather more drastic things, e.g., include in the suicide note that they had, as a last attempt, called this organization and the person there was altogether callous, and so, coming to the end of that, they figured they had no alternatives. Now that wouldn't do too much good for the public relations of the organization, and probably wouldn't be altogether consistent with the continuation of the career there of the particular person who happened to deal with them. Furthermore of course, it can be relevant to the future references, etc., that they get. So it's not simply that they might lose a job here, but they might also then be kind of marked thereafter – particularly for someone in clinical work. In short, there are ways for a client to mobilize the locus of a person in an organization in the client's interests – without ever having to deal with the agent's sympathy. That's quite a different matter.

In that regard we might notice a particular feature of this conversation, which is that at the beginning of it the lady who is calling is crying. And one callous way of conceiving an import to her crying is something like this: This phone call takes place at some time. Any phone call to an organization takes place at some time. A question is, in what way does the time the call is placed figure in it? For many calls it can be altogether incidental, e.g., "I'd like to have a checkup on my teeth, when can I get an appointment?" or "I'm considering a trip to Alaska, what's the situation about reservations?" In which case, things like the hour you call or whether it was toward the end of the week might be altogether incidental considerations.

Now this place is open for calls 24 hours a day. It happens that a specific problem of people who are suicidal concerns others taking them seriously, where, to approach someone and say "I'm feeling suicidal" is not necessarily to be believed, in which case it may be best to only make an approach when you can bring off the utterly current character of your feelings. Among ways to do that would be to call in a state of specific emotional trouble. To call up crying is at least to say that when I called matters for me, i.e., the problem that I'm telling you about is a problem I have *now*. And of course her crying will quite unavoidably be heard as having to do with the call, i.e., it would be altogether ludicrous were she to say, sobbing over the phone, "Look, I have a suicide problem. Excuse the crying, I just stubbed my toe. Don't worry about it, it has nothing to do with this." So, crying can bring off not simply the seriousness of her business but its current seriousness, and can be a way to attempt to affect its disposition. Calling up crying, one can hope that somebody won't say "I can get you an appointment for next Fall," but that they will come to feel that unless they do something soon you might be a trouble on their record. Crying isn't the only way in which she shows the current character of her trouble. At one point she says "I just drove home from somebody's house where I was being ((sarcastically)) really gay, and on the way home I fell apart." Where that business of giving its local history is affiliated to making the thing now-serious, where making the thing now-

serious can provide some sorts of bases for the other attempting a disposition now. And again, without their having any particular sympathy for the client or in any way getting involved with the client, dealing with them purely as someone in an organization for which records are made by them, the use of which records are part of the way they're assessed as to their current and future state in that organization or other such organizations.

So there are ways in which, that somebody is situated in an organization – which is characteristically thought of by us as a position of strength, untouchability, impersonality, etc. – makes that person available to manipulation by an otherwise weak client; in our case, somebody who is suicidal. Somebody who is suicidal can, calling some organization, have some sorts of power over the persons that they just happen to deal with, by virtue of that person's position in the organization. And they might use those powers, and that might affect how they get dealt with. And the idea is to see what sorts of strategic matters are available to an interactant with regard to that they're dealing with someone in an organization. In that regard, then, one can see as a kind of a bluff, that Smith says "If you're not willing to work at this and help yourself in a clinic or somewhere how can I help you over the telephone?" Where that might get her to feel that if she won't acknowledge being willing to go to a clinic, then she's not going to get help over the telephone, and she has no place else to turn. On the other hand, she could see it as 'He can't get away with that. Our lives are now locked together in some way, and whatever he thinks of me he's not going to let me off the line so fast,' so that she can call his bluff, and when asked "How can I help you over the telephone?" say "You can't. I guess nobody can." He won't hang up.

I'm trying to focus on how it .is that, where there's an initially proposed solution, "Go to a clinic," some sorts of interests of the person proposing that can be mobilized to get them to propose otherwise. And in the first instance I wanted to deal with such sorts of interests as have nothing to do with the caller, and have only to do with the career contingencies of the one who is giving that advice and who is prepared perhaps to give only that advice. Now plainly there's more to the world than that, but the idea is to see that there *is* that. For one, that's what people have to start out with, i.e., what she has to start out with is that it's Mr Smith of the Emergency Psychiatric Center, and they're on the phone so she can't use other vehicles for getting him interested in the case.

And clients will routinely try immediately to mobilize the agent to interest in their case, and a variety of rather common occurrences should be considered in that light. For example, first therapeutic sessions are a special sort of event, where a first session is not necessarily a first in a series, but may be the basis on which a therapist decides to take or not take a case. And a common thing for those, where the possible client is female and the therapist is male, is that she will check out if she can mobilize the male interest of the therapist in her. One altogether simple thing is to make some move toward smoking a cigarette at the beginning of the session; an unnoticeable thing, since at the beginning of a session persons are, after all, nervous. The key problem is, is

he going to light it or not? If he lights it, then that suggests that other than the professional relationship can be actuated between them. That's not to say that he's going to become a lover or anything like that, but one can count on those energies as available for use. And senior therapists will often twit the young therapists they're supervising, if, e.g., they're watching a videotape of the first session, with "Well why did you light her cigarette?" or "What did you feel like when she reached for a cigarette?" in order to see whether the therapist under supervision has any interest in the case (some people figuring if you have an interest in the person you might have an interest in the case, and others figuring the reverse). This is distinctive from the conventional issue of that males light females' cigarettes, where if one refuses to light the cigarette then one is being less of a male. What is involved here is the kind of way that a male can be attending the female's body for its movements, which would be something he would discover when she happened to make some gesture and he found himself reaching for his matches, i.e., psychiatrically he could learn that he wasn't just dealing with some client, but was attending to pleasing this woman.

Let me just note that the call has an incredible *economy* to it, not only in the sense that she sets out a series of demands and constraints on those demands, like that she has a date coming in half an hour, and that she wants certain sorts of help and refuses to get other sorts of help, where the call proceeds within those constraints and finishes in time and finishes with her getting what she wanted out of it. But also there's a sense of its economy in the way in which events in the call are turned to the specific business of the call. So, for example, at one place we get:

> *pt*   My father used to say unless I change no man'd want to touch me with a ten foot pole
> *dr*   uh huh   so you decided to prove it
> *pt*   laughs   you're making me laugh   I must be feeling better.
> *dr*   laughs
> *pt*   laughs

So she laughs and says "You're making me laugh, I must be feeling better." Now the laughing can be something interpretable simply by reference to that someone says something possibly funny and someone else laughs. Laughs are not routinely talked of in terms of some course-of-the-interaction character they might have, or for the issue of what-you're-doing-to-me by reference to the business of the interaction. But here she does her laugh, apparently a spontaneous laugh, and then gives an interpretation of it having to do with its position in this conversation – this conversation under its narrow formulation of 'I want help from you now; such help as has me feeling better by the end of this, so I can go out on my date.' And the question I've been trying to get to here is, why in the world should he care about that, and how does she bring him to care about that, so that in fact, in the end, the two of them have accomplished that.

May 17

Poetics: Spatialized characterizations

I'll start this time by noticing, for a variety of different types of things, some similarities. Within some 26 lines of talk we get three characterizations of facets of a course of life:

> *pt*   I dont know Mr. Smith I I guess that I got to a point where I all
> therapy's done for me was give me a good fat clear look at myself

a bit further down:

> *pt*   you go through a period where its everybody else's fault and you
> understand its just fine as long as you can blame everyone else

and further on:

> *pt*   Its like everybody else is somebody   or something   and somewhere
> along the line   I muffed up

These are three temporal descriptors in a fashion; characterizations of time in the sense of time in a course of a life. They're each perfectly good as characterizations of time in a course of life. They have a common feature which is separate from that, i.e., each of them distinctly *spatialize* the characterization. They do that not simply with the use of words that are alternatively temporal or spatial, like 'point,' 'period,' 'line,' but, where such words could be made more temporal with the use of 'when,' "*where*" is used in each of them: "You go through a period where . . . ," "I got to a point where . . . ," ". . . and somewhere along the line . . ." Plainly enough, one could have course of life descriptions that were not temporal and spatial; they could be purely temporal. Here's a group, each of them is spatialized, i.e., turned to a spatial sense. So that's just a something.

Now let me shift to another sort of thing present in the conversation. There are some more or less neat *idioms* used, and I want to offer a partial list of them. On page 2:

> *dr*   do you have any friends or relatives around?
> *pt*   nope   not anybody I'd ever tell this to I'd
> SCARE THE DAYLIGHTS OUT OF THEM.

On page 4, rejecting clinical therapy:

pt   I dont think it would help me
dr   well uh
pt   It would TAKE ME DOWN A STEP FURTHER

Again on page 4:

dr   if you're not willing to work at this and help yourself in a clinic or somewhere   how can I help you over the telephone?
pt   you cant   I guess nobody can   Was just a WILD (laugh) STAB IN THE DARK

On page 9:

pt   I'm not perfect but god damn it I've GOT SOMETHING ON THE BALL

On page 11:

pt   My father used to say unless I change no man'd want to TOUCH ME WITH A TEN-FOOT POLE

And on page 17, again and finally refusing to give her name, she says:

pt   I'm kinda HIDING UNDER A PAPER BAG at the moment.

These are not all the idioms or proverbials used in the conversation, but these are sprinkled across the conversation from its beginning to its end, and there is a notable facet to each of these, i.e., each involves an idiom which is *spatialized*. Obviously there are many idioms which do not have spatialization to them. So now there are two domains which are kind of separate from each other, one having to do with course of life characterizations and the other having to do with idioms. Both of these are spatialized. Does it mean anything?

Let me now turn to the initial problem in the conversation, i.e., hearing him:

pt   I cant hear you.
dr   I see   Can you hear me now?
pt   Barely   WHERE ARE YOU,   in the womb?

Now one might not at all attend that the initial possible solution to why she can't hear him has anything intriguing in it, but again, plainly enough one could have another way of formulating the difficulty in hearing than by reference to "Where are you?," i.e., trouble on the line is a more obvious thing than distance.

The next problem that emerges has to do with her hesitancy to tell him about her problems, and she poses that as "Now that you're here:"

dr   Tell me about your problems
pt   I   uh   NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE   I'm embarrassed to talk
about it.

Clearly there are special ways that he is "here," i.e., it has to do with 'now
that we are in contact,' "here" being a way of spatializing a co-presence which
is in the first instance an abstract co-presence, i.e., over the phone.
     Later, with respect to men who like her:

pt   the only time that I have anybody FLIP OVER ME is when I'm not
interested in them
dr   uh huh
pt   An   Its a challenge   and I cant GO ROUND ALL MY LIFE
being a challenge

And other problems which she poses are posed in partially spatialized terms.
Also, this spatialization is something that Mr Smith turns out to be employing
as well. Whether he begins to employ it by virtue of her use of it, I have no
idea. In any event, I at least suppose that neither of them has any idea that
there is anything spatial going on in the conversation in such a way as it is here
going on. Let me mention some of the things he does. On page 13,
characterizing himself:

pt   You sound very young to know so much
dr   ho huh huh
pt   hhhhh
dr   well like you, I'VE BEEN AROUND too

On page 14, characterizing her circumstances:

dr   yeah well YOU'RE IN A SPOT NOW at your age and in your
situation that you've gotta MAKE SOME KIND OF A MOVE

Where "make some kind of a move" as a way of describing what she has to
do, i.e., make changes, has a spatial character, in part perhaps by virtue of
"you're in a spot" and whatever else has been transpiring, in which the world
has been surfaced and flattened out and rounded, and that's what's being used
as the source of characterizations of whatever in it. Also on page 14:

pt   yeuh well you know after talking to you   I dont feel quite so much
right now
dr   uh huh
pt   You know why   cuz you told me you hated yourself once and you
sound so confident hhhh
dr   heh eh
pt   laughing

dr   well I feel like I'VE GONE THROUGH IT AND COME OUT
THE OTHER SIDE

I suppose one could think of the conversation as an exercise or a game, but
you must know that it's no such thing – in part by virtue of the fact that, e.g.,
just reading through the transcript no one ever sees any such thing happening
in it. And for all we know, lots of conversations may be as involved in some
way of formulating the world, where whatever it happens that you're saying
now, you do it in a way that is just running through the whole thing.

Now I don't have much to say as to what this adds up to, and what I'm
going to point out now I do not offer as an explanation or as more
central – though I imagine anyone would be willing to make more of it than
I think we can – and that is to focus a bit on the way she talks about her
suicide problem. Among the reasons she gives for suicide are "I just want out
of the world anyway if that's the way it is who wants to be in this world" and
"oh I I guess suicide's an escape too" and she talks about "in church you
know they teach that you die and you go to heaven and then you become one
of God's children? and uh that sounds pretty nice;" that "they keep teaching
you, you know, to be with God and I really want to be with him." I suppose
one has heard that kind of talk without seeing that it can have a certain sort
of sense, under a spatialized view of what dying involves, i.e., going from
somewhere to somewhere. It is perhaps by virtue of a spatialized view of
circumstances that one can treat dying not, as one of the options has it, as the
end, no 'you' after, but as going somewhere and thereby an escape. Under
that kind of consistency suicide becomes a voyage, a trip, one way to get away
from somewhere to somewhere else.

An argument was made in some work, discussing *The Inferno* by Dante, a
book from many centuries ago which gives a very detailed characterization of
Hell, and where the people are located in it who have committed the various
sins. The argument was about the use of Hell in Medieval literature, and
proposes that the people who used it did not have a literal notion of Heaven
or Hell but that the conception was used as a way of organizing the sins that
are to be avoided, i.e., 'placing' each sin such that one could keep in mind the
things one should avoid doing. And if that's so, then one isn't to suppose that
the Late Medieval–Renaissance Christians specifically believed in a Heaven or
Hell, but that they used a spatializing technique, which was at that time
attractive by virtue of, e.g., New World discoveries and interest in maps,
etc. – as a way of organizing and keeping in mind, moral issues.

There are, then, some apparent virtues to spatializing. Whether it's that by
virtue of a spatialization it looks reasonable to talk about death as going
somewhere, I don't know, but it does seem plain that with the stuff I pointed
out here, and masses of other stuff in this conversation – and perhaps, for
other conversations, this or other simple such notions – one may find oneself
collecting an enormous proportion of the characterizations present in a
conversation, present in consistent ways, ways that seem to provide both
problems and solutions. That is, a suicide problem getting formed up within

a spatial format can perhaps give one the notion that what we want is to get out of this world and go somewhere else, and that that's an achievable thing, where lacking that spatial conception no such solution may be available. But whether the spatial format of the suicide problem is core, or is just derivative from the rest, or gets the various participants into a mind where the possible absurdity of what's being proposed is not visible via the way in which the language has now put them into such terms as make it a reasonable proposal, are things which I'm simply in no position to say.

But I do take it that, that one classification of terms – in this case spatial – can collect such a large amount of one conversation – a long conversation going on about all sorts of things – is worth some attention. And it is a different kind of organizing than I've talked about so far in the course. We again see a way that large, disconnected, about-different-things, by-different-parties events have exceedingly simple similarities.

And furthermore, I at least suppose for now that nobody in the conversation at all notices this organization. I guess that, that I say it goes unnoticed has to do with that I'd imagine that if it were noticed anywhere it would begin to be picked up on, giggled over, treated as embarrassing, and various other things that people begin to do in a conversation when something is just happening in it, beyond their control, that neither of them figures either of them is responsible for. That is to say, as when they begin to see puns popping up in a conversation, or when they find themselves using some odd word again and again, they do things that bring it to each others' attention. Now, how something as prominent, as striking, as overwhelmingly present as that goes unnoticed is a question. And it isn't particularly obscure, nor do you need a very abstract view of things in order to find this.

Now I'm wondering, is it possible that if someone does such a thing this much and the other does not notice it, that the other will not do it also? Supposing that one talks in such a way – spatializing in this case; I have no idea of what the list of classes are that can be used to so fill a conversation – but supposing that one talks in that way and doesn't see it, and the other doesn't see it either, then is it not sort of inevitable that the other person nonetheless now begins to exhibit an attention to it in some way, i.e., begins themselves to form problems up, to characterize events in the way this Mr Smith ends up doing?

In that regard, there's a kind of routine observation made about something that happens to people who are crazy, i.e., they get the idea that other people are controlling their minds. Now that came up as a topic when I was working on a piece of data that involved somebody saying "Remember that car you had?" It sounds like a question, and you could think of it as just a question. In some ways it's not that at all, it's a command which says "Remember that car you had." And now you find that the car you had pops into your head, and you say "Yeah," not, however, "Yeah I was remembering the car," because the car wasn't on your mind at all. So if we wanted to know the sources for people having the view that others control their thoughts, then one kind of transparent thing is someone asking you if you remember something.

The first thing you know is that you remember it; they're telling you what to do with your head. And it's imaginable that somebody could go through a conversation like this one and have a sense that the other took over their mind, i.e., the other person's spatial terminology has now become how you are thinking whatever you're thinking about, across a series of things you're thinking about, i.e., while topics change.

And a thing we can come away with is that people aren't crazy for thinking that other people control their minds. That could not be a source of their craziness. That could only be a matter of wisdom. Now, people may well be differentially sensitive to it, and indeed those who feel it may only feel it and not know why it's so. Plainly we go through conversations like this figuring we were being spontaneous and our own person, when some immense amount of the things we say are cast by reference to a way that the other talked – that *they* didn't even know that they were using. But it is imaginable that somebody could feel queasy about it, feel that they're talking in a way that's not their way of talking. You feel that you are not yourself – maybe 'phoney,' maybe somehow something else. And what I'm wondering is whether if you had a tape of the conversation you might not find that in ways like this the other has taken over your mind. Of course it might have been educational – you might have found a different way of thinking about things you've thought about – but the thing is that you wouldn't in the first instance know what had happened. If you knew what had happened you might well have picked up on it, giggling over it or whatever.

Again though, and as a further lesson for this, certainly it would be silly to take the complaints of crazy people too lightly. It's much more interesting to consider whether what they say is at all so, not how is it nonsense. And for a thing that's very dramatically present and has been much talked about – the notion that others control my mind, influence my thoughts, etc. – there are simple and transparent ways in which that's obviously so. And thereby, people could not be crazy for asserting it. Why they feel it and no one else does? That's another question. I'm saying that they're right. People do control their minds, and not theirs only. Now I'm not saying that they're right for the reasons they think they're right, but certainly one might explain a feeling in an incorrect way and nonetheless have the feeling right. You can't, after all, complain about things like "Remember that car you had?" You can't say "Oh, go to hell." Nor can you not remember. It's a nice sort of power to consider.

May 21

Closing; Communicating a feeling; Doctor as 'stranger'

This fragment is from the New Year's Eve conversation we've been working on. I'm going to talk about some facets of its close.

pt   well   well gee thank you   I um   I'm terribly   now I'm very ashamed of myself that I bothered you   but I was in the house and I thought I just cant last and I just cant go it another minute I just cant
dr   uh huh
pt   Then   I thought you know its like I know you're a stranger but its the feeling that there is somebody that would just   just listen for a minute
dr   right
pt   And I didnt know anybody that would even understand what I was talking about and that makes you want to do it even more
dr   right   thats right
pt   there isnt anybody in the world's gonna even know what I'm saying
dr   uh huh   uh huh   Thats right I understand that an you really didnt bother me because thats why I am here for thats what I'm here for
pt   well
dr   so I'm glad to have helped you   I wish I knew who I was talking to
pt   hhhhh oh I
dr   really if you would be willing to give me your name I dont give it to anybody I just file it   and uh   If you should call back again we
pt   Yud say   theres that nut again
dr   right   heh heh
pt   laughs
dr   we'd just know a little more about you so that we could help better
pt   I really rather not   cause right now I'm   a little ashamed of myself   and a little embarrassed
dr   alright   if you need
pt   I'm kinda hiding under a paper bag at the moment
dr   heh heh   if n   you need us again you'll call back wont you?

pt I will and I just thank you so much   I think I can go wash my face
now and put on my pretty dress n
dr good and remember Wilshire Methodist
pt Wilshire Methodist   yeh   I will
pt n What do I do just go in and ask about it huh?
dr Yes I believe I'd give em a telephone call and ask em how to do it
pt Yeah
dr An I think you'll find help there
pt I sure thank you and I certainly wish you a very happy new year
dr thanks very much and the same to you
pt thank you
dr good by
pt good byyy

We are, with this section, fully into the closing of the conversation. Now
this closing bears some notable relation to the talk that just precedes it, and
a first thing I want to point to involves us in looking at that. The talk that
precedes this closing concerns another scene, therapy that she was in, about
which she says that it stopped at an inappropriate time.

dr this means you havent gone far enough in therapy
pt I stopped at a very bad time   I know I did (m hmm) But I uh
job situation   got moving and I   I stopped right when I was beginning
   well I would a been better if I had no therapy   then to stop when I
stopped (dr yeh sounds like it) Cause I stopped right when I was looking
at the whole gory mess (dr uh huh) Before it started   you know Before I
started a clean it up a little
dr uh huh
pt Was like a surgeon getting down to the disease you know and all of
a sudden he opens you up and there's the disease whooah yeay
dr he he he
pt He knows what it is and quits there ha laughs
dr yeah I suppose that thats it
pt laughs
dr thats a good example,   thats good
pt well   well gee thank you . . .

So when talk about the therapy she was in stops, we get into the close of this
conversation. And it is contrastive with the talked-about close, by virtue of the
way in which this close does not have the sort of inappropriateness as the prior
one did, i.e., this close occurs, not before some help, but after some help. So
the positioning of the close here does not just come about by reference to one
way in which it appropriately could be placed, i.e., after she's gotten some
help, but it is also an ending that is positioned after a discussion of the
positioning of endings.

I want now to point out some aspects of a relationship between the start of this closing and earlier events in the conversation. One kind of marked, relatively formal thing can be noted by comparing her report now, and her report at the beginning of the conversation, of her feelings before the conversation. On page 2 she says:

> *pt*   I've got a date coming   in a half hour and I (sob)
> *dr*   I see
> *pt*   I cant go through with it   I cant go through with the evening I cant (sniffle)

and here she says:

> *pt*   I was in the house and I thought I just cant last and I just cant go it another minute I just cant

Plainly, a sequence is reproduced, roughly involving an initial – for a hearer eliptical or allusive – statement ("I can't go through with it" and "I just can't last"), an elaboration on that ("I can't go through with the evening" and "I just can't go it another minute"), and then an emphatic end ("I can't" and "I just can't").

Now the replication of that triplet raises questions as to whether that format has anything interesting in it. Is it just a remembered version of what she'd earlier said, or does it capture something else? Like, does it in some way capture something having to do with how she felt? I want to point to something that suggests, yes, there are neat things it captures. One such thing is plainly present in the first version. What we have here is that the initial formulation of the thing, "I can't go through with it," contains a pronoun, "it," which is then explicated. I want to suggest that a statement like "I can't go through with it" may reflect how the feeling was felt, in contrast to the assertion "I can't go through with the evening" which is involved in a characterization for a listener, not a characterization for the speaker–feeler, of the thing being reported.

Here's the kind of thing I'm thinking about. Among the great, now 'early,' explorers in the novel of inner states was Virginia Woolf. And a way she differentiated between the way the world was felt and observed, stood in contrast to novels of the time where, if a known person entered a room, then the person was identified: "Mr Jones came into the room," "Her husband came into the room." Now that kind of identification serves very well for a reader. The question is, does that kind of identification reproduce the way a person who is in the room, who knows the person entering, would have formulated it for themselves? Virginia Woolf argues that that's not so, and her characterizations of people entering a room involve things like "He walked into the room," the pronoun "he" involving that she knew who he was such that she didn't have to pick some identity of his in order to characterize him. That is to say, she identifies him, not for the telling of it, but

for that I know him, it being enough for purposes of identification for the reader, to indicate by "he" that he might be known, and in various other ways indicate who he might be, e.g., by the way the person who is now having their consciousness explored in the novel would feel about him and things they would notice about him.

The idea then is that things like non-complete, non-objective, non-nominalized references do perhaps reproduce in some way, how a person having feelings that they're not in the first instance having by reference to their communicatability, has them. And if what she's trying to do is say how she felt or what she thought, then a sequence which goes, "I can't go through with it, I can't go through with the evening" would involve first the felt thing and then some explication of it to the hearer. The upshot then is that a sequence in which an amplification occurs second and follows a something that, for a hearer, needs to be amplified, may well be at least a way that a person reporting on feelings and thoughts of their own can bring off that this was something like what their initial thoughts were. Such a sequence does, then, have a point to it, in its connection to such proposals as "at some point I thought," "at some point I felt," discriminating a narrative designed primarily for its listener following what's being said, from one designed also, but designed to first say how it appeared to me then.

And plainly things like that are used by participants to a conversation in order to elicit interest, etc., by doing what would be heard as 'musing aloud,' e.g., "I wonder what he meant by that," thereby getting a question from someone who makes themselves an overhearer of it, taking it that they may not have been addressed. Where the format of not identifying the 'who' or explicating the 'what,' etc., is one that occurs, and is affiliated with 'private thought.'

I want now to notice that in her thankings she apologizes for having 'bothered' him, and talks of him as a 'stranger.'

> *pt*   now I'm very ashamed of myself that I bothered you   but I was in the house and I thought I just cant last and I just cant go it another minute I just cant
> *dr*   uh huh
> *pt*   Then   I thought you know its like I know you're a stranger but its the feeling that there is somebody that would just   just listen for a minute

I'm interested in the connection between "stranger" and "bothered," and the way in which he deals with that. And I want to make certain kinds of points about some selectional possibilities that permit one to see the kind of directed work that goes into what looks like an altogether natural characterization of something.

First of all there is an obvious relationship between calling what you did 'a bother' and calling the person to whom it's a bother a 'stranger.' For one, not anyone who is a candidate for being called a stranger will be called a stranger.

That is to say, if a stranger is thought of as someone who doesn't know you, then plainly there are lots of people who could give one help whom one wouldn't call a 'stranger.' If you broke your leg and went to a hospital, then you wouldn't thank the doctor who fixed your leg for fixing the leg of a stranger. If you walked into a department store and the sales personnel were very helpful, you wouldn't say "Thanks for doing this for an absolute stranger." There are all sorts of people one encounters, who do one good, who are not conceived as 'strangers' though to be sure they're strangers.

If one now tries to figure who among those who are strangers gets called a stranger and who doesn't get called a stranger, then plainly with a little thought one could see at least that somebody who could be called a stranger is not called a stranger when what they did is what they hold themselves out professionally to do. The doctor or dentist or butcher or policeman, etc., who does a service to some previously unknown person is, for that encounter, 'doctor,' 'dentist,' etc., and not 'stranger.' And connected to that can be that what they did is not a 'bother.' They may be thanked, but they're not to be thanked for the bother – though were they to do something beyond the call of duty, then it could be talked of as a bother. For that matter, someone who is not a stranger would perhaps not be thanked for the bother. These terms are then involved in ways of formulating social relationships; 'bother' being ways of characterizing things done between persons related in some way, i.e., related as 'strangers' but not as, say, 'professional–client.' In a way, then, calling it a 'bother' is focussing on that we might be intimates but we're not. What I mean by 'we might be intimates' is 'I'm not thinking of you as somebody like a doctor or dentist, I'm thinking of you as a candidate for someone I could know, and you're not, and therefore it's a bother.'

In that regard, at least one way she comes to call him a stranger has to do with the way she puts together how she's come to call him in the first place, that having to do with that she's looking for "somebody" and her friends can't be called.

> *pt*   sob   I want somebody to   talk me out of it   I really do
> *dr*   uh huh
> *pt*   Cause I cant call any of my friends or anybody cause they just gonna say "oh that's silly" or "that's stupid" I guess

Now, consistent with a conception of looking to 'somebody,' finding 'friends' ineligible, then the group left are 'strangers,' persons she sees herself turning to by reference to not being able to turn to others. A characteristic that 'stranger' involves, then, is that it is not merely one way of characterizing some person, an alternative to, e.g., 'doctor,' but it's an alternative characterization in the sense that somebody is called a 'stranger' when one would have liked to have turned to somebody else.

Now, he is not treating himself as a 'stranger.' Nor is he treating himself as a 'friend,' but as someone who's doing "what I'm here for."

dr Thats right I understand that an you really didnt bother me because thats why I am here for thats what I'm here for

And someone who's doing what he's here for is not a 'stranger' though you don't know him in the first instance. In that regard, there is an issue of their mutual agreement on the terms of the contact, she calling him a 'stranger' while he may be conceiving of himself as something else. And that can make for such issues, in a closing, as that the offered terms of a thanks might be rejected by the recipient. If, for example, one thanks a stranger for the bother, he might say, "It was no bother at all and you owe me ten dollars," it turning out that it's his business to tow cars, and here you're trying to make something of a gesture to an unknown Samaritan. So the negotiation over the terms of the closing can be connected to such sorts of things as "Do I thank you or pay you?" aside from do I thank you *and* pay you, do I thank you and not pay you, do I not thank you, etc., where some people wouldn't get either thanks or payment, e.g., if they were some sort of friends doing something expectable for a friend.

Taking a slightly different facet of the issue of 'a stranger,' there's a relationship between 'stranger' and 'bother' that can involve that what the person you're calling a 'stranger' did was something like 'help,' i.e., you're not merely reporting on somebody in some conversation with you. So that if, e.g., you got into conversation with someone on the subway, then you might not report it as "I was talking to this stranger on the subway" but "I was talking to this guy on the subway," nothing being reported but what we talked about. Where, then, if somebody on the subway helped you, it might well be that they would now be called a 'stranger,' that being kind of intimately related to that what you're saying about them is that they helped you, where 'stranger' then focusses on that the deed they did was something they weren't *relationally obliged* to do.

The whole thing then gets a funny blowup when one way that persons measure the moral state of society is in terms of whether strangers help others, 'strangers' being persons who, the fact that they help others makes it notable that they are strangers and remarkable for them to do it. So people talk about New York or America or whatever going downhill by reference to that strangers don't help people; again, with that strong connection between the formulation of a somebody as a 'stranger' and the talked-about thing being the giving or not giving of help. So we're getting sharper and sharper constraints on 'stranger' and its use, even though plainly a vast number of people are *eligible* to be called 'stranger' in a vast number of interactions. It isn't, then, as though nothing is happening when someone calls someone a 'stranger,' by virtue of the fact that after all they *are* a stranger. Involved in the choice of that term are matters having to do with its alternative status, that help was involved, that one is taking someone to be a non-professional. And those matters can themselves be operative for the other ways that one then orients to someone so called, i.e., thanking them for the bother and things like that.

Now, insofar as what he's doing is characterizing himself as 'not a stranger,' there are, as I noted before, issues about the terms of his treatment of her appreciation. It is then of some interest that he says both 'it's no bother' and 'that's what I'm here for,' which are quite separable things. One could say "It's no bother, I really enjoyed it," or "I got a lot out of it too," etc. The 'that's what I'm here for' is a different way of making it 'no bother' than the others. It has, then, a slightly curious relationship to what follows it, i.e., an acceptance of the thanks, "So I'm glad to have helped you."

> *dr*   Thats right I understand that an you really didnt bother me because
> thats why I am here for thats what I'm here for
> *pt*   well
> *dr*   so I'm glad to have helped you

This might look like merely a matter of 'you thanked me so I accept your thanks' but it turns out to be something quite different in this conversation. Let me work toward that by noticing first that things like that are often other than sheer etiquettal relationships where you thank me and I thank you for your thanks. Then I want to notice that we get such a series at the end:

> *pt*   I sure thank you and I certainly wish you a very happy new year
> *dr*   thanks very much and the same to you
> *pt*   thank you

And those things can go on rather elaborately, depending, perhaps, upon anybody's wishes to go on with them.

Now a thing we can notice about this end thanking sequence is that she does a thanks and then follows it with something that *he* can do a thanks for. And the situation of parties exchanging thanks at the end of an interaction which was plainly one-sided in some fashion, is of interest in that we can notice that a party will, in doing thanks, somehow also get themselves into a position of getting thanks. It happens here that there's an event, New Years, where happiness can be wished on this occasion, but the patterning of that – that somebody having done something relatively effortful being thanked, the thanker will find something to be thanked for in return – is of some interest. Specifically, there are apparently some sorts of events that should be *exchanged*, and for which, that they're not exchanged can be a trouble about them. A more dramatic such sort of thing is, e.g., if somebody says "I love you" then you don't merely say "Thanks," or you shouldn't, or if you do then you're doing something different than an exchange.

And it is that potential of an initial thanks opening things up for an exchange – which the thanker can set up or the thanked can set up, which can end up with "Thanks for your service," "Thanks for using our service" – which is in this case exploited in his earlier acceptance of her thanks, i.e., "I'm glad to have helped you." Having done his acceptance of the thanks, he then uses the exchange issue to himself make a request whose

fulfilment would then allow *him* to do a thanks, the request being now for her name.

> *dr* Thats right I understand that an you really didnt bother me because thats why I am here for thats what I'm here for
> *pt* well
> *dr* so I'm glad to have helped you   I wish I knew who I was talking to

So that we can see here that via the exchange property as an appropriate potentiality given the occurrence of a thanks, he sees in her thanks an opportunity to himself do a request that she should comply with by virtue of the fact that it will then permit him to do a return thanks. In a way she might have forestalled that, had she earlier done not simply a thanks but a thanks plus something which would directly end up with his doing a thanks. That might have cut off the way in which he could sequentially use her thanks to get his request done.

And of course the general situation is one where, having some request to make of another you can, when you get into a conversation, hold off making that request under the possibility that the other will ask you for something or you will end up doing something for them, at which point your request stands as something they can do for you in exchange for the thing that they just acknowledge that you just did for them. And people routinely do offers when they have some request in mind as well, i.e., I'll do an offer, if you accept it and thank me then I can have an occasion to do a request. So, what seems like sheerly a form: "Thank you and have a happy new year," "Thank you," involving as it does the 'exchange' feature, can be a serious part of the business of interaction, with one party awaiting and watching for chances to do a request they have, by reference to that general principle that I've raised: If you can do something second, prefer to do it second.

May 24

"Uh huh;" Questioner-preferred answers

I want to deal with a couple of things which are otherwise not particularly related, where the common interest for them is to give a kind of sequential cast to some objects other than I have previously given them. The two things are "Uh huh," and some differences between "Yes" and "No" as answers.

Starting off with *"Uh huh,"* I had for a long time made the argument that a business of "Uh huh", was something that we talked of as serving as a 'continuer.' The idea being that it said to the person who was speaking before it that they could go on after it with whatever it is that they were talking about. And that's I suppose a reasonable enough interpretation of what "Uh huh" seems to have happening in its environment, i.e., if you look at talk in which it occurs, then somebody is talking about something, "Uh huh" occurs, and they thereafter go on about whatever they were talking about. And consulting your own sense of what you're doing with "Uh huh," then you can figure you're saying 'go on.'

I essentially want to sharpen that picture up only a little bit and consider the matter from only a slightly different angle. Now, we think of "Uh" as doing something called 'filling a pause.' It's not normally added, though I guess it goes without saying, that the pause it fills is the pause in the talk of the person who's speaking around it, i.e., in the middle of your own utterance, were you to pause, and choose to not have that pause filled with silence, then you might do an "uh" there. There are indeed some issues about that sort of way of conceiving it, but let me just use the notion 'pause filler' to notice that with it, one might need to collect not just "uh" but "Uh huh" and raise for consideration that what "Uh huh" does is to fill a pause in the *other* person's talk. That is to say, "Uh huh" is the same thing as "uh," only it's done by you when the other person is talking, not when you're talking.

Why bother to mention a difference like that? For one, there are intriguing things about the use of "Uh huh" which the characterization of them as saying 'go on' doesn't focus well enough upon. One such thing is the way that "Uh huh" can be done within the talk of somebody else in such a way as to have their talk fully bounded, i.e., they talk, "Uh huh" occurs, and they talk again, and there isn't any gap between speakers. "Uh huh" can in that sense *anticipate* a possible pause. It doesn't occur *after* the other has paused, it occurs at a place where they might now pause and fills that pause, and fills it

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in such a way as to have on its completion the other start up again. So a first thing that we're adding about "Uh huh" is that a really kind of characteristic place for it is within the talk of one speaker by another, done in such a way as to have no gap on either side of it. And, equally characteristically, no overlap between speakers on either side of it. And things that preserve that feature 'no gap and no overlap between speakers' have a very large sort of interest because it can then at least be asked, how can such things be done spontaneously between speakers? That is, that with two or more people talking they are able to so monitor their talking that they don't overlap and also don't have a gap between utterances. Where by 'gap' I mean things that can be as fine as one tenth of a second.

A second sort of thing about its use is that instead of its saying 'go on' to a just prior speaker, "Uh huh" can be conceived of as noting that while the speaker is now about to pause, he *intends* to go on. That is to say, the speaker's talk so far is available as merely syntactically complete. And routinely, after the "Uh huh" speakers continue a sentence, using things like "because," "and," etc., etc., as compared with starting something new. In that way, then, one doesn't want to think of "Uh huh" as simply saying 'go on,' but as *anticipating* the other's intention to go on, and saying something a bit more elaborate; something like: I see that you're reaching a point where – maybe for altogether technical speech reasons, e.g., you have to get a breath – you're going to stop at a syntactic node in your talk, e.g., the possible end of a sentence. At that point I could start talking if I chose, by virtue of the kind of rules that operate in conversation, where a listener can treat a possible sentence as a total utterance and start talking. I also see that you want to go on, and I'll let you. But do not treat that you're getting a chance to go on as indicating either of these things: (1) that I'm not listening and didn't notice that you'd come to a possible completion point, so that you happen to be going on just because nobody is listening to what you're saying, or (2) that I've just given you the floor for as long as you want it.

What's involved, then, is a listener's registering the kind of attention that could be turned to his taking the floor, noting points at which he could take the floor and *resigning* that floor use of now to the other. And in that regard, that for "Uh huh"'s what the prior and thereafter speaker does is to 'go on with' the talk, i.e., continue a sentence, is a rather non-incidental feature of the thing. For one, that will be informing the one who did "Uh huh" that they indeed saw that though a possible completion was reached, the speaker intended to go on.

There are several sorts of things that this discussion can lead one to note: How finely placed "Uh huh" is within the talk of another, and that indeed "Uh huh" is bounded by no gaps on the other party's part. Then there is the kind of talk that routinely follows an "Uh huh," in terms of the way that, e.g., that talk syntactically connects to the talk that preceded. And there are the differences between all that, and no use of "Uh huh," with a speaker simply being allowed to go on, where we can ask whether there are ways that a speaker will attempt to find out whether the other party is listening, i.e., will

attempt to get the other party to speak – though perhaps only to indicate with an "Uh huh" that indeed he's listening. And then, there is a kind of trouble that the whole thing sets up, which is in part why I raised it for this conversation.

The sort of understanding of the use of "Uh huh" which I've described, permits a sort of exploitation, which is that one party to a conversation can employ "Uh huh"'s where the other party has no intention of going on. Hearing "Uh huh" they are then in a position of seeing that they said something that the other party figures to be as yet incomplete, and they then proceed to find that they ought to go on. "Uh huh" can, then, be heard directively. And it's not a matter of a statement, e.g., "Well you've said this and that but it doesn't sound complete," but it's something which will simply elicit a feeling of "They must have thought I was going to go on since they said 'Uh huh,' so I guess I have more to say." This interviewer technique (psychiatric or otherwise) of using "Uh huh"'s can operate, then, off of the way in which "Uh huh" tells you that the other person is granting you the floor again though they could take it over, by virtue of the fact that they figure you want it, i.e., that they're doing you a favor. Now obviously if it gets done enough, the speaker can become aware that there's an intended distribution of talk which involves them doing the talk and the other person not saying anything except to mark possible points where they could have talked. The speaker might then make an issue of "Do you ever intend to talk? And if not, is it a matter of your thinking I intend to go on, or of your telling me to just go on until you stop me?"

One further consequence is, if the sort of argument I make has some sense to it, then one would expect that "Uh huh" would occur much more commonly in two-party conversations than in multi-party conversations by virtue of the fact that whereas in two-party conversation the listener can be gracious and give the floor to somebody who seems to want to go on, in multi-party conversation there's nobody of the non-speakers who has a distinctive right to give the floor to the current speaker. If one listener doesn't want to talk, then there may well be somebody else who does want to. And my impression is that "Uh huh" is dramatically lessened in multi-party conversation, except under kinds of special circumstances, e.g., that it has become a two-party conversation by virtue of, in effect, only two people out of a group talking, or where in effect only one person talks and the others become an audience. Somebody telling a long story in a multi-party conversation might well get "Uh huh"'s. Now if anything like that is so, then the question becomes why does "Uh huh" distribute in two-party conversation and not in multi-party conversation? And an answer to that question might well involve its connection with floor management.

The next thing I want to talk about occurs on page 6 of the New Year's Eve transcript:

dr   do you have some church affiliation, now?
pt   What?

dr   Do you belong to a church   now?
pt   No   I went to church   I havent been to church for a long time and
I went   its a funny thing I went Christmas Eve with my family   the
Episcopal Church   and I took communion and uh
dr   uh huh
pt   I that   triggered me somehow   its kinda been building up since
then

I want to talk a bit to "Do you belong to a church now?" "No, I went to church
. . . etc.," but let me just make a passing observation on a difference of an
obvious sort between "Do you have some church affiliation now?" and "Do
you belong to a church now?" It's kind of a minor law of conversation that if
somebody does a question or statement and the other person says "What?"
then you can get a repeat. If you don't get a repeat then what you will get will
stand as a more simply phrased version of what was prior said, i.e., 'affiliation'
is replaced with 'belong.' That replacement is not exactly perfect; one could
have some church affiliation and not belong to a church, and there might be an
intended delicacy to the question − the guy happens to be a minister. In any
event, he might well be wishing to allow for a wider range of 'yes' answers than
'belong' might involve, for reasons that have to do with something which
occurs towards the end where what he does is to use the church affiliation to
give her a recommendation on where to go for a clinic. He might be looking for
that when he asks about her church affiliation here.

   And a question can be raised as to why the replacement is simpler than the
initial when you get "What?" At least some suggestions on that matter might
be offered. "What?" says at least 'I didn't hear what you said, say it again,'
but it's employed and is well known to be employed as a substitute for 'I
don't understand what you said,' i.e., when one doesn't know a or some of
the words used. Now asserting that is apparently something that is lesser to
be chosen than asserting that one didn't hear. But while asserting that one
didn't hear it is preferredly said, the speaker can, in making himself more
hearable, also choose to attend the possibility that some word he used isn't
known by the other, and not simply speak louder or enunciate better, but also
speak in a simpler way. "What?" then seems to serve as a generalized
instruction: Find whatever kinds of trouble the hearer could have with that
thing, clear them up, and say it again. People can then use "What?" knowing
that they will often get a chance to not have to disclose the source of their
difficulty. And plainly, speakers and hearers can be variously friendly or nasty
about the whole business. A speaker can very clearly enunciate something he
figures contains a word the other doesn't know and, getting a "What?,"
enunciate it very clearly again and force the other to say "I don't know what
that means." Or the other can choose in the first instance not to say something
that could be interpreted as 'I didn't hear what you said' and − brashly or
embarrassedly or whatever − announce "I don't know what that means." In
any event, we have a sequence of: A version, a "What?" and a simpler version
following that. It's an exceedingly lawful thing.

Let's turn now to "Do you belong to a church now?" "No, I went to church . . . etc." One way to characterize that is something like, the answer to the question is "No," but but while they're talking about churches and their relationship to any problems she might have, she offers some thoughts on that. Now that way of looking at it provides for this sort of a difference: Suppose she had said "Yes." If she had said "Yes," then I figure she would not have taken the opportunity to talk about recent involvements with church in the way she did here. She would have said "Yes," period. And I want to focus on a kind of difference between *"Yes"-period* and *"No"-plus*. What I'm interested in is *questioner-preferred answers* and their occurrence and non-occurrence. Questioners can of course prefer a "no" as well as a "yes," e.g., "You don't want that lamb chop do you?" where the questioner has designed a question that says he's looking for a 'no' answer. But for purposes of this discussion we're just going to talk about situations where "Yes" is the preferred answer and we get "Yes"-period or "No"-plus, though it could perfectly well be "No"-period and "Yes"-plus if the preference were put the other way.

A while back I gave some discussion about question design, that involved questioners preferring one answer and not preferring another, and indicating in their talk which one they preferred. When I was talking about those sorts of things I didn't have any particular sequential characterizations of why a preference is put in, I had other sorts of reasons. Like, by putting in a preference the questioner could show that he had access to what the answer was, i.e., a preference would be the questioner's way of saying 'I already know the answer in part by virtue of what you told me,' e.g., "You're not married are you?" and things like that.[1]

Now there's another way in which the preference thing operates, and that sets up an observable – I think – difference between "Yes"-period and "No"-plus. It has to do with that for some sorts of questions, if a preference is put in, answerer can see that questioner has asked it for some reason which, if the answer is the preferred one, questioner will then proceed to develop, i.e., the question is part of a line of direction that they're planning to take and the continuation of that line of direction turns on the answer. Now, you don't know what that line of direction is, you only know that the questioner has one and is showing you he has one, so if your answer is consistent with the preference, give the answer and stop so as to allow him to pursue that line. On the other hand, if your answer is inconsistent with the preference, then he isn't going to take up the line of direction he intended to, and if you can find some line of direction yourself, you are free to take it up. And, for example, we can see an effort in this piece of conversation to make something in the world, of 'church.' Though the preferred answer isn't present, the answerer seeks out 'What can I say about my life that would be interesting to you, with regard to the church, with respect to the current problems I'm having.' So that the doing of "Yes"-period involves returning the matter to the

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[1] Such a discussion does not occur in any of the transcribed lectures.

questioner, by virtue of his having by his preference indicated that he wants to go somewhere but where he's going to go turns on whether "Yes" is said, and "No"-plus involves that, given that he won't be taking up the line of direction he intended to, you yourself are free to take it up.

Now, possible evidence for this sort of a thing is something which goes as an alternative to "Yes"-period and "No"-plus, and that is "*Yes, but.*" Now the "Yes but"'s often seem to involve something like this: You ask me a question to which the answer is indeed "Yes," and I say "Yes." But what I try to tell you is that although I don't know where you're going to go with it, I doubt that the implication you would take from my "Yes" is the kind of implication you ought to take, e.g., "Are you unemployed now?" "Yes but I'm independently wealthy." So you have some line you want to take about how come I'm troubled and now you're going to fix in on that I'm unemployed. I can see that that's a line you could be pursuing, and although it's true that I'm unemployed, you can't take the line you seem to be taking. And it may be a responsibility of the answerer to indicate that while you seem to be wanting to use this answer for some line of direction, and this answer is indeed the one that is preferred, and it's so, it doesn't carry the implications you'd probably care to have.

Again, then, for "Yes"-period and "No"-plus or the converse, one of them, by virtue of the preference put into the question, becomes something which should be followed with a period, whereas the other can be developed. That is to say, the answerer can see that the questioner wants to take a line, and if they have the preferred answer they can allow the other to take a line, whereas if they haven't then *they* are free to take up a line. What I'm saying then is that "Yes" and "No" become quite different sequential objects under this kind of a situation.

Part VII
Fall 1971

Lecture 1

On hypothetical data; Puns; Proverbial expressions

I will be occupied throughout the course with a phenomenon, *storytelling in conversation*. In the first several lectures I'll be occupied with two sorts of lessons. The first is – I will attempt, anyway, to show – that storytelling in conversation bears and will repay close looking. The second lesson may appear to be somewhat more exotic. It has to do with this: In that the kinds of observations on stories and storytelling that I'll be making in these beginning lectures involve catching some of their details, then a thing we can come to find is a difference between the kind of way I'll proceed and one characteristic kind of way that social science proceeds, which is to use hypotheticalized, proposedly typicalized versions of the world as a base for theorizing about it. I imagine that in the things you may have read, or in the courses you will have had, you find that somebody will say, "Let us suppose that such-and-such happened" or "Typical things that happen are . . ." and you find yourself perfectly willing to grant that such things happen. Where, on the basis of those assertions, suppositions, proposals as to what's typical, some explanation about the world is built.

What I want to argue is that if a researcher uses hypotheticalized or hypotheticalized-typicalized versions of the world, then, however rich his imagination is, he is constrained by reference to what an audience, an audience of professionals, can accept as reasonable. That is to say, theorizing in that fashion has as one boundary on it that only those things can be offered which pass under some notion of believability. There are things that somebody might present as "Let us suppose . . ." or "It's typical that . . ." to which the response of an audience would be "Ah come on, that doesn't happen." So, a researcher might perfectly well be able to imagine a large range of things. I'm suggesting that if how he proceeds is by offering hypothetical examples or typicalized versions of things, then he's limited as to what he can theorize about by reference to what he figures anybody can accept as happening or as typical. Now that might not appear to be a terrible constraint, except when we come to look at the kinds of things we'll be seeing as occurrent. Then it should be plain that if those were offered as hypothetical or as typical, we would be laughed off the floor. These materials could not be successfully used as a base for theorizing if they were urged as imagined. One is then debarred from using these kinds of materials. And that debarring of lots of things that actually occur, at least presumably affects the character of social science theory very strongly.

Now our business will be to proceed somewhat differently. And one of the gains of proceeding somewhat differently is that we can start with things that couldn't be offered as imagined, by reference to showing that they *happened*. Then the question is, can we proceed to explain those things that are otherwise debarred from being explained, where we might then gain some increased satisfaction with or commitment to the use of observation as a basis for theorizing. That is to say, a base for using close looking at the world for theorizing about it is that from close looking at the world you can find things that we couldn't, by imagination, assert were there: One wouldn't know that they were typical, one might not know that they ever happened, and even if one supposed that they did one couldn't say it because an audience wouldn't believe it. Where, then, if we can add to the stock of things that can be theorized about we will have done something more or less important – if the things that we've added have any import to them. So my business in the first several lectures will be to point out that there are things to see that you wouldn't have noticed, and that we can then use those things to begin to try to develop explanations in which they are the materials. That is to say, I want to encourage the sense that interesting aspects of the world, that are as yet unknown, are accessible to observation. And then we'll see what can be done with them. And that particular theme is going to be developed by reference to stories, since over the semester I will time and again be engaged in a close look at storytelling.

The fragment of material I'm beginning with will initially yield a rather fragile observation. And what I mean by 'fragile' will become more or less apparent in due course. Let me first say some things about the fragment. The names along the side are pseudonyms of the speakers, three teenagers approximately 16–18 years old. The conversation from which this fragment has been extracted is a group therapy session for teenagers. It was done a long long time ago, some seven years ago. Ken is telling a story about his 12-year-old sister.

Ken :	Wuh–d– her whole <u>room</u> jus' got it wallpapered. She jus'– she jus' got done rewallpapering it about a <u>month</u> ago,
Louise :	–with the pictures of the Beatle//s.
Ken :	No. A–a month ago Mom had it done in this gra:sscloth, like junk y'know it looks like // Hawaiian–
Louise :	Yeah I know we have it.
	(1.5)
Ken :	She came in there the other night with <u>Scotch</u> tape an'
→	<u>every</u> inch of the room. You couldn'– The <u>roof</u> I think she's got done, in Beadle pictures. An' she lays in bed at night,
	(2.5)
Roger :	She's doing that 'cause all'er friends're (doin' it).
	(//) over th'Beadles.
Louise :→	Mm they need some kinda idol y'know, something to // look up to,

Ken :   I̲:dol! They look like little kang̲a̲r̲o̲o̲://::s.
Louise :   hheh!

My interest now is in this particular utterance, "They need some kind of idol
you know, something to look up to;" in particular, its relation to the story
told about the 12-year-old sister; in particular, this utterance of the story, "The
roof I thing she's got done in Beatle pictures. And she lays in bed at night."

Louise uses the word 'idol' and then goes on with a proverbial expression
that continues and partially explicates a sense of 'idol' relative to what she's
talking about, i.e., "something to look up to." Now what I want first to point
up is that "something to look up to" stands in some possible *punning
relationship* to the story. That is to say, the story has the little sister lying in
bed with pictures of the Beatles on the "roof," and what's asserted in Louise's
utterance is that they need something to look up to.

That's the initial observation we're going to be doing some coming to
terms with. And I take it that the phenomenon might be of the sort that
would be hard to put into an imagined story on the basis of which one was
going to theorize about storytelling. That is to say, if we look at linguistic
philosophy or linguistics, then things like this are not the common sort of
objects used. And were I to say "I made this story up and I'm going to
consider it" then you might feel hesitant about what I would make of this, by
reference to whether such things happen.

Now the observation that there is a pun here is fragile for varieties of
reasons. We can wonder whether she put the pun in, or whether it's just a
matter of my having seen something here that really has nothing much to do
with whatever is happening, i.e., it's just some assertion by somebody who's
looking at it, as we all know that people can make things of talk – and other
things – and we could feel queasy as to whether they were really there. And
in the case here of a possible pun there are some good reasons to doubt its
serious presence, by reference to that we know how people respond to puns
that they produce or hear others produce: If they catch it they will
characteristically mark it; laugh at it and point it out. And no such thing takes
place here. The pun that happens – if it happens – is unnoticed. And if the
argument is that there's a pun here, then presumably we'd be better off if
there was some indication that they'd noticed it. I say 'presumably' because
while we would in some sense be better off, we might in other ways not be.
It might be that if we could establish that the pun is there, then we could do
some interesting things about how come nobody noticed it.

Now the way I'll proceed here is kind of characteristic of the ways I will
proceed throughout the course. Let's hold the pun in abeyance and work our
way up to some assurings that it's there. The way I'm going to work our way
up to that is by examining this utterance, ". . . something to look up to," in
terms of what is to be a persistent theme of the course; something roughly to
be called 'sequential analysis of storytelling.' And we'll arrive at an initial
sequential feature of storytelling, and do some specifications of that, relative
to this utterance.

The utterance is done by a recipient of the story. It's one of two utterances done on the completion of a story, by recipients:

Roger: She's doing that 'cause all'er friends're (doin' it).
           (//   ) over th'Beadles.
Louise: Mm they need some kinda idol y'know, something to // look
           up to,

Both utterances can readily be seen to be explanations of the reported event; morals to the story; more generally, indications by a listener that the story was understood.

I want to suggest that part of the common business of storytelling occasions, involves story recipients positioning an appreciation of the story on its recognized completion. That, of course, differentiates stories as they occur, say, in books, stories as told in a variety of other occasions, from stories told in conversation: Stories told in conversation have commonly on their completion, a recipient or a series of recipients offering an appreciation of the story. There's no particular news to that, except that there's an initial sense for a sequential organization of stories: On their completion something is done by somebody else. And that something can be said, roughly, to constitute an understanding of the story.

Now, if one looks at the objects with which stories are understood, then, again quite commonly, *proverbial expressions* are used. One can turn the matter around slightly and say: Examining the distribution in conversation of proverbial expressions, one characteristic place they occur is on story completions. And one characteristic use of them is as understandings of the stories they are produced directly after.

That sort of fact turns out to have a variety of interests to it. A common kind of puzzle about proverbial expressions is that for almost any proverbial expression it's possible to take another proverbial expression, counterpose it to the first, and see their inconsistency. That is to say, it's often been noted about proverbial expressions that they're not a consistent package of things, but that as one says "A rolling stone gathers no moss," so another says that "consistency is the something or other of small minds," etc. Now the question is, is that a defect of proverbial expressions? Or is it that, if it turns out that what proverbial expressions do is that they are used to understand something else, then the question for them is, are they applied to something that they evince an understanding of? If so, it's quite irrelevant that, as a package, they can turn out to have an inconsistency among them. The problem is not, on any given one's use, is it true relative to other proverbial expressions, but, does it, as something one understands with, understand what it applies to? Where, what it applies to is the story it's used after.

So what's being recommended is: Take an object like proverbial expressions. Subject them to a distributional investigation. Use that distributional investigation to see what's done with them. One then comes up with that they're used to understand other things; that what they are, are things to

evidence understanding with. What's done with them is to take one and see how, for what it's positioned after, does it understand that. It can then be seen as irrelevant, somewhat arbitrary, to say "Let's take the set of them and consider whether they're consistent, to determine whether they're true." That may be not at all how, empirically, they work.

Okay. We have, then, at a point where understandings are properly done, a possible understanding offered. And that possible understanding is done with something that is an instance of things commonly used to exhibit understandings, and commonly used in just such a position as this one is used. What we're doing now is holding aside the question of the serious presence of the pun; we're engaged in finding that the utterance that has the pun does have a serious presence. That is to say, it has a methodical source for being where it occurs, not simply as something that understands the story, but as something that is commonly used to do just such a job. We are now in a position to see, for many many more stories, that things just like this occur in just the position that this does, and do just the job that this does, so that we begin to get a sense of some relatively abstract object being produced here. And furthermore, we can come to see that it's one of a variety of types of things used to do a similar job in a similar position.

This particular understanding has a relatively nicer fit to the story than we've so far noted, that nicer fit turning on that one sense of the form of the story is that it constitutes a puzzle or a problem. That is to say, what Ken is telling is something he is offering as "Here's something weird my sister did. Why in the world would she have done it?" And at the point where an understanding for the story is appropriate, what's done is something that stands as an explanation for the puzzle that the story contains. So that a thing one might see is that the understanding-object that is used stands in some methodic relationship to the form of the story, i.e., the story is a puzzle and the understanding is an explanation. And one might then look to see whether, for stories that are not of the form of puzzles, the things that are used to do an understanding fit them also.

I want now to note something about proverbial expressions, and that is that they commonly have a relatively empirical content. And while having a relatively empirical content, they're not to be understood themselves as the empirical assertion they might be. That is to say, one misunderstands "a rolling stone gathers no moss" if one supposes that the talk is about rolling stones and moss. One might not even particularly notice that facet of it, i.e., that is has some empirical content.

Now that particular fact about proverbial expressions can turn out to bear on the question, why, if the pun is here, isn't it noticed? At least grossly we can say that when proverbial expressions are heard, they aren't heard for their empirical particularities, such that if what the pun involves is a relationship between a particular sense of the proverbial terms and other materials – like the particular sense of the story – then, hearing the thing for its proverbial sense, one wouldn't at all notice that it has its non-proverbial sense also apply. It might then be not at all unusual that if it happened, for whatever reason,

that a pun of this sort were present between a proverbial expression and what it's talking to, the pun wouldn't be noticed. The fact is here that the pun isn't noticed, if it's present. And what's now being suggested is that the way proverbial expressions are heard is such as to have it common for them that if some sort of pun is present, it won't be heard. One will have focussed on what is a specifically alternative sense of the utterance that contains the proverb. Which is still not to say that the pun is present. But it is also to say that since proverbial expressions always have at least two possible senses – one being their particular empirical sense and the other being their lesson sense – then they might kind of commonly have the possibility of a punning relationship, not to just anything in the world, but to precisely what they're talking about.

And what I didn't yet notice about this situation is that the pun in the proverb is a pun precisely for the story that's being talked about. The pun could perfectly well be a pun, and be a pun about almost anything that happened priorly. It could pun on itself, it could pun on a fragment of the story that had nothing much to do with the story's business. But what I want in due course to argue is that the pun is very finely related to the story's problem.

Lecture 2
Doing 'understanding;' Puns

I'll begin by reviewing the kinds of things I was doing last time – substantively, anyway. I started out by noticing a possible pun, and then proceeding to attempt to see what kinds of resources could be deployed to begin to turn the pun – or if not the pun, at least the object which contained the pun – into one which had a more or less fine methodical place where it occurred. That involved leaving the pun aside for a bit and proceeding to propose about the utterance that contained it, that there were a variety of aspects of its positioning which had an orderliness to them. So, for example, that the utterance was done by a recipient of the story on the story's completion and constituted a way of 'understanding' the story, was a collection of features of that utterance relative to storytelling, which at least I asserted were a common coincidence, i.e., on the completion of a story, commonly a recipient talks, and what a recipient does is to produce an utterance that exhibits an understanding – where the question of how it 'understands' remains open for investigation. Precisely that kind of question is one that's intended to be looked into somewhat closely, since one of the things that can be done with it is to determine what do 'understandings' look like, how do they show sorts of hearing of what has preceded, etc.

Sequentially, then, there is a place for 'understanding' of stories; that place is directly on the completion of the story. Such things are done by other than the teller, i.e., by some one or more recipients. In this case it's done by several. Now there are lots of ways that intended understandings are exhibited, such that, for example, it's quite possible that someone produces what is in various ways recognizable as a 'possible understanding,' and that is then taken to task by the teller, who argues that it's not an 'understanding' but a 'misunderstanding:' "No, that's not what I meant; that's not the point of the story." Which could, of course, have a variety of functions right then and there; of, for example, giving the recipient a second chance; letting the teller know whether the teller's intended point – if there was a point – was caught, and if not, to correct it, etc.

The assertion that a place for putting in 'understandings' is directly on the completion of a story, can itself get firmed up in lots of ways. One additionally methodical way that such a claim can be developed involves the possibility that there are objects with which such things as 'stories' are 'understood.' That is to say, there might be a form of talk that people commonly use, which can be recognized for its 'understanding' business. Where, then, in a way, that doesn't involve simply looking at the talk, and the story, to see "Does it understand?" but what you have is an object that suggests that it's such a thing as is used to do just that job, independently of its use here. Now, that

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can happen in some places and not happen in other places, and it happens here that an object that is commonly used to do 'understanding' is used to do the understanding here. So that we see a kind of formal thing used.

And what I'm suggesting for that is that the status of the remark "they need something to look up to" as a *'proverbial expression'* involves the use of just such an object as does 'understanding' in this 'understanding position.' One could then look to varieties of stories and see whether indeed there are objects which are specifically for 'understandings,' as there are objects for lots of other things, like 'promising,' 'cursing,' 'betting,' etc. That is to say, if someone says such a thing as we known can serve as a 'promise,' then we can see that they're not just doing promising, but they're doing promising with one of the ways that promising is done. It may be less commonly asserted and therefore less obvious that there are objects with which one understands – except in the obvious and trivial and possibly incorrect sense of things like "Uh huh." That is to say, we take it that one obvious use of a thing like "Uh huh" is that it proposes at least "I heard" and maybe "I heard and understand what you've said." Now what I'm proposing is that a characteristic job of proverbial expressions is just that kind of thing. They are things to understand with. So there's a proverbial expression used in the position that 'understanding' are properly put; proverbial expressions being a particular type of utterance used to do 'understandings' – in that position and in other positions.

I'm in addition asserting that proverbial expressions are more or less ideal objects to do understanding with, since they have an appropriate way of being heard. Where that appropriate way of being heard involves hearing them in one specific way, of the alternative ways that they can be heard. So, e.g., one could hear "A rolling stone gathers no moss" as being asserted about rolling stones and moss. In that sense one can hear it to be making an assertion about the things to which it, in content, refers. Alternatively, one can hear it as making an assertion about something other than to what it obviously refers. Now, proverbial expressions characteristically have a thing in it which it could refer to. I made a remark last time that people do not hear proverbial expressions as referring to the thing that they can be heard to empirically be referring to. And that's a kind of well known fact. Indeed in classical tests for brain damage and schizophrenia of various sorts, persons are given proverbial expressions and asked to say what they're about. And at least it has been traditionally observed that brain damaged people of various sorts, when asked "What does 'a rolling stone gathers no moss' mean?" cannot do much more than say "Well, it's about rolling stones . . ." or something like that, whereas others can take it that it's not particularly about rolling stones and moss, and can readily give an abstract version of it, for a whole range of proverbs.

If that's so, then one can see that what can be done with proverbial expressions is to take them and look with them for what they apply to. Now that makes them kind of ideal objects for use for exhibiting an understanding, in a particular sort of way. They can propose to be applying to something other than the objects which they refer to, where there could then be a job for

one who receives one of them to find what does it apply to, and does it apply to it well.

Now, how do people go about finding, for an utterance that intends an understanding, what it intends an understanding of? The argument is that an utterance's *positioning* can be used to do that. The positioning of an utterance can be a resource for finding what it's talking to. And that's altogether obvious in the sense, for example, that if someone says "Are you going to the movies tonight?" and another person says "Yes," the question is how do people find out what "Yes" is talking about? Where you don't characteristically say "Yes I'm going to the movies," you say "Yes" or "No" or things like that. What's involved, obviously, to anyone, is that the positioning of the "Yes" after a question is part of the information that's used in interpreting it. So the position of an answer is a resource for determining to what the answer applies: Look to the question to find to what the answer applies.

Notice that the speaker of the answer obliges someone who is going to understand it, to have understood the question. So the very questioner is put into a position of having to understand the answer though the questioner produced an object which itself needed to be understood. That is to say, it's not as if the answer alone exhibits to anybody how it understands, but it makes a job of understanding, just like the job of understanding what was in the question. And stories are precisely that kind of object. A story is a puzzle. There's a job for the listener to understand them. When the listener does the job of understanding, he puts the original teller in precisely the position that the listener was put in originally, i.e., when the listener produces his understanding the teller himself has to keep in mind the story, to understand that the story is understood. And the teller uses the positioning of the listener's utterance right after the story, to see that what's being done with that utterance is to 'possibly understand,' rather than that this is an altogether new utterance, make of it what you want.

What we're doing, then, is extending, from an obvious base – things like questions and answers – the relevance of positioning of utterances for determining the kinds of jobs that they do, and what they oblige people who are dealing with them to do. In a way, then, we've taken a story which has a whole series of utterances, and suggested about it that it can be treated as any object relative to something that follows it. And we can then begin to get an idea about why it is that the utterance that understands it goes right after it. That is to say, positioning might not be usable if a whole bunch of talk went on between the end of the story and the possible understanding of the story, particularly if what was adapted was a relatively simple situation of 'look to the last possible object to find what was being understood.' It's not at all incidental, then, that story-understanding goes directly on the story-completion. Since the understanding needs itself to be understood, and a way it gets to be understandable is by one's finding what it refers to, and positioning can be used to find that and thereby help it to be understood itself, then its positioning right after something is an obvious kind of solution, any modification of which makes for enormous complications. In any event, if

positioning is used and can then be counted on, there are ways in which it's obviously easier to do an 'understanding,' i.e., you don't have to independently locate the thing you're intendedly talking to.

And with that kind of a discussion we get into a position to see that if that slot is filled with a proverbial expression it wouldn't be too odd for it to contain a possible pun, by virtue of the fact that the proverbial expressions have an empirical sense apart from their proverbial sense, and if they do, then at least one empirical sense they may have may be one that somehow puns on the story. In addition, if they're not heard for their particular empirical sense but heard for their proverbial sense, then we are in a position to appreciate why, if there were a pun present, it might not be caught.

So what's being suggested is that this position is a specific environment for the occurrence of puns, and unnoticed puns. And a common object with which they will occur is proverbial expressions used to do understandings of stories. Now, when these things occur, something somewhat parallel to the visual-illusional duck/rabbit phenomenon may be present. That is to say, we all know about those illusions where if you look at it one way it's a duck and if you look at it another way it's a rabbit, etc. Here we might have not simply that sort of a phenomenon, but maybe even a rule that tells you which one is going to be seen. Where, in the typical situation of an illusion it may be that we don't know which is going to be seen, we only know they're exclusive, here it may be that we can say that a first hearing will be not the pun, and maybe even that the pun will not be heard. And that is a very neat kind of thing to know, i.e., it's neat to know for objects that people hear, that are plainly ambiguous, that without even specifying which particular proverbial expression it is, we can say that it won't be heard for its pun sense. That's telling us some rather strong things about how minds work – if it's true.

Notice of course that if the pun is seen, then the 'understanding' kind of dissipates; all she's said is the same thing; an 'explanation' of a story detail turns out to be simply another version of it. You can then see the importance of hearing the proverbial expression abstractly. That is to say, Ken having remarked that his sister put Beatle pictures on the ceiling of her room, we would take it as an altogether strange thing for Louise to have said "Well, they need something on the ceiling to look up to." Why would they need that? Whereas, having said "They need something to look up to," it sounds like she's saying something abstract. By differentiating the thing that way, one might begin to get an idea of the important difference involved. And commonly one does deal with proverbial expressions as though something more abstract has been said – and indeed maybe something more abstract is being said, in some other sense.

Now, forgetting about that issue, we can have at least partially arrived at an appreciation that something like the following was in Louise's mind: The story is over, she's in a position now of, if she's going to produce an understanding she's got to produce it right now. She can look for an object with which to do it. Proverbial expressions are one class of ways to do it; find now a proverbial expression that exhibits an understanding. That can be the

job she has to do within this period of time, which happens to be two seconds in this case. The question is, then, how does she go about finding the proverbial expression that will work?

There are two sorts of things relevant to her finding the proverbial expression that will work, which are independent of the way her remark puns on the story. Those two sorts of things are the occurence of an error in the story, and that the story stops before some obvious senses of its appropriate completion. That is to say, it drifts off in the middle of its close. What I want to propose is that – even independently, but interestingly enough they conjoin – those two sorts of matters might have a bearing on where her mind is while she searches for a proverb. The way they could have a bearing on where her mind is, has first of all to do with that a correctable thing was said, and she didn't correct it, and nobody corrected it. The misused word here is of course "roof," the correct word would have been 'ceiling.' Now, a common occurrence on a word misuse is that recipients focus on it and sometimes aloud and sometimes not aloud, correct it.[1] So, if they understood what Ken was saying, then they would have mentally corrected it. They would see that "roof" is wrong, not intended – the story would be far more bizarre if that were intended – but that 'ceiling' was intended. It happens that I have lots of materials involving these people, and it's a very common thing for this kid Ken to make mistakes like that one, and it's also kind of common for Louise to correct him. It doesn't particularly add all that much to these materials that that's so, since in any event the correctable status of such a thing like "roof" for 'ceiling' is enough known. It happens that she doesn't correct him here.

Now in the case of this thing, ". . . the *roof* I think she's got done in Beatle pictures. And she lays in bed at night," a variety of things can be said. One is that such sorts of things are characteristically brought to completion by another speaker, i.e., when somebody drifts off or stops within the course of a sentence that they've given enough materials to allow others to finish, then others quite commonly do finish it. It could be heard as *a search for some words*, and others will – not always, but characteristically – finish it off. In this case, were it finished off, it might well involve something like ". . . looking up at" the pictures. So that both the error and the incompletion, if they were dealt with by recipients at all, could involve them in focussing on something like the thing that gets put into Louise's 'understanding.'

I want now to make some slightly parenthetical remarks to this issue of the incompletion here. That incompletion itself has a variety of kinds of orderlinesses to it. One has to do with that the story is developed as a puzzle and it ends as a puzzle – at least it ends as a puzzle in this particular sense of not having its ending presented – i.e., apart from the question of why is she doing what she did, there is the question of what was she doing? It is commonly observable that for some 'what is it they're doings' a party will

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[1] A bit of this consideration comes from the last moments of Fall 1971, lecture 1, not retained in the edited version of that lecture.

break off their talk before they say it, when they might well say it. And those have to do, not untypically, with obscenities. Where there is a kind of plain allusion here to that she's doing something dirty. The question is, what is she doing lying in bed at night looking at the pictures of the Beatles above her. That he drops off at that point is something not at all peculiar, and is at least a typical kind of incompletion which won't get completed by someone else. That is then to say that there are places in talk where it is, in a fashion, not wrong to stop your sentence in the middle. And one such place is where you've given sufficient indication that you're going to report on something dirty and then you stop without reporting it. Where, then, the sheer fact that others don't continue can in some way evidence that they see what you were saying. And furthermore, that you don't continue can inform them that that's what you were indeed going to say. So the incompletion here is not merely a fault of the story.

What we get to, then, is something like: Possibly in search of a proverb to produce an understanding with, a thing used to find one of them – where varieties of them will work – is to use materials from the story that were themselves needing of treatment, as resources for arriving at a proverb. In any event, it looks like the content of this expression, aside from its proverbialness, does pick up on relevantly-to-be-picked-up-on aspects of the story. And a thing we can look for is to see whether, if someone produces a possible error in their talk, it happens that others later exhibit that they picked up on the error, though they didn't say anything to it then. That is, a piece of research that we're then led to do is to see whether, when someone doesn't show that they saw an error when they could have shown that they saw an error, they nonetheless at some point later on evidence that they saw it. And the same might go for incompletions.

So we've put together a bunch of pieces from this fragment, which deal with it kind of neatly, but which also suggest that rather abstract events are taking place which can also be seen in lots of other places. And in that sense we can have some kind of a vision of relatively abstract machinery operating in this particular event. The abstract machinery, however, does not have the consequence of not handling the details of this event. That is to say, we have as a typical sense of abstract versus detailed considerations of things, that as soon as we get abstract, for example in social theorizing, then we're committed to losing the details. It's a credo of social science reasoning that we can suffer the loss of details while we build abstract models. It's a feature of abstract models, as compared to the real reality, that they do not preserve the details. Possibly it needn't be.

Lecture 3
Allusive talk; Poetics

One thing I'm interested in doing in a casual fashion in these introductory presentations, is to allude to a view going around that pretty much all of what's interesting in conversation doesn't happen via the use of its words. Now, I figure that such a theory is held, not by virtue of an investigation of what words do in talk, but by virtue of a doctrine about words which assigns them a particular, narrow import. The consequence being that insofar as we know that lots of other things happen in conversation, we suppose that they don't happen with the use of words. That is to say, if we undertook an investigation of how words mean, then we might find, for example, that they mean more interestingly than we had supposed. And an interest I've had, then, and that I'll continue to have – particularly in the introductory direction – is to deal with the view that holds 'everything interesting takes place apart from the words' by indicating that there are some delicate, interesting things that happen distinctly with the words.

The last two times, in talking about a fragment and the presence of a pun there, one of the things that we ended up with was not simply that we could see that the pun might have really been there, but also that proverbial expressions, given their features and the places where they're used, have a distinct aptness for a possible punning usage. The import of that being that we will have seen something about the language, or the language and its users, that involves the particular occurrence noted being turned from some private, occasional event into one that can have a sort of generality of presence. Where in part the question is how does one go about explaining such an occurrence? Does one, finding something neat and delicate, need to try to build into the particular person who uses it some sort of virtuosity which we suppose is unusual? Or is it that if it's a virtuosity then it's a virtuosity that maybe anyone has, or the language gives them.

Now let's turn to a fragment. The series of remarks I just made will continue to apply to what I'll be saying this time and perhaps the next time as well. Again, the talk is from a group therapy session, the same series as the materials from last time. Al and Ken and Roger are the kids, Dan is the therapist.

> *Al* :   ((sung)) Ba::rney Google with his goo goo googuly eye::s. Ba::rney
> Google hadda wife three times his si:ze,
>
> *Ken* :   ehheh
>
> *Al* :   ((sung)) She sued Barney for deevorce, now he's living with his
> ho:::::rse

Ken :   heh heh hh
Al :   ((sung)) Ba::rney // Google
Ken :   heh heh
          (1.0)
Roger : Did he buy the horse before he got divorced?
Dan :   Well so far, all of you skirted around the subject. That see(hh)ms
          to b(h)e predominantly uh on your <u>minds</u> at any rate,
(   ) : ((clears throat))
Ken :   heh heh
Roger : hmnYeh well we're at that sta(hh)ge.
Ken :   ehh//heh hehh
Roger : hhehh hehhh hehh // hh hehh hh
Dan :   Yeah?
Al :   Yeah.
Dan :   What stage is that,
          (1.5)
Roger : Awareness.

I'm going to focus on the utterance "Well so far, all of you skirted around the
subject. That see(hh)ms to b(h)e predominantly uh on your *minds* at any
rate," particularly on the phrase-part "skirted around." Let me just note that
the utterance doesn't refer merely to the Barney Google ditty, but to talk that
had been preceding the Barney Google ditty and that the ditty is consistent
with.

Now, a plain sense of the assertion of Dan's utterance is that the talk that
he's talking about was *allusive*. And a first thing to note about his utterance
is that there are obvious senses in which it, with respect to the talk that it's
talking about, is also allusive. That is to say, if what he's proposing is that
they've talked around some unstated subject, then he, too, does not name that
subject. There can be a variety of kinds of issues involved in such an assertion.
One of them being, for example, if what he's proposing is that the talk has
been talk around the edges of some topic, the topic having gone unstated,
how does he indicate that he knows the topic that they've been talking
around? He could say, "So far you've been skirting around the subject of
sex." Then of course *he* wouldn't be doing 'skirting around' that topic.
What kinds of resources can he deploy to bring off claiming they're being
allusive while himself also being allusive, while indicating that he knows
the topic?

There is plainly present and used, a resource for doing that; that being the
ambiguity involved in this case – and obviously more availably than just this
usage – in the term 'skirted.' That is to say, "skirted around" is perfectly well
a way of talking about how, for any topic, persons might talk to it, while the
term 'skirt' is one way of talking about, e.g., women, and perhaps thereby
indicating that the topic that's being skirted around is a topic for which the
word 'skirt' is itself indicative of the topic. Where there are a variety of ways
of saying about some talk that it's, e.g., 'beating around the bush,' 'evading

the issue,' etc., etc., not all of which but not only 'skirting the subject' can also, for at least 'sex' as a topic, indicate that you know that 'sex' is the topic.

So there are these sorts of things possibly present here: He's saying that they're talking allusively while he talks allusively, and he's saying that he knows what the topic is, and indicates that he knows what the topic is, without naming what the topic is. Now, with those at hand, we might ask what would be the business of doing such a thing? Here's one possible use: If the talk of the topic has been allusive, then at least what he can do with this way of noticing it is to preserve both the topic and its allusiveness while inserting himself into the talk with a note about it. That is to say, he hands them back the topic in almost the state it was in. And that sort of a treatment can have its own interest, if one considers some other ways that some of the jobs he's doing can be handled by the recipients of his utterance. So, for example, if he asserts what the topic is, then it's possible for them to deny it or to accuse him of reading into the talk what it didn't involve, and to turn it, then, to issues about his dirty mind.

Alternatively if he does that, and does it as a *complaint*, then the correctness and adequacy and appropriateness, etc., of his complaint can be themselves addressed. That is to say, what the topic has been can be ignored for a consideration of the appropriateness of the complaint offered. Now I'm going to put something maybe a bit more abstractly than it's characteristically put: One of the problems about making complaints in conversation – complaints that are perfectly well fitted to something that's just happened, complaints about the course of a topic, etc. – is that there's a way in which the production of a complaint can free the talk from what the talk has priorly been. The complaint itself now becomes the topic. So, for example, there are a range of ways that, a complaint having been made, the course of the talk can be siphoned into a dealing with the fact of a complaint, like, "You always complain" or "You're being a killjoy" or whatever else, that has nothing to do with the particular complaint's connection to what's preceded it. It's a characteristically known thing that talk on any topic can "end up in an argument," and one of the ways that that's a formal possibility for conversation has to do with there being places in it where some kinds of interactional events can be freed from whatever they were about, and themselves multiply. So a complaint can be met by a counter-complaint and the counter-complaint can be met by another complaint, and one can kind of rapidly get into an argument that – intendedly or not – loses the course of talk out of which it seemed to come. Where, then, there is a particular difficulty in, for example, holding a topic while also talking to it or about it. Such issues are roughly known, and commend attempts to allow the preservation of a topic across a comment on it: How to make a comment *on* it a comment *in* it. How to possibly avoid giving too much of a chance to persons who have now been embarrassed, to turn on the embarrasser.

Returning to the allusive utterance itself, let me just note that the allusiveness of the talk continues after it: While acknowledging that he's

correctly alluded to the topic they're allusively talking about, they continue talking in an allusive way.

Roger:	hmnYeh well we're at that sta(hh)ge.
Ken:	ehh//heh hehh
Roger:	hhehh hehh hehh // hh hehh hh
Dan:	Yeah?
Al:	Yeah.
Dan:	What stage is that,
	(1.5)
Roger:	Awareness.

Now, the resources he had for building his complaint allusively and sufficiently were this ambiguity in the term 'skirt,' which can refer to women sexually. I want to make two sorts of points about the resources used: First, for not just any topic is there such a resource. And on the other hand, for referring to sex, there are lots of such resources. At this point I'm trying to locate the scope of usability of this deployed ambiguity. Last time I suggested that proverbs have a specific aptness for a punning relationship to the talk that they might be 'understanding.' What I want to be saying now is that as 'skirt' is a way in which some unstated topic can be talked about, and also alludes to a particular topic, that sort of thing is relatively special for 'sex' as a topic, but is not exclusive to the term 'skirt' at all, for 'sex' as a topic. In effect, then, in some fashion, you can't as readily employ ambiguities to allude to just any topic, but you can specifically deploy them for 'sex' as a topic.

What is being noted has a variety of sources. One of them is – to put it in a slightly paradoxical fashion – that the proper literal way to talk about sex is to talk about it allusively. So that if you talk about sex literally you're not talking about sex properly, you're talking about sex 'frankly.' That is to say, what would otherwise be ordinary talk about some other topic, talked of in the same way for sex, it's 'talking frankly.' And what would be for some other topic talking about it allusively, is talking about sex, in effect, literally. So the language for talking about sex – and a variety of other things – is specifically allusive. I mean to be noting such a thing as that a perfectly reasonable, literal, but not 'frank' reference to sex is 'going to bed with,' 'sleeping with,' etc. And that has correlates for other sorts of events as well, as when announcing what one is doing one says "I'm going to the bathroom." That is to say, there are other descriptions which would come off not as literal but as 'frank' or as 'crude.' And one wouldn't be heard as speaking allusively if one said "I'm going to the bathroom." Though, on the other hand, one might be heard as being allusive if one said "I'm going to the kitchen" when one was intending to get something to eat.

In a fashion, then, 'allusiveness' is the way sex is properly talked of, if you used the term 'allusive' as it would apply to some other topic. Then, too, there is the fact that obscene puns seem to have no particular locus, in the sense that there seems to be no particular topical talk that has, more than or

less than any other topical talk, the possibility of having obscene puns emerge in it. Obscenity, then, is something that if one wants to avoid it one needs always to keep it in mind so as to keep one's mind off of it. It looks as though our language is one in which the possibility of obscenity is the ambiguity to be avoided in talk anywhere, such that sex is always latent in a way different than, say, politics or any general topic that one might get into is always latent. The pun organization is, then, sexual.

The reason for my raising this is again to say that it takes no particular wit of somebody's to use the particular resources of an ambiguity in order to invoke sex as the topic that's being alluded to. That isn't the kind of thing about which what we have to see is what kind of a mind does this fellow have, or has he done something distinctly clever. In using the ambiguities of a term to invoke sex, he's done it in just the way that it's altogether easy to do. And if sex is to be talked of allusively, and is the primary allusively-to-be-talked-about subject, it isn't surprizing that much of the language would turn out to be deployable that way. As persons sought to find ways to talk allusively on that topic they would have generated a more or less large range of otherwise punning terms that could have a specific sexual sense. 'Sex' doesn't have its own terms being used, so what happens is that the language in general is being raided for usable terms. And every time a raid is successful we have another obscene pun possibility added. And when, say, that term is otherwise used, the possibility of a sexual reference lies latent.

So we've added to our prior stuff a way that can be seen to have some sorts of generality and also some sorts of anyman usage, to deploy ambiguity – a feature which is considered to be delicate on any occasion – systematically for interactional purposes.

Now I want to move to another fragment, again from the group therapy sessions (these were excerpted from a collection of five two-hour sessions).

Roger: When I say I wanna be something, it's not that I just wanna be this, it's just I–I–I just– that's the only thing I <u>tell</u> people that I wanta be an artist. It's really a whole way of life, y'know, an' I guess that's– -- an' that's the way my brother feels too, so he just– just tells everybody, b'cause he won't be accepted, y'know, the idea is // not standard.

Dan: Yeah.

Dan: Uh huh.

Roger: Y'know this is– this is just halfa the situation.
   (1.0)

Dan: Mm hm,

Roger: You visualize yourself uh living a certain way. An' the only thing'tchu tell people is uh whatcha do as yer occupation.

Dan: Yeh

Roger: I see it as a whole picture.

Dan: It is.

Roger: Y'know

Dan :   Yer right.
Roger :   Not just uh -- (1.0) -- Like my father, you know, "Well I -- I'm
           a painter."
Dan :   Mm hm,
Roger :   Y'know? But I–I don't see it that way at all.
Jim :   Huh.
Roger :   I–   How am I gonna live, what am I gonna do for a living, an'
           the whole– whole scene.
Dan :   Right.
Roger :   And uh since most people don't think along these lines . . .

Briefly, what he's doing here is asserting that he's unsatisfied with the ways in which it appears he has to describe his preferred occupation. He's unsatisfied because that seems to treat it as merely an occupation, i.e., an eight-hour-a-day thing. For him, the occupation he wants is one that he treats as life-pervasive. Now, a plain kind of issue is, he could *say* that; how can he make it *believable* that as compared to others it's so for him. That is to say, there's a large difference between claiming something and proving it. And maybe there are ways of proving something like this assertion. What we can do here is to look at a kind of neat thing happening – and again, we're dealing with spontaneous talk. The kind of neat thing happening is: The occupation he proposes as the one with which he's life-pervasively occupied is being an artist. Now let's note that while there is a whole range of ways he could describe the problems of having that occupation being life-pervasive for him, what he does is to use, a bunch of times, specifically *visual terms* to characterize his preoccupation. He talks about "You visualize yourself," "I see it as a whole picture," "and the whole scene," "along these lines." Any of these things could be formulated in a way that had nothing to do with some occupation, or he might use terms specifically of that occupation's mental state. What he's done is to show a listener that his mind is indeed kind of totally occupied with a visual way, i.e., a painter's way, of thinking about the world.

What's been done here is that someone has taken description situations which would allow for descriptions that had nothing in particular in common with each other, and isolate terms that all had a visual aspect. He has, then, mobilized, out of the range of ways that all of these things could be formulated, each of them as distinctly have a visual sense to them. He's thereby exhibited the visual character of his mind, and thereby proved that it isn't only a job for him, it's "a whole way of life."

Lecture 4
Spouse talk

This fragment comes from a conversation with five people present. Ben and Ethel are father-in-law and mother-in-law of Lori; they're visiting Bill and Lori, their son and daughter-in-law; Fred is Bill's grandfather. They drove down from Los Angeles for the afternoon. The first utterance, "When are your folks coming down," refers to Lori's parents who are also expected.

Ben:	When're yer <u>folks</u> comin' down.
Lori:	They <u>should</u> be <u>he:re</u>.
	(1.5)
Ben:	There wz the <u>one</u> spot there, -- they must have hadda, -- // some kind'v a–
Lori:	Will they get into it too? 'r // wz it– more up by yer house.
Ben:	Yeah.
Ben:	No, no they'll get into it. They must'v had some type of a <u>show</u>ing. -- A camper sho:w or uhm– // flea market,
Ethel:	At the great big drive in theater. =
Ben:	=or they mighta hadda swap meet, and there were, <u>so</u> many cars parked there en' so many people walkin' on the bridge across the <u>free</u>way thet people were slowin' down tuh <u>look</u>.
Bill:	Huhh
Ethel:	Brother I mean it slowed up // a:ll, the traffic y' know,
Ben:	An' there– there wz at least ten mi:les of traffic <u>bum</u>per tuh bumper.
Ethel:	–because a' that,
	1.0)
Ben:	⌜Damn idiots,
Lori:	[[⌞An' how long did it– So–so it took a while tuh get through– What time // didju leave.
Ethel:	Mm hm,
Ethel:	Well, let's // see, we–
Ben:	'Leven thirty,
Lori:	But that wz– Then you wentuh Fre:d's.
Ethel:	We, // we left– we left–
Ben:	<u>No</u>. That's the time we left <u>Fre:d's</u>.

I've been engaged in pointing up some relatively delicate aspects of storytelling and attempting to make something of them. I'm continuing that now. And the delicate aspect of storytelling that I'm going to focus on is involved in Ethel's utterance, "At the great big drive in theater" and her

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utterance "–because of that." I want to develop an account of her usage and what it is; what she's doing and why.

What she's doing in a transparent sort of way is producing specifically *completions* to sentences begun by Ben; such sentences as, so far as he's concerned, may already be complete, at least in the case of "–because of that:"

> Ben :   An' there– there wz at least ten mi:les of traffic <u>bum</u>per tuh bumper.
> Ethel : –because a' that,

In the other case he's going to go on in any event:

> Ben :   They must'v had some type of a <u>showing</u>. —— A camper show or uhm– // flea market,
> Ethel : At the great big drive in theater.

The phenomenon of people finishing off other people's utterances, or extending and re-finishing an utterance that somebody else has already attempted a finish to is not all that rare, though it has a great deal of technical interest to it and I'll suggest some of its technical interest in a bit.

Now I want to locate one class of such occurrences and explain them. In doing so we begin at a place that seems very far away from where we shall end up; we begin with among the most general sorts of maxims for the production of talk in conversation, and specifications of this maxim will recur throughout the course. It runs: *A speaker should, on producing the talk he does, orient to his recipient.* We're concerned with one specification of that, for now. If the maxim is so – as it is – then a sort of consequence is that *if you've already told something to someone then you shouldn't tell it to them again*, or if you know in other ways that they know it then you shouldn't tell it to them at all. So that a typically complainable-about event is: Two parties walking along, both watching the same sorts of things, and one narrating what's happening to which the other can characteristically reply, "I see it, I see it." Alternatively, one telling the other something that they've already told him, to which the other will characteristically reply, not awaiting its completion, "You already told me that."

That's a very general rule, and it can present difficulty under certain standardized situations of which possibly the most interesting – interesting not so much for technical reasons but interesting for the plaintiveness of the problems it poses – are those in which one or more couples are present and talking in the environment of others, possibly other couples. And hereafter just imagine other couples so as to make it a little bit more interesting. If a couple is present and conversing with other couples, and there's a rule 'Don't tell your recipients what you know they already know; what you've already told them,' then, if that rule generically applies to conversation, there would be a kind of dramatic bind on this sort of conversation which would involve that if, e.g., one person is going to tell a story, then, considering whether

others know it, if that person is a part of a couple then one thing they're very largely going to know is that their *spouse* will know the story by virtue of the fact that the stories they tell in the presence of others, they've already told their spouse. That is then to say that when couples get together they might find that they have almost nothing any member of the group can tell the group without feeling that at least some other members of the group already know what they're telling them.

A general problem, then, is how to deal with the situation of a couple in conversation with others. One obvious solution – that spouses shouldn't tell each other anything that they might have occasion to tell other people – obviously has massive troubles involved in it which are reflected in such a situation as someone telling a story and having their spouse complain "How come you never told me that." However, spouses don't much get into that situation. And that has to do with, if they are in each other's daily presence then on any occasion that they have anything to tell, there are rather strong bases for their telling it to their spouse. So that they will daily use up, with regard to their spouse, any possible news they have. The reasons for that are themselves rather technical and general, having to do with things like: When people gather, including spouses but not uniquely to spouses, then, via the rule 'orient to one's recipient,' one of the businesses is to inform the person they're with of any possible news relevant to that other that they acquired in between meetings. And this will partially explain how come spouses don't withhold from each other, until a scene in which many are present, the stories that they have.

Now let me try to develop kind of an explanation of why, when something is news, spouses tell that news to their spouse first, i.e., not necessarily first of anyone, though sometimes first of anyone, but on the first occasion they can. But I want to hold the problem and develop an explanation which will turn out to be an explanation of it, without at the moment referring to spouses.

Everyone has encountered the following sort of scene: You meet somebody and they ask you, about someone you mutually know, "How is X?" Now, at least theoretically it's quite imaginable that you could say, not having spoken to the asked-about one in the last ten minutes, half hour, week, two months, that you don't know, and refer to as your source for not knowing, that you haven't spoken to them in the last ten minutes, half hour, two weeks, three months, whatever. That occasionally occurs to you, and we'll try to say why it can occur to you, but very characteristically you feel altogether confident in saying that they're fine or not so fine, and maybe adding some more or less close characterization of how they are. Now, how can you feel confident that you know how somebody is whom you haven't spoken to recently? After all, people suffer all sorts of contingencies in one's absence. But for some sorts of people – roughly, close acquaintances (people in such sorts of relationships as involve others asking one party to the relationship about the other, i.e., others know what sort of relationship you're in with the one they're asking about), it's their business to inform each other of any more or less dramatic events that

happen to them. In some cases it's their business on the event's occurrence to sit down and start calling people up. Deaths, marriages, changes of jobs, whatever, are occasions for making a contact that otherwise one would not have then made with a variety of people. On the other hand, there is a variety of news which can await some other sort of contact; either one's normal contact-occasions, or however it is that a contact happens to occur.

Now, parties in what we can call a '*reason for a call*' relationship – and by that I mean that there are some things as between them, that if those happen it's their business to make a call or make a contact – can feel assured about the status of someone; assured enough not to call them to find out, or assured enough to answer somebody who asks about them, by virtue of the fact that they haven't received a call. That is to say, one can figure, about a whole bunch of people, that they are more or less as they were by virtue of the fact that they haven't told you otherwise. So we wander through the world feeling confident about the states of people with whom we aren't in moment to moment contact.

That can be consequential if at some point you encounter them or encounter someone who's encountered them, and you discover that such an event as should have occasioned a contact has happened and a contact hasn't happened. That is to say, you meet someone and they tell you that some time ago X got married or X moved or some such significant thing, and X never told you. Not that they 'never told you' by virtue of the fact that you've seen them and they didn't say anything about it, but they never called you to tell you. If that happens then you can begin to doubt whether you know what's up with them. And if someone asks about them, you can end up saying – though you've spoken to them with as much frequency as you normally do – that you don't know how they are: "We aren't close anymore." People can feel "we aren't close anymore" about people they see with as much a rate as they ever saw them, by virtue of discovering that things have happened with them that they haven't told you.

Now, spouses are plainly an instance of that sort of thing, i.e., there's a large body of news that a spouse should hear about as soon as it happens, or on the first occasion thereafter. Indeed, pretty much anything you would properly tell anybody else, you will have or should have told your spouse on the first occasion you could have – which will characteristically be before you've had occasion, in public with your spouse, to be telling someone else. It would plainly be bizarre, seeing your spouse every day, to announce on a Saturday night in the company of others that you got a raise on Wednesday. She might well figure that something is up in that you didn't tell her. Or she would also feel strange if on Friday she were to hear from somebody else that on Wednesday you got a raise. She might well figure, not that you were holding it for a surprise, but that you were holding out on her.

So, by virtue of what are really rather general considerations, spouses should end up telling each other pretty much anything they ever tell anybody else, before they tell – if not anybody else, anybody else in the company of their spouse. Unless, e.g., they happen to arrive and the spouse is there with

somebody else. But that has nothing much to do with spouses, it has to do with rules for telling and classifications of items that are tellable.

Now, among the few occasions where spouses end up telling news to a spouse in the presence of others is when they're talking about the long and far ago, and it just hasn't happened that we've ever had occasion to tell of this, since the issue is I didn't know you then, so it never was 'news' for us. And in the course of our relationship since I've known you, such a matter as leads me to mention this never came up. But nonetheless spouses are often bothered by much of that happening, i.e., they are bothered if, in the presence of others, too many reminiscences occur which they haven't already heard. And there are reasons for that, too. I can't develop them fully here, but roughly what it has to do with is that, in ways that we'll see eventually in the course, *stories get occasioned by a current course of conversation*. There are many occasions for any story getting occasioned. If we've known each other long enough, the course of conversation should have naturally provided that anything substantial at any time in your life will have been occasioned to tell. And people telling, then, the most antique stories for them, in whatever company, it will turn out that after they've been spoused for a while they've already told that to their spouse. So spouses can figure that if much of your early life occurs to you in conversations, not with me but with others and me, then you haven't been participating in conversations with me in the way you participate in conversations with others and me. Like, you only turn on when other people are there. Which is plainly a complainable.

What we've been coming to, then, is that, not so much by virtue of being a spouse but by virtue of the consequences of being a spouse, one will have told almost anything worth telling to one's spouse before one has an occasion to tell it with one's spouse and others. Furthermore, it's kind of likely for lots of news that on any given occasion when one might tell it to one's spouse and others, one will already have told it – not simply to one's spouse, but to one's spouse and others, i.e., for any given story one is going to tell, one's spouse will be publicly hearing that story maybe many times. Now, that is already to suppose a modification of the general rule, 'don't tell someone what you've already told them;' a modification which says, 'in the presence of others, relax the don't-tell rule in the case of spouses.' One question, then, is what do spouses do when their spouse is telling a story they've already heard? That's a professional problem for spouses, since a good deal of time that they spend in the company of others, they are rehearing what they've already heard.

Another aspect of it is, spouses will jointly have participated in some of the events that they will have occasion to tell in the company of others – where, e.g., having gone to the movies together they wouldn't come home and tell the other that they went to the movies. But the next night, having been asked "What did you do?" they would plainly be in a position to say "We went to the movies." Well, who of them is it that's going to tell of any event that they mutually participate in? The problem is after all simple in other circumstances. Whoever it is that something happened to can tell it. But what happens when it happened to both of them? It's common enough that

something that one's reporting has happened to more than oneself, but it's also common that in any group of participants they'll find something to tell which has happened to only one of them. So that of all the people who went to some event, they will disperse backwards, such that each of them will end up in some environments in which they're the only ones to whom it happened. Milions of people go through wars, etc., but for the millions of people who go through a war, there are events of the war that for some environment there will be recipients who weren't in it, or weren't in it in the way they were, and will thereby be proper recipients for the story that's available. But again, spouses are peculiar in that a great deal of what either of them have to tell in the company of their spouse to others is something in which they jointly participated. How then do they divide up the work of telling?

There are some plain and classical solutions. In some places if couples gather for an evening, then the first thing they do after gathering is split apart. Men go into one room, women go into another room. That has as an obvious nice consequence to it that stories in one room can reproduce the stories in the other, while allowing everyone to tell a story, not having to compete for that story with their spouse. And in this culture, such things take place. An alternative thing might well involve some relatively simple rule, like if it happened to both of them then one of them has distinct rights to tell it. It would, e.g., presumably be one index of male–female relationships if what held were what seems to have held often enough – that any story that happens to both man and wife, the man tells. Then of course the wife is in a position such that she not only listens to stories that she knows by virtue of the fact that her husband has already told her about things that happened to him, but she also listens to – or at least doesn't tell – the stories that she knows by virtue of the fact that she too was one to whom they happened.

Now all of that is rather problematic by virtue of other technical features of conversation having to do with some of the reasons for the rule 'don't tell what you've already told.' These have to do with how it is that people listen to stories and should listen to stories. For example, one kind of rule for listening to stories which I'll discuss in great detail eventually, is 'listen to a story to find out if a similar thing or the same thing happened to you. At the end of the story, if you've found such a thing, tell it.' Plainly that would have bizarre consequences for one spouse telling a story that the other also participated in. That is to say, the one spouse having told the story, the other would say "The same thing happened to me," and tell the same story. Which isn't all that funny because just such a thing happens not that rarely, except that the parties to the story didn't do it together, i.e., a first person reports on something they did and the other says "Isn't that a coincidence? I did just the same thing today" and then tells it again. We then get questions like "How come I didn't see you there?" etc.

So at least one major way that listeners are occupied, is one that a spouse cannot be engaged in. What are spouses to do? It turns out that there doesn't seem to have been any formal solution arrived at for the culture, and spouses

have to work out a solution, each for themselves if they can, though they tend to work out more or less similar solutions, some of which are to get angry and annoyed and bored. And one recurrent thing that happens is that insofar as one of the spouses is, if not a famous person, then a sort of a conversational star, i.e., someone who, in the company of a variety of people, ends up telling lots of stories to the amusement of those other people, then while everybody else loves them their spouses hate them, in that what happens is that the spouse ends up hearing time and again the same stories told, and can't possibly find themselves being amused by them. It's a distinct problem of stars that everybody else is amused with them and their spouses are bored with them. And typically they don't know what to do about it, either of them.

Now, one sort of solution is, if they do a lot of hosting themselves, then while one is telling a story, the other can behave also as a host by wandering around filling up drinks, making themselves busy, all in all not listening. But are there listening techniques available? Yes. One such listening technique is present in our materials and is altogether kind of common, and that is, a spouse listens precisely to the story they already know, for its more or less correct presentation, and engages in monitoring it − as a listener should − utterance by utterance. But now, however, for whether it's correctly presented as they know it. If not, what they do is put in corrections at the proper places. This can be a more or less happy solution. It can also be a more or less unhappy solution. For its unhappy version, one routine situation for spouses is that at the end of the evening, when the spouses get together, the news that they have is their anger over the corrections that have been done to the story I told, or the way in which the story that I know has been fudged by its teller. That is to say, given the earlier remarks I made about spouses when they're together having news for each other, then an evening together can generate news for each other after the evening; the news being what either spouse did to the other in the course of the evening. And that can have to do with each's talking behavior.

Again, then, an altogether common kind of thing is that spouses listen to each other's stories, and among the few ways they can listen to it to retain interest, is to listen to it by virtue of the story they know; that ending up in their engaging in modifications on the story, one telling it and the other modifying the told story. This situation also occurs when groups of people who are currently friends and also had a past together, are *reminiscing* together. Then, too, one finds some party telling a story they all know − indeed, that's the nature of the reminiscence − and the others engaged in modifications and elaborations of the story being told. Occasions of reminiscing are, then, specifically occasions in which the general rule, 'don't tell what the others know' is lifted, and where it's lifted its consequence is precisely the consequence that occurs for spouses generally.

Lecture 5
Selecting identifications

This time I'm going to begin a consideration of a story which will take a bunch of time. I'm not sure how long, but maybe several lectures. The fragment comes from the same group therapy sessions that we've been pulling stuff out of. It's told by the girl, whom we call Louise, to the only other person present at the time she's telling it, Ken.

> *Louise* : One night– (1.0) I was with this guy that I liked a real lot. An' uh (3.0) we had come back from the show, we had gone to the (1.0) Ash Grove for awhile, 'n we were gonna park. An' I can't stand a car. 'n he // has a small car.
>
> *Ken* : Mm hm,
>
> *Louise* : So we walked to the back, an' we just wen' into the back house an' we stayed there half the night. (1.0) We didn't go to bed to– t'each other, but– it was so comfortable an' so // <u>nice</u>.
>
> *Ken* : Mm hm,
>
> *Ken* : Mh
>
> *Louise* : Y'know? There's everything perfect.

This particular lecture will be devoted to developing an apparatus that sets up a consideration of the reference in this story to "this guy that I liked a real lot." The analysis will be very general. I deliver it here because it's appropriate here, but it holds for identifications in stories and in conversations very generally. I'm going to present a typology for identifications and some rules for use of the typology, and then offer varieties of evidence for the operation of that small mechanism. What I want to be getting to with regard to the story is to be able eventually to focus on aspects of the way that "this guy that I liked a real lot" is an identification that's 'topically selected.' But right now we're not going to talk at all about topical selection of identities; we may eventually be placed in a position to be able to do that.

I'm going to describe one non-exclusive procedure for selecting identities. That procedure has two components plus the rules. The two components – ways of classifying persons – I'll just give very non-descriptive names to. I'll call a first type Type 1 and the second Type 2. And I'll propose that a rule of their use is that you use Type 1 if you can.

One way of differentiating identifications made of persons in conversation is by reference to whether the speaker intends the recipient(s), or differentially among the recipients, that they use the presented identification to find from that identification that they know the person being referred to. And we intend, by Type 1, to be naming such a type identification. That is to say, a

Type 1 identification is one that the speaker produces with the intention of having the recipient use it to find some person that the recipient already knows. And a Type 2 identification is one that a speaker uses to indicate to the recipient that he should not employ it to attempt to find who, that he knows, is being referred to. In recipient terms, given a Type 1 identification it's the recipient's business to try to find from it who, that he knows, is being referred to. And given a Type 2, it's his business to recognize that he's not to try to find from it who he knows that is being referred to.

Now, there are some obvious members of either group. So, for Type 1, obvious instances are things like first names: Jim, Joe, Harry, etc. and obvious instances of Type 2 are things like "a guy," "someone," etc.

Q: You can say that the Type 1 is specific and the Type 2 is general.

HS: Why is that so? "Someone told me" refers to some one person. What makes it general?

Q: It's not telling you which one, so it's general. It's indefinite.

HS: How about "a guy." Is that indefinite?

Q: Yeah because there's a lot of different types of guys. There's only one Jim.

HS: Oh is that so? There's only one Jim?

Q: Talking about Jim it's understood as being one that's known by the recipient.

Our problem is to find out how people interpret identifications. It's obviously not so that there's only one Jim. It's obviously not even so that for any one person they only know one Jim. The specificity of names does not, can not conceivably, turn on the uniqueness of the assignment of a name to a person. 'Someone' can be just as particular a person as 'Jim.'

Indeed, the formulation I first gave, 'recognize the person whom you know' is not quite correct and I would amplify it to 'recognize the person that the speaker knows you know.' So that there can be Jims who you know, who you don't recognize when they say "Jim" because you figure they don't know him, or they don't know that you know him. So there can be a person, Jim, who you know and who they know, and that's not the person you recognize, but you recognize the person who you know that they know you know. The issue, however, is not to take the classification and see that it says that "this guy" is such a person as I suppose you don't know or have no reason to suppose you know, but to see such things as: Is there a rule which says which one to use? The rule is kind of important. And also, we want to see what else this thing will do besides assign a classification to types of terms.

Last time I said that one – if not the most – general maxim for talk production in conversation is 'speakers should design their talk for recipients.' In a way, we're dealing here with another specification of that general maxim; here by reference to identities of persons. That speakers do design identifications by reference to recipients is available from materials particularly used in that fashion. I'm talking about the combinations of pronouns and relational

terms; things like "my mother," "your brother," and things like that. Where plainly for those, a speaker who uses one of them should use it by reference to himself and the recipient such that, e.g., one shouldn't use "my mother" to a recipient for whom that person referred to is also the mother – one should use, instead, "our mother."

It would then seem as though that combination – pronouns and relational terms – constitutes the body in terms of which an orientation to recipients by speakers is done. That turns out not to be so for these, taken as a combinable group by themselves. Which is to say, one shouldn't use a term like "my brother," though it's true that the person being referred to is both my brother and not your brother, if other things are so. One obvious instance would be, suppose he's my brother but he's also your husband. Then one is in a position where referring to "my brother" is kind of a special activity. Or, say, she's my mother but she's also your friend. Is the issue then that one chooses between, e.g., "my brother" and "your husband" or between "my mother" and "your friend" in such a circumstance? That's not the way it's done, since what alternates with, e.g., "my brother" or "my mother" is not just another term from the same corpus of pronouns and relational terms, but other terms altogether. So if, e.g., the person you might refer to with "my brother" is a friend of the recipient's, then the issue isn't should I use "my brother" or "your friend," but what I should probably use is his name.

At least a consequence of that is that this is not a self-contained group to be used for selecting identifications relative to indicating who, that we know, is being referred to, but at least this list plus, say, names, are obviously selected-among together. That is to say, it's not sufficient to analyze the combinations the pronouns and relational terms yield, in order to find how identifications which could have those things as their instances are selected. One needs to at least add to the list such things as names.

What I've then been suggesting is something like this: If I wanted to make a case for '*recipient design*' of identification-selection, then there's an obvious body of materials in terms of which a case might be made, i.e., the combination of pronouns and relational terms. Now, while it remains so that pronouns and relational terms are used to do that job, focussing on them will not yield how that job is done. They are not a self-contained group selected from amongst each other to find which terms to use, but their selection involves some of them in alternation to other things, like names – and yet other things as well.

Now, the way I'm going to proceed is first to look at what I'll call 'modified identifications,' instances of which are things like:

> *Lottie* :   And Jan, uh this friend of mine, uh well she– I let her stay at the house this weekend.

Another one:

> *Roger* :   New Year's we:: split up the dues so we each hadda buck fifty tuh buy booze with for the New Year's party?

Al: Mm hm,
Roger: So we wen' around the room they were takin' orders. So Jack s–
        uh one guy bought a dollar fifty worth of glue.

So we've got "And Jan, uh this friend of mine . . ." and "So Jack s– uh one guy . . ." What we plainly have here is a modification, specifically a correction, of one identification by another. "Jan" is said and then replaced by "this friend of mine" and "Jack" is said and then replaced by "one guy."[1]

Now, a question is in the first instance, why replace the names by the second identifications – 'replace' being what I'm emphasizing. I ask that by virtue of a differentiation between bases for correcting identifications and bases for doing, e.g., cumulations of identifications. That is to say, there are familiar, obvious bases for correcting names. One is where you mis-name the person, e.g., "And Jan– uh *Mary* . . ." where there's a person you're attempting to identify and what you've done is to use the wrong name. And you can correct an identification where what you're intending to bring off is that you referred to the wrong person, e.g., "And Jan– no, not Jan, I mean the other girl, what's her name, uh, *Mary* . . ." I bring up that kind of correction because it's an obvious place where one is replacing one identification with another.

That's relevant because there's an altogether different thing which is perfectly legitimate, which is to cumulate identities. One can refer to a same person as "Jan, this friend of mine" where, then, one has two identities. And obviously you can have a large list of identities: "My friend Frank, a computer programmer who recently moved here from Kansas because he got a new job, he and his wife are coming over, they're leaving the kids home . . ." all those constituting an accumulation of identities for a single person. So identities plainly can be cumulated. Since they can be cumulated, if some two identities are correct for the person, then why replace one with the other? One can plainly see a basis for replacing one with another if one of them is wrong. We want to know why, when several identities are used which can all be correct, are they not done as a cumulation but as a replacement?

That replacement is done suggests that some identities, both of which are correct, can stand in an alternation relationship to each other. The question is, how do they alternate with each other? If we look at those that are used in an alternating relationship, they map onto the types we proposedly started with, i.e., "Jan" is an instance of a Type 1 and "this friend of mine," on its own,

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[1] Sacks' version of the talk in the second instance is simplified, and the phenomenon is a bit more complex. The transcript goes:

Roger: So we wen' around the room they were takin' orders. So Jack– k– this uh one
        guy bought uh dollar fifty worth a' Ripple, next guy bough (hh) t a dollar fifty
        worth a' glue hheh
Jim: heh heh // heh heh
Al: hehheh heh heh!
Roger: hhhmhhh heh "Planning on gettin' gassed. huh Jack!"

is an instance of a Type 2. And if what's proposed about them is that one says 'try to recognize' and the other says 'don't try to recognize,' then we have a basis for the fact that one is corrected to the other.

Now, that they're ordered starting with a Type 1 and replacing it into a Type 2 is also consistent with the proposal which says 'try to use the Type 1 if you can,' i.e., one would start with a Type 1. Furthermore – forgetting about names or identifications – with respect to the issue of 'orientation to a recipient,' the occurrence of a correction operation in speech is rather direct evidence for an orientation to recipients. And the positioning of the correction is also material on that issue, in the sense that to put the correction directly on what's to be corrected as compared to putting it anywhere else, involves some sort of very close monitoring of one's talk by reference to how recipients will deal with it. Having said something, and with an idea of what it is that a recipient will do with the thing you said, then it can be in point to put the correction right then and there, so as to try to have them relieved of a job that they might be at this point engaged in, i.e., to take "Jan" and try to figure out who, that you know that I know, are you trying to tell me to recognize with that name. The replacement, then, says "Don't try to do that, I made a mistake, it's not someone whom I suppose you know."

And there are materials relevant to that indeed Type 1s and Type 2s are heard in terms of the work they impose on recipients, differentially. Here is a characteristic fragment, again from the group therapy sessions. Two of the fellows, Al and Ken, are having a sort of mock fight. At one point Al says "I'll give you til three to move" and starts counting, "One, two," and we get:

> *Ken*:   hheh heh heh hhh A̲lri(hh)ght.Alright D(h)addy, hh hh hh hh
> hhhh!
> 　　　　　(3.0)
> *Ken*:   whhhh
> 　　　　　(1.0)
> *Ken*:   Ohhh
> 　　　　　(0.7)
> *Dan*:   Da--
> 　　　　　(1.0)
> *Ken*:   hh Huh?
> *Dan*:   Daddy,
> *Ken*:   Yeh at'sa new word t'day.
> 　　　　　(1.0)
> *Ken*:   → Joelle's M̲ommy, (0.6) He cn be Daddy d'day,
> *Roger*: → Who's Joe̲lle̲.
> 　　　　　(0.8)
> *Ken*:   → Th'girl th't lives nex'door. Sh's a li'l brat.
> 　　　　　She's about, fourteen fiften years old.
> *Roger*:   Girl'oo lives nex'door? hehh (0.6) Haven'even me̲d'er.
> 　　　　　(2.0)

Ken: Butchu don'needa meed'er. She's horney. (0.6) Show y'a picsher of 'er.

Al: Oh hey! Eez gotta picture of 'er I'm // (sure we'll)
( ).

Roger: → Oh you mean nex' // door t'<u>yer</u> house.

Ken: hhh!

Ken: <u>Yeah</u>.

Roger: → Oh I thoughtchu men'nex'door tuh <u>he(hh)re</u> hheh
(2.5)

Roger: There's a vacant lot on that side 'n another head sh(h)rinker joint ne(h)x'door.

I want to focus on "Joelle's *Mo*mmy," "Who's Jo*elle*," "The girl that lives next door," etc. What happens is, "Joelle" having been used, Roger engages in an attempt to try to figure out who it is that Ken knows that he knows, that is being referred to. The 'Who is X?' is something specifically done when a Type 1 has been used. Now, in a fashion, one could perfectly well say "Who is X?" for the other type of identification, e.g., "Who is 'this guy'?" And there are some particular circumstances under which such a thing is done. Here is an instance of that sort of thing, where one of them, Jessie, is a visitor to California and the other, Goldie, is an old acquaintance living in more-or-less west Los Angeles. The old acquaintance asks if the visitor is planning to come into the city. The visitor is saying 'yes,' and the way she says it is:

Jessie: Yes. I will. I, I, uh as a matter of fact uh this friend of mine uhm uh who's lived out here all these years. She lives in uh the Valley? Sherman Oaks?

Goldie: Yeah?

Jessie: Uh she's gonna pick me up Thursday morning.

After a brief interlude:

Goldie: Uh uh what is your friend's name. 'Cause my son lives in Sherman Oaks.

The name of "this friend of mine" was not given by virtue of it not being supposed that the friend would be known, in part by virtue of her living so far away. However, the name of the place has now been used to establish a possible warrant for her knowing that person, that then being a basis for asking 'Who is the friend, maybe I do know, though you would have every reason to suppose I don't, and I offer you a reason for my possibly knowing it.' So there are some rather special circumstances under which, in producing a Type 2 identification, one can give off materials that allow the other to ask for a 'Who is X?' They may then include information about why, though you wouldn't know it, they have reason to believe that they might know the person.

Now if a Type 1 has been used, like "Joelle," and the question is "Who's Joelle?," i.e., who that I know that has that name are you referring to with that name?, then the answer to such a question should be materials which I could better use than the name to find who that one is. And such possible materials come up: "The girl that lives next door." What happens is that "next door" doesn't solve that problem. He engages in a consideration of who might live next door and finds that he doesn't know such a person, i.e., "I haven't even met her." He thereafter discovers that "next door" was meant to do a different job, i.e., in that Ken was referring to 'next door to my house,' it was such a thing as would say 'you don't know her.' Having found that it's next door to Ken's house, Roger finds out that he's been misled by the use of "Joelle," and also by "the girl that lives next door" which wasn't intended to assist him in finding the person that he knows, but to indicate that he doesn't know the person.

So that deals in part with the issue of the way in which the use of a name can be heard, and the kinds of operations that indeed a recipient will engage in, and also the way in which a recipient will treat possible materials he's given in aid of that search, to find who it is that he knows. Now this doesn't yet really directly go to the issue of the *preference* for Type 1s over Type 2s, though it could, if such a thing could be established, bear on it. And kinds of materials directly relevant to the issue of the preference for Type 1s can be gotten.

> *Jay*:   Where'dju get the filing box from.
> *George*: From uh:: that fellow who usetuh sit in back of you, who, who got fired.
> *Jay*:   Jordan?
> *George*: Jordan, yeah.

Another fragment:

> *Marge*: Uh she asked me to stop by, she bought a chest of drawers from uhm (4.0) what's that gal's name? Just went back to Michigan? (2.0)
> *Marge*: Helen uhm
> *Bea*:   Oh I know who you mean. (1.0) Brady– <u>Bra</u>dy.
> *Marge*: Yeah. Helen Brady.
> *Bea*:   Mm hm

Another:

> *Rose*:   Uh because uhm I think uhm what's her name? uhm
> *Bea*:   Oh
> *Rose*:   That's on in the morning?
> *Bea*:   Sue?
> *Rose*:   Sue Brown, I– she usually stays until eleven.

What's happening in these is, speaker doesn't have the name. Not having the name, what speaker does is to ask recipient to give them the name. Now if Type 1 and Type 2 were not preferredly organized such that Type 1 is preferred over Type 2, then if speaker didn't have the name, speaker could used some kind of identification. The question is, why do the speakers, if they don't have the name, attempt to get the name from the recipient? One thing that's evidenced, anyway, is that speaker in these cases is oriented to whether the recipient knows the person. Being oriented to whether recipient knows the person, and knowing that recipient knows the person, they can show that without having the name, by getting recipient to give them the name. Now, if the issue were only 'use Type 1 if you can,' by reference to 'if you have the name then use it,' then if you didn't have it you'd use some other identification. But the preference for a Type 1 operates to get speaker to try to find the name if he figures that recipient knows the person – even if that involves getting the name from recipient. Such materials, then, bear directly on that there is a preference for Type 1 over Type 2.

It also can happen that neither party can remember the person's name. Speaker can produce an identification intending to show 'you know who it is, I don't remember the name, do you have the name?' and recipient can say 'I know who you're talking about but I don't remember the name either,' and give an identification which indicates that they recognize the person without the name. An instance of that:

> *Ken* : No some people–some people wish fer things that are beyond their reach. Now uhh with that father and– you know that family thing that– that we had here with that clod, that I went
> → to, that I didn't like?
> *Roger* : Huh?
> *Ken* : Uh that– On–on Monday nights I used to come // here
> *Roger* : You're talking about my <u>parents</u>, son.
> *Ken* : No! That that jerk that was tee– he was supposed to be the doctor.
> (2.0)
> *Ken* : You know? uhm the // ( )
> *Roger* : → Y–the quack! hhehhh
> *Ken* : Yeah. Well I was sitting in here and he kept . . .

Where Roger than produces an identification, "the quack," which says 'I know the clod you're referring to.'

The matter is a little bit stronger yet, since the preference for Type 1s can operate where a speaker doesn't figure that recipient knows who's being referred to, but knows something that involves it in being an 'almost,' i.e., that you know someone in some close relationship to that one being referred to. The kinds of materials I'm talking about here involve things like:

Bea :   I'm reading one of uh Harold Sherman's books.
Marge :   Mm hm
Bea :   I think we read one, one time, about life after death or
              something.
Marge :   Mm hm
Bea :   And uh this is how to make uh ESP work for you.

The idea here is, a book is being referred to. The book is not taken to be known by the recipient. It could be referred to as "I'm reading a book you've never read." Instead what's done is to find some way of referring to the book – here, via the author – which makes it an 'almost known' thing: You know the author of books of which this is one book. Where here we can see a rather elaborately found way to make this an 'almost Type 1' identification.

Another instance of that sort of thing is from materials in which people went into houses and watched the children of the house for very extended periods, and wrote down, as much as they could, everything that happened. Here, 'she' is this little child that's being observed.

She turned and went into the kitchen and asked her mother very definitely, "Mom, didn't they almost– Who is she?" Her mother said, "That's Rita. Do you remember the other day when you went to the party and met Una? Well that's Una's mother."

Now here, a person unknown is being asked about. The identification that's given is one which says 'You don't know her, but I can find someone that you know, that she is related to.' And that's then the way it's done, to provide that this is an 'almost Type 1,' as compared to simply a Type 2, "A friend of mine."

The business of all this for our purposes here is to set up that a thing involved in "this guy" is that its use says 'the person who I'm referring to is someone whom I identify in such a way as to indicate that I have no reason to think that you know him.' Now this leaves open the issue of, if one is going to pick a Type 2 identification, what are the constraints in choosing among possible such identifications? What I want to be getting to eventually is that if you're going to give a Type 2, then there are lots of Type 2s you could give; how do choose among them? We've said at least that quite different things can be done with Type 1s and Type 2s. Now one thing is that if what you're doing with a Type 1 is identifying the person with a name, then for Type 2s you're freed from that in some way, and you can mobilize the identification for other purposes. So you don't have simply that all it says is 'it's someone you don't know,' but you could have things like, for "this guy," "this guy that I liked a real lot," which is another thing, but you could also have "this older guy that I liked a real lot" or varieties of things like that. We're in a position, then, to try to focus on how the particular thing that's used for this particular Type 2 got selected, and we'll go on to that next time.

Lecture 6
A *'defensively designed'* story

Louise : One night– (1.0) I was with this guy that I liked a real lot. An'
uh (3.0) we had come back from the show, we had gone to the
(1.0) Ash Grove for a while, 'n we were gonna park. An' I can't
stand a car. 'n he // has a small car.

Ken : Mm hm,

Louise : So we walked to the back, an' we just wen' into the back house
an' we stayed there half the night. (1.0) We didn't go to bed to–
t'each other, but– it was so comfortable an' so // <u>nice</u>.

Ken : Mm hm,

Ken : Mh

Louise : Y'know? There's everything perfect.

We've so far arrived at that "this guy," as an identification, is *recipient designed* in at least the sense that it proceeds from a determination – or a claim, anyway – that the person being referred to is supposedly not known by recipient, and it instructs recipient to not try to find who, that speaker knows that recipient knows, is being referred to. Under that circumstance, that speaker is going to pick a Type 2 identification, then there are other possible Type 2 identifications that can be picked, and a question is how do they go about picking some Type 2 identification – or some set of Type 2 identifications, since they can perfectly well cumulate them.

What we at least have as features of "this guy that I liked a real lot" is that it proposes about the person identified that it's male, and that there was an affectional relationship from speaker's side, with respect to that male. Those aspects of the identification have an altogether apparent relationship to an obvious business of the story – reporting on a date, and setting up what I shall claim is a decidedly focussed characterization of the occurrence of sex on the date.

A thing I'll want to propose is that the story is rather elaborately organized, and that in a very detailed way its elaborate organization is recipient designed, in a fashion we've not yet focussed on. The recipient design seems roughly to be involved in bringing off something like the following point, under certain constraints. The point being that a particular variant place for sex was used, the constraints being that the story is being told to a partial colleague; one who is a teenager and unmarried like her, and in that sense a colleague, partial in the sense of being male not female. And by virtue of the maleness of him – and some other facts – the story is *defensively designed*. By that I mean something like this: By virtue of that he is male, a way that he has, that she can know of, of reading the story that she tells, is in terms of it possibly telling

him the terms of her availability; a thing he could be interested in on his own, or, insofar as he has male acquaintances, then the terms of her availability can be used by him to advertise her. In due course I'm going to be arguing that she tells the story in such a fashion as to rather sharply locate what she will do and with whom, given that she's telling it to one for whom such a story told by an eligible female is readable, and known to be readable, to find out just such a matter.

In that regard then – though I'm not going to rely all that much on it, but for now just introductorily – an obvious point is the use of ". . . that I liked a real lot" in her characterization of the guy she was with. She didn't have to use it. It's not, for example, a feature of the course of events on this particular evening, nor is it for that matter, even a current characterization of the person. And in that regard there is kind of a marked difference between 'like' and 'liked.' If she'd said "One night I was with this guy that I like a real lot," she might be saying 'you can't use this to see whether it will happen with you or any friends of yours whom you might arrange for me, because I'm currently occupied.' Insofar as she's not reporting 'like' but 'liked,' the question is, well why put in 'liked' since the person who is being referred to is no longer in the picture? And the point of its presence may have to do with the way in which it locates a condition for her doing what she did, where, in proposing what it is that she was willing to do, it can be heard as saying 'that which I was willing to do on that occasion is not something that one can suppose I would do on any occasion,' such a matter having a specific relevance if she's talking to someone who could read what she did for its advertising purposes – to himself or to someone whom he might arrange such an occasion or such a relationship for.

Now, I want to deal with some of the ways that their colleagial relationship is used for putting together the story, and for focussing its business. But first let me just note one sort of organization the story has, that seems to be elaborate and detailed, and that is, its tense organization. Consider one obvious alternative to the tense organization the story has; that being that insofar as the whole thing takes place in a past, then it could be given simply a past sequential narrative organization, a stringing together of "then"s: We went to the show, then we did this, then we did that, then the following, then . . . etc. It's a perfectly natural, if not canonical, form to stories. This story doesn't have that form. The form it has involves the arrangement of its pasts in such a fashion as to have, in the middle of it, a kind of present, i.e., its pasts lead up to a present from which a future is looked towards – where the future is itself a past for the story's purposes. So we have "One night I was with this guy that I liked a real lot." Then we start to move toward a present: "We had come back from the show, we had gone to the Ash Grove for a while;" we're now somewhere in a present. "And we were gonna park." At that point we're in a present looking forward to something – that something has of course already happened when the story is being told. It stops at that present, looking forward to a first future, rejecting that future and taking up another, i.e., not to "park" but to go to the "back house." And the story then preceeds

into a continuation of its past tense format. So in a way, a present is designedly isolated. By 'designedly' I mean to point up this fine organization in which a range of tenses are manipulated such that the pasts before that present are set up to arrive at that as a present, and that present is used, then, as a platform for projecting futures.

Leaving the tense organization aside for the moment, and going back to the issue of the colleagiality of the characterization, I want to notice that the story positions the occurrence of sex in it, in a fairly elaborate way. What I mean by that is that there is a characterization of a variety of events, temporally occurrant in the evening. The sex in it is positioned among those as, after some events and before others, i.e., it's bounded fore and aft. So it's announced that "we had come back . . . ," what we had done before that, that we did whatever we did after all those things, and that it lasted "half the night." What's the point of that positioning? For a colleague, i.e., another unmarried teenager, the positioning asserted is the normal positioning of sex for a date. That is to say, one could plainly produce a story in which what one was pointing up was the unusual positioning of the sex on the date, e.g., "We were going to go to the Ash Grove, but we decided not to, and right then and there we went off to park."

Note that the positioning is not *said* to be normal or abnormal. What's done is to employ the colleague's knowledge of normal positioning to indicate that that was normal. Which is then to say, in effect, 'I'm not telling you the story by virtue of that the positioning of sex in it was abnormal, don't look to its positioning to find what I'm telling you to be the story.' Such a story as, "One night I went out with a guy who I liked a lot and we went to the movies and after the movie we parked and eventually he went home" is no story for such as they. Though it perfectly well might be a story if she was 12 years old, or if she was considerably older than she is, in which case it might be 'doing something like unmarried teenagers.' After all, for a married couple or unmarried adults or varieties of other combinations, this same positioning would be not be specifically 'normal.' The sex only has its normal positioning vis-à-vis that they are unmarried teenagers.

So we have an elaborateness of the tense organization and an elaborateness of the positioning of sex. And of course the two needn't combine in the way they do, since we could have the sex positioned via a narrative course-of-the-date organization, and not one that focusses on the 'just before the sex' as an arrived-at present. But here we have an interesting tense organization and an uninteresting positioning, where at least a possible business of using the positioning when it's uninteresting, can be to isolate what it is that *is* interesting that's present. Again, there could be a variety of things interesting and present. It could be that the sex took place in a variant place and also at a variant time, and that's readily enough doable: "Instead of going to the Ash Grove we went to a motel," which would do both positioning and place variance.

Let's move on to the issue of place. I want to suggest that the story's tense organization is built so as to allow for the assertion of a place for sex that

wasn't used. Plainly, the place that was used could simply be asserted: "We went to the Ash Grove and then we went to the back house." But what she does is to arrive at a present, the present being treated in the story as a decision point in terms of which alternatives are assessed, and one alternative is rejected, another accepted. I raise the question, why put in a rejected alternative? I would suggest that for people like them, had *that* second alternative not been involved, then one wouldn't have presented a rejection of one and an acceptance of the other.

Now, that is to say something like this: If an event is alternative to another, then it's not necessarily the case that the other is alternative to it. While one may report one as done 'in alternative' to the other, if the other was done one wouldn't report it as done 'in alternative to something.' That is, one could simply say "we parked" and not, e.g., "we rejected going to the back house, and parked," though one could present a rather different story, e.g., "He said we should go up to his apartment and I said no, so we parked." But there are some events which can, under some circumstances, be presented as 'alternatives to something else,' where that something else, if it happens, is not presented as an alternative to some other. So parking is presented as 'an alternative' where parking is rejected, and going to the back house is presented as 'an alternative' where it's accepted.

At least one aspect of the defensive design of the story, then, is that she would be telling an altogether different story if she simply said "We went to the back house" without noting "parking" as an alternative. What that involves is that as there is a normal positioning whose variance can be used to assess the terms of availability of the person telling the story, so there is a normal place, whose use or non-use can also be employed in the same fashion. Knowing that there is a normal place, at least for one's recipient and their supposition of colleagiality with you, if you ignore reference to that normal place then youy're making a rather different claim, i.e., that something else is normal for you. So that if what she were telling were that for her the normal place is her back house, then she would be isolating herself as someone having different conditions of availability than if she indicates that parking is the normal place.

Again, then, another aspect of the story's defensive design is that she indicates that she knows what, for them, is the normal place, which she can use to specifically locate what happened here as 'distinctly unusual.' And the tense organization she uses allows that to have been present in her mind on the occasion she's now telling about. That is to say, she can use a decisional organization to invoke the normal priorities, in which, for unmarried teenagers, parking is *'preferred.'* I don't mean that it's favorite, but there's some way it's preferred over the back house, if at least only in moral terms. That is to say, she brings off that *she* prefers the back house, but there is a more abstract sense of 'prefer' which involves her in invoking the parking – that which is 'preferred' in the more abstract sense – as a first alternative. And she can do that via the decision situation which she gets to via her tense organization.

Now, having done this variant event – going to the back house – she proceeds to temporally bound it – half the night as compared to staying there all night. And also she proceeds to indicate that they didn't "go to bed" with each other. Presumably what she *didn't* do is something that she figures she needs to say, by virtue of the question now arising: "Okay, if she would do that, what else would she do?" So that in proposing that she did something that she knows is unusual – and she knows it's unusual by virtue of her commitment to the normal preferences – she then engages in bounding it as to what she didn't do. And again, were she telling her girlfriend, or were one guy telling another guy, then they might perfectly well choose to leave what they 'didn't do' allusive.

So what we have are a series of technical resources mobilized to isolate a particular variant to a series of known normal structures – i.e., that we had some sort of sex at an abnormal place – in the context of which elaborate materials are also used to delimit what it is that happened. All of which can be read by the male and thereby only partially colleagial recipient as a relatively sharp specification of what sorts of terms she has. Where issues as to her terms are made relevant by her wanting to say that she did a particular variant thing. By virtue, that is, of her having done 'going to the back house' for the sex, a whole range of other materials are stuck in: that she liked the guy a real lot, that they had gone to the Ash Grove before, that it just happens that she doesn't like cars and he had a small car, that they stayed in the back house half the night, and that they didn't go to bed with each other. So we can see a sense in which she's telling, from her point of view, a rather dangerous story. And in that she's telling a rather dangerous story, its size has to do with the warding off of inferences that could be made from the specific event that she intends to tell of.

One can, I hope kind of readily, see how a specification of a range of venturesome acts, sexual and non-sexual, could have a similar way of being constructed, in which, to bring off a particular point, a whole range of resources are employed to indicate 'what I'm not saying.' And those resources are employed in distinctly technical ways; i.e., like this rather elaborated tense organization which isolates a present in terms of which the alternatives are projected, so as to get those alternatives into the story.

And one can see that, as complicated as it turns out to be to tell this story to even a colleague, what a job is involved if one is trying to tell it to someone who isn't. She couldn't, then, use the positioning, place, etc., the sense of "half the night," in order to bring off precisely what she's bringing off and defending against.

Lecture 7

The 'motive power' of a story;
'Ex-relationals'

Before I get into the discussion let me just note that the Spring 1970 lectures are also on storytelling, and in those lectures are a variety of technical materials which are much relevant to understanding how stories work. I figure I did them then as well as I would do them now, and I'm not going to repeat them. You should, if you are at all interested in how stories work, read them.

A thing I want to address now concerns the motive power of stories. By that I mean, assuming that they get told in the first place, what keeps them alive; what keeps them being retold? I will address that question rather more specifically when I deliver a couple of lectures on jokes. This time I'll begin by making a bunch of points about aspects of the telling of a story, which are not available from the story itself though they're more or less profoundly related to the story that's told. Then I'll see what can be done with them.

The guy who tells the story, Tony, is around 40, and he works in a nondescript job at an insurance company. He's telling the story to a younger co-employee of his, Jay, who is quitting as of tomorrow and going back to school. This is a possible last conversation for them before Jay's going back to school. That he is going to quit and that he is going back to school is something that was known as between these two, and the conversation begins with that matter. They then go on to talk about a bunch of things having nothing to do with quitting, and eventually get into the following sort of talk: They are both of Italian extraction and they get into a discussion about being in Italy – Jay was there on a long trip, and Tony was there during his time in the navy during the Korean War. They talk about how they came to be in the military, and Tony says how he went into the navy because he was insecure and didn't know what to do with himself. He goes on to say,

> *Tony*: But I'm t'ankful anyway. I came back ali:ve, (4.0) I'm thankful fer <u>some</u> things, (4.0) I could be a lot worse off.
>   (10.0)
> *Tony*: T'day is money. -- Uh- people don't– pee– people respectchu for how much money yuh have. (4.0) They don't care <u>how</u> yih get it. (2.0) We're talkin'– When I say 'people' I'm speakin' in generalities. (3.0) They don't care <u>how</u> you get it. -- Jus' so long ez yuh have it. (2.0) See if they see you gotta fifty thousan' dollar ho:me? or a hunnuh thousan' dollar home? They don't care how

yuh <u>got</u> it. (2.0) What is it Brentwood? Belaire, -- or Pacific
Palisa:des or -- or what have you. Or Laurel Canyon? (3.0) They
don't care how you get it.
    (8.0)
Tony: Bud <u>I</u> care how I ged it.
    (7.0)
Jay: Hmmh.
    (3.0)
Jay: Well, (2.0) I think it's, (1.0) I think it's <u>useless</u>. for a man tuh spen'
iz life, making money, if he's not doing what 'e wants tuh do,
Tony: Oh I <u>agree</u> with you. Wholeheartedly.
Jay: I mean 'e c'n make <u>all</u> the money he wanz but what <u>good</u> is it if he's
not really doing what'e wants tuh <u>do</u>.
Tony: Yeh.
    (5.0)
Tony: Very true. (2.0) You c'n become president a' the company. (3.0)
Buh what if yer not doing really whatche wanna do. -- Whad if–
whad if– whad if uh:: y'know.
Jay: Whad if yer so bored.
Tony: I met a guy in Jersey.

And the story is produced. Now let's look at the story. It involves the report
of a conversation that Tony had with another guy some seemingly long time
ago when Tony was younger, and prospectful relative to the circumstances of
the other guy. That is to say, at that time he was a 'manager trainee' and the
other fellow was an insurance salesman, and an insurance salesman in part
by virtue of failed prospects he had once had. And he's telling Tony of the
failed prospects that he had, and where he is now by virtue of those failed
prospects.

Tony: I met a guy in Jersey (3.0) I wz working inna department store
in New Jersey -- for a short while. Right– In Newark New
Jersey. Right on Broad Street. -- Big department store. (4.0)
And uh. I was a <u>trainee</u> there. A manager trainee. -- Butche
hadda learn the <u>business</u>. Y'unduhs– They putchu in <u>sto:ck</u>.
–work. Yihknow, the k– behind the counter I mean uh– to
learn the <u>business</u>.
Jay: Mm *hm*,
    (2.0)
Tony: And this– this guy wz selling us, in<u>surance</u>. -- He was, he– he
wen' aroun' tuh all the employees sellin' insurance. En 'e wz a
<u>nice</u> lookin' guy. Jewish fella, -- about, oh I guess he wz about
-- <u>oh</u> about, thirdy fi:ve, -- <u>sum</u>'n like dat. Said he wentuh
acting school with Kirk <u>Douglas</u>. -- Eh' I be<u>lieve</u> 'im. -- So I
sez "What happena <u>you</u>." -- Kirk Douglas is Jewish <u>too</u>. --
Bud <u>anyway</u>. Dat's immaterial. -- So I sez "What happena

you" I sez uh "How come you didn' <u>make</u> it." He siz "I got
ma:rried I gotta coupla kids" -- he sz "I hadda struggle" -- he
sz thē- -- He sz "The interest was there" he sez "but- -- then
the kid came along, I bought a nice home out here in, in Jersey"
he sz "I gave it up." He sez "Kirk, stuck it <u>out</u>." -- I seh "Well
that's the way it <u>goes</u>." -- He wz, selling in<u>sur</u>ance.
        (3.0)

Jay :   ((clears throat))
Tony :   Maybe he wasn't <u>hap</u>py but he's doin it, -- A <u>lotta</u> people by–
        sometimes by <u>circum</u>stances. -- Circumstances pre<u>vail</u> where you
        haf to, do something -- not ex<u>ac</u>ly to your <u>lik</u>ing. (4.0) I know
        it'd be a real catastrophe if all the people in the <u>worl'</u> did that. I
        unnuh<u>stan' that</u>. -- <u>Some</u>body's gotta do it,

It's of some interest to consider the way Tony positions himself in the story.
It isn't just that it happened some time ago, "Once I met a guy in Jersey, he
was selling insurance and that occasioned the conversation, and he told
me . . . ," but Tony locates a sort of point in his life at which this occurred.
That is to say, we want to account for why Tony puts in the particular job that
he happened to have at that time, since what he's doing in some fashion is
telling about a guy he met. He could tell about the guy he met in a way that
could have all this interaction occur without mentioning that he was a
"manager-trainee." Except that in saying that he was a manager-trainee he's
locating a time when he had prospects.

Now the point in Tony's life that this occurred, in the way it relates to the
insurance salesman, has a kind of distinct interest to it, and that is in the way
in which the telling *here* relates Tony and Jay. Tony's characterization of his
situation at the department store does a positioning of him, in his own life and
relative to the insurance salesman, which makes the story he was told
something that can have a possibly nice relationship to the story he now tells.
The story Tony was told, was told when he had prospects, and is the story of
someone who at an earlier time had prospects that, at the time of the telling
had failed. Tony is now telling the story at a time of his life when his prospects
are no longer there, and he's telling it to someone at a time in their life when
they specifically have prospects. These are not merely abstract prospects that
anyone at any point in their life might or might not have, but he is described
in this story as someone who had prospects, and the insurance salesman is
described as someone who no longer had prospects. And the situation of the
current telling is one in which differential prospects are specifically available to
both Tony and Jay, as they were originally available to both Tony and the
insurance salesman.

Let's give some consideration now to the question, why did the insurance
man tell Tony the story? The insurance man could just try to sell him
insurance, and could go about selling insurance in various ways. I want to
suggest that the selling of the insurance and the telling of the story are rather
nicely related to each other, and that the selling of the insurance to someone

who is a manager-trainee and the telling of the story are nicely related. That is to say, what perhaps in the first instance looks like merely a report of failed prospects, can be something we can see to be well used by the insurance man. As compared to selling varieties of other things, selling insurance involves a focus on current circumstances relative to future ones. And plainly it is a thing sold by reference to possibilities not turning out quite as you had hoped, but also turning on that you have possibilities for which you have hopes. Where there is a difference between selling someone, e.g., burial insurance, which simply involves that you're going to die and people are going to have to bury you so here's a way of taking care of that, as compared to catching someone at a point in their lives when, not only do they have prospects, but that they have prospects is a working feature of their lives. So that you can appeal to their hopes and possibly their fears in order to get them to buy insurance commensurate with not simply their current circumstances but their notion of their future prospects.

So, future prospects are something that insurance men are very much attuned to, and they're also very much attuned to the fears incumbent on the possibility that future prospects will not pan out. And of course they could perfectly well have materials in terms of which they talk about others' future prospects panning out or not. But there may be some more or less special virtues to your telling that about yourself. That transforms it from merely a sales pitch to something which perhaps isn't even seen as a sales pitch but is nonetheless appreciatable for its relevance to the recipient.

The point then being that for the insurance man, the tale of his failed prospects can have virtues in selling insurance, in a way in which that wouldn't be the right sort of thing to tell if you were, e.g., selling a refrigerator or a car or other things. It's not, then, simply that a personal story, or a personal story about failed prospects is apt for a sales pitch, but that a personal story about failed prospects can be apt for the sales pitch of the insurance man. Particularly where he's talking to someone who is now a person with prospects, as compared to someone with failed prospects or someone who conceives of himself as specifically a success. If the insurance man tells of his own failed prospects to someone who conceives of himself as a success, then he might be appealing for charity or whatever, but he isn't alluding to a way in which life can turn out to be not what you hoped, which plainly is one basis for the recipient of that kind of story considering insurance seriously. Which is then to say that this is a rather ideal story for an insurance man to tell, as part of the insurance sale, to someone who conceives himself specifically as a 'manager-trainee.' There is, then, a kind of real aptness of the story told on the occasion on which it was originally told, as between the people who were involved in the telling and receiving of it.

Let me just mention some things about the failed- prospects phenomenon. Kirk Douglas is a very relevant object for that, in two related ways. The one obvious way is that if he went to acting school with Kirk Douglas, Kirk Douglas now being somebody plainly a success, then the fact that Kirk Douglas is a success and he isn't, makes for that he did, indeed, fail. But also,

that he went to acting school with Kirk Douglas who is now a success, also turns that he is a failure into something different than merely being a failure; it's a failure given that one had prospects. Where the question of the reality of prospects is relatively complex, in the sense of how you're to be in a position to have others believe that whatever your fantasies were, those fantasies had any reasonable chance of proving to be real.

So, for example, Tony reports, "He said he went to acting school with Kirk Douglas. And I believe him" where what's involved in that is that the listener to the original story takes it that he can decide whether the prospects that the guy proposes to have had, he really had. He also puts in, "He was a nice looking guy," where that report of his appearance would not occur with a male telling another male a story, both of them figuring they're not queer, if that feature were not a way to say 'I now looking at him, I can see he could have been an actor, in the sense that he looks like someone who could have been an actor.' The question is whether one could say "I always wanted to be an actor and now I end up an insurance man" and someone could believe that you are now someone who had failed prospects in a way that's relevant to their own possible failed prospects. Where, e.g., the guy he's talking to has 'realistic prospects,' i.e., he has this job, 'manager-trainee,' a job that could become manager. It's not just that he's someone who says "I'd like to become a department store executive" – although the reality of the prospects with respect to the manager-trainee business has a very interesting kind of status which I'll talk a bit about in a while.

Let me make a parenthetical remark about Kirk Douglas. Kirk Douglas is an instance of a thing that has been described by an anthropologist named David Schneider who's done a bunch of work on American kinship. Among the things he proposes is something like this: Americans have a kinship system with respect to their knowledge of the members of their families which involves knowing all the close relatives and how they're related to them, and then not knowing distant relatives – except for some relative at a distance whose specific feature is that they know no other relatives at that distance, and furthermore, they know hardly any relatives at any distance between. And that relative is a famous relative. I'm now adapting that to call it '*ex-relationals.*'

There are people who are recognized as being in the family by virtue of their turning out to be famous people. Nobody knows them for some whole time in their lives. Nobody at this point knows them. Then they pop into the papers, and various people rediscover that they are relatives of theirs. Where, then, at some point if you asked them for a list of their relatives, they can tell you up to, say, typically not even second cousins, and then say "X, a famous person, is a third cousin." They can't give you any other third cousins. The point is, there is a special category, 'ex-relationals.' That special category is much larger than actual relatives. It includes ex-relationals of all sorts and it works in exactly the same way: People cannot name anybody in their kindergarten class except for somebody about whom they say, "You know who was in my kindergarten class? X." Where X is a famous person. Or, they

can't tell you whoever lived in the apartment house that they lived in when they were five or ten years old, except someone who now turns out to be a famous person. And the insurance salesman didn't go to acting school with Kirk Douglas. Kirk Douglas was nobody. He went to acting school with a variety of people, one of whom turned out to be Kirk Douglas, when Kirk Douglas turned out to be Kirk Douglas.

At any place in your life that you encounter large batches of people all of whom are forgotton, somebody may pass through your life who is later rememberable, by you or by other poeple in the same group, as having been in that group. And now you can say "I went to grade school with" or "My next door neighbor when I was 12 years old was" some X. Where, again, that's not true because there were all these other next door neighbors and people you went to grade school with and people you went to acting school with, and X only became such a one when they became the someone they are. But that's sufficient to generate a comparative situation for you.

And there's a rather large, complex kind of mechanism involved in rediscovering these people. A circle that's hardly even alive will go to work to tell the members of it that for our circle, a member of it has now become X. So, two girls age 30 who don't see each other anymore may have one of them call the other up and say "Remember me?" "Yeah of course, we were really good friends." "Well, if you watch TV tonight you'll see that so-and-so, that guy you once went out with, is now a TV star." So the circle becomes alive to establish its ex-relationals. That's important, because if lots of people can have famous ex-relationals, then the fact that somebody becomes famous or known to be successful can reverberate back to a pool of people who now see that they had chances once. Where if no one they ever knew becomes somebody other than somebody they might as well know now, then that they ever 'had chances' is something they cannot say.

The difference, then, between a relatively mobile system and a relatively fixed one is that in a relatively fixed one you 'have no chances' in the sense that no one you know will ever turn out to be somebody whom you could turn out to say you once knew. That is to say, a poor black kid in the ghetto 20 years ago had no prospects of anybody they ever knew becoming somebody they could ever say they once knew – or they had that in very narrow ways, i.e., it could turn out that some athlete is an ex-neighbor. But to turn a life into a reasonable failure you have to have these ex-relationals around. And there are many more of them than people figure. Like, it's a thrill that the insurance salesman knew Kirk Douglas, but everyone knows someone like that. Lots of people would have had Kirk Douglas and all the other people equivalent to him – if not actors then a whole bunch of other things – as ex-neighbors or ex-classmates, or whatever. At least in a world where people do pop out from nowhere and others move around a lot.

Now, there's an important parallel to that, in the phenomenon of the 'manager-trainee.' Large businesses need lots of young men to do jobs that, if described in terms of what those jobs involved, they could not get the kind of young men they want. That is to say, you can get people to sell stockings

behind the counter. The question is, can you get people who are, e.g., highly motivated, obviously middle class, etc.? No you can't. How, then, do you get them to do it? A way that's been devised is to make that a position in a future development, i.e., one isn't doing 'selling stockings behind the counter,' one is doing something else, for the future of which one does this. Now, most people who do this eventually quit. Some people who do this eventually get, not much higher, but somewhat higher. That they can conceive of themselves, while doing 'selling stockings,' as 'manager-trainees' provides them a way of seeing that they're not doing what they obviously are doing, and by virtue of their not seeing that they're doing what they obviously are doing, they come to be able to do it – at least when they're young.

So that 'manager-trainee' is a name of a job whose specific interest to those who are wanted to do it, i.e., people who 'look good,' is in terms of the future prospects it has. Though plainly that set of people cannot become the future it promises. That is to say, in no business will you ever have anything like the number of managers out of the set of manager-trainees. And of course, had it not been that you wanted a certain sort as a salesman or a stock clerk – someone who cares enough to try to sell a lot and look good and all the rest – then you wouldn't call it 'manager-trainee.' But the people who come into it can think of themselves as having prospects. And thinking of themselves as having prospects, they're available, not only for working hard and keeping clean and doing all that sort of thing, they're also available for being sold insurance as a future manager. And they're also available for having failed prospects.

What I wanted to be getting to was the *motive power of stories.* By that I mean, this fellow Tony hears a story, say 15 years before he tells it here. And when he hears it, it's not his story at all, it's a story that may be offered in an advisory fashion by someone else, but is heard as 'having nothing to do with me because I'm not going to turn out that way.' But at some point in his life, that story also turns out to be his story. It's not like you're told a story and you realize then and there that it's your story. That's one sort of thing. What is intriguing about the motive power of a story like this is that it's a story that, if it's going to work, it's only going to work at a substantial delay. It's only going to be realized, made available for retelling, some long time afterwards. He doesn't know it's his story, he wouldn't think of it as his story when he's told it. Some time later it comes back to him as his.

Now, characteristically a story you get is, if it's to be retold at all, to be retold the next day or shortly thereafter. Here's a story that, once we can uncover its bases for being retold, it will turn out not to be retellable for a long time. And in that way one can think of it as planted with an enormous delay fuse on it. The delay fuse not only having to do with its retellability, but for ever seeing that it's about me – if it ever is. Though again, one can imagine quite well, not that one guy just met one guy in New Jersey and told him a story at a time in his life, but that there are a series of delayed fuse stories put into people at various times, that they carry around, that sometimes turn out to be their story. And then there may be an occasion for them seeing that, and

then seeing it as something to be told to someone else, for whom it has precisely the same character.

That is to say, the story Tony is now telling, is to somone who is also a 'trainee' – who is going out to learn in order to become something other than he is, and who in that way has specific prospects. That story is, for the person it's now being told, also specifically 'not my story,' though it may happen that at a point 15 years later that story may have become his story. And, encountering someone in the situation that he was in, it may turn out that he now retells a version of it. Though of course if things are otherwise, he may retell something else, which was also planted in such a fashion.

And apart from its delayed reaction relevance, one can get some kind of bases for the insurance man telling the story in the first place. And one can see that he has reasons for analyzing his life in such a way as to make it one of 'failed prospects,' and to analyze the life of the person he's dealing with so as to be telling the story to someone who is now 'someone with prospects' – prospects that may fail or not; someone to whom the story has a local relevance with regard to why they might buy insurance.

Lecture 8

Preserving and transmitting knowledge via stories

There are things about the story we started with the last time which I didn't bring to completion. I'll try to re-say some of what I said, while adding some new things.

Most of the stories I've ever dealt with in the past, if they get retold, then they get retold quickly. This story is peculiar – but altogether non-unique – for having as a systematic aspect of its retelling that it will be retold by a recipient only a long time after its initial telling. Now that aspect, that it's retold only after a long delay, is affiliated with at least one other feature of it, and that is that its reteller retells it when his recipient identity – who he was when he received the story – has now been more or less radically transformed, and he is now in something like the position of the original teller.

That transformation of identity – from being an appropriate recipient; someone with future prospects in this case, to being an appropriate teller; someone with past 'future prospects' that have not panned out – is what accounts for the delay, and that transformation is also key to that it gets retold. That is to say, other transformations, and even other orderly transformations, are obviously possible given an initial position of being, e.g., a manager-trainee. And by 'orderly' transformation I mean one that has a systematic relationship to the original identity as compared to, having once been a manager-trainee one is now, at some later date, a one-armed tennis player, or ranges of other things that a person can become having once been something. But having been a manager-trainee, one could become, say, a manager, but then one wouldn't be in the position of the original teller. So, not just any orderly transformation of identities yields that the original recipient becomes a future reteller of such a story.

Further, even if the original recipient does become somebody transformed in the way in which this original recipient was, they may have no one to give it to, i.e., someone in the position one was in when one originally received it. Also, there are issues about having some reasons for telling it and occasions for telling it. Last time I talked about how the insurance salesman had, not merely this story, but bases for telling it – he could use it as part of his sales program – and occasions for telling it – he was engaged in conversations with people who were appropriate recipients for it, in the course of which the story could be told. And it's imaginable that the current teller in this case, though he has become someone with failed prospects, would have had either no one to tell it to who is now like he had been, or, though he'd been engaged in

interaction with people who are now like he once was, he might have lacked reasons for telling it or occasions on which to tell it. That is to say, here it comes up at a distinctly apt time – the day before his recipient is leaving the job for a prospectful future. And it comes up in an occasioned way – the talk being about whether people should do things other than those that make them happy, what they should be willing to do for money, and things like that. And one can adduce other reasons for him telling it then and there. Roughly, it can serve as some sort of experience-based defense of an acceptance of a fate that does not involve the fruition of one's hopes and possible prospects. The story justifies an acceptance of things not having come to what it looked like at one time they might. And as such, it can defend his current circumstances.

We can ask a series of questions: What are the bases for there being stories with long time delays involved in them? What kinds of work can they do? And, if they are important, what are the kinds of mechanisms that can more or less assure that they get told? Some of the things I've said answer those questions in a fashion, but one thing they have to do with concerns the kind of object that stories can be. A question that can be either banal or deep, and has a series of alternative forms, is this: Why do people transmit information to others? How could they be gotten to transmit information to others? How is the world organized so as to have more or less important information preserved and transmitted?

The kinds of lessons that stories often contain can perfectly well be delivered in the form of simply a lesson, a proverb, an idiom, a general expression, a general truth. Like, "Sometimes circumstances prevail where people have to do something not exactly to their liking." And in considering things like that, relative to stories, one wants to know whether there are differences between them and stories which account for the use of stories. A seemingly dumb difference between them is just this, that the story that the insurance salesman told – which could be given, in a fashion, in the lesson at the end of Tony's report – is something that happened to him. Or, as we should put it, it's something that happened to him, too. That is to say, if there are such lessons in the world, then presumably there are lots of happenings which they characterize. The story here may not be something that only happened to the insurance man. And it need not be a condition for his telling the story that, not only did it happen to him, it happened only to him so far as he knows. But maybe that it happened to him can serve to make him a possible *carrier* of it, and it happening to lots of people, then one gets lots of carriers of it who have a particular basis for telling, i.e., that it happened to each of them.

A question is, well, so it happened to them. Why does that make it something that they are interested in preserving and telling? It's imaginable that the world would be arranged so that people are not interested in telling a story unless it happened to them, without it being a consequence of that that they are also specifically interested in telling stories that did happen to them. But the gross fact is that the stories they are interested in telling are those that

happened to them. People in this world in any event are built to be the custodians of just about only their own experiences. And a lot of things that people are built to be the custodians of, i.e., that they can be made to care about keeping, taking care of, defending, and the like, are more or less whatever it is that the world has them conceive of as 'their own.' Their experiences are but one class of such things. And in the prior course on storytelling I've discussed some ways of motivating people to make available their private experiences, and ways of having them analyze situations so as to have available to them more or less antique private experiences of theirs.[1]

I'm trying to suggest a picture in which lots of things are happening in the world, out of which people are catching the way in which what happens, happens just to them. Where the world is arrangeable nonetheless to have that be a vehicle for the culture reproducing itself in terms of its body of knowledge. That is to say, one kind of problem a culture faces is getting its known things kept alive. A basic thing it uses is people's heads. Where people's heads are not just to be repositories for known things, but they have to be repositories that are appropriately tapped so that those known things get passed to others. And, having been put in some others' heads, there need to be ways that those known things again get tapped and put into yet others' heads.

Now plainly one can think of various ways that the passing on thing could happen. Having been told a story about an experience of someone's, one might tell it to the next five people one encounters, and they in turn do the same. Or it might be that one holds a story for some specified time – a week, a year – and then tells it. Or it's imaginable that every person would be the passer of one story which is their property, and everyone they encounter, they tell that one story to. Or it's imaginable that someone of an age that would involve them in being able to understand stories at all, could be sat down with story-repository persons and have the culture's stories committed to their memory. Such a technique is employed in various places at various times, and it works in a way and doesn't work in other ways. So that, e.g., the *Iliad*, the bible, and other objects like that, get told and retold in some independence of recipient or teller situations – though it's notable about their telling and retelling that occasions are designed to have them appropriate for being told. That is to say, a way of thinking about sacred occasions is as occasions that are simply made for the purpose of telling large batches of information which is to be remembered and to be passed on on other such occasions, independent of what's now happening.

But plainly, telling occasions can be distinctly more powerful if what a story does is to proposedly analyze the occasion on which it's told, mobilizing the parties to the telling into the story itself, where their retelling occasion will be also an occasion that they analyze. A thing that's interesting about storytelling, then, is the way in which the telling of stories is done for persons

[1]See Spring 1970, lectures 4 and 5 respectively.

located to be distinctly ripe for them, and done on occasions that they're powerfully relevant to. It's as though the stories in people's heads are more or less constantly alert for the occasions for which they are distinctly apt. And they come out then, and are maybe never thought of any time else.

So, what the world uses is persons' interst in analyzing any situation they're in – e.g., to know how to deal with it – in order to get them to see that a story that they know, insofar as it analyzes the situation they're in, is tellable. That is, on analyzing a situation they're in, they discover that they know about it with some story, which can be made, then, something they now recall, have at hand, and may tell as a proposed analysis of our current situation. They're not, then, doing simply telling a story for no good reason, or telling of something that happened once, or telling of something that happened once to somebody else, or that happens to people, but they're offering something that does something now, i.e., describes, explains, accounts for, our current circumstances – mine, or yours, or mine and yours. And that usefulness of stories is not simply a usefulness to its current teller, but would be precisely the kind of usefulness which would in the first instance motivate a culture to have stories used. That is to say, what a culture wants to do is not simply have what it knows preserved, but to have what it knows used when it should be used.

Now, that can be appreciated by persons in such a way as to lead them to regard the knowledge that's passed on as indeed worth keeping. That is to say, the knowledge that they get, they see as possibly usable. And that is of interest for the situation of a story being told that, when it is received and when it is retold, it will be understood in altogether different ways, which is, in its fashion, extremely common. Old people are routinely telling young people stories that they were told when they were young by someone old, where, when the story was told them they thought it inapplicable to them but when they tell it they now agree with it, though they tell it to someone who is in the position they were once in. So there's a large amount of stuff that may only become apposite to tell long, long after it's been received. And when it's received it's either not understood or not figured to be 'for me,' and nonetheless it's preserved.

There is, then, a serious problem in the preservation of knowledge for a society, under this particular constraint of the information involved being appropriate to an initial recipient only a long time after he's received it. And I've tried to suggest that there are massed cultural resources for putting information into a shape that makes it acceptable to very long-delayed transmittal, and that those things have to do with the usability of the story form particularly, to analyzing possible current circumstances. Where, again, the knowledge persons get in a story is seeable by them for its possible usability, and they can then come to have regard for the usability of such sorts of things, such that, though it's not on the occasion of its being received figured to be 'for me,' it is nonetheless preserved.

Lecture 9

The dirty joke as a technical object;
Temporal and sequential
organization; 'Guiding' recipient

I'm going to begin a presentation that will take a while. It will involve an analysis of a dirty joke, eventually leading up to a theory of some of the business of dirty jokes. This time I want to argue the artfulness of this joke. Where, by its 'artfulness' I mean to be referring to that not only is it elaborately organized, but some aspects of its elaborate organization can be found to be occupied with two sorts of jobs. One is concealing some of the ways the joke works on its recipients from those recipients, and the other is directing its recipients to attend it in rather sharp ways. A motivation for beginning by characterizing some aspects of its organization with an orientation to the artfulness of its construction, is to develop a basis for giving careful attention to the joke. That is to say, if we come to see that it's extraordinarily carefully put together and extraordinarily carefully put together in a way to direct a recipient's attention, then we have a basis for looking at it closely in other ways.

Roughly, I want to make a case for the dirty joke as a technical object worth attention. One way I think of this investigation – which is only partially correct – is under a title like A Detoxification Program for Dirty Jokes. Which is to say that one might imagine that dirty jokes are kind of frivolous objects, or that what's interesting about dirty jokes is necessarily the ways that they're dirty, and I will suggest that there may be ways in which that's not so; that they are serious technical sources of information, and not merely at all sexual information. We'll get to that kind of a position rather later on.

I'll proceed in the following way. I'll begin with an overview of some sorts of organization the joke has, and then proceed to take it apart rather more closely.

Ken :	You wanna hear muh–eh my <u>sister</u> told me a <u>story</u> last night.
Roger :	<u>I</u> don'wanna hear it. But if you must.
	(0.7)
Al :	What's <u>purple</u> en 'n <u>island</u>. Grape, Britain. That's w't iz <u>si</u>//ster–
Ken :	<u>No</u>:. To <u>stun</u> me she says uh (0.8) There wz these three girls 'n they jis got married?
Roger :	ehhh//hehh hhh hhh

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Ken :	A::nd uh
Roger :	Hey waita seco(h)nd.
Al :	⌜heh!
Roger :	⌊Drag th(h)at by ag(h)ai(h)n hehh // hehh
Ken :	There–
Ken :	There wz these three gi:rls. En they were all sisters. En they'd jis got married tuh three brothers.
Roger :	You better have a long talk with yer sister.
Ken :	Waita waita // minute
Roger :	Oh: // three brothers.
Al :	eheh
Al :	eh//heh!
Ken :	A::nd uh, so
Al :	The brothers of these sisters.
Ken :	No they're different– mhh//hh
Al :	heh
Ken :	Y'know different families. // (No link-up.)
Roger :	Th's clo:ser th'n before, // hhh
Ken :	⌜So–
Al :	⌊heh! hh hh
	(0.7)
Ken :	Quiet.
Al :	hh hh // hhhh
Ken :	So:, first'v all, that night, they're on their::: honeymoon the– uh mother in law says– (to 'em) well why don'tcha all spen'th'night here en then you c'n go on yer honeymoon in th'morning. Th'firs'night, th'mother walks up t'the firs'door en she hears this uuuuuuuuuhh! hh Second door is HHOOOHHH! Third door there's NOthin'. She stands there fer about twunny five minutes waitin' fer sump'n duh happen. -- Nothin'.
	(1.0)
Ken :	Next morning she talks t'the firs' daughter en' she s'z -- uh how come yuh– how come y'went YAAA::: las' night'n daughter siz well it tickled Mommy -- second gi:rl, -- How come yuh screa:med. Oh: Mommy it hu:rts. -- Third girl, walks up t'her. (0.7) Why didn' y'say anything las'night. -- W'you tol'me it wz always impolite t'talk with my mouth full,
	(1.5)
Ken :	hh hyok hyok.
	(0.5)
Ken :	hyok.
	(2.5)
Al :	HA-HA-HA-HA!
Ken :	ehh heh heh // hehhh
(*Al*):	hehhhehhheh hhh
Roger :	Delayed rea:c//tio(h)n.

Al :   hehh I hadtuh think abou//t it awhile y'know?
Roger :   hhh heh
              (1.0)
Roger :   hehh hh hehh hhh You mea(h)n th(h)e dee(h)p (h)hidden
              meaning there doesn' hitcha right awa−ay heh heh // hehhhh-
              hhhh hehhhehh
Al :   hh hhh // hhh
(Dan) :   (Yeh. I // guess so.)
Al :   What'e meant tuh say is the t− thet u:m
              (0.5)
Roger :   Ki//nda got ps::ychological over//tones (to it),
Al :   (   )
Ken :   Little sister's gittin' // older.
(Roger) : hehh hh hehh
Ken :   ehheh heh That's w't I m(h)ean tih // say,
Dan :   Sounds like it,
Ken :   Fer twelve years old tellin' me− I didn' even // know−
Roger :   How do yuh know she's jis' not repeating what she heard'n
              doesn'know wha//t it means.
Al :   She haftuh explain it to yuh Ke:n?
Ken :   Yeah she had to explain it to detail to me,
              (0.5)
Al :   Okay, good. Gladju gotta sister thet knows // somethin'.
Ken :   hh hhh
Ken :   She told me she wz eatin' a hot dog,
              (0.3)
Ken :   hh
Roger :   Wha'does that mean,
Ken :   hh hh
Al :   Yeah come // on. Explain // it to us, hnhh
Ken :   heh
Ken :   heh
Al :   Explai//:n, explain everything you kno:w Ken,
Ken :   hhhh! Nuh I: D(h)ON'KNOW I j's' sai:d tha(h)t.
Al :   Explain everything.

A first, very gross pair of related facts about the joke is that it's both
temporally and sequentially organized. With regard to its temporal organiza-
tion, it has what I earlier called the canonical form for narratives,[1] that it
proceeds in what we might take to be directly the temporal ordering of the
story's events: They just got married, then there is the first night and the next
morning, all ordered in that kind of a natural way. But we have to keep very
well in mind that when we say that the joke or story preserves the sequential
form of its events, then one has to remember that it's made up. There weren't

[1]See lecture 6, p. 454.

such events. And in that regard, it adopts a format which such events might have. If it were a real story then this might be its events sequence. But it isn't a real story, or isn't to be supposed to be real story, and therefore, that it has its events presented in a canonical temporal form such that they are heard by recipients as mapping onto some actual sequence of events that went off in the fashion it reports them, turns out to be a type of organization that can do other sorts of jobs that we'll get to in due course. Among the other sorts of jobs it can do is to array events in such a fashion as to have an otherwise extraordinarily implausible set of events appear plausible.

So we have this overall temporal organization. Now, I separated temporal from sequential organization by virtue of that a sequential organization is such as for each point in it that is subsequent to some other point, an appreciation of that point turns on an appreciation of its position. Which is to say, e.g., "next morning" is a term that requires for its understanding that one have kept in mind that there was a "last night." And, for example, there's a "second door," and to understand what is going on by reference to it one uses that there was a "first door." In detail: The mother "walks up to the first door and she hears this uuuuuuuuuhh!" She doesn't "walk up to" the second door, nor does she "hear" the sound. It's just "Second door is HHOOOHHH!" To understand what's happening at the second door, that event is appreciated by virtue of what we know about the first. We see that the second is similar to the first except by virtue of the different sound. We don't repeat the whole organization for the second. And in due course I'll show that the sequential aspect of the joke's organization is distinctly powerful in the way in which it leads a recipient to understand the joke.

Now, one could have a temporal organization that did not employ the resources of sequential organization. One could have simply dates or times; ways of referring to events which don't require the connectedness that a sequential organization employs and thereby leads its listener to use to appreciate each of the subsequent events. So that temporal organization could involve things like, "8:10 p.m., conversation with mother, 9:05 p.m., mother standing at door," etc. Those are just times. They happen to be temporally ordered, and one might use them to see their relative positioning to each other, but their terminology doesn't require that one keeps their positioning in mind in understanding what they are.

So there's an overall temporal organization and an overall sequential organization. Now, the body of the joke is composed of two sequences, the "first night" sequence and the "next morning" sequence, each of which is composed of three events which are themselves ordered temporally and sequentially. The "first night" sequence poses a puzzle and the "next morning" sequence yields a solution to the puzzle. And that, of course, also has a sequential character to it, i.e., first puzzle, then solution. Now, the solution is nicely positioned for a joke. Which is to say there's a puzzle-solution form which is fitted to the joke form such that the solution to the puzzle matches the arrival at the joke's punchline. We want to kind of begin to feel our way into that there is a story-structure type that the joke is

operating within, and it can more or less fit the story-structure type. That is to say, you can imagine that there could be a puzzle posed at some point in the story, and a solution to the puzzle which will complete the story. Now, if it's also a joke, the punchline of the joke might fit somewhere relative to the solution to the puzzle. A more or less perfect meshing would involve that the punchline of the joke is the same event as the solution to the puzzle. But if one's going to be putting together a joke with a story structure, then, plainly, arriving at it in that kind of a fit might be something that would take some kind of constructional work.

Let me start to deal with the first sequence.

> *Ken*:   Th'firs'night, th'mother walks up t'the firs'door en she hears this
>   uuuuuuuuuuhh! hh Second door is <u>HHOOOHHH</u>! Third door
>   there's <u>NO</u>thin'. She stands there fer about <u>twunny</u> five minutes
>   waitin' fer sump'n duh happen. -- <u>No</u>thin'.

What we have here looks simply like an ordering of the mother's behavior relative to a series of doors behind which we know are the newly married couples, where this just happens to be the order in which she approaches the doors. She gets a puzzle from this sequence, which she proceeds to attempt to get resolved by her interrogation sequence the next morning. But one wants to think of the mother as something like a shill in the story, to direct the recipient's attention. The figure of the mother serves in part as a way to lead the recipient to hear the story in certain ways – 'the mother' being, now, not a person for our purposes, but a guide in the story (though of course recipients don't treat 'the mother' that way) – so that if the mother is puzzled, then there's a way in which the recipient can come to adopt the mother's puzzle as the recipient's. So the mother is puzzled by this silence at the third door. And now the recipient is engaged in trying to figure out what it will turn out happened there. The mother's sequence, then, leads the recipient to focus in a way that the mother does.

How is it that the mother operates as that kind of a guide? There's apparently a merely temporal ordering to her going to the doors, and there is no statement in the story of what it is that she's interested in at the doors. That, however, is very powerfully conveyed by her behavior. Which is to say, she goes to the first door and hears a sound, and then directly proceeds to the second door where she hears a sound, and then directly proceeds to the third door where she hears nothing, and waits. Now, that tells us that what she's interested in and what then puzzles her, is the sounds and the absence of sounds. Plainly, one could have a story where she goes to the first door and hears "uuuuuuuuuuhh!" and then she stands there listening for some extended period of time, and a whole range of sounds or various other sorts of things could be reported. By the fact that she moves promptly on, we know that what she's heard there is what she was interested in. And by the fact that she moves promptly on again when she hears the "HHOOOHHH!," and by the fact that she then waits extendedly when she hears nothing, we know that

she's interested in hearing some sound. We thereby get the puzzle that she has, from the way in which the story reports on her movements, and what it is that seems to be adequate to have her move on or stop. So that by the end of the first sequence we know that the puzzle is 'why no sound at the third door?'

I want to give some attention to the fact that we have three events; two of them sounds and one of them silence. If we're going to have those three events, then, for the development of a reasonable puzzle it's crucial that the silence comes third. That is to say, the mother isn't surprized that she hears a sound; what she's surprized at is that she hears no sound. Well, to have that be the nature of her surprize, then it has to be that the third door is the place where the silence occurs. Now, that is different than a merely temporal ordering. It involves that a temporal ordering is used to convey a sense of a natural ordering – where such a natural ordering could yield the surprize, but whether in a natural ordering it would happen that way is an altogether different question. But following 'the mother' and imagining that 'the mother' is a reasonable person proceeding along, then a recipient is led to appreciate the possible surprize of no sound – rather than, e.g., to be amazed at the coincidence of the two earlier sounds occurring just when she arrives at the door. And it's for those sorts of reasons that we are focussing on the way in which a temporal ordering adopted for a constructed story can do a job of leading recipients to suppose things about what's reasonable and unreasonable in the events being imagined to come off that way.

Now, for the silence to be a puzzle, not only is it important that the silence be third in the sequence of three, but it's also the case that you need at least three to get the silence as a puzzle, and that you need no more than three. Three is then a perfect economical use of a number of events to get some puzzle. Imagine there were two doors; at the first door, sound, at the second door, silence. So? One was sound and one was silence. How could there be an issue of why was there silence. It could as well be why was there sound. But the two doors' sounds suffice to make the third door's silence noticeable, and you don't need more – though you could have eleven doors, at ten of them the mother hears sounds, at the eleventh she hears silence, and we'd say "Huh! Wonder why that was." But three will give you that, whereas two can't give you that. Three suffice, as long as you preserve that arrangement of the silence occurring last, so as to build up an appreciation of the expectable, normal, majority character of the sounds. Three is, then, a minimal but sufficient number for making the minority event peculiar and therefore focussable on as a puzzle.

Let me go on now to the second sequence.

Ken : Next morning she talks t'the firs' daughter en she s'z -- uh how come yuh– how come y'went YAAA::: las' night'n daughter siz well it tickled Mommy -- second gi:rl, -- How come yuh screa:med. Oh: Mommy it hu:rts. -- Third girl, walks up t'her. (0.7) Why didn' y'say anything las'night. -- W'you tol' me it wz always impolite t'talk with my mouth full,

As I said, the second sequence specifically connects to the first via its use of "next morning," and now we get again an apparently natural sequence: First daughter, second daughter, third daughter. Where again, that's given as a temporal thing and again it works as a sequential thing. And again, what I mean by a sequential thing is that "she talks to the first daughter and she says how come you went YAAA last night," but we don't get for the second daughter a statement of "She talks to the second daughter and says . . . ;" we get simply what we hear as a quote of her remarks to the second girl: "How come you screamed."

Also, "How come you screamed" is of interest for what it begins to say, which is that this second inquiry is addressed to someone who has been a listener to the first. Imagine that the second girl is inquired into in isolation: "How come you screamed?" "How come I screamed when?" That is to say, the second girl is using – and we as well use – that she is second having heard the first, to know what is being referred to. A statement like "How come you screamed" properly occurs when somebody has just screamed. Well, she hasn't just screamed, so she wouldn't know what she's being asked about. It's the "last night" scream that's being asked about, and that scream is found by reference to the question to the first daughter, that we are now told that the second daughter is hearing.

And the presence of all the parties in the same room is kind of crucial to getting, not just the second daughter, but importantly the third daughter, to know what's being asked her. Because in a way, the question being asked the third daughter, "How come you didn't say anything last night?" is rather more bizarre yet. "Last night" is a long time, and presumably there are a whole range of things that she did say last night, at any time in it. But she knows what's being asked. And she knows it not only by virtue of the questions that have been asked the others, but the answers that they've given. Their answers have been consistent with regard to an allusion to the sexual activities involved. And for the third to be in a position to explain how come she was silent, to see that it's a puzzle, then that the others made sounds is something important for her; it lets her see her relative circumstance.

Now, forgetting about jokes or stories, this is the normal form for talk involving a series of parties present. One doesn't have to review, for each party, what it was that was asked the last, and what their answer was. But having at hand that the daughters must have been present to each other when this "next morning" sequence went off, we're in a position to see that what is presented as simply a natural temporal ordering of an inquiry to the girls, is not that sort of a thing but is parallel to the first sequence, and for reasons. That is to say, if the daughters were all present to each other, why inquire of them in precisely the order that they were encountered last night? We know that last night's order of encountering was functional for setting up a puzzle. And it is functional in this second sequence for setting up the positioning of the solution to that puzzle at the end of this sequence, and for having the solution be where the punchline is going to go. So we have this apparent temporal ordering. Layered onto it is a sequential ordering that builds off of

it and employs it so as to preserve the apparent naturalness of the parties while concealing the way in which that temporal ordering is used to make an appreciatable problem in the first place.

Lecture 10

The dirty joke as a technical object (ctd); Suspending disbelief; 'Guiding' recipient; Punchlines

I'll continue on with our consideration of a dirty joke. Last time I talked about the ordering of the second sequence (the interrogating of the girls) which repeats the ordering of the first sequence (the listening at those girls' doors). I remarked on the detailed ways in which the ordering is used in the construction of the second sequence. And that involved, for example, that all the daughters needed to be present in the scene from the beginning, as the very understandability of what the mother is talking about in her capsulized question to the second girl, and the very plausibility of the inquiry to the third girl, required the kinds of sequential attention that I've been talking to.

Now, one of the persistent themes of the analysis so far is a kind of massive consistency throughout the story. That is to say, the story/joke employs a series of co-occurrent coincidences; things like: It happens there were three sisters who got married at the same time. It happens that their mother got all of them to agree to stay the first night, as compared to it being perfectly possible that she proposes, "Why don't you all stay here tonight and go on your honeymoon tomorrow" and two of them say "Fine" and the third says "I'd rather go somewhere else;" so it happens that the three are willing to stay. It happens that the mother goes to listen at the doors in some order, and that arriving at the first she promptly hears a sound, goes on and promptly hears a sound at the second, and goes on and hears nothing at the third, and waits, and hears nothing. It happens that the sounds were made by the daughters exclusively, though of course it's perfectly well imaginable that if a sound were to be heard at one of the doors it could just as well be a son-in-law, or both, or whatever. It happens that the next morning the mother interrogates the three daughters in the sequence in which she listened at the doors, though, since they were all there together she might perfectly well have interrogated them in some other sequence.

It also happens that for each of the three daughters, their answers involve that the overheard event is interpretable as a sexual event though, for one or another or all three, it could have been other than sexual. So, the first daughter says "it tickled" and the second says "it hurts." Both use a same format answering, in which there's this something-or-other "it" which a recipient can take it has a common, presumably sexual, interpretation. And that then sets up an interpretability of the third as consistent with the first and

second, i.e., all the answers are interpretable as intendedly sexually allusive. Where one intrusion of an interpretability that wasn't sexual would make for rather extended problems in interpreting any later answer, and also for the parties being able to use allusive language which is understandable as specifically sexual. That is to say, instead of, e.g., "it hurts," it's after all perfectly possible that the answer could have been "I stubbed my toe," but the intrusion of such a possible event would have consequences for the consistency of the interpretability of events – a consistency which yields the kind of starkness that stories characteristically have.

There is, then, this series of co-occurent coincidences. Now, these turn out to be organizationally crucial to the story. That is to say, we wouldn't have the joke without them. And we can begin to visualize a series of components that need to go into the joke, where, with rather slight variations on the components, we wouldn't have this story/joke. Now, seeing the necessity of this co-occurrent set of coincidences, and seeing that they all happen together just as they're needed, makes their happening rather implausible. That is to say, we're seeing now a stock of materials that have to be put into the joke for it to come off, i.e., the collection of a series of coincidental events. One or another or many of them might perfectly well be there, but they're all there, and they're all there necessarily. They become, then, distinctly implausible. But for the joke to come off, it is central that they are not implausible. The question then to be raised is, how is it that they can be put into the joke and have their implausibility not seen?

This kind of harkens to a really ancient theme in the construction of things that have storylike form, i.e., Aristotle's notion that for drama or tragedy we engage in a willing suspension of disbelief. Now, the notion that what we do is simply suspend disbelief is, if actual stories are going to be examined, nonsense. What we should see is that while for the story to come off we may need to believe, the story is built in such a way as to not lead us to have to figure "This is implausible but I'll suspend disbelief." And the thing then is to look to see what kinds of ways a recipient is led to not have that occur.

First of all, of course, the *canonical temporal ordering* does a good deal of that. The sheer narration of the thing as having happened in just this sequence, delivered flatly, does some of the work of having us see that it happened as it happened. The burden of work, however, seems to be accomplished in the following sort of way. I've made a good deal of that the story is *sequentially organized*, meaning by that, that to understand at all what some second component says, one needs to interpret it in the light of a prior component. It's built so as to require that kind of usage. That is to say, in order to understand what "Oh mommy it hurts" refers to, one needs to position the thing in a sequence involving the prior question and answer, the prior night, and the setup having to do with just having gotten married.

Now, if it's built sequentially in that kind of intense fashion, then the recipient is indeed engaged in doing a job of analysis on, say, roughly, each sentence of the story. He is always engaged in figuring out what each sentence

means, using the rest-so-far and what it looks like it's developing into. The story, then, by its sequential organization, *directs* certain sorts of work that the recipient is going to do to understand it. And having done that work, the recipient finds himself in a position of understanding it so far. Where, then, the story's sequential organization poses jobs for recipients, whose success is demonstrable when the next thing happens. So, if you suppose that "it tickled" is sexual, then when you hear "it hurts" and consider that it might be sexual also, then you find that "it tickled" was indeed sexual and "it hurts" is sexual. So the story's sequential organization can be said to guide a whole job of work that the recipient will engage in.

Now, one has further evidence for the rationality of the things happening. Last time, I talked about the mother as something like a shill in the story, operating as a kind of a *guide to the recipient*. What I want to be noticing now is that there are characters in the thing, who also are engaged in sequential work, i.e., they need to figure out what it is that they're being asked, and they produce talk that appears to involve that they understand what they're being asked. They're not puzzled, though plainly there's plenty of places where they could be puzzled; as in the second sequence the girls could be altogether puzzled about what's being inquired of them, and how anyone would ever know that they said any of those things. That is to say, whereas the recipient can know what the mother is asking about, by virtue of the fact that the recipient has been told that the mother was listening at the doors, this is something that isn't to be presumed that the daughters know. But the recipient apparently doesn't have to figure there's an issue with regard to how the daughters know what the mother is talking about, by virtue of that the daughters do seem to be able to answer the questions. Or, an answer having been given like "It tickled, mommy," the mother perfectly well could say "What tickled?" But there is a sufficiency to "it tickled" and "it hurts" by virtue of the fact that nobody in the scene questions what they refer to. Nobody questioning it, the recipient, also making an interpretation, can figure that unquestioned interpretation is correct.

So we have that in order to understand the thing in the first place, the recipient is engaged in a continual act of analysis of what's being said, in sequential terms. And that act of analysis yields an understanding, and it parallels an apparent act of understanding that the parties are engaged in. The recipient, finding that he can understand things in the way that the parties do, the parties' understandings can serve as a further confirmation of that the recipient is doing the right sort of work. And this borrows from a usual sort of business for stories and for observable events, which is: If it looks like the parties to some seen event know what's happening, or if the persons in the story seem to understand what's happening, then an observer or story recipient will not readily figure that those who are participating are all that crazy. And so far, then, as one can build characters who give off, if nothing else, that they understand what's happening, a recipient will not see that the thing is implausible – and crucially implausible. That is to say, without this set of implausible events, the joke collapses.

What I'm suggesting as a picture is, there are a series of components put into the joke. Getting those components arranged in a way that makes the joke, can suffer the consequence of ending up with an extraordinarily implausible sequence of events. But the story can be built so that the attention of its recipients is directed away from its possible implausibility, i.e., the question of disbelieving it need never come up, one being altogether fully occupied in understanding it. One is not, then, ever in the course of it, in a position to assess the complex of its components. And, arriving at the end, one's problem right then and there is to solve the punchline as fast as possible. Having solved it as fast as possible, the whole thing is over as soon as you've laughed. There's no room in the story to engage in assessing its plausibility.

Now, the reasons for wanting to solve the punch line as fast as possible are given by knowing that it's a joke, where a delay can involve that one isn't 'getting' the joke, and therefore reflect on one's sense of humor, sophistication, etc. So the social circumstances lead a recipient to attempt to be finding what the punchline means. Having found that, they've demonstrated that they understood the joke. Having been involved in trying to understand the joke as the thing that they know from the beginning will be the test of them, questions about believing or disbelieving it need not emerge so long as they can, indeed, understand it as it goes along, and come up with an interpretation of the punchline that they can exhibit by, e.g., laughing, and laughing as soon as possible.

I want now to talk a bit to the mechanisms involved in the punchline sequence, i.e., the third question-answer sequence. There are some altogether standard joke, and dirty joke, components. First of all we're in a position of having a puzzle solution arrived at; the puzzle having been set up in the first sequence, and again in the second sequence with the first and second answers. Now, in a joke, it will be characteristic that while the puzzle is solvable from the punchline, the solution won't be asserted in the punchline but will have to be interpreted out of the punchline. And that, of course, has to do with making it the recipient's business to get the joke, where getting the joke involves being able to assign to the punchline an interpretation that solves the puzzle that's been set up. So in this case, the third answer isn't a solution to the puzzle, it's what the answer means that's a solution to the puzzle, that being 'gotten' by the recipient. And routinely the materials used in a punchline involve an altogether well-known expression – an idiom, a proverb, a rule – produced in such a way as has its sense for the joke or story be other than its normal sense. In this case it's transformed into something obscene, and that is one characteristic way that dirty joke punchlines get produced, i.e., there's a common expression with a properly obscene interpretation of it to be assigned by a recipient.

That's one aspect of the punchline's work. But in this joke something new has been added. And that is, while the answer to the third question, like the answers to the first two, constitutes an explanation of why something was or wasn't done, in the third case the explanation operates as a *squelch*. Now, for

the squelch operation, some things that are in the story become rather crucial. That is to say, the daughters' answers could operate as explanations to anyone who happened to ask them that question. Had anyone been standing at the doors and then the next morning interrogated the girls, then the answers they give are satisfactorily and understandably answers. But the third answer wouldn't be a 'squelch' unless it's 'the mother' who was standing at the door and does the asking. Saying it as to somebody else, "My mother told me not to talk with my mouth full," it isn't a squelch to them. So, while there are a series of *identities* of the girls in the joke, i.e., they're first introduced as 'girls,' they're collected as 'sisters,' that they just got married makes them 'wives,' that they function in these two interactions largely as 'daughters' becomes, in the third interrogation of the second sequence, crucially a 'mother–daughter' interaction. With her answer, the 'daughter' is doing something to 'her mother'. And what she's doing is squelching the mother's question. So we have an 'explanation' which is an 'excuse' of a very particular sort; one which says, 'What I did that might violate a rule, I did by reference to some other rule that you told me to follow.' And that is one form that squelches take.

I'm asserting, then, that the power of the punchline involves a series of things: It permits finding a solution to the puzzle that the first sequence yielded as a 'story.' For the 'joke', an obscene interpretation is to be applied to the answer to 'get' the joke, and that obscene interpretation is to come off of an otherwise non-obscene common expression. Further, however, the punchline constitutes a squelch on the question to which it responds – the squelch in this case involving 'mother' and 'daughter.' So that there are, then, a series of ways that the punchline works, one of which, the squelch involving mother and daughter, is the surprize of the joke structure. That is to say, while we're all prepared for some sort of interpretably obscene punchline, we're not prepared for the squelch. That is a new, surprize element in the punch-line. And I will make a lot of the mother–daughter aspect of the squelch when I get into the second sort of discussion I'm going to build off of this joke.

Lecture 11

The dirty joke as a technical object (ctd); Packaging and transmitting experiences

Continuing with our consideration of the dirty joke, let me now begin in a quite different fashion. I want first to consider some similarities and differences between stories, jokes, and dirty jokes. Stories are plainly ways of packaging experiences. And most characteristically, stories report an experience in which the teller figures. And furthermore, in which the teller figures – for the story anyway – as its hero. Which doesn't mean that he does something heroic, but That the story is organized around the teller's circumstances. To give what can pass as a bizarre instance – though it's not bizarre and is altogether characteristic – I'll more or less give a couple of stories told shortly after the assassination of Robert Kennedy. Two ladies are talking on the phone and one of them, talking about the helicopter that carried Bobby Kennedy's body back to wherever they took it, says, "You know where the helicopter took off? That was the exact spot where our plane took off when we went to Hawaii." To which the other responds, "Oh for heaven sakes, weren't you lucky. If it had happened when you were going to take off, it would have ruined your trip."

It's in that sort of way that an event which, in the, quotes, objective reality, has the current teller figuring altogether incidentally, gets turned into an event in their lives specifically – or an almost-event in their lives specifically. In another conversation two women are talking about the tragedy of the assassination, and one is telling about her daughter's response – her daughter first being proposed to be someone who is highly political and who did a variety of things in the primaries, and how she was broken up and all that. The teller says "So she was really depressed" and then goes go on tell how the next night her daughter's ten-year-old son was in a little league game, and they didn't put him in until the fifth inning, and when he got in he hit a home run with another kid on base and they won the game and carried him around, and how her daughter was so thrilled and said, "It was the only good thing that happened to me this week." Again, for an event in the world – the assassination – it is her life that the assassination has happened to. That is to say, even indeed recognizing the character of the assassination, it happened to her as something depressing her, such that something that also happened to her could lift her depression.

Now, that's one aspect of the way in which stories happen to their tellers: The teller figures in the story, and figures as the hero of the story. Related to that is that it's pretty much the teller's business to tell it with respect to its import for them. And, recalling some remarks I made earlier in the course, by virtue of it being the teller's involvement in it that provides for its telling – and, indeed, for 'what happened,' it has a very short motive power.[1] That is to say, teller can tell it to somebody who knows and cares about teller, and maybe the recipient can tell it to someone, but it goes very little further than that. So, in the case involving this ten-year-old boy, then his mother tells it as happening to her; she tells it to her mother, and her mother is now telling it to her sister, i.e., an aunt of the ten-year-old's mother. And the story has no base for going much further. So there's an initial power but it's short-lived since insofar as people tell stories in which they figure, most characteristically they're not much telling stories in which others figure except to the extent that the others are in some way 'themselves,' i.e., their children, etc. So recipients do not serve automatically as future tellers of the stories.

That's reinforced by other kinds of considerations which involve that if, e.g., someone is telling their experience of the assassination, then the person they're telling it to will also have such a story. And the person they're telling it to will tell back their own. So the scene will be one of an exchange of stories: You receive one and tell back one of your own. And on some next occasion, receiving another you will again tell back your own rather than now tell back the one you received. Though I don't mean to say one cannot tell stories at second hand. There are classes of second hand stories that are told, but they are plainly special, and the reasons why a recipient would retell are relatively limited.

Now some differences between jokes and stories. Jokes characteristically have a story format, i.e., they report some sort of single experience in which someone is some sort of hero. A first difference is that the teller is specifically not a character in the joke. One may tell funny stories in which one figures, but that's something different than a joke. In a joke the teller is not a character. And there is considerable importance to this. Obviously, insofar as one is a character in a story one tells, then, in telling the story, one is permitting or encouraging or desiring to have others get a view of you as courageous, thoughtful, frank, God only knows, whatever it is that stories will convey of someone. Jokes, then, can contain kinds of different sorts of events than stories will characteristically contain, since the characters in jokes can do things that tellers might not like themselves to be thought to be doing if what were heard were that the teller is a character in it. Whereas if one were to be heard as a character in it, there are lots of jokes one wouldn't tell. They wouldn't reflect well on you, for example. So, in a joke there's a specific disaffiliation between teller and the characters.

A second feature of jokes is that any recipient is a possible future teller. Having heard a joke, having 'gotten' it, that's enough to be able to tell it.

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[1]See lecture 7.

A third thing is that jokes are not placed in the ways that stories are. One constraint on telling a story is that it needs to be fitted into an appropriate place in the conversation. It doesn't make its own place, and any free time that there might be, e.g., a silence occuring or whatever, is not an occasion for telling some, any, story. But jokes can make their place in a conversation. If nobody is talking one can say "I've got a joke" and tell the joke; it has no bearing on the conversation so far or thereafter. So that, as compared to stories, jokes 'go around' rather more extendedly than any particular story does.

Now, one marked difference between jokes and *dirty* jokes is that while what holds for jokes holds for dirty jokes, there's one serious addition. Dirty jokes come with a restriction on them that says 'tell them with discretion,' i.e., don't tell them to just anyone. That is to say, their obscene character serves as a restriction on their passage. In effect one could say that a dirty joke is a story that comes with 'top secret' printed on it; 'pass it, but pass it with discretion.' Tell it to only some sorts of people, not just anybody.

With that kind of differentiation, let's suppose that stories, jokes, and dirty jokes contain some sort of information. Now, what sort of rational institution might dirty jokes be? One might be led to suppose that for dirty jokes, their information is their obscene information. But that would be irrational in a way which I can better propose by saying what would be rational for their use. Their obscene character serves as a restriction on their passage. If you have a way of restricting the passage of something, then plainly a use it has is to put in some other information than that, whch its restriction guarantees will only be narrowly passed. Having a vehicle which, by virtue of its dirtiness or whatever, has a restriction on it for passage, that vehicle would be rationally exploited if it were used to pass information other than just that information that restricts its use; things for which restricted passage is relevant. If there are any sorts of information which it's relevant to pass, but to restrictedly pass, then such things could be put into dirty jokes. All that the 'dirtness' aspect of the dirty joke needs to do, then, is to say 'pass with discretion,' and it might then be simply a formal aspect of the joke having to do with its transmission and not particularly with its information. So that in some ideal form, one would have dirty jokes whose information had nothing to do with sex.

What we're doing then is to examine the transmission considerations involved in something put into a story format. A story format can be powerful, but it has a short motive power. Turn it into a joke and you increase its motive power. Use the format for building a dirty joke and you preserve its increased motive power while also adding a restriction on its transmission. Under those circumstances you could put lots of information into, say, the dirty joke format.

Furthermore, that information that you might put into a dirty joke format has a sort of safety to it in that, specifically, teller is not a character. So, insofar as the joke contains possibly embarassing or denegrating information, it isn't information to be affiliated to teller − nor, of course, to any recipient/future teller. And in that regard, the safety of it as a vehicle is also given for someone

receiving a joke, in dramatic contrast to receiving a story. Receiving a story, i.e., something in which teller serves as its hero, the business of a recipient is to specifically exhibit in a variety of distinct ways that they understood the information. Those include, e.g., telling another such story in which they figure as the teller did in the first – and that's discussed in the earlier series of storytelling lectures[2] – or in other ways asserting the lesson of the story. And failing to properly assert the lesson of the story, the teller can say, "You didn't understand."

Whereas, in jokes and in dirty jokes, the recipient sufficiently indicates an appreciation of the joke by laughing in an appropriately timed way, i.e., as quickly as they can after they realize the joke is over – where, whether they understood or not is something that is private for them. So, whether they understand or not, recipient can laugh, and that suffices to bring off that they understood the joke. Furthermore, it's also in no way guaranteed or inspectable whether teller understood the joke, since what teller does is to repeat a joke they've heard, and all they need to do is be able to have the joke that was told them be available for retelling by them.

So we see that there is a distinct safeness to jokes and dirty jokes as compared to stories; a safeness involving both teller and recipient; one that's in part presented in a joke telling, when a teller begins a joke by announcing that it's something he heard – not merely in the sense of it not being his experience, but that it's specifically something that he's passing on. Having preserved it correctly, then, whether he understood it or not is not to be inquired into. So that jokes can be passed among people when neither teller nor recipient understands them in the way that some others might figure that they understand them. And the knownness of that is present in our materials; one of the boys asks "How do you know she's just not repeating what she heard and doesn't know what it means." That is to say, the boys here, who figure that they surely understand the joke, can figure that the 12-year-old girl who told it may not have understood it. They don't know the sister, they only know that she's 12 years old. What they know about jokes is that one doesn't have to understand them to retell them, much less be a person for whom what's being told is a real experience.

With those kinds of features to dirty jokes, and the possibility that the dirty joke can be a vehicle for passing information which is intendedly restricted – that argument having as a support for its seriousness that we have already seen that the joke is extremely elaborately put together, and it being the case that the joke is reported as having been told by a 12-year-old girl, I want now to argue that this is a joke for 12-year-old girls. It's told here by something like a 17-year-old boy to a group of other more or less 17-year-old boys – told by the boy as having been told to him by his 12-year-old sister. The boys know they understand it and they don't find it particularly funny, and they also don't figure that the girls would have understood it. I'll argue that the boys don't understand it, that the girls would understand it, and that it

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[2]See, e.g., Spring 1970, lecture 5.

involves some information that is distinctly and peculiarly relevant to 12-year-old girls.

If one is thinking of a joke involving sex, then one of the kinds of questions one might ask is, if there's a drama in the joke, who is involved in the drama? And then, by reference to real persons, for whom is such a drama characteristic? Where what I'm suggesting by that is that it isn't for just anyone that the drama of sex involves, as it does here, 'mother and daughter.' Whereas, for 12-year-old girls the drama of sex involves to some considerable extent, not their relationship with males, but their relationship with their parents; perhaps in particular their mothers. The conflicts about sex, dating, etc., concern what mother will and will not allow, what mother wants to find out, etc. So the fact of a drama involving mother and daughter in the joke can indeed capture what for such persons would be a specific drama of their lives, whereas for lots of other groups that would hardly be a relevant kind of circumstance in their lives.

We also have that the girls get married together. Now, while it occasionally happens that, say, two sisters get married on the same occasion, and maybe conceivably three, we might ask why that's put into the joke, and whether putting it into the joke at all reflects some interest that could be more or less distinct to, say, 12-year-old girls. I'd like to suggest that 12-year-old girls are perhaps in some way interested in sex and marriage and things like that, but I think it can be found that what they are rather more interested in is each other. That is to say, one of the really distinct features of that age group of girls is that they travel in packs, i.e., they have a group life among themselves. And when they fantasize about a future, one of the things they know in some way is that that future will involve the end of their traveling in packs, that being replaced by, e.g., that they get married and end up in two-person relationships, the other persons being a male. Now, one of the things they do when they fantasy about the future is attempt ways to project their pack-traveling into that future. And one characteristic feature of such fantasy is that they get married together. That's about as far as they can go as a projectable aim because they know that having gotten married, they are now split up. Indeed their getting married together might in some not too bizarre way be about the only condition under which they could accept as interesting that they have to get married. That is to say, for a group traveling in packs together, that the marriage take place in a pack is a way in which the future, of a marriage for each of them that splits the group apart, can be accommodated to their pleasure in their pack status. Notice again that in the joke the males play almost no part. They're introduced as a foil for the marriage and never appear again. So the event of the three sisters all getting married together can project a common fantasy that 12-year-old girls have.

Now, insofar as the future of sex and marriage has an interest for them as something they could look forward to, then again a common object with which they would be occupied – and with which many others would not be occupied – is the First Night. For many of the purposes of the joke, the first

night is an altogether incidental event. It could take place on any night. But some groups would find the first night a particularly interesting event, e.g., those for whom a first night is a future.

Having, then, some hints of a special interest that 12-year-old girls might have in this joke, what we're now going to do is look for interests of 12-year-olds in some materials the joke contains. I'll go on to do that next time.

Lecture 12

The dirty joke as a technical object (ctd); "What is sex like?;" Possible versus actual applicability of a rule

I'm going to finish up this discussion of the joke. The interest so far has been to see that there are extremely well developed constructional forms that can be used to handle components – 'components' now being, roughly, pieces of information – in a way that allows for a story to be built out of them which is observably understandable and observably not implausible. I suggested that dirty jokes can involve a way of packaging information which is distinctly relevant to a particular group, where that packaging has a series of important virtues, i.e., it provides that the information will be passed, and that it will be passed with discretion. I've been leading up to that this is a dirty joke for 12-year-old girls, and that as such it contains in it, extractable by them but perhaps not by others, information of distinct interest to them, and not of interest to others. Two sorts of such information seem to be present in the joke; one is specifically sexual and the other has nothing in particular to do with sex, but has to do with rules in general, and the way in which kids encounter rules.

The sexual sort of information packaged in the joke seems to be specifically something for girls, and young girls; girls old enough to be interested in what sex is, and young enough to have only particular sorts of experiences. One such experience is that of encountering sex from behind a closed door. So: sex may be going on, it's going on behind the door, and not with you as a participant, but, e.g., with your parents as participants. A question is, what is it like? Where, encountering sex that way, what it's like is specifically ambiguous. And that is so by virtue of the fact that the sounds that might be the sounds of sex are ambiguous, i.e., hearing them one hears sometimes sounds that seem like pleasure, sometimes sounds that seem like pain, and sometimes no sounds. So that, encountering sex that way, listening from behind a closed door – whether intendedly or overhearingly – one doesn't get a solution to 'what is sex like?' but finds instead that a problem is posed: What is sex like? And furthermore, encountering it that way one faces the situation that whatever the sounds may mean, the question is, is that the way it is, or is that the way it is for my parents? Is the puzzling character of its sounds unique to my parents – they don't have fun at it or they only sometimes have fun at it – or is that the way it is for anyone?

And the problem yielded by the information so encountered plainly has difficulties in getting an answer to it. It's supposedly illicitly acquired – you shouldn't have listened at the door. And a question then is, has anybody else acquired the same sort of knowledge, i.e., have my friends also done the same thing? The illicitness of the acquisition of the information can serve to constrain getting a solution to the problem that acquiring that information yielded, i.e., on presenting that information so as to get it checked out. As well, of course, that it's about my parents, my family, might provide a source for not telling it; for not saying to a friend, or indeed to a parent, "Listening at the door I heard . . . what does it mean, and is that the way it is?" And in that regard, then, if there were a package of information that was floating around which tells someone who knows of sex that way that, yeah, that's the way that people like us encounter sex, and indeed it is sex, and indeed it has its ambiguity; a package that could be transmitted without providing that its teller or its recipient had experiences such as the package preserves – its teller by virtue of that its teller is not a character, its recipient by virtue of that its recipient, laughing, doesn't reveal that he had such experiences – then such a package would have distinct transmission virtues.

Now the second kind of thing involved here is something that the punch-line provides for our looking into, in that it involves, as we talked of earlier, a *squelch* on the mother.[1] Recall that the girls being referred to have a multitude of identities in the joke. They're 'girls,' they're 'sisters,' they're 'wives', and they're 'daughters.' In the punchline, specific to the character of it as a squelch is that the one who does it is operating as a 'daughter' to 'her mother.' Now I said that squelches are not unusual ways for jokes to close. And there is a particular type of joke for which squelches are distinctly characteristic. Those are political jokes; political in the sense of, say, conflict between groups. For such jokes, certain things are present. One is that they involve some known-to-be-lower person squelching some known-to-be-higher categorial person, i.e., a citizen squelching a governmental official, for example. And the victor of the interaction will characteristically have an identity which the teller has, and also the recipient has. So that we have a common identity occur between the victor, the teller, and the recipient. And in this squelch, in which 'mother' and 'daughter' are involved, the victor is the daughter.

I mentioned earlier that the squelch is of the form of the use of some rule that the mother gave the daughter, as an explanation of some itself possibly wrong, violative act of the daughter's. I want to propose that with this squelch, i.e., a rule in response to a question that might locate a violative act, we have captured here aspects of an altogether characteristic, problematic phenomenon for children.

Children in various ways learn rules. They learn them by inducing them from events, and they learn them from being told them. One sort of occasion on which they're told them is on some rule's relevance, when the rule is used

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[1] See lecture 10, pp. 481–2.

to correct some action that they did or didn't do. Now, a thing they can and do suppose is that they can be freed of correction – and whatever accompanies correction, e.g., punishment, sanction, 'being a child' – by learning to use rules. That is to say, living under rules can provide a source of freedom for them; freedom from corrections, sanctions, and the like. All they have to do – it's not a small "all," but all they have to do is to have their activities conform with rules.

It turns out that they discover, are taught, something else besides this. And that is, that the domain of a rule's *possible* application is not the same as the scope of its actual proper application. Instead, rules are to be used more narrowly than they might be used. Which is to say that not all occasions that any given rule might apply are the occasions on which it should be applied. This is an altogether pervasive problem. It's a problem, e.g., in language use strictly. That is to say, when following the apparent rules of a language one comes across places where, using a rule, one ends up talking incorrectly, it happening that the language has 'irregular forms' which need to be learned separately. One very characteristic source of children's erroneous talk is that their talk is, in a way, more lawful than the language. it isn't that they're simply making an error, but their error is due to having applied some rule of grammar beyond its actual scope of application. The same goes for many, if not all other rules.

That situation itself is non-unique to children. It is known for adults, by reference, e.g., to rules for which their scope of application can be precisely the kind of question that people in authority make decisions about for other people. And such decisions don't have the same sort of rule base that other decisions seem to have. The whole range of questions such as "Is this a government of laws or men?" etc., preserve that circumstance. But a distinct problem is posed for children, by virtue of the fact that in following a rule, they sometimes turn out to be behaving incorrectly and are then sanctioned by adults. What the size of that problem is, is something that they can't get a handle on, in the sense of coming up with a systematic solution. When a rule will turn out to be incorrectly applied is something they can only 'learn by experience.' And, that rules turn out to be incorrectly applied by them is something that preserves adult authority over them. So that the dream that rule use can lead to a freedom from authority never materializes. It turns out that acquiring rules involves them on the one hand in finding constraint – that of living under the rules – and also in finding that they nonetheless are subject to the authority of those who engage in actions of correcton, sanction, etc., for what seem like private interests – where they acquire in other ways, knowledge that adults can be capricious.

Now, two sorts of things: For any given child, for whom the problem is, "I learned the rule and followed it and it turned out that sometimes – at times I wouldn't have known about beforehand – I nonetheless did wrong," the question is, is that a problem of theirs or is it a problem that is not particularly theirs? That is to say, it's their parents who taught them what seem to be general rules; rules having nothing to do with their parents. It's from their

parents that they induced rules that seem to have nothing to do with their parents. But it's their parents who inform them of the violations that their rule use has produced. A question is, "Is it that *my* parents are introducing all these exceptions, or is it that that's the nature of the game?" Is it a 'my problem' or an 'anybody's problem'? How would anybody ever learn that it's not a 'my problem,' that it's an 'anybody's problem'? Where it's easy enough to suppose that insofar as it's my parents that introduce the corrections, and obviously have an interest in preserving their authority over me that way, then it's my parents who use rules against me that way.

That's one sort of thing. The other is that one characteristic way that parents do that correcting is to juxtapose some rules: "You applied rule X here, but rule X doesn't apply here, rule Y applies here." What children are then learning about problems of rule use is that at some places where a rule might apply, it's not that nothing applies but that some different rule applies. And the question then, in part, is learning which rules apply in any given scene; a problem which seemingly has to be handled empirically. In evolving ways of dealing with that problem, a special skill is to be learned which involves mobilizing multiplicities of rules to be juxtaposed against each other in handling circumstances. So, as adults characteristically use a rule to correct a child's intendedly rule-governed activity, one thing that can and does occur is the child using a rule to counterpose a proposed violation.

Children come to learn to answer complaints about possible rule violations by introducing another rule which yields the very thing that is being treated as a violation. And they get a special kick out of it. So they can be motivated to acquire skill in rule manipulation by reference to the way that that can save them in situations of possible sanction. They can be found to be acquiring skill in the use of rules, to do things like make excuses. What will have happened is, having done something possibly wrong – ideally something that they know has no rule for it – they can come up with an offered rule as why they did it, and, again ideally, a rule that they were told to follow by that one who is now threatening to sanction them. This is one perfect fantasy solution for children who live with the authority of adults. And just such a thing is what the punchline here involves. The punchline has, then, one of the specific ways that children dream of turning the tables on adults present in it. It is then of specific interest to – if not 12-year-old girls specifically, then 12-year-old girls among other children.

So, while there are various sorts of squelches, this sort of squelch is specifically the child-desired squelch. Therein we would find one way in which what's proposedly characteristic of some dirty jokes, i.e., their hostile sense, is present here. And with this squelch we find one way in which this joke can be understood and appreciated by kids who have come to deal with the problem of the scope and domain of rules' applications; a way which others would hardly focus on as of any interest. That it has this thing, and that it involves a child using it and coming out a victor, seems then to be a specific occupation of this joke. And one that has nothing particularly to do with sex. The dirty joke, then, contains information and a drama that has nothing particularly to

do with sex, but that does have particular interest for the group within which it might pass; where these are groups that do not have obvious other sorts of vehicles for transmitting information relevant just for them. That is to say, there's no child's newsletter that transmits distinctive information relevant to them. But, recalling my discussion about the transmissability of jokes and the transmissability of dirty jokes with a 'discretion' marker on them, then these sorts of things can move within the groups interested in them, informing its members of problems, solutions, fantasies, possible outcomes, of distinct interest to just those groups, in the way that, e.g., private newsletters for small or large stockholders can do that kind of a job, or a motorcycle magazine can do that for motorcyclists.

So we're dealing with what are learned in the first instance as possibly unique problems, possibly just my problems: Possibly just my fantasy solution to it, in the case of the rules; possibly just my parents' problem or my lack of knowledge of what it means, in the case of the sounds of sex. But both of these are distinctly problems of persons of a certain age, and in the case of the sounds of sex, more or less distinctively the problems of girls, i.e., the sounds of pain are at least characteristically thought of as female sounds – if not some of the sounds of pleasure. So that the joke can then serve to package information which any of such persons interested in such information can pull out of it and see to be not merely 'mine' but 'ours.'

The joke passes, of course, in another guise; as simply an oral sex joke. I would propose, however, that there are a variety of themes of dirty jokes, of which oral sex is one, which in no way discriminate jokes in terms of their transmission. That is to say, oral sex jokes are told by all sorts of groups, where, however, not all oral sex jokes are treated as equivalently funny, equivalently tellable, by any group that tells oral sex jokes. So that the boys here don't find it particularly funny, but also know that they understand it – where what they understand is not the same sort of thing as 12-year-old girls would possibly see in it. And the fact that the boys don't find it funny doesn't mean that they wouldn't tell, and find funny, other oral sex jokes. So what happens is, it gets into their hands, it's not going to go anywhere, and furthermore, they're not going to see what's in it for others, since they figure they understand it and also doubt that the girls would understand it – which may or may not be true for its oral sex aspects, but would have nothing to do with whether it's true for these other things it contains – that 'daughters' are involved, that they get married in packs, that it takes place the first night, etc. – which can turn them on to its special interest for them. Where, again, they can distinctively understand the power of the squelch solution. They are the victors in it. And the victor in it is a victor in just the way they will have dreamt of being a victor; if not for some sexual matter, then for some situation of rule use.

In that regard, a chance feature of our materials – that the joke is told by 17-year-old boys – turns out to be relevant to appreciating that the story form can be adapted to the joke and dirty joke form, to get itself moved and to have kinds of information put into it that differentiated groups would be interested

in. Because one sees that the boys don't like it, they figure they understand it, they understand it by reference to its oral sex. So at least that aspect of it, that it is safe – i.e., it could pass among others and they wouldn't know what they had – gets some sort of support.

All in all, why this thing is so intricately put together can be given an account, having to do with that it has a very serious job. It isn't intricately put together simply to bring off the oral sex punchline, because the question is, why would effort, anonymous effort, be devoted to building these things? And unless there were some serious business they do, then that becomes obscure. They live and pass on rather extensively, no one having a particular interest in telling them – as for ordinary stories one might, having been in them. In this case it's precisely the situation that if one were in them, one would be hesitent to tell.

Lecture 13

Two 'floor-seizure' techniques: Appositional expletives and "Uh"

The thing I'm going to talk about this time turns out to have a series of aptnesses to it; to what's just ensued, and to what's seasonally forthcoming. It's a Christmas story, and it's about – among other things – private feelings and their public expression. But I'll begin with something not particularly related to the sorts of things I want to focus on about the content of the two stories which make up the fragment, but present in the fragment and related in a fashion. And that is the beginning, "Oh God! Christmas has gotten so damned painful!"[1]

> *Bob*: Oh, God! Christmas has gotten so damn painful! You know there's always this great no one likes what they're getting. You know what I mean? So you say, "thank you," and like my mom, "shit, when's that guy gonna learn that I don't want an electric skillet, I wanna coat, or I wanna sweater,"

It has a form to it which I would like to develop a basis of. The form is an utterance which goes something like this: A word or brief phrase, comma, sentence. In linguistics it could be talked of as an 'appositional construction,' and there are other instances of that sort of thing present in these materials, e.g., "Shit, when's that guy going to learn that I don't want an electric skillet, I want a coat or a sweater."

So we get "Shit" or "Oh God" or a variety of things like that; some expletive, followed by a sentence. A question is, are there some interactional bases for utterance constructions like that? There are some kinds of relatively obvious things one can say about them in the first place, one of which is that it looks like there is a relationship in which the expletive previews the business of the utterance. So that, e.g., "Oh God" expresses a pain, and "Christmas has gotten so damn painful" explains the pain that's been expressed. With the expletive, then, one is told to listen to the sentence that follows, by reference to what the expletive expresses; to hear what follows as an account of how come the expletive was produced. And that kind of thing, in which one prefaces a construction by a 'reading rule' for what follows, is altogether common. Of course a question is, well why should you preface what, after all, is itself kind of plain? That "Christmas has gotten so damn painful" is a

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[1] Transcriber unknown. For the full fragment see Winter 1971, March 4 lecture.

complaint, an expression of annoyance is plain enough; why would one have
to say beforehand, "I'm now going to say something in which I complain or
express annoyance." It's not as if the sentence that follows cannot itself be
readily decoded. The answer is perhaps one for which one needs a consider-
ation of some of the rather basic rules of the organization of conversation. I'm
intending, then, to take a typical syntactic form – here, appositional
constructions – and give it a motivation out of rules of conversation.

Let me begin with a different thing; something that looks somewhat alike
to 'expletive, comma, sentence,' and that is an utterance that goes "Uh,"
comma, sentence. A kind of common way that utterances are constructed is
that the utterance is begun with an "Uh," then there's a pause, then a
sentence. One might not think of them as *constructed* that way, but they are
constructed that way. Obviously that does not have the same kind of syntactic
organization as 'expletive, pause, sentence.' That is to say, you could cut off
the "Uh" altogether – but in a way, you could cut the expletive off
altogether. In any event, a question is, is there some basis for beginning
sentences with the "Uh," pause, sentence form? And I'll develop an account
of why that's done which would put us in a position to see why the other is
done. The 'why' having nothing much to do with persons' motives
particularly, but with the ways in which the organization of conversation has
this be done as a systematic event.

The problem has to do with *how persons get the floor*. Roughly, there are
two sorts of ways persons get the floor. One is that someone selects them to
speak. In particular, the current speaker selects the next speaker. That doesn't
mean that current speakers always select next speakers, but if anyone is
selecting a next speaker it's current speaker. So one can get the floor by being
selected, and one is selected by the last speaker. The other way that one gets
the floor is by self-selecting oneself. Those two are not equally alternative
options. Obviously they can't be. Obviously if they are both going to be
present, then that current speaker selects a next speaker has to be *preferred*.
Otherwise current speaker could select a next *and* self-selection could be done,
and one would get two or more people starting. So we have a situation in
which that current speaker selects next speaker is the first possibility. If current
speaker has not selected a next, then self-selection can be used.

Now, if self-selection is possible, a question when there are three or four or
more present is, how does one get what one gets with current-selects-next, i.e.,
that only one speaks? Various people could self-select themselves, and one
would then get two or three people talking. But that's not what happens. The
rule is 'first starter has rights to speak.' (None of this is very obscure.) So, if
first starter has rights to speak, then there is an issue of rapidly positioning the
beginning of an utterance relative to the end of some prior one. A consequence
of that is that one gets very fine relationships between utterance closes and
next-utterance starts, particularly where no one has been selected. That is to
say, where someone has been selected, then in that they have the floor they
could take a bit of time before they start. If, however, no one has been selected
and one wants to get next position, then the possibility that someone else

might want to get that position will involve that speakers will attempt to place the beginning of their utterance as close to the end of the last as they can. And it's a non-rare, really common occurrence that they do it so that there's no gap between the end of a last and the beginning of a next.

So that if there's a seeming completion and no one has been selected, then the silence that ensues is such a silence as anyone's talk can occupy, and the beginning of someone's talk involves that they now seize the floor. Once they've seized the floor they have exclusive rights to produce an utterance. One could expect, then, that persons would attempt to seize the floor and have ways of attempting to seize the floor which would stand in some independence of having already prepared an utterance. That is to say, they could do it before they had formed up the sentence they were going to say. Which would then lead one to an expectation of a partial separation between what they seize the floor with – that being an issue of getting it in first – and what they're going to say. Once they've seized the floor there can be a silence. That silence is now not a silence in the conversation such that anybody can start talking, but a silence in the course of their utterance, i.e., a pause.

If the argument so far is so, then one expects that there are pure *floor seizure techniques* of which "uh" might be just such a thing, if it occurs close to – if not precisely on – the end of a prior utterance and is followed by a silence (the silence now being a pause within the utterance of someone who has taken the floor) and then a sentence. One doesn't, then, produce "uh" because one is hesitating with what one is going to say, but one produces "uh" to get the floor so as to be able to say what one isn't prepared to say. If one is hesitant with what one is going to say, one could after all say nothing yet. However, if one says nothing yet, then someone else may take the floor. So, routinely one doesn't get utterance completion, silence, new sentence start, but utterance completion, "uh," silence now, new sentence start.

Obviously there can be various states of preparation for producing an utterance. If one wants to produce an utterance on a latter speaker's completion, then while one may not have it formed up, one may well be in a position where one knows the *effect* of what one wants to say. One may know that one wants to 'disagree,' or say something 'positive,' or 'complain' or be 'joyous' varieties of other such things. Then one might be in a position to not simply claim the floor but to also give some materials as to why one is claiming the floor, and thereby put persons in a position of beginning to work on what one will have said. That is to say, one can provide them with something other than "uh," something that tantalizes, that partially is a puzzle in a different way than "uh" is a puzzle; something about which, in the pause that follows, they can be asking why that was said, for which they will now be attending what's said next as an answer. And *expletives* are just such an object. An expletive will work to seize the floor, and in it one hears, e.g., an expressed emotion, without hearing why it's expressed, and with respect to which one knows that one can listen to the sentence that follows the expletive plus its pause, to see why it was said.

So the appositional form – particularly the appositional form with an expletive beginning – can then be seen to be a floor seizure device that will allow time, after the floor has been seized, to form up the utterance-sentence that it previews, where it also indicates not simply that I want the floor but that at the point at which I say I want the floor I know the sort of thing I'm going to say. Where, again, the appositional format has as its source that non-selected speakers can seize the floor and once having seized it they needn't produce talk consecutively to retain it. That is to say, they do not have to fill all the time of their current turn with talk, but they can produce pauses in that current turn and nonetheless yet have the floor. But they don't have the floor unless they've initially done seizure of it. Once they have the floor they can have silences of various lengths at various points in their talk without others taking over. Now in that regard, "uh" may be considerably weaker than an expletive, in the sense that "uh" plus a relatively extended silence will get someone else starting up, whereas it may be that using an expletive you get a longer time to form up your utterance.

So then, the fact that one begins with something that can be read to preview what one wants to be saying, that that's done appositionally, that it's done appositionally with a pause following it, that it's done appositionally with a pause following it and a sentence following that, are orderly features of utterance construction for a system that has first startership as a way to get the floor. And the preview-explanation relationship between expletive and sentence is consequent on those sorts of things.

Lecture 14

The workings of a list;
Doing 'hostility'

Bob :		Oh, god! Christmas has gotten so damn painful! You know there's always this great no one likes what they're getting. You know what I mean? So you say, "thank you," and like
	→	my mom, "shit, when's that guy gonna learn that I don't want an electric skillet, I wanna coat, or I wanna sweater," and uh–
Ted :		Well, doesn't she make any attempt to even hint, or even–
Kim :		What's even funnier is, his father said, "Well after 25 years, I don't think we're gonna give presents." And that's just ridiculous!
Bob :		It's just that, becuz presents are so important to her, and so, he uh she was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources cuz they'd also my mother went to Florida twice and my father had to go to New York. So jeez! They were pretty low! And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it. "Well you know we just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it, you know." So, the day before, Christmas afternoon, we were over there, and Kim was in talking to mother. And then Kim came out to me and said that my mother had gotten my father just scads and scads of presents. And she said that, uh, and Kim said that my mother was afraid that my father hadn't gotten her anything. So I was supposed to go out and feel out my father and see if he'd gotten her anything. (laughs)
Kim :		We should've just left everything alone!
Bob :	→	No. I'm glad we didn't. But, my father'd gotten her a lighter. (laughs) a little Zippo. (laughs)
Ted :	→	At least it was for her use.
Bob :		Yeah, yeah. She liked it, sure.[1]

I'll begin by examining a relationship between the first quoted thing the mother says, "Shit, when's that guy going to learn that I don't want an electric skillet, I want a coat, or I want a sweater," and Ted's response, "At least it was for her use," to Bob's announcement, "But my father'd gotten her

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[1] Transcriber unknown. For full fragment, see Winter 1971, March 4 lecture.

a lighter. A little Zippo." I want to propose that Ted's remark picks up on, not just Bob's announcement but also the mother's earlier quoted remark, and that it exhibits one rather formal product of an analysis that Ted has thereby shown himself to have been doing of Bob's story. With regard to maybe the most obvious topic in the study of communication, i.e., do people understand each other? How do they understand each other? What do they understand? we can examine this material for, not just an exhibiting of that understanding takes place, but a way in which the understanding that gets done and shown, involves more or less formal operations.

Let's look for a bit at the mother's remark, presumably produced in her husband's absence, presumably with a recipient being either son or daughter-in-law. Among the sorts of jobs being done in the utterance is that it expresses concern with the husband's learning something, but it also turns out to be itself educational, in that it proposes what's not wanted and what is wanted. And a thing to initially fix on about what's wanted and what's not wanted is that there's a difference in their number. One thing is noted as not wanted and two things are noted as wanted, with their status being alternative ("I don't want an electric skillet" and "I want a coat or I want a sweater"). A question is, why does she have two things that she wants, and what will people make of that? At least an initial suggestion is that if she says "I want a coat" then presumably she wants a coat. But if she says "I want a coat or I want a sweater," then it isn't that she wants one or both of those, but, giving two things, it may be that she's thereby locating a *sort* of thing she wants, where something else would also satisfy that, in a way in which something else might not satisfy "I want a coat."

The presentation of what she wants is, then, to be treated as instantial by virtue of the alternatives. That is to say, perhaps it's not a list which is specifically exclusive in its full character, i.e., "I don't want an electric skillet, I want either a coat or a sweater." Instead it might be, "I don't want something like an electric skillet (whatever sort of a something that is), what I want is something that can be seen to contrast with an electric skillet, of which a coat or a sweater are instances." And that, then, is to propose a way she could be *producing* this utterance and also a way in which she could be *heard* to be locating what she does want and what she doesn't want.

If we then look to what Ted says, "At least it was for her use," we may find that he's examined the Zippo for its relationship to the prior asserted items and found that the Zippo is more like a coat or a sweater than it is like an electric skillet, it standing as a sort of thing she wanted as compared to a sort of thing she didn't want. And I talk of it as a formal matter by virtue of that such a classification operation could obviously be performed – dividing the two groups, attempting to extract their differences; e.g., a kitchen item for the mother's use in doing things for the family versus something for her own private use, something to wear or things like that. The question then would be, how does the Zippo stand, relative to those two groups, such that he can conclude that it belongs in the latter group and is thereby, if only minimally, a good gift.

Ted has, then, treated the Zippo by reference to an analysis of the classification that can underly the way in which she produced her alternatives. And to do that is to show that he caught on to what she was saying in her proposal. Where, in a way, that could involve not just catching on to her proposed wants and dis-wants, but perhaps to their delivery as something intendedly educative. That is to say, from "when is somebody going to learn that I want this and that," he could himself try to learn what she wants, and then monitor what she gets by virtue of what he himself has learned. It's not, then, like he's monitoring the father's gift by virtue of himself independently knowing what she would figure to be correct or wrong, but by virtue of his having used her assertion to learn what it is that she might have wanted. We can then say that Ted subjected this bunch of talk to an attentive, analytic way of listening to it, which he then kept in mind to be used by reference to the actually-bought item.

It turns out that the same would hold for the gift that Bob and Kim bought, a bracelet.

Bob : But, my father'd gotten her a lighter. (laughs) a little Zippo. (laughs)
Ted : At least it was for her use.
Bob : Yeah, yeah. She liked it, sure.
Kim : So we went out–
Bob : So we went out and bought her a bracelet. And then, we had this tremendous problem of how, now we don't want my mother to know that we did this . . .

It, too, exhibits an education from the mother's initial proposal, presumably falling on the same 'wanted' side. Notice that what Bob has talked of as the problem is, did the father get her anything, which is simply delivered in terms of number, i.e., "and my mother had gotten my father just scads and scads of presents," with the father's gift delivered as a 'one little thing.' So, presumably Bob and Kim could have helped the father out had they but gotten her a variety of some other things. However, they don't just get her three or four any other things, or any one other thing. What they get is a 'one other thing' that also is such a thing as she might have wanted, given her statement of what she wanted. Which, again, is not treated by Bob and Kim as what they should get her. If Bob and Kim treated what she said as, not classificatory but a list, then presumably they could satisfy her by going out and, instead of buying a bracelet, buying a sweater – which they don't do. And nobody says "How come you bought her a bracelet? She wanted a sweater." Where, of course, in delivering wants, insofar as one is delivering wants about gifts – which are supposed to be chosen by the giver, where the giver is supposed to be not just buying you an X but buying you a present – the wants should be delivered as instantial, i.e., one doesn't properly isolate items as "That's what I want and nothing else." Consider "I want a coat or a sweater and he bought me a new car." And in that regard, 'coat and

sweater' are not only for her in particular, they also have a possible price range involved in them. They're not, in some fashion, her fantasy gifts, they're realistic gifts.

So, it's apparently evident to all that the kind of operation that Ted did is correct, that the kind of thing the father bought was correct, and that the kind of thing that Bob and Kim bought is also correct. All of those things perhaps turning on the list that presumably was available to Bob and Kim, and that is made available to Ted. Where perhaps in making it available to Ted, Bob makes available the sensibility of the thing that he will have turned out to have bought. That is to say, he doesn't have to put the list into the story at all. But Bob having put it in, Ted uses it for the father's gift. He could also use it to see the reasonableness of Bob and Kim's gift – though presumably were he to deal with the list otherwise, i.e., empirically and not formally, he could find it a strange thing to do: "If you wanted to satisfy her and you knew what she wanted, why did you buy her something else?"

Now I want to return to the mother's remark, as a complaint against the father. As such, it carries at least an aspect of its hostility to the father in a usual place for putting in intended hostilities, and that is in the way in which he's referred to, "that guy" being a way of exhibiting some sort of intended hostility. Now, a reference to a person is one obvious place that can be packed with endearments and hostilities, as one can also do varieties of other things there, some of which have been talked about earlier, e.g., when I discussed types of identifications – those intended to indicate that the recipient knows the one being referred to, and those intended to indicate that the person is not known to the recipient.[2] Here he's referred to as "that guy." How is "that guy" hostile?

"That guy" can be a perfectly reasonable, non-hostile characterization of somebody, as compared to "that son of a bitch" or "that dope", which have rather weaker potential for being turned into merely a way of referring to someone. So "that guy" is then hostile not by virtue of that the *term* is hostile, but by virtue of other things. One obvious facet of those are that the person being so referred to is her husband and the recipient's father or father-in-law, and the term used makes it a task to determine from it who's being referred to, where such a person can be altogether readily characterized in a way that doesn't provide such a task. I'm not saying it's a difficult task; it's a task differently than is "When is your father going to learn" or "When is Bill going to learn" or whatever. And again, that doesn't necessarily convey a hostile intention, though it can be a component in producing a hostile characterization. Also, "that guy" is a reference to someone who, its use suggests, is relatively distant from the parties involved. One will use a term like 'guy' where either you don't know the person's name or the recipient doesn't know the person's name, and in that sense they're not well-known persons, and in using the term you indicate at least that sort of distance between speaker and the person or recipient and the person. "Just a guy I

[2]See lectures 5 and 6.

know." "Some guy who's name I forgot," as compared to "Bill." Now, plainly the person involved is not such a person. He's not distantly related or distantly unrelated. And plainly, a way of producing a hostile reference to someone is to increase the apparent distance via the use of a reference to them, beyond the actual known distance. Altogether simple instances involve, for families, instead of "our child," referring to "your child:" "You know what your daughter did today?" – which is for that moment to remove her from what's also so, that she's "my daughter." So, picking a term that asserts a distance that solving its reference will yield to be no such distance, is plainly a way of producing hostile references.

One can, then, do the hostility by reference to that use of an apparent distance which will not, however, create a puzzle. That is to say, it's by virtue of the utter solvability of who's being referred to that the distance term can work to exhibit hostility. One needs somehow to already know that it's the father being talked of, so that you use the term to see he's being 'talked of as distanced,' rather than using the term to try to find the person and thereby find you don't know who's being talked of, since plainly it couldn't be the father, since he isn't someone who's at that distance, and could be much more directly referred to.

So, "that guy" will isolate an intended distance involved. And "guy" has a rather nicer relationship yet; one that we can approach by considering some alternatives and the way they would fit to the complaint. Consider a term like "When is that dope going to learn." In calling him a dope, one has picked a term that fits the complaint very nicely. What's being complained of is that he doesn't learn, and the term used is 'dope,' which would very nicely satisfy a complaint in which an assertion of lack of learning is done. But, while both 'guy' and 'father' are possibly identifying characterizations, 'dope' isn't. 'Dope' just says 'I'm hostile to someone and find out who I'm hostile to by virtue of dumb things they did which I may tell you about in the course of my utterance.' But, again, 'dope' is very nicely fitted to a complaint about a lack of learning. Now I want to suggest that in this case, 'guy' is a term like 'dope,' in this sense: As one characteristic use of "that guy" is for someone whose name I don't know, then the accusation that *he* hasn't learned about her, can be claimed, in a non-serious fashion about *herself* about him. We all know about such a thing as, in trying to think of the name of someone one's angry at, one can't. I'm not suggesting that in trying to think of a way of referring to him when she's angry, she can't find it. What I'm suggesting is that in her concern for "after all these years that we've lived together he still doesn't know what I want," then a way to show her anger about that is to say ". . . whoever he is." The upshot is, then, it may be that a term of reference to a person can carry not just such a thing as one's hostility towards them, but the *sort* of hostility one has; the reason for your hostility, or the consequences of your hostility, for example.

Lecture 15
'Fragile' stories; On being 'rational'

A question I want to raise is: Consider the variety of kinds of jobs that forming up a story might have for someone. For one, the sorts of relationships building a story out of some events might have to the character of those events. There are varieties of obvious options involved. There can be, e.g., the production of a story simply devoted to telling about some interesting or amazing or extremely odd thing that happened to you, where in telling it, a thing you're asking of the recipient is, say, "Isn't that odd?" and they tell you "Yeah it's odd" or "No it's not odd." One can think of varieties of ways that the job of a story can fit an event. Now, in the light of that one option – and there are plainly plenty of others – I want to introduce another sort, having to do with this possibility: Some rather complex events have happened, and a thing you're trying out is whether you can put together a more or less compelling version of them, that version isolating one or another of the happened things, to find "That's what happened, isn't it?" "I have a correct version of it, don't I?" What's involved, then, is that you may in some fashion present to your audience materials which are more complicated than your story has them, where your audience could suggest about the proposed upshot of your story that you may not have it right.

Of course it would be curious if you gave them materials to allow them to say you may not have it right, but varieties of bases for that could be found. For one, the sheer announcement of a story involving, say, family troubles can tell that we're going to get a biased version of it. But the sort of thing I want to be talking about here is that you have in mind a bunch of things that happened, and as you're forming the story up, parts of it that you're not forming up as the story nevertheless appear in it. And by that I mean things like, in the Christmas story Bob's version has it that nothing is to be made of the money that he and Kim spent on the bracelet.

> Bob :   So we went out and bought her a bracelet. And then, we had this tremendous problem of how, now we don't want my mother to know that we did this, but how are we gonna give it to my father without hurting his feelings? Oh, shit! And we
> → finally got it to him. I don't know, we spent about an hour and a half trying to figure out, "Now, how the shit are we gonna manage this thing?" I don't know how we did, but–
> Jan :   He probably knew.
> Ted :   I know just what you mean. We go through this thing every year. My father said, "No gifts." And we tried to analyze what–

   Bob :   Does "no gifts" mean no gifts, or does it mean more gifts?
   Ted :   → No, he, he gave us one reason why "No gifts." And I was
             questioning the reason. I didn't think it was his a legitimate
             reason. I don't think it was his real reason.

So, nothing is to be made of the money that Bob and Kim spent on the bracelet, where, listening to the story, one could easily enough figure that they might have some feeling about having to have spent the money. And he may have left some aspect of that in the story when he says "We *spent* about an hour and a half," which focusses on, not that they spent money but that they spent time. Or consider, e.g., that when Ted complains of his father's "No gifts" decision, he doesn't complain about – he maybe very carefully avoids any suggestion that he was bothered by – not getting gifts. But in a way, some such possible complaint, which the story is built to avoid, but which a recipient plainly could raise, is left in when he does a thing like saying "he *gave* us one reason." Where one could hear that "one reason" is something not alternative to "a compelling reason," but alternative to "giving us something else."

There is, then, an aspect of both stories as possibly *fragile*. By that I mean that a recipient could say, "That's not what happened is it, really?" That is to say, first Bob and then Ted are in no way assertedly bothered by not getting any presents, though they are complaining by reference to there being no presents. And those are delicate paths to be able to move amongst safely. Bob's story could easily be heard as one in which he is after all complaining because it looked like they weren't going to get anything, and anything else he says rationalizes that. And Ted is after all complaining because his father said that he wasn't going to get anything, but he's proposing that he's bothered by the reasons, not by the no gifts.

So there's a way in which the two stories can be seen as ordering materials out of alternative versions of what transpired, such that a recipient could, from the materials nonetheless left in there, pick away at it as to whether what happened is other than your version of it. Of course one can adduce reasons why one or another recipients might not do that. In this case there can be good reasons why Ted doesn't do it, one of which is that if he doesn't do it, having such a story himself, then his second story supports Bob's and is supported by Bob's. That is to say, if he supports Bob and thereby gets a chance to form up his story as "See, I wasn't annoyed either by not getting a present, what I was annoyed by was that he didn't seem to have a good reason for it," then it's not likely that Bob is going to say, "Oh come on, you were just bothered because he didn't give you something." So that there's a situation in which just letting the version go can serve to have the two of them, as it's said, wash each other's hands.[1]

I've offered some allusions to possible ways that a story might be fragile or weak. Where, while any story might be heard in a way that leads to a questioning or a doubting of the version the teller gives, this one has

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[1] The discussion to this point comes from lecture 14, pp. 10–14 of the unedited lectures.

discoverably formal sources for its possible fragility. Saying it in a sentence for now, they have to do with that the stories involve a character who happens to be the teller here, doubting the motives, reasons, things of that order, of another character, where the doubting that's been introduced could, readily in this case, be applied to the teller-character's report of his own behavior. So: That the story involves doubts, where one might extract the doubts and reapply them to the teller-character, yields one sort of characterizably formal basis for the story having a fragility to it. Where what's of interest in some ways is that it can be told and not have its fragility exploited by a recipient. And there may be bases for, and some sorts of assurances that, the fragility won't be exploited. Those can be kind of readily gotten at also, and have to do with – again, in a sentence – the possible similarly situated character of the recipients to the teller. In this case they, too, are children of parents, and in a position of being the proper recipients of gifts, such that they might well – as they turn out in this case to be – ones who have a similarly fragile story to tell.

There's another sort of fragility the story has, which is perhaps not quite so obvious. That has to do with a relationship that is by and large suppressed in the story as a possible source of difficulties, and that's the relationship between spouses insofar as it deals with Bob and Kim. Which is to say that what takes place between them goes largely unsaid, particularly what takes place between them that could in various ways parallel the difficulties that take place between the spouses who are spoken of, i.e., the parents. The parents reportedly have problems about getting gifts for each other, are sensitive to each other, unable to talk to each other about how to deal with getting gifts for each other, need intermediaries to deal with that. That there might be such problems closer to home, i.e., involving Bob and Kim, goes unsaid. And furthermore, how these two went about dealing with dealing with the parents' problems goes unsaid. So, e.g., we have the assertion of the father's problem, the assertion of the discovery of the father's having gotten "a little Zippo," and then, "So we went out and bought her a bracelet." Where, how they came to arrive at that, whether they were initially altogether in agreement about that, is unsaid.

That is to say, there are a series of ways in which Kim might turn out to be a non-ally, i.e., she could turn out to argue with Bob's version of the story. And that would involve, now, an interaction in which locally present persons are conflicted. It could lead to, say, the development of an alliance between Bob and Ted and one between Kim and Jan, in which their own conflicts about gifts emerge. And there are hints of it present, having to do with, e.g., that Kim proposes "We should have just left everything alone."

Bob :		So I was supposed to go out and feel out my father and see if he'd gotten her anything. (laughs)
Kim :	→	We should've just left everything alone!
Bob :		No. I'm glad we didn't. But my father'd gotten her a lighter. (laughs) a little Zippo. (laughs)

And there's a possible sense in which that source of what could turn out to be a present conflict is picked up on, e.g., via Jan's remark "He probably knew."

Bob :		I don't know, we spent about an hour and a half trying to figure out, "Now, how the shit are we gonna manage this thing?" I don't know how we did, but–
Jan :	→	He probably knew.
Ted :		I know just what you mean. We go through this thing every year.

Where does that come from, and to whom is she talking when she says it? I'm guessing a possibility that "He probably knew" is responsive to Kim's inserted remarks in the story, where Jan, as 'also a wife' is talking to Kim, telling Kim "I kind of see that you don't have quite the same view of the whole thing as Bob has." My interest in mentioning this is, I offered some hints about a way that the story can be fragile, having to do with Bob's version of it being subject to treatment by Ted and Jan which could turn into other than what he's forming up. Now I'm suggesting that Bob's version is subject as well to treatment by Kim, which could have it be other than the version he's formed up. And each of those possibilities yields a rather different interactional development than we get here.

I want to devote a bunch of time to something else. It will involve a discussion similar in its fashion to the thing I did last time, i.e., the development of formal materials which would permit Ted, having analyzed a collection of earlier materials, to have said "At least it was for her use." What I want to turn to now is that Bob says about his father that he was "being very rational about it."

Bob :	and so, he uh she was involved in this teamsters strike that went on that really cut into their resources cuz they'd also my mother went to Florida twice and my father had to go to New York. So jeez! They were pretty low! And so my father, you know, was being very rational about it. "Well you know we just haven't got much. Let's get things for the kids and you and I'll forget it, you know."

I want to collect and order a bunch of things Bob says which can tell us what "being very rational" means. Where at least one interest of that, apart from seeing that he possibly provides for his recipients a very nice set of materials for that job, is in how it locates what kind of a thing "being very rational" is – and I specifically want to allow the distinction between "being rational" and "being very rational." Now, there is a kind of prejudice that we have academically, though not otherwise, about something like "being very rational." We treat it as though, whatever it is, it's certainly the best thing to be. I want to bring under some control that the assertedness of "being very rational" is specifically not the best thing there is; it's something less than the best.

Let's look to the kinds of materials we can extract from the story which seem to go into the conclusion "being very rational." One sort of thing that could alert us to an order of delicacy involved in the use of that characterization is the connection between that we're talking about Christmas, and the types of financial expenses that are introduced to make their circumstances "low." Very characteristically when persons are engaged in considering a current expense, they introduce, in finding that it can't be done, some old expense, some other actual expense that has already transpired. Now, the fit between a current proposed expense and the expenses that are offered to make it un-doable tends to be extremely nice. Consider, e.g., some things that can be introduced as grounds for not doing a possible current Christmas expense. Then, while it can be said, "Let's not go out to dinner tonight, we went out to dinner last week," it can't be said, "We can't buy any Christmas presents, we just went out to dinner last night." Nor, e.g., can it be said, "Let's not buy anything for Christmas, we had a very large grocery bill last week," though, engaged in purchasing things at the market one can say, "Let's not buy imported Swiss cheese, we just bought a ham."

That is to say, there are ways of isolating items to be juxtaposed to a possibly current expense, such that items to be juxtaposed to a given current expense are not to be juxtaposed to any current expense. So, e.g., a feature of Christmas is that it comes once a year, such that, in consideration of how much to spend or whether to spend, one may adduce extraordinary expenses of this year, plus other difficulties of this year. The Teamsters strike, and that mother made two trips to Florida and father went to New York, are introduceable as circumstances for Christmas, though plainly other things would not be circumstances for Christmas, and, on the other hand, those which work for Christmas may not be circumstances for other expenses. That, in the story here, there's a review of extraordinary expenses of the year, used to assess their circumstances for Christmas, can let us feel some assurance that the proposed rationality involves types of decisions for which the types of grounds have been accurately isolated, and does indeed involve possible ways of making assessments and using materials to make them.

Notice, too, that while there could have been a perfect sufficiency to mother's involvement in "this teamsters strike" and that mother "went to Florida twice," there is a sensibility to the inclusion of that "father had to go to New York." And that is in the way in which it turns what could be claimably not 'our problem' but 'your problem' between the parents, into something in which both of them are involved, and furthermore, neither of them are responsible. That is to say, the Teamsters strike is something in the world in which she was involved – she didn't cause it – and he had to go to New York – no need to say why, enough to say he "had to go to New York." So that both of them are involved in that they now have specifically unexpectedly low resources. Things happened that they could not have planned on and that did not involve their own casualness to their financial circumstances, e.g., "Okay, collect the year's expenses, we can't buy presents because we took that trip to Hawaii." They're difficulties over which we

had no control, that affected both of us. Those are what are introduced, and thereby, that there are no recriminations as between them can be achieved.

So we have, then, appropriately isolated extraordinary expenses – 'appropriately' in that they are for the year, they are extraordinary, they are unexpected, they aren't in our own interests, and they involve both of us – as one complex of materials being apparently employed in coming to the problem of what to do about Christmas. Now, what to do in the light of those collected circumstances? Sacrifices are proposed. And while proposing that he's not going to buy her gifts he's also offering that she doesn't have to buy him gifts, so that he's not asking that she make a sacrifice and he not, but they both are to make a sacrifice. Nor is it just that they're both going to sacrifice, i.e., ignore Christmas. They will attend Christmas while themselves not getting anything for each other, and that is to be used to do getting gifts for specifically proper recipients of theirs, i.e., their kids. Where, by 'specifically proper recipients' I mean that Christmas is a specifically family event and they preserve it as a family gift-giving event by having the sacrifices between them for the kids, and not, e.g., between them for something else, like the lady next door, some charity, or things like that.

So what we have then is, grossly, a non-ideal circumstance, i.e., limited resources, with some principled way of making a decision that employs altogether conventional means for analyzing that situation to get a solution. Now, there are ways in which one perfectly well might say, "Since gifts are so important to her, he can't be said to be rational unless he buys her gifts." If he bought her a gift, however, it wouldn't be said that he was 'rational.' Not that it would be said that he was 'irrational,' but the *issue* of his rationality wouldn't be posed. What's involved, then, is that he proposes that they do something which isn't the thing to do, and he proposes it by reference to the ways of doing what should be done. Where, also, one can't latch onto any private gains for him, or any particular nastiness of his. What he's doing is proposing an 'allowable second best' decision, which is what, I take it, "being very rational" is here, i.e., putting together materials which turn what's in the first instance the wrong way to proceed for Christmas into a second best way. Where, again, if things went as usual and gifts were bought by all for all, it wouldn't be called 'a rational decision,' which again isn't to say that it would be called 'irrational.' Rationality comes up by virtue of its possible wrongness.

At least one consequence of this exercise of seeing the use of "being very rational" and noticing that there are materials here which might be collected so as to see what it is that the storyteller is talking about, is that we come to see the place in the tale of some otherwise possibly 'merely in there' features. Things like the Teamsters strike, that the mother went to Florida twice, that the father had to go to New York, and the character of the proposal, "Let's you and I forget it."

In the course of this discussion I've remarked on the way in which arriving at the father's "being very rational" in his dealing with Christmas, involves

an at-all-points use of the conventional materials for isolating Christmas as an event. And there are a whole range of other, seemingly particular, personal aspects of this tale which make use of or otherwise reflect altogether conventionalized versions of the Christmas scene. One of these has to do with that as the father is asserted to be rational by Bob, so the version of the mother we get is of someone not rational, but emotional. And that male/female partitioning is done in the conventional way that, those terms being allotted to such people, they are to be allotted, i.e., something extra would be being done if it would involve that the father was emotional and the mother was rational. Now, the story is not a soap opera, i.e., specifically only about types of persons, but having introduced these conventionalities, there's a way in which the story is indeed about nobody in particular. And that has to do with that Bob doesn't know who he's talking about, in the sense that it's perfectly adequate for him to talk about his parents that way. Which is to say, he doesn't know them as anything other than these persons whom he can adequately talk of as 'a rational father' and 'an emotional mother.'

It's a very commonplace thing that people, when they're being frank or intimate to someone and talking about their parents, will say things like they can't imagine that they ever have sex. And they may remark that they hardly know them, i.e., hardly know them in the way in which, say, they figure they know the person they're talking with, or they figure they know themselves. That's only one cute instance of what is much more massively present for, e.g., children and parents. It can be gotten at by noticing that while to be sure, Bob is not here fully developing his father as he knows him, nonetheless the picture he portrays may be adequate to Ted. And the picture he portrays is of someone who is sufficiently known by knowing 'he's a father and he does this sort of rational event,' and 'she's a mother and presents are so important to her,' without having to say, e.g., how it comes about for her that presents are so important. That is to say, nothing being introduced as to why, for this particular person, presents are so important, then it's by virtue of what anyone would know about a somebody of whom it's only been said she's a mother and a woman. She has no particular known biography which enriches or substitutes for just the adequacy of 'presents are so important to her' as needing no further development.

Now, I raise all this because it's talked of as though the recipient should be able to see why, e.g., we went to these lengths to avoid confronting the father with what we did. That is, the hearers could figure, "Yeah, you never could talk to him," where it's altogether reasonable that a very same story is tellable by the parents as persons, i.e., of their difficulties with the kids. They are then, by virtue of what it is that is figured to be unsayable between them, achievedly strangers to each other. So it's not just that there is an altogether non-individually worked out version of how to deal with Christmas, but also an altogether non-individually worked out version of who these people are that he's known for 25 years.

Furthermore, in a fashion, the very same thing is happening in this occasion of the story's telling. They are allowing each of the other participants to

present a version of what happened which, in the way it retains a conventionalization of whoever else they're talking about, also preserves for each of them as the tellers, such a position relative to their recipients. That is to say, it would look like these people are doing intimate talk, e.g., Bob is telling about an intimate problem that he has with his parents. But he's telling it in the presence of Kim, and in no way is *their* intimacy brought up. As Bob says that his parents can't talk of what it is that happens between them, and is intimately telling of that, and how he deals with it, so precisely is the person in that position to him as his parents are to each other, i.e., Kim, also treated in the same fashion in this conversation. Which can then tell Ted and Jan what the boundaries of this conversation are, i.e., the way that it's unintimate in the very way that the conversation being talked of was unintimate.

Lecture 16
On dreams

What I'll propose at least tentatively for the purposes of discussion today is something maybe kind of bizarre, and it has some sorts of interests. The fragment is excerpted from a conversation among four people; Ethel and Ben are husband and wife. Some version of the topic 'art' is being talked about when Ethel goes into this:

Ethel : → Y'know Ben, I was thinking of you, d–eh it w– yesterday
morning after you went, to work y'know en I tried tuh fall
back tuh sleep 'n, 'hhhhhh I couldn't, hhhhhh en I thought
well? tch! you'd be <u>so</u> goo:d. (0.5) –in doing, (1.0) –the
geometric type of artwork, the–the type of thing you like so
much. <u>You</u> don't haf to d– force yerself tuh do, 'hhh
whatchu think other people feel you, sh'd do::,

Ben : I do what I <u>wanna</u> do.
        (0.5)

Ben : En // if I wanna paint I'll paint.
Ethel : And I think y–you oughta set up the easel now en start
going at it, eh becuz I think yer very <u>goo</u>:d.

The thing I'll propose is this: She's not remembering what she "thought" yesterday morning; what she's remembering, though she doesn't know it, is a *dream* she had yesterday morning. Maybe she discovers it later on, may be discovers it in the middle of telling it, maybe she never even notices it – and of course maybe I'm just making it up. But if I'm making it up, I'm making it up on the basis of some knowledge I have otherwise. That is to say, I saw this and began to puzzle about it by virtue of having had such an experience. I've found myself telling people things that I remembered as, e.g., "Something happened to me that I wanted to tell you about" and then in the course of telling it I realized it never happened, it was a dream that happened. So I'd had that experience and never really seen anybody report it, and then in looking at this fragment in the course of analyzing the conversation, it occurred to me that there was good reason to think that it might be an instance of the same thing.

It's a thing that could be very important theoretically, under the following sort of problem. Stories are largely told as occasioned memories. That is to say, stories are finely placed; occasioned by the current course of talk. As you hear someone tell a story, a story like it, for example, will pop into your head, of a something that happened to you. Now, what sorts of things get remembered for the story? Plainly an enormous mass of stories do not get

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told, or even noticed, and those are stories that occupy people when they dream. What happens to them? What happens when the brain searches for memories out of which it's going to get the next story it's going to tell? There's all these stories that happen to you in your dreams; is it that there's a massive separate classification of experiences such that some experiences are labelled 'dreams' and some are labelled 'non-dreams' and only those that are labelled 'non-dreams' are available to your memory as 'stories'? Or is it that some other kind of thing works, such that you might not know?

Dreams are, after all, available for some sort of remembering. For one, having a dream, you can remember you've had a dream like it. And lots of people know that they have 'recurrent dreams.' So there *is* a memory for dreams. And sometimes in the course of the day something happens, and that leads you to remember a dream you had. So that actual real events *can* yield memories of dreams. And a kind of thing I'm wondering about is, is the classification 'dream' assigned to an experience? And does that, for ordinary people or in ordinary states of affairs, keep an experience so classified as to provide that however it's used it's always used as 'this was a dream,' but maybe in special states of mind you don't know that it was a dream? Now, that's what's relevant here.

The initial clues for me are, first, the way in which she sets it up: "I was thinking of you yesterday morning after you went to work, and I tried to fall back to sleep and I couldn't, and I thought . . ." Okay, that's a very common state. You're awakened by something – noise, somebody leaves, dogs barking, garbage trucks, whatever it may be. You're awakened. And now you do 'trying to fall back to sleep.' And you can commonly have the experience that "I tried to fall back to sleep and I couldn't." But if you've ever thought about it at all, you know that you don't know whether you "couldn't." That is to say, you often lie there in a state which is sometimes awake and sometimes sleeping, and whenever you're awake you kind of feel "I can't fall asleep," but you may well have slept. And then while you're awake you're having thoughts, and while you're asleep you may be having dreams, and there can be times when it's very clear that it's a dream, but there can be states when it's not clear that you're asleep and dreaming. And in those states you may have things which you think are thoughts, which are dreams.

There are reports in the literature on experiences like that. In a paper by Edward Sapir, a very famous anthropologist, he reports that he was sitting and talking to somebody at night and he fell asleep while he was talking, and continued talking. And the talk he then generated turned out to be a report of the dreams he was having. It wasn't that he's now in the dream and talking to whatever persons are in the dream; what he does is he narrates the dream. And that's not all that rare. Such experiences happen, are known to happen, I've heard people tell of them. People who, when they're very very tired are talking to somebody else, can slip into sleep and nonetheless keep talking. And the other person at some point hears what can only be an extraordinarily bizarre kind of talk coming out. So it looks like there are times when people don't know that they're sleeping, don't know what the state is that they're in,

might well think they're awake, so that they could think it's a 'thought' they had when it's a 'dream.' And this point, early morning, having been awakened and knowing that you want to go back to sleep, is a characteristic place for such an experience.

So, by locating the time and the occasion when she has this thought, there became reason to suspect that she might be remembering, not a thought, but a dream she had. Now, that's not enough to say "Well, she's reporting a dream," though it is enough to say we can be suspicious about whether she knows what she's saying.

A second clue is that the thing itself – let's consider it as a possible dream – has dream characteristics to it. Among the most striking is that when people talk in this state of just having fallen asleep, the talk they produce is something that if they were awake would be treatable as characteristically schizophrenic speech. And there is one perfect instance here: Among the most classical instances of what schizophrenic speech looks like, is 'paradoxical talk.' And here she gives him an instruction which says, "Don't do what other people tell you to do, do *this*: Do what *you* want to do." Now that's a perfectly characteristic piece of schizophrenic speech. In some of the modern literature this phenomenon, called 'double bind,' is treated as the character-istic instance of the way in which a mother produces a schizophrenic child; telling him, "Be free, do whatever you want. I insist that you do this. This is what you want." So there's that aspect of a dream.

There is also this "geometric artwork" thing. And again, if you put yourself in her position and think of yourself as lying in bed, semi-asleep, then among the things that people have happen to them – and of course there are perfectly good physiological reasons for having it happen – is you see geometric light patterns; like you're looking at the inside of your eye, and you see colored light patterns. So she may well have seen these geometric patterns, and seen them as the possible artwork he could produce that would be beautiful, as they are, indeed, beautiful. So there's a sense in which she could have been visualizing something; something very much like "geometric artwork."

Now, one likes to have as well, some personal materials involved. And it turns out that we have sufficient information to say something about what indeed might be happening in the dream, besides that she's seeing something on her eyelid and thinking of the husband who just left. She's proposing to him that he ought to do something, and the thing he ought to do is paint. Now, it happens that this couple has a best-friend couple of long standing. The other couple is one that, if not both of these people then at least Ethel, is overtly, distinctly jealous of, though they're best of friends – that doesn't mean anything, she's also very jealous. She's jealous on various scores, one of them being that the other man is much more successful in conventional ways, i.e., he makes more money than Ben does. And he's also an amateur artist. This husband of her long-term friend is, then, someone with whom she compares her own husband negatively. And she could perfectly well have dreams that involve that she wished that her

husband did some of the things this guy does – perhaps as a way of wishing that she had this guy.

There are, then, in some absolutely ordinary ways, some plausible psychological interests in her having a dream about wishing that her husband painted. Now, that might connect up with an annoyance she has with her husband right now, i.e., she thinks she's awake, and she thinks she's awake because he woke her up. She might then turn that immediate annoyance into how she can otherwise be dissatisfied with him. Which is, after all, a common enough sequence, i.e., having one grounds for annoyance with someone, one can readily enough find oneself in a chain in which one finds other grounds for being annoyed with them. And particularly, one can find such grounds out of the current environment; the current environment in this case possibly being these light patterns that she's viewing, that she can see as 'artwork,' which turn her to a dissatisfaction with her husband that involves a comparison with his friend/her friend's husband, as someone who does such things.

So, one could put it together as a possible dream. A question then is, are some dreams subject to being remembered as non-dreams? Dreams like this, which occur in 'twilight states' and are not even experienced as dreams? Let me tell one story of mine. It has two parts to it. I have a friend who is interested in jazz and in transcriptions of jazz, and transcriptions of jazz are hard to come by. He was in my house one day, I'm mixing a drink or something, and I'm about to call to him to tell him "Hey I just remembered something I wanted to tell you. I met a guy who has transcribed music." Then I thought, "Gee, that's ridiculous, there's nothing rare about transcribed *music*." Then I realized "It never happened! It was a dream." So I didn't tell him. Second sequence. We're at his house some time later, and I'm sitting telling someone else this story about remembering a something I'd wanted to tell my friend, and how I had realized, no, it was a dream. My friend was mildly listening in to this conversation. He breaks in and says "That's not true. You *told* it to me. And first I thought, 'Thanks,' and then later on I thought 'That's strange, what's so rare about transcribed *music*?' but I never thought more about it and just forgot about it." Now I, for my part, don't remember ever telling him. I thought I didn't tell him, but he says I did tell him. And I take it that *he* didn't dream that part. So that was the specific occasion on which I became aware of that sort of thing, and then the question was, well why *wouldn't* you remember things that were not real stories? And then it's the rarity of it that's odd. And I'm just interested in whether anybody has had the occurrences to them of a thing that they think of, or tell someone, as a thing that happened, that they later on or in the course of it realize didn't happen but was a dream.

Q: I remember a bunch of people sharing their childhood experiences, and as I recalled it everything was right about the story, then as I began to retell it some of the things were just so absolutely incredible that it couldn't have happened, and it must have been a dream. But I had considered it as an actual experience until the time I began to tell it.

Q: I was just remembering an experience I had when I was about five years old. At Easter time in the morning when we got up we'd go in the kitchen and

we'd have our little basket there. Well, evidently I dreamed that I got up and went into the kitchen and everything, and I saw the basket, but also, outside the kitchen door, I saw the Easter Bunny leaving. And it was as big as a man, and I swore I saw him, and he had other baskets on his arm and stuff. And later that morning I was telling everybody in my family, and they said "Oh sure, you saw him." But to this day, I know there's no such thing, but I'm sure I saw him. But I know I couldn't have. It must have been a dream.

HS: I guess if you put it back in your youth you'd have good reason to imagine that you would have a store of early memories which are not known to be dreams or not, since you would have acquired that information about experience, and applied it, only later on.

Q: I remember when I was really young, my parents telling me something and then maybe months later they'd tell me something just the opposite and I'd get really confused and ask them why they told me this other thing, and they'd say "I never told you that." So if you could begin to add that as a corpus, things where people say "It never happened," we could now think maybe it was a dream.

HS: Yeah, that's good. Those sorts of things might be very interesting.

Q: It seems to me that in a real life experience you have a basic orientation to that experience all the while it's happening, and it doesn't change; and when it does change it's change that progresses rather than jumping to something else. But in a dream the basic orientation can change; like you can be with somebody but that person can change in any second and become somebody else. And I interpret that as irrationality. Like somehow for the purposes of a story you don't trust that; it goes into another bag.

HS: That may be so for you, but even in our culture people use dreams in much different ways than that. I certainly know people who use dreams as a better informational source than other sources. So, e.g., I want to know how I feel about somebody. When interacting with them I figure I don't get a good chance to know them. There are lots of constraints which prevent me from knowing how I feel about them because I will behave towards them, and feel by reference to my behavior, all kinds of things. Like, if they seem enthusiastic then I might seem enthusiastic. And there's no one to talk to who could give you a better angle on that person. They'll either agree with you or disagree, but they have their own feelings about them. Well, how do you then get to have some idea that you have real feelings about somebody? How do you get to know what your real feelings are? Some people treat their dreams as non-interactional occasions for finding out their feelings about somebody. And supposedly there are people who can instruct you how to have a dream about how you feel about someone; there seems to be a way to develop that as a thing, and you can do it.

See, the question is, how do you believe your brain? How do you believe whatever it is that gives it to you? I mean, it doesn't just come out with answer like a fortune cookie: "You like them very much." And what you want is something trustable. Let me talk a bit about my own analysis of my own

dreams, where the question was, how do I believe it? The way it would come to be believed by me was that it would use exceedingly private information of my own; such things as nobody else knows about me, that *I* don't particularly think about. Such things would be put into the dream. For example, I had a cat that I really liked. Some people know I liked the cat, nobody really knew how much I liked the cat. And the cat died. And there were times in dreams when, if I had a puzzle, the dream would use the cat as an indication that it knew how I felt about things, so that I could say, well, yeah, it's got good information that nobody else would have, so I really shouldn't treat it lightly. Or you could think of it as a fortune-teller. You meet her, she doesn't know anything about you. Ideally, the way in which she can make herself credible is by telling you things that nobody should know about you.

But you can come to believe about your brain that it really knows a lot of things about you that nobody else knows, nothing else knows. And when it tells you something, give it some credit. Particularly if it does it in intricate ways. Now, that's a way of using dreams which doesn't treat them as irrational in the sense of 'less than rational.' It can be an extremely clever mind presenting you with information about things like how you feel about someone. And there is a long history of people asking questions to their dreams, i.e., to their non-waking brain. Now while people can think that's an irrational procedure, what we have to come to see is that there's good reason why you can't trust your *waking* states as to, e.g., your feelings about people. You just have no chance. You have no time out in which you can say, well what do I think about them? You're always involved in activities relative to them. And there's good reason not to trust how you *behave* to them to tell you how you feel about them, since there are people who know how to control your behavior.

Q: Maybe that's the key, then, to why you don't use dreams in stories. Because they're too intensely personal.

HS: Why you don't tell anybody, you mean. And why they don't occur to you. Well, that's interesting. That's now altogether different than that they're irrational. There's good reason not to tell people your dreams. If you put things in that way, then it's interesting. It's a serious loss in some fashion. Conversation would be a lot more fun.

Q: I often have dreams of people, maybe I haven't seen them for a week or so, and whether I liked or disliked them before the dream, when the dream happens it's not a story that I can relate, but if I was warm and friendly in the dream then I wake up the next morning and I want to see that person and be warm to them that day.

HS: See, now there's an interesting connection that a lot of people do know about, which is, you come up to someone and you feel annoyed with them or happy with them. You haven't seen them in a while, what are you annoyed or happy with them about? And you realize at some point that it's not by virtue of anything that happened, but by virtue of their appearing in a dream of yours. So that's a place where the stuff certainly floats over very dramatically.

I guess if you're interested in the extent to which dreams influence your wide-awake behavior, then you probably should latch onto those sorts of things, e.g., figure that a great many of the people who count to you at all appear in your dreams, and then look at your feelings to them as you happen to encounter them, and start to see whether you can figure out the sources of your feelings. It would be nice if it turned out that some amount of your feelings are dream-based. Now, one thing I wonder about is whether dreams influence ordinary behavior rather more dramatically than we suppose. How would we know that at all? One thing we could do is to see if we can't isolate feeling-states when we encounter people, to determine that those feeling-states are dream-based. And that isn't to say that you really shouldn't feel, e.g., angry at them since you only feel angry at them because of the thing they did in the dream. Because the dream might be a good source of information that, independently of the dream, you should feel angry with this person. The dream is not necessarily wrong. It might be perfectly insightful about the person.

Part VIII

Spring 1972

Lecture 1

Adjacency pairs: Scope of operation

For the bulk of this course the lectures will be devoted to something I'm calling 'adjacency pairs.' This time I'll kind of run over the scope of operation of these things. First of all, one is perfectly entitled to think that any naturally occurring conversation is a more or less extraordinarily complicated thing. By virtue of an interest in knowing how complicated it is, or on the other hand how simple some parts of it are, I am isolating for examination a type of organization for conversation which is extraordinarily simple, and may have aspects of its simplicity relevant to the vastness of its occupying of conversation.

The initial observations are something like this: Aspects of certain sequences that occur in conversation can be isolated, for which the following features obtain: They're two utterances long, and the utterances that compose them are adjacently placed to each other. Note that from these two features alone one can derive a third, that being that alternative speakers produce the utterances. If the two utterances were not adjacently placed but were separated, you could easily enough have a two-utterance sequence which would involve only one speaker, i.e., both utterances could be produced by a same speaker. But if they are adjacently placed, then it follows that they're produced by alternative speakers. Now, characteristically there are names for the components of such pairs, for example, greeting–greeting, question–answer, "goodbye–goodbye" (whatever you want to call that), complaints followed by an excuse or a request for forgiveness or an apology or a denial, offers followed by acceptances or refusals, requests followed by acceptances or rejections, compliments followed by acceptances of a compliment, etc., etc. Once we have these named and affiliated pair parts, then a couple of other features fall out. They are such things as, that for some classifiable pair the parts are *relatively ordered*. That is to say, as compared to the two utterances going in any order, that's not so, but there is something that goes first and something that goes second. So, for example, that's obvious for questions and answers, but even for things like greeting exchanges there is plainly, hearably, a first greeting and a greeting return; they're said differently. And the same goes for, e.g., exchanges of "goodbye"'s. But plainly, acceptances of compliments follow compliments and do not precede them, etc., etc. So there is a relative ordering feature. Another immediate feature is that given the possible list of pair parts, for any actual sequence a first and second are *discriminatively related*. Which is to say that given a first pair part, not anything that could be a second pair part goes, but given some first, only some seconds are admissable and are done. After a question one puts an answer and not a greeting return, for example.

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So then we have this small list of features to start out with: There are some natural two-utterance sequences; their parts properly go adjacently, not separated; for a large number of them there are known names; given the names, the parts are relatively ordered and discriminatively related. In a fashion, then, we're talking about something we can think of as 'the class, greeting exchanges' or 'the class, question–answer sequences,' and when we consider them as 'adjacency pairs' we are talking about them as a class of a class of utterances. In due course I'll go into what is involved in that.

But if we start out noticing about, e.g., something like the beginnings of conversations, that they characteristically begin with "Hello–Hello" or "Hi–Hello" or "Hello–Hi," etc., etc., then we might make such a set of observations as I've made, about just those pairs. And we might suppose that those features hold for greeting sequences. We might note also that they hold for question–answer sequences. And then, by virtue of that they seem to hold for lots of obvious paired utterances, we might see whether we could construct a class, which we'll call adjacency pairs, which is the class that has those features. Then we get such things as greeting sequences, question–answer exchanges, etc., as being particular sorts of types that are instances of the class, adjacency pairs. That is, we're trying to abstract from types of *pairs* to see if there is not a type of *organization* which we can simply characterize as 'adjacency pair organization,' and from which we can perhaps get a lot of mileage.

And we'll see what some of the virtues might be, of talking about adjacency pairs generally and not just talking about given pair types. Among the things that are gained is an ability to make the following sorts of noticings: It's perfectly plain that lots of conversations begin with a greeting exchange. And also that lots of conversations (and of course often the same conversations) end with a closing exchange, a terminal exchange, i.e., an exchange of "goodbye"s. Now, that's more or less a fact. But if we're looking to the possibility of talking about adjacency pairs, then we can turn that observation into something else, and ask whether there are some bases for it happening not simply that conversations begin and end with greetings and closings, but that they begin and end with adjacency pairs, where the answer might not have particularly to do with features of greetings and closings, but with features of adjacency pairs. Proceeding in that way we can run through a large range of organizational problems for conversation, and see how many areas turn out to have adjacency pairs operate for them. So, for example, there's this thing that I call '*overall structural organization of conversation*,' which is the means whereby parties get into conversations and out of them. And it turns out that at the precise point of getting into them and at the precise point of getting out of them, adjacency pairs are used. So, then, at key points in the overall structural organization of conversation, adjacency pairs are used. And that's initially a bit interesting.

Let me turn to another sort of issue. It's a plain enough fact about any actual conversation that it has some *order of speakers* in it. So that you could sit down and write out for some historical – i.e., finished – conversation, in some fashion, the order of speakers in it. Now, one attempt at seeing if there

is any lawfulness to the order of speakers would obviously be to attempt to use some kind of notation for it. And the simplest sort of notation would be letters, using a same letter, obviously, for a same speaker (or a same number, for that matter). That sort of notation can hold and be used for a series of conversations, where, then, one can see whether the order of speakers has any apparent orderliness.

Consider what would be some conceivable, obvious, simple orderlinesses. Imagine that there are two parties to the conversation; call them A and B. They talk for some length. Plainly we would have a sense that there's some orderliness to the order of speakers in a two-party conversation if, writing it this way, we got sequences that ran A-B-A-B-A-B. Now, that's not a necessary order. It's imaginable that you could get A-B-B: A talks and then B talks and then there's a silence, say, of 20 seconds or 10 seconds or a minute, then B starts up again. So we might get A-B-B-A. But the matter is much clearer when one begins to introduce more than two speakers. If you imagined, as this A-B-A-B suggests, that the rule was that you alternate, then as you increase the size to, e.g., three speakers, you have one possible beginning ordering being A-B-C with, as possible expansions, A-B-C-A-B-C-A-B-C. One could then ask if there is an organization to taking turns in conversation which operates via something like the following sort of rule: Given a set of parties at the beginning, any party may speak first and any other party may succeed the first speaker, but neither of those are to go again until all other parties have spoken. You'd then have something like 'rounds' in which every party talks. The rounds could be built in such a way as to reproduce themselves, i.e., A-B-C-D, A-B-C-D, or they could be built to provide only that nobody who has already talked in a round talks again until that round is over. Then you could have something like A-B-C-D, C-B-D-A or whatever else.

That seems awfully simple and possibly very neat. But if one begins to think of how it would work, one could begin to derive sorts of problems with it, i.e., difficulties that would emerge if that were the way that a conversational system worked. Imagine, for example, a situation in which A speaks and asks a question, and then B speaks and says in effect "I didn't hear the question." Now, under a round system with, say, three or four speakers, A could not go, and repeat or clarify the question, but would have to wait until after C and D spoke in order to get a chance to do a clarification.

What I'm doing now is considering some possible *turn-taking systems* and considering some of the consequences that follow from a given turn-taking system. For example, that it does not admit that a same speaker go twice in a round seems like merely a feature, but it turns out to be consequential for the way in which our conversations operate. It would plainly be kind of troublesome that you could not, in your utterance, address the last speaker and get the last speaker to put an answer to your utterance, unless you were at the end of a round. So, if you take this lettering system and apply it to American conversation, then, while it has some apparent sensibility for two-party conversation, it obviously does not apply for more-than-two-party

conversation. The latter does not constitute a simple expansion of the ordering features of two-party conversation, if we imagined A-B-A-B to be the ordering features of two-party conversation. And it is not organized in terms of rounds. So a possibility that looks like it might be present given two-party conversation, turns out not to be general to conversations of any size.

If it happens that the way in which parties come to speak in a conversation is not via such a formula as, e.g., A-B-C-D, how do parties get to speak at any point in a conversation? Are there or are there not some rules? It turns out that there are *techniques for arriving at next speakers*. That seems like an altogether bland statement. Concealed in it, however, is a possibly distinct, possibly general feature of a particular turn-taking system. And that concealed feature is that this turn-taking system operates for *next* speakers. Now again, it's imaginable that you could have a turn-taking system that did not intend to control how to get a next speaker, but to control, e.g., the next two speakers, or the next speaker after this one. Those are just as imaginable if we're just playing with formal possibilities. It wouldn't be a problem theoretically, once you got started. And just to suggest the sorts of things we're empirically talking about, it turns out that there are ways of selecting, not next speaker but next two speakers. Consider one of these possible exceptions to the next-speaker feature: A party is now introducing two people to each other: "Jim, this is Harry." Now, by reference to the rules for dealing with an introduction, that obviously provides that those two people are now to speak next, in series. One goes "Hi" and the other goes "Hi." So it seems as though the speaker who did the introduction is someone who can select the two next speakers, i.e., it looks like there's an exception. But notice about the exception that it's not an exception, because the one who speaks first post the announcement of an introduction, i.e., the one who does the first "Hi," selects a next speaker. That is to say, those two people order their responses to the introduction in such a way as to provide that there is a first and a second of those, and it's by virtue of the first that the second is done. So that one can set up an introduction sequence, but the introduction sequence operates with the first speaker in it selecting the second speaker in it. This is a fairly minor sort of thing; I only mention it to bring up that there are occasionally seeming sorts of exceptions to the next-speaker selection feature of the turn-taking system, but that even the exceptions may not be exceptions.

What, then, are the *speaker-selection techniques*? There seem to be two classes of techniques, and they're ordered. One technique is that *current speaker may select next speaker*, and the other is that *next speaker may self-select himself*. To say that they're ordered is to propose that as between these two types, both types plainly cannot operate for any given next utterance. If they did then we'd get that A speaks and selects B, and C also being present selects himself, where B and C then talk at the same time. That's unlawful, given that there should be one speaker talking at a time – and we'll deal with this feature soon. So there has to be an *ordering of preferences* as to the types. And the ordering obviously is, if current speaker selects a next speaker, then that's the way the next speaker is to be arrived at.

Now I want to propose that maybe the total class of means whereby current speakers select next speakers are instances of the use of adjacency pairs. The whole range of ways that anybody can select a next speaker involves the use of something that, for now, we'll call *first pair parts*. Again, things like complimenting, making offers, requests, complaints, questions, etc. By using a first pair part one can select a next speaker. So that we now find that adjacency pairs, besides being in key places in the overall structural organization of conversation, are at the core of the turn-taking system as well. We have adjacency pairs not only at the beginning and at the end, but occurring at any place where some party engages in selecting another. So we have these things strung throughout conversation by virtue of considerations about how turn-taking works.

Let me raise a third area in the organization of conversation: *Parties should talk one at a time*. That parties should talk one at a time provides what we can call a *local control problem* for conversation. And that is, how do you achieve that one and just one talks at a time in a conversation? Plainly there can be lots of problems, e.g., someone interrupts another. How is it that the conversation system administers itself? Now, analogizing it to problems of social order more generally, there are imaginable solutions. Suppose somebody engages in a violation, like interrupting somebody in the conversation. You could call the police, write a letter to his mother, do something involving the use of the usual means for getting sanction or remedy. Lots of the imaginable means, however, wouldn't particularly help out the conversation when the problem happens. Now, there are a class of things to which a name has been given by Erving Goffman. Those are things he calls 'remedial exchanges.' And I'll just use that name, although he doesn't apply it with the kind of import that I want to give it. The business of remedial exchanges is to handle problems of local order in conversation; failures to understand, failures to hear, interruptions, silences, more than one person starting up at the same time, etc. It turns out that the means for remedying local problems of order in conversation are adjacency pairs. For example, if someone has been addressed and they didn't hear or understand, then what they do is to produce a first pair part, e.g., "What did you say?" And if somebody has been interrupted, then they can produce a complaint or some such thing, to get a return to it like an apology, an excuse – "I thought you were finished," etc.

So the pairs, then, occur at the beginning and at the end, wherever someone is selected to speak next, and wherever there is any trouble in the conversation. For each of these we can ask why is it that adjacency pairs occur? But now as we start to ask each of those questions we begin to ask it with some suspicion that the answers to all of them may well be related, That is to say, there may be something about adjacency pairs which commends them for a whole range of uses. And it's by virtue of that, that we want to be asking these sorts of questions about adjacency pairs and not, e.g., about greeting exchanges or turn-taking or remedial exchanges.

Consider yet some more things. It is said about '*utterances*' that either a way to define them or a way to describe them is that they are some string of talk

produced by one speaker exclusively, bounded on either side by the talk of others. There are obvious ways in which that is wrong, i.e., parties can be talking at the same time as somebody producing an utterance. But if all that was wrong was that sometimes errors or violations occur, then it would still be a perfectly good definition of an utterance. And one doesn't need to point to those things in order to show that that characterization of an utterance is not correct. Instead, we can notice that for a class of things that we can loosely call '*long utterances*,' commonly it's not true that the speaker is the exclusive speaker. And of interest is that the two or three parties who talk in the course of somebody's utterance can talk in such a fashion as to yield that, though a variety of people talk in the course of one utterance, nobody ever talks at the same time as anybody else. That is to say, there is always just one party talking.

Now, the rules for doing that involve the use of something like adjacency pair construction: The one who is producing the utterance makes room in his talk for others to speak by putting together clauses or phrases of an utterance in such a way as to have, not at sentence endings but at clause or phrase endings, 'question intonation.' At the completion of the phrase with question intonation another party goes, and does something like an "*Uh huh*." And at the completion of the "Uh huh," the party who is producing the utterance continues. They can continue rather extensively, the others inserting "Uh huh"s into that talk, without the "Uh huh"s ever overlapping that talk nor that talk ever overlapping the "Uh huh"s. So the way in which we get more than one speaker lawfully talking in the course of someone's utterance involves, again, the use of adjacency pairs.

In these last remarks, one thing I've been pointing up is the possibility of a rather fine shifting among speakers. One party talks and another party talks and the first party talks again and another party talks, and nonetheless there's *no gap and no overlap* between the speakers. That feature, no gap and no overlap between speakers, can obviously obtain, not for an utterance that has places in it for others' talk, but for a string of utterances. It is, that is, a generally oriented to feature in conversation — which isn't to say that it always happens. But a question is, how is it that speakers are able to talk in such a way as to have, for a sequence of utterances, the possibility of no gap and no overlap between them? That's an awfully fine constraint. Plainly one thing it means is that people have to listen to each other's talk to see when it might end so that they can be in a position to start talking precisely on its end. But the problem of ending is a very complicated one. And it's complicated because of the following sort of thing: Utterances are, roughly, constructed out of sentences. Now, that yields a kind of problem; that being that for the construction of sentences, essentially one can only characterize productionally, *sentence possibilities*. That is to say, anything that is a possible sentence is also possibly extendable beyond, say, its first possible ending. For example, having produced a possible sentence you can add an 'and' or an 'or' and make what was a possible sentence now the first clause of a larger sentence. And there are a range of ways of making sentences longer than their construction up to a first possible completion. That being the case, possible next speakers have as

something they can use, only a notion of 'possible sentences' which they can apply to anything produced. And they cannot use a notion of a sentence definitively ending, in order to see when they could start speaking 'safely,' i.e., without interrupting somebody. On the other hand, they want to start speaking as soon as possible so as not to have a gap.

We have, then, an orientation to no gap and no overlap, but the use of the possibility structure of sentences makes that complicated. Are there means for systematically achieving no gap/no overlap transition? Where in conversation does it systematically happen that you get no gap/no overlap between utterances? You get it when you use adjacency pairs. Something like a reason for that is involved in the rules for completion of utterances. One rule is: If a party is talking, then when they've arrived at a *first possible completion*, which would be a first possible sentence ending, they may stop. And also, another may speak. Now, none of those might happen. A speaker may not stop and another might not speak, or they might not stop and another might start talking – in which case you get overlap, or they may stop and another may not speak – in which case you get a gap.

Now, for adjacency pairs you get a special rule which says: If an utterance that is being produced is a first pair part, then on its first possible completion the speaker should stop and, if somebody has been selected, then whoever has been selected should speak. So if you're a possible recipient of, e.g., a question, you can attend its first possible completion and know that when that occurs the speaker will stop and you can start safely. And for questions in particular the signalling that this is the first pair part can go very very early into the utterance. It can go in the first word, e.g., those called the 'Wh' words in linguistics (where, what, why, etc.), all of which signal right from the very beginning that this is going to be a question, and in signalling that, permit a recipient to begin right then and there to analyze the thing so as to see what it will take for it to be finished, knowing that at its first possible completion it will be over and it will be the recipient's business to start talking.

So, what's being proposed now is that while there certainly are places in conversation where no gap/no overlap does not obtain, i.e., where there is gap or overlap, there are systematic means for achieving no gap/no overlap, and those systematic means involve the use of adjacency pairs.

So far we've been going though considerations about the overall structure of conversation, considerations about turn-taking organization, about problems of local order in conversation, about utterance construction and the building of long utterances, and about the achievement of no gap/no overlap. In all of these places it's been at least asserted that problems of those areas are handled distinctively by adjacency pair construction. That begins to give us some idea that this is indeed a more or less fundamental type of organization for conversation. And in the first instance, as a type of organization, it has a very small list of features that characterize instances of it; those things I mentioned at the very beginning: Adjacency pairs are two utterances long, adjacently placed, have various names, a relative ordering of parts, and a discriminative relationship for the parts. I will go into those features at length

eventually, but I hope I've provided at least a glimpse of that something drastically simple is involved and is utterly pervasive in the operation of conversation.

Let me extend the sense of the pervasiveness of these things by considering something slightly different. We're talking about two-utterance sequences; not any two-utterance sequences but two-utterance sequences in which the utterances are adjacent. Now, we could consider, for example, whether other sorts of two-utterance sequences, those in which the utterances are not adjacently placed, have anything like the pervasiveness that two-utterance adjacently placed sequences have. While there are such non-adjacently placed two-utterance sequences, they're not very easy to think up, and they obviously don't have the kind of scope of use that adjacently placed ones have, which suggests that adjacency placing is a very important feature. Alternatively we can consider, not two-utterance sequences but *longer-than-two-utterance sequences*. There are obviously such sequences, even as types. For example, there are three-utterance sequences, an obvious instance of which is a riddle sequence: A: "Why did the chicken cross the road?" B: "Why?" A: "To get to the other side." An interesting thing about the riddle sequence as a three-utterance sequence is that it's obviously a variant of the adjacency pair. That is to say, if we have question–answer as one sort of adjacency pair, then a riddle sequence is something like a question which has as its subsequent another question, and an answer following that. So, the components of adjacency pairs can be used to build longer sequences.

There are some sorts of, e.g., four-utterance sequences which are also specifically built out of the adjacency pairs. Consider a remedial exchange type of thing, the 'not hearing' situation. For example, somebody produces an utterance, then "What did you say?" and the answer to that. Now, specifically where a question is asked, followed by "What did you say?," then the answer to that, and then an answer to the question, what we have is [Q [q–a] A]. We call these things '*insertion sequences.*' Not any question can follow a question, and the questions that can lawfully follow a question are insertion sequences. And, roughly, an insertion sequence's questions are such questions as propose "If you answer this one I will answer yours." There's a paper called 'Formulating place' by E. Schegloff which includes a consideration of insertion sequences and has some fairly elaborate ones discussed.

Now, we can consider some versions of these four-utterance things involving pairs, where again our interest is in seeing that even when we get out of adjacency pairs their components still comprise the four-utterance sequences. Let me begin to locate such four-utterance or larger-than-four-utterance sequences built in terms of pairs. Consider things like invitations, offers, requests, and things like that. When they are done as first pair parts, i.e., as questions, "Would you like to come over for dinner sometime?" Would you lend me your car?," etc., then one of the consequences is that the response to that – which is not merely an 'answer' but something like an acceptance or a rejection – has to go right now, i.e., right on the completion of the first pair part. We have, then, for one, a motive for why one would do

things like invitations and the like as first pair parts; that's the way to get a response now as compared to, e.g., having it as a rule that invitations are only done by mail and not in an interaction, and are then to be responded to at some point later, or that they're to be done in an interaction but they don't involve being responded to in a next utterance.

Now, for some things, that the response has to go right now is no particular bother. For others, it can be a systematic issue. There are places where parties might like to do a *delay*, not respond right now. And among those places are where they've been given an invitation or request, etc. Now, how do they do a delay without doing something violative, i.e., ignoring the question? Among the ways they do that is by producing insertion sequences there. So they can do things that attend the question, don't answer it, provide for the other to talk in promise that I will do the answer when you're done. Though again, yet another insertion sequence can be inserted after a first. So you can get, "Can I borrow your car?" "When?" "This afternoon." "For how long?" "A couple of hours." "Okay." You have, then, a delay of the response to the request until a series of insertion sequences has been done: [Q [q–a] [q–a] A].

I'm proposing that one place where delay sequences built as insertion sequences go is after certain sorts of first pair parts. And we have an obvious sense of why delay sequences would go for certain sorts of things done as first pair parts, i.e., those delay devices happen by virtue of somebody 'springing' one sort of first pair part on another party. Now, someone who is going to do such a first pair part can produce their talk in such a way as to avoid the consequence of having 'sprung' their invitation, request, etc., on another. They can do other sorts of first pair parts before the one that they're intending to do. So, for example, before an invitation they can *pre-signal* 'invitation to come.' And they do that with adjacency pairs. Instead of saying "Would you like to come over to dinner tonight?" they can say "What are you doing tonight?" where the answer to that controls whether they're going to do the invitation. And the person who gets "What are you doing?" can assess it so as to see that an invitation is forthcoming and deal with the possible invitation in a variety of ways, before the invitation is ever done. So that's another way of *expanding* what could be a pair into a larger sequence; characteristically, again, the larger sequence being composed of pairs. The point being that in talking about adjacency pairs, while we're in the first instance talking about two-utterance sequences, it turns out that when we come to consider larger sequences, then not a few larger sequences are composed of series of, or nested sets of, adjacency pairs.

Let me turn now to another sort of thing. I've talked about building long sentence-utterances and proposed that, via adjacency pairs, they are built in such a way as to provide for others to talk in their course. Now, there is one interesting phenomenon, that is characterizable by contrast with the way that 'utterances are normally constructed out of sentences.' It involves utterances that are specifically grammatical but not sententially grammatical, i.e., they are *grammatical non-sentences*, e.g., phrases and clauses. For example, the clause "Because I wanted to," or the phrase "To get home," as total

utterances. A kind of question is, are the grammatical non-sentences characterizable as to their positioning in conversation? It turns out that they are. And it turns out again that they are characterizable by reference to the adjacency pair organization, their presence being as 'answers,' i.e., as *second pair parts*. Answers are lawfully, and if not always then very commonly, not full sentences.

Focussing on second pair parts – for example, answers or greeting returns or second closings or acceptances, etc. – we can focus on them via one altogether general problem in the construction of utterances in conversation. We characterize that problem in the following way: A general problem for *positioning an utterance* in a conversation is showing with that utterance why you are producing it now. If that sounds a little puzzling, then consider for example, that when you say "Hello" at the beginning of a conversation, the account for saying "Hello" is that it's the beginning of the conversation. So by putting an utterance like that where you put it, you provide an explanation for why you said that thing. And there are whole ranges of ways whereby parties position their utterances. By 'position' I mean that they show, in an utterance's construction, that they know where they're doing it, and why they're doing it then and there. Things like using "too" at the end of an utterance. For example, A is asked a question, "What did you do last night?" A says "I went to the movies," to which someone else might say "I did, too," thereby locating, not that they went with A, but that they're putting their answer after somebody else's answer. That it's "too" has nothing to do with 'going with,' it has to do with where this utterance is placed.

Now, a question is, are there any means for building a class of utterances in such a way as to have why the utterance is done now be made available? It appears that the only class of utterances that needs no extrinsic characterization of why it's done now, i.e., which always has an explanation available for why it's done now, is second pair parts. Second pair parts are done now by virtue of first pair parts having been done just before.

I want to very briefly mention another sort of organization for conversation, and that is *storytelling*. I'll merely observe for now that the organization of storytelling in conversation uses adjacency pairs. Characteristically stories begin with something that we call a '*story preface*' which contains varieties of information and does a range of businesses, of which a perfectly prototypical instance is "Something really weird happened to me on the way to work this morning." That announces more or less that I want to tell a story, and it tells various things about the story relevant to listening to the story. For example, it tells how to listen to the story to find out when it will have been over; where, say, the term "weird" as a characterizing adjective in the story preface gives a listener a something with which to monitor the story so as to see, when something 'weird' has been told, then that's what the teller was intending to tell as the 'story,' and until then the story isn't finished.

Now, the speaker of a story preface stops when the preface – typically a sentence just like the one I gave – is done, and thereafter other parties speak. And they either accept the offer or request to tell a story, or reject it. And

among the occurrent ways of accepting the offer/request to tell a story is to do something like "What?" which is an adjacency pair first pair part. The story then can be delivered as an answer to the question. So, I'm saying that built in to the organization of storytelling in conversation (not necessarily the organization of, e.g., written stories or those told not in conversation) we get the insertion of adjacency pairs at a locatable spot. And that can be contrasted to, for example, the topical organization of conversation. One might say about the topical organization of conversation that for sure, for lots of topical talk, things like questions and answers, offers and acceptances, etc., will occur. But one might not be able to say about the organization of topical talk that topics begin with or end with adjacency pairs, or that adjacency pairs must go somewhere in any topic, as one may be able to say, e.g., for the overall structural organization of conversation that conversations begin with adjacency pairs and are brought to a close with adjacency pairs; that for turn-taking organization the means for selecting next speakers involve the use of adjacency pairs; that for story organization the preface response will involve adjacency pair organization, etc.[1]

Let me bring this all to a close by returning in a fashion to what I began with, *overall structural organization of conversation*. I said that conversations begin with adjacency pairs, i.e., greetings. Now, that use of adjacency pairs can be given a rather more extended scope than 'at the beginning of conversation.' Consider the following sort of problem: How, for somebody you're not eligible to be in conversation with, can you so talk to them as to indicate to them that while you're talking to them you're not trying to get into conversation with them? Are there means for doing that? Yes. The means for doing that is the use of adjacency pairs. You can say to someone, "Do you know the way to Main Street?" or "What time is it?" or "What time does the plane leave?," where, in producing one of those without a greeting, one is indicating that if the other will answer this, they are not committed to being in a conversation. So that we have not merely the use of adjacency pairs for beginning conversations, but also the use of adjacency pairs without greetings for doing something that is specifically to be 'not a conversation.'

Also, if you're dealing with someone who is eligible to converse with you, and you're trying to indicate "Let's acknowledge that we see each other without getting into a conversation," then again, adjacency pairs are used. In this case, a greeting. Exchanges like "Hi." "Hi." So that for *minimal exchanges* that will not become a conversation – though of course a conversation can turn out to happen – adjacency pairs are again used.

Furthermore, one can indeed find types of things which are somewhat like conversation, which might be considered conversation, which involve extended talk between two or more than two parties, which consist wholly or almost wholly of adjacency pairs. For example, an *interrogation* of a witness at a trial, or an *interview*. Where a question is, are there other types of

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[1]The materials from the start of the discussion of storytelling to this point are taken from the beginning of lecture 2.

organization for conversation which can also characterize an entire possible conversation?

I hope I've shown the following: Out of the apparent morass of talk we can find a sort of thing, the adjacency pair, i.e., two-utterance, adjacently placed sequences, which are massively present – directly and through expansions – which are used for a whole range of types of organization for conversation, and can be at least initially characterized in fairly simple ways. We can then get some idea that while conversations are not always composed of sequences, for the sequences that they are to some extent composed of, a great many of those are, commonly, adjacency pairs.

Lecture 2
Adjacency pairs: Distribution in conversation; A single instance of a Q–A pair

Last time I ran through a consideration of the scope of presence of adjacency pairs, more or less in terms of types of organizations for conversation. For at least some of the types of organizations I mentioned, it would take at least a complete lecture series to lay out approximately what we now know about them. For our purposes here I wanted only to be noticing that in various types, some of which obviously are more or less central to conversation, adjacency pairs can or must go at key spots. And that's one way of characterizing the scope of operation of adjacency pairs, i.e., in terms of a series of types of organizations which involve at some structural point in them the presence of adjacency pairs.

I want to address another way of doing the same sort of task, i.e., locating the presence of adjacency pairs in conversation. This way is naturally subsequent to the former way because it already supposes that we can extract the class 'adjacency pairs' out of the particular types; greetings, question–answer, etc. Having extracted the adjacency-pair aspects of the pair types from the pairs, we move naturally to another possible way of locating the scope of presence of adjacency pairs, which is to attack the question directly. Can we come up with what we call a *'distribution rule'* for the occurrence of adjacency pairs? That is, a rule which says where such things can go or must go?

Let me first notice that if we're interested in the possibility of a *basicness* of a type of organization, then there are various ways of attacking it. Now, one possible way is in terms of the other types of organization. That is to say, if you had a type of organization and various other types of organization, and you wanted to say that they weren't just a list of types, but that, say, one type was more basic than the others, then a natural way to do it would be to show that it was involved in the operation of some other types of organization which weren't involved in *its* organization. So, for example, if it turned out that adjacency pairs operated in storytelling organization, but storytelling organization didn't operate in adjacency pairs, then adjacency pairs would be basic in some way to storytelling, and not the reverse. And maybe you could layer the whole set of them in some fashion, coming up with a yet more basic one; something which was essential to adjacency pairs, for which adjacency pairs were not essential, etc. So, instead of just talking about a list of types of organizations, we could have a way of integrating the types of organizations.

That would be one way to attack the question of how basic is adjacency pair organization.

Another way is in terms of a distribution rule. Where can a thing go? Now, if we were to look at the particular types of pairs rather than at the class 'adjacency pairs,' there's a way in which, say, greetings might be more or less basic to conversation in that they go at the beginnings. But they plainly can be dropped from conversational beginnings, and furthermore there are things that substitute for greetings, i.e., instead of saying "Hi" you can say "How are you" which is not a greeting but something slightly different. So you can't say that greetings go in any conversation; they don't. And if that were a criterion for their being basic, then they're not basic. Further, they can only go in some places in a conversation, i.e., their positioning is *restricted*. And furthermore, having been done, they can only be redone in very limited ways, i.e., we can have a telephone conversation that goes, A: "Hello." B: "Hello!" A: "Hi!" B: "Hi." But more or less, once they've been completed they're not to be redone. There are exceptions to that, e.g., if you're talking over the phone and it seems like the other party has been cut off for the moment, you may go "Hello?" Or if they say "Wait a minute I've got to do something" and then come back, they may say "Hello," though they don't have to. In any event, the positioning of things like greetings is restrictable, and the same goes for things like closings, which are also restricted.

With that sort of a preface, can we construct a distribution rule, not for this or that pair type, but for adjacency pairs as a class? A first thing is, we're interested in a distribution rule for adjacency pair first pair parts, i.e., the first greeting, the question, whatever. We only need that, because the distribution rule for adjacency pair second pair parts is simply that they go immediately after a first pair part. So we have to find where a first pair part can go. Notice that we're not going to be saying that *every* first pair part can go in any of those positions. We want that *some* first pair part can go in any such position. So, for example, "Hello" would be ruled out for some of the places where adjacency pair first pair parts can go, e.g., it wouldn't go after a story preface (unless the preface was designed to to elicit it, e.g., "You know what Dr Green finally said to me this morning?" "Hello?" "Yeah!"). So we want a rule for first pair parts that doesn't have to allow for every first pair part, but for some first pair part. We're trying to catch all of the places that a first pair part can go.

The rule that seems to obtain is extremely neat: An adjacency pair first pair part can go *anywhere* in conversation, *except* directly after a first pair part, *unless* the second first pair part is the first pair part for an insertion sequence. So: Anywhere . . . except . . . unless. If that's true, then there's an extraordinarily interesting sort of aspect to it, i.e., the only thing that bounds the usage of adjacency pair first pair parts is the use of adjacency pair first pair parts. That obviously makes them as general as anything could possibly be for conversation. It's as perfect a freedom-of-occurrence rule as you would want – that also contains orderliness to it. That is, if it said that an adjacency pair first pair part can go anywhere at all, then there would be a tremendous

undercutting of the orderliness of adjacency pairs themselves, because instead of doing an adjacency pair second pair part following the first pair part, you could always do a first pair part, and then you could have just a possible string of adjacency pair first pair parts. So if you're going to have as total a freedom of occurrence as you can, with the orderliness that the adjacency pair organization has, you've got to have a restriction.

And even with the restriction, the 'anywhere' is much more general than one might suppose. 'Anywhere' would initially sound like 'on any utterance completion.' But that's not true. Adjacency pair first pair parts can go before utterance completions. So, for example, if a party is having trouble in the course of an utterance, i.e., can't find some words, then other parties can attempt a completion of the utterance by guessing the words that he's looking for. And the indication that one is guessing thereby makes a question of it, i.e., an adjacency pair first pair part, to which the other responds "Yeah" or "No." So we can have an adjacency pair stuck into an utterance, begun before an utterance is completed. Or, for example, last time I talked about the building of long utterances, where speakers characteristically provide places where they use, quotes, question intonation to provide a spot for another person to talk in the course of that utterance, doing an "Uh huh," giving us a little adjacency pair in the middle of somebody's utterance. And from those, one can begin to consider that there might be lots of places within the course of an utterance in which adjacency pairs perfectly well go. The 'anywhere' is, then, larger than it might seem to be – where, were it merely 'after any utterance completion' it would still be extraordinarily general.

Let me just give what looks like a possible exception to the 'unless' proposal: repeated questions. These might seem to be first pair parts that do follow first pair parts which are not, as the rule provides, insertion sequences: Someone asks, "What did you do?" and then, after a bit, repeats, "What did you *do?*" We note that repeated questions do not follow a first pair part, they follow the *pause* after a first pair part. So they aren't an exception. The rule doesn't have to be amended to say 'Adjacency pair first pair parts can go anywhere except after a first pair part, unless either an insertion sequence or a repeated question.'

We now have a quite different sort of proposal as to the scope of possible presence of adjacency pairs than that which I developed last time. They can go anywhere in conversation, and that 'anywhere' does not have to be characterized in terms of other types of organization of conversation. They can go after utterances, in utterances, at the beginnings of conversation, in the middle of stories, anywhere, by reference to the distribution rule. Only that they can't go after first pair parts unless they are insertion sequence first pair parts. (That version of the scope of presence suggests asking about lots of types of organization, what scope of presence do *they* have? And I take it that it would be extremely rare to find a thing bounded only by such a thing as itself.)

Now, if adjacency pair first pair parts can go anywhere-with-the-restriction, and if, as I earlier proposed, adjacency pair first pair parts can be used to select

next speakers, then we have something rather impressive that falls out. A kind of reasonable question to ask about conversation is why do people who are not talking, listen? The temptation is to begin to come up with particular sorts of reasons, like, they listen because the other person is saying something interesting, or they listen because the other person is a relative, or this or that sort of reason. Now, the world is simply not built that way. For conversation plainly, it could hardly be the case that the basis for people listening to others talking is that they're interested. If one is doing something like a sociology of conversation, what one wants to do is to see what the system itself provides as bases, motives, or what have you, for doing something essential to the system. And listening is essential if people are to talk in such a way as to keep this system orderly. For example, talking in such a way as to have no gap/no overlap between utterances.

So the question is, what, in the system, provides motives for people listening? Let's suppose only that someone who is a party in a conversation is willing to talk if they're selected to talk by somebody else. That's all we need to suppose about a party for our purposes now. It may be that we can truly suppose much more, but we may reasonably be able to suppose at least this, such that if a party isn't willing to speak when he's been selected, then there are ways of taking care of him. Now, if parties are willing to talk whenever they've been selected by another, of course they'll have to listen to whatever talk might select them, in order to find that they've been selected. And if adjacency pair first pair parts can go anywhere, then it falls out that in order to find that they've been selected, people have to listen to everything.

Given that turn-taking moves one utterance at a time, an utterance that selects a next can select any next of the various people present and not speaking. And since adjacency pair first pair parts can go anywhere, then any given utterance can do that selection, i.e., any next utterance might contain a first pair part, or indeed, any current utterance might be turned into one. So, for example, when one thinks about 'questions' as prototypical adjacency pair first pair parts, one may think of them as the object that one wanted to build from the first. And there are plenty of instances where that's a perfectly reasonable way to think about them. For example, when one begins an utterance with a 'Wh' word – 'where,' 'when,' etc. – then it's obvious from the beginning that the speaker is trying to build a question. There are, however, ways of turning utterances that are not built as questions from the first, into questions, by doing something at the end of them. So you can't examine the first word of an utterance, see that it's not going to be a question, and decide it's not going to select a next speaker, and since you don't want to talk unless you're selected, you therefore don't have to listen to it. If the rule were that one had to signal first pair parts right from the beginning, there would then be an exception to having to listen to everything. But it's possible to turn utterances into questions – i.e., into things that select – at their end. You can take pretty much any sentence and say, "Isn't that so, Joe?" And things like "Isn't that so, Joe?" are indeed used by someone when they figure that Joe hasn't been listening. The phenomenon, called 'tags' in linguistics –

"isn't it?," "aren't we?," etc., items that are appended to sentences, making questions out of them – is a device that turns an utterance into a first pair part, providing at its end that a next should deal with it.

Further, there are ancillary devices which provide that even where it's indicated in an utterance from its beginning that it was addressed to one of the present parties, nonetheless the others should have listened. Someone who hasn't listened to "Hey Joe, what do you think about this?" by virtue of not being Joe, may be 'caught,' i.e., Joe answers and then the one who asked Joe now says "What do *you* think, Harry?" such that Harry should have been listening to the question addressed to Joe.

Again, then, these things can go anywhere, and need not indicate their presence from the beginning of an utterance but can occur right at the end, so as long as one is willing to talk if one is selected, one may need to listen to any utterance in the conversation. There is no place you can say, "Well, I can rest now." Furthermore, that holds when you have just talked, since there are specific techniques for selecting the one who just talked as the one who talks next, e.g., at the end of your utterance someone can say "Why?" So, where I started by saying that any non-speaker has to listen to the talk of others, it's also true, bizarre as it may sound, that any speaker has to listen to his own talk because somebody may take him up on it. The motivations for listening, then, are built not only for non-speakers but for speakers as well.

From this consideration of the scope of presence of adjacency pairs, we have a fully general motivation for people listening. Which is then to say that the system for conversation does not leave it to whatever goodwill abounds in the world, to make people responsible for listening, but that the distribution of adjacency pairs serve as a fundamental mechanism for keeping people attentive in conversation.

I'm now going to switch gears altogether and talk a bit about a small fragment of data. For one thing, this will provide some idea of the sorts of materials and the sorts of considerations that underlie what seem to be rather sweeping generalizations.

> *Emma* :　Are you the oldest one in the class?
> *Bernice* :　Oh, by far.

This comes from a telephone conversation between two middle-aged women, one of whom has gone back to college part time, and is telling the other about a class she's taking. I'm going to pick at it and see what we might get out of it.

If we start with the answer "Oh, by far," then there are a series of obvious alternative answers, many of which would be "Yes" and variants of "Yes" – and one would consider this answer as a 'yes answer of a sort.' We could ask what sorts of differences are there between "Oh, by far" and "Yes," and see where that leads us. At least one obvious difference is that "Oh, by far" says not merely "Yes," but also, "I'm sure that that's so," where for just "Yes," under some versions of what the question could mean, there can be an

issue as to "How do you know?" Now, that is undercut when we start to consider what the question means. That is to say, if one imagines that 'the oldest one in the class' is a way of characterizing her position in the class from a set of positions, of which 'the oldest one,' 'the second oldest,' 'the third oldest,' 'one of the oldest ones,' 'the youngest one,' etc., are alternatives, then there could be issues about "How do you know?" But 'the oldest one in the class' is not a way of asking a position in the class like 'third oldest,' it's asking about a position like "Are you the only cop in the class?," "Are you the only Negro in the class?," "Are you the only woman in the class?," i.e., it's a unique position. And for such a position, if one does not think it's true, then one doesn't ask that question at all, i.e., if the person is thought by you to be, e.g., the third oldest one in the class, not the oldest, then you might ask it for third graders, but otherwise you don't ask it.

So that what seems like a kind of obvious semantics turns out to be wrong for our language. It's one you hear around, and it says: Take "the oldest one in the class" and find its meaning by considering the set of alternatives to it, where the alternatives can easily be derived from it by just considering some obvious way in which it is part of a set of positions having to do with 'oldness.' That's wrong for our language in the sense that people who say to someone "Are you the oldest one in the class?" don't say "Are you the third oldest one in the class?" Now, *alternatives* are an obvious way to go about locating what something is doing or what something means. But the question of alternatives does not have an easy answer. It is, for any given thing, an empirical issue and not simply a transparent semantic issue to be gotten by lexical considerations. In saying what I figure to be the kinds of things that are alternatives here, both in the question and in the answer, I'm saying something that has to be discovered from a consideration of the way the world works that produces these kinds of sequences. This obviously produces a massively complex set of problems in analyzing things like a small question–answer sequence. For each one of them, if we're going to use alternatives to find out what it means, then we're going to have to go into a discovery of what the alternatives are.

So, asking what in the world such a question as "Are you the oldest one in the class?" is doing, we find that it is a realization of a device for locating the possible uniqueness of a person; that being a feature of circumstances in some situation. And there are other, altogether equivalent questions that are realizations of the same thing, that look, in a fashion, nothing like it, e.g., "Are you the only black executive at such-and-such insurance company?" Where the *sequences* look very much alike, and look nothing like one that goes: "Are you the oldest one in the class?" "No." "Are you the second oldest one?" etc. This latter is, again, the sort of thing that you might ask an eight-year-old. And that has to do with that ages for eight-year-olds are altogether different objects than ages for adults, a thing that is more or less formally noticed in our culture, in the sense that if you look at the way people describe ages, then they describe them differently at different ages. For the youngest, they use days, then weeks, then months, then years. And there are

times when any other measure is inappropriate; you don't say "I'm 270 months old" and you don't say "He's a third of a year old." Someone can be six and a half years old, where people don't tend to be forty-three and a half years old, nor do they tend to be a half a year old but are six months old. So that there's a place where you might well say "Are you the second oldest one in the class?" because ages are calibrated in such a way as to provide a differentiation. There are, then, a range of materials that need to be brought to bear on considerations about the domain of a thing like "the oldest one in the class." It can have to do with a unique position and it can have to do only with that kids are more involved in very local age considerations than others are.

As to the answer, "Oh, by far," it says "The question you asked me is correct. I am what you're supposing I am." And by using "by far" one indicates how one would know it, i.e., looking around the class, without any particular interest in finding out the ages, she could age herself relatively to everyone else – which is after all not a thing that many in a class would do. But there are some people who can do it just like that, by virtue of that it's a 'by far.' That is to say, 'by far' is *glance-determinable*. And if it's glance-determinable, then that's how you could have known it. Whereas if you say you're a month older than other people in the class, then there's a question of how do you know? Did you ask everybody what their age was? So, "by far" says 'a glance will tell,' and she didn't have to have any particular interest in the matter to know it. It's visible, like anything else in the room, that she is older by far. And as she knows it, so does anybody else in the class know it.

That the answer says how one knows what one is saying is a common feature of answers. So we get things like "I used to think . . . but I just found out . . ." or "I was just reading about that and . . ." or some other way of showing how you know. For 'age,' if you use "Oh, by far" then you've provided how you would know, since if it's "by far" then it's glance-determinable. It doesn't require a procedure used to locate everybody's ages – though you could say "It's funny, I happened to look into the records and it turns out I am the oldest. I wouldn't have thought so, but I am," which would also say that it doesn't matter for what is being asked about. And once we begin to have that kind of context we also begin to have a real interest in the question. It's not like Emma is doing a survey of the people she talks to, to find out if whatever they happen to be doing they're the oldest one doing it. But, in talking about the person's situation in a class, one of the things relevant is whether they occupy some unique position; some position which may, furthermore, isolate them from the rest. So that subsequent to this may be "How do you get along with them?" – 'them' obviously not appropriately being the people who are a week or a month less than you, but who are now of a different generation than you. Where again, for any unique position, if you get a "Yes" answer, you can go on to "How do you get on with them?" the 'them' being all those others who are, not younger than you, but are "by far" younger than you – or white, or male, or whatever.

This looks rather un-neat, in the sense that while a semantics that looked as neat as adjacency pairs looks would involve things like 'the oldest one' being part of a set of which the next item was 'the second oldest,' 'the third oldest,' etc., it turns out that we're going to have to find the alternatives to 'the oldest' from places that are really very different; not 'age' at all, but something else. But it's by reference to those things that the very use of the question occurs. That is to say, when talking about a co-conversationalist's life, being in a unique position in something is a *distinct feature of a life*. And a first sort of thing that somebody wants to know when you tell them about some situation you're in, for which a unique position is possible, is do you have it? Then you're not talking about the class, but about the class as seen by someone older than anyone else in it. And since the person who asked is approximately the same age as the other, you're now talking to their possible interest in the class: "Is it a kind of thing I could go to, too?" So that the experience now being reported on, "Yes, I'm unique in the class," can be reported on by reference to whether people like us can go there, have chances there, etc., as compared to it's not a place for people like us. For one, then, the asker, apart from any interest in the other's circumstances, can have the talk go on by reference to her own possible interest in whether it's a possible something for her.

Now that's a funny business. You might say, "Well why in the world should it be something for her?" However, if one person is reporting on a something that the other isn't doing, it's extremely difficult to make it *not* a possible thing for the other. I leave aside situations in which as soon as someone proposes something they say "You'd love it" without regard to who the "you" that they're talking to is; that being one conventional appropriate way to talk about whatever you're talking about. But pretty much an enormous range of circumstances that are 'my own' in the first place are told of to any particular person one is telling it to, by reference to whether it's something the other should do or shouldn't do. And that turns on a rather general feature of the organization of conversation, *'recipient design,'* i.e., you should, as much as possible, design whatever you're telling about, even if it's the most intimate parts of your particular life, with an orientation to the other. So they ask you about something that they ask about because *you're* involved in it, and you answer it by reference to *their* possible involvement in it. Which makes for a funny sort of scene, in the sense that they're being nice to you in asking you more about this class that you're in that they couldn't care less about, and then you spend your time telling them about how wonderful the class would be for them – which may involve characterizing it in a way that has nothing to do with how interesting it is to you.

That is to say, not uncommonly you characterize something in one interaction, in a way that has nothing much to do with how you would characterize it for somebody who is differently related to you. Consider, for example, telling your parents about a movie you saw, that you're now telling them they should see. How you describe it to them as compared to how you describe it to a friend whom you're also telling to go see it, are quite different.

You tell your parents grounds for going to see it which are not your grounds for having gone, or for telling your friends to go see it, etc. They having in the first place asked you about it, not particularly because they're interested in seeing it but because you did, so they'll ask you about it in order to show that they're oriented to you, you now do the same in reverse. And nothing happens.

Lecture 3

A single instance of a phone-call opening; Caller–Called, etc.

For a good part of this time I will stay involved in a particular piece of material. I mentioned earlier that adjacency pairs are a class of classes, the classes that are members of it being various of the pair sequences; for example, the greeting exchange. Now, one of the things about its being a class of classes is that the classes can also have developments and versions of the general adjacency pair features. Which is to say that we haven't taken care of the mechanisms involved in each type of adjacency pair when we characterize them as adjacency pairs and give some characterization of what adjacency pairs are. We want, then, to look at all sorts of little fragments and see if we can learn things both about adjacency pairs and about particular ones, and then see where learning something about them leads us. All of which comes down to this utterly typical actual fragment, a phone conversation.

> Lana : Hello:,
> Gene : I:s, Maggie there.
> Lana : 'hh Uh who is calling,
> Gene : Uh this's Gene:.Novaki.

Now, there is a rule for telephone-call beginnings which may sound awfully trivial but has turned out to have varieties of interesting theoretical implications. And that is, while there is not a general rule for face to face interaction which says who speaks first (in some societies there is; e.g., lower status people among the Wolof always speak first in a two-party conversation) there is a rule for telephone conversation which is 'Answerer speaks first.' Now, that seems to be, like, how else could you have it? And we've had people play with it, saying "Hello" right off, before the answerer gets a chance to, and it's exceedingly disorienting. But the rule could be otherwise; caller might have to speak first. That would obviously have some interest; you could hang up on whoever you didn't want to speak to before you had given any indication of your presence. But in any event, 'Answerer speaks first' is the general rule for telephone conversation. And that's what happens here.

But now there's a funny thing. The response is not a "Hello." So we don't have a greeting exchange. Now, what to do with that? There are ranges of obvious ways we could go about it, which are conventional social science ways to do things. So, for example, we all, after all, know that any rule fails sometimes. So let's just count this as one of the variations in what is after all

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some kind of distribution of conformities, and don't worry about it unless the number gets too large. If the number stays rather small then we still have the rule. If the number gets very large then there can be a question about the rule, and we might not talk of it as a rule but as something like an option. Alternatively, we could go into the deviations, not as a sheerly statistical thing, but in terms of that some of the non-appearances may specifically be violations; where there may be a rule which says if it doesn't occur it's a violation. And then one could look into the mechanisms involved in preventing that violation. Or, quite another sort of thing that has become reasonably fashionable is to see what the gains are of doing a violation – not focussing on the mechanisms that prevent it, but the gains of doing it. And there are obviously varieties of gains to doing a violation; for one, simple things like, among the best ways to insult somebody is, when they say "Hello" don't say "Hello" back. And looking at violations in terms of how they're dealt with and the gains of doing them could lead somewhere, in that it would be looking into particular cases.

Now, one of the strategies that we've adopted involves using some of these occurrences as possible indications of more complicated rule systems. I'm not suggesting that that's a peculiar approach, because lots of people would try to do a similar task: Start out with the simplest rule system and then elaborate it as seems legitimate and necessary – 'legitimate' in the sense that you're not merely trying to save the initial rule.

So, having noticed no "Hello," a question one asks is, are there places where that happens? It's not "What is *he* doing with this?" but, can I find out where there are places – hopefully in the first instance places that have an apparent similarity to this one – where that's a kind of regular happening? If I can find such places, then maybe I can see that there's some rule for them. If you look at the beginnings of telephone conversations, it turns out that this "Hello"-absence-given-a-"Hello"-presence is not at all odd. We can then look for a way to characterize it, to see if we can find terms which locate it as having a sort of generality.

Now, the first "Hello" is done by answerer, so it's caller who didn't produce the second "Hello." Which is to say that for telephone conversations having this event, "Hello" not followed by another "Hello," it will be caller who doesn't do it. That's a very big jump in terms of locating the possibility of application. We then can look to places where caller doesn't do it, and see if there is something involved in it. And a place where caller doesn't do it is where it later turns out that the person who was the answerer is not the person the caller called. Caller is calling some called, and the answerer is not the called. That raises a possible exception to the 'return a greeting with a greeting' rule in the case of telephone conversations. Caller need not do a greeting return if answerer is not equivalent to called.

Just constructing a rule like that, ad hoc, is not a happy event. You don't like to have rules hanging around which have no reason for existing in the structure of conversation. If you only had a rule involving caller, called and answerer, it would seem for sure you're making it up, whatever anybody says.

So, having found that there's a possible rule especially relating caller and answerer-not-called, you're led to see if there are other such rules. If there are, then this rule we just introduced may turn out to be one instance of a class of rules regulating telephone conversations in particular.

We already have a rule which says answerer speaks first. Now we begin to get a sense of answerer being a status in the enterprise of talking on the phone, where there will be a series of terms that apply to people in a way that has them as *categories* and not merely the person they are, somebody with a name. By responding to the phone they put themselves into a position in the world, of which such a position is answerer. A question is, who are answerers? Well, you would say anybody who answers the phone. It's not that kind of thing because, for one, there are people who could pick up the phone and answer it, who don't. They're standing there, the phone rings, they just let it ring. And also, of the set of potential answerers, not all of them go and answer the phone. So that the achieved answerer comes out of some operation, and the question is, can we characterize the operation and get a non-merely descriptive statement – i.e., not merely 'someone who answers the phone' – about what an answerer is? Forgetting about professional establishments for the moment, it may be something like this: *Any, and only, possible calleds answer the phone.* Which would immediately take care of why somebody who is in somebody else's home or office can have the phone ring and not answer it. They are not a possible called.

If we have that possible calleds answer the phone, then we have at least a beginning account of "Hello." The "Hello" could be how a possible called talks to those who may well turn out to have been calling them. Then it was a greeting. So by virtue of your being a possible called you produce the greeting. Notice in that regard, an interesting thing. If a non-possible called answers the phone, as of course they physically can, then they don't say "Hello." They say things like "This is the Jones residence." Butlers do the same, and butlers are of course non-possible calleds, only answerers. And secretaries can also do that – now getting into professional establishments. So, while the lady who answers the phone at Magnin's or some such place may perfectly well answer the phone a hundred times a day, each of the times she knows she's not a called, she's just an answerer, that now having become a position in the world. So the answerer who says "Hello" is perhaps exhibiting their status as a possible called.

However, this possible called may not be the intended called for this caller. What, then, is to happen? Obviously, among the things that can happen is that the caller gets into some talk with the answerer-not-called, quotes, before getting to the called. And one has that status of a not-called-but-talked-to in a conversation, the size of which is distinctly variable and which involves orientations to a relationship that supposedly exists outside of this conversation. Though it's interesting that it can be a relationship that exists in no other way than through conversations like this. So that if you call an office twice a day for 11 years you may well eventually be getting into intimate conversation of sorts with the person who answers the phone, they having developed

this more-than-answerer relationship with you. And that's interesting because it says that the answerer status turns out to be a developmentally removable one. So that, having started in some situation as an answerer, over time one can become something which is different, and in some obvious ways better, than that, which is not-called-but-talked-to. Where the basis for that happening is somebody making it an occasion of I'm calling so-and-so, and finally I get to talk to his wife, mother, etc., "I've heard so much about you." That is, you can make an insert of talk to the answerer-possible-called. (And let me say as passing advice, among the cheapest ways of getting yourself known to be really really swell is to talk to answerers.) In any event, that answerer can go from answerer to not-called-but-talked-to is of some interest because if you're not treated as that, then you're an answerer in a structural position in a hierarchy, and you can treat that as being not well treated.

Let me just note that not-called-but-talked-to persons have that preserved in the conversation. It isn't treated as though they are the real called, or insofar as one is talking to them and may talk to someone else later, one is not differentiating among calleds – as one might not differentiate among calleds when, e.g., one calls home to talk to whoever answers the phone and whoever else is there. Then there may be no single called. But if there is a called, then, though other people get talked to, and at length, doesn't make them the or a called. And one of the things involved in that is when persons before the called get off the phone – the called being the one who will, among other things, carry the conversation to its close – then the others don't say "Goodbye." There's no exchange of goodbyes in what has been in some fashion a conversation between caller and promoted answerer, though an exchange of goodbyes is more or less an obliged end to a conversation otherwise.

Further, there are a series of obligations in the answerer position. You cannot, for example, as a possible called pick up the phone, you say "Hello," they say "Is Mary there?" you say "This isn't Mary" and hang up, and Mary's sitting next to you. The obligations taken on by persons who take an answering position vary, depending to some extent on what caller demands; callers often demanding very elaborate things from answerers – to whom they have no relationship otherwise in the world. It's not simply that answerers have an obligation not to hang up, such that they can just yell into the room "Mary, it's for you!" They may have to take messages, they may have to go look for people, they may have to call back, they may even end up substituting for the called, e.g., if somebody is being called to pick somebody up, if they're not here, why don't you do it. And this answerer position with its obligations is the minimal answerer position. It turns out it's become the minimal answerer position by virtue of the possible transform onto it of not-called-but-talked-to. That means that when somebody chooses to treat you as just an answerer, then they're picking the lowest thing they can pick for you. And people do specifically get angry on particular occasions when someone who should have reason to not treat them as an answerer treats

them as an answerer, not even saying "Hello" but asking to speak to called.

Now there is a choice involved in not responding to the offered "Hello" with at least a "Hello." And what's involved is that persons have learned to do something kind of neat, which is to use just their hearing to decide who they're talking to – or at least to decide that they're not talking to the one they called. So that when you pick up the phone and say "Hello," one of the things that's given away with it is your voice that can be inspected to see whether you're the one they want to talk to. You might well imagine its being done with a tune, and lots of people do it with their name. But it's perfectly okay in our world to do it with "Hello." Various cultures that use telephones think that's ridiculous, in that it makes such work for the caller of having to figure out who it is that said "Hello," whereas if all potential calleds answered with their name, that wouldn't be a task.

And notice that if an answerer-not-possible-called speaks and doesn't do "Jones residence" but does "Hello," then that one may get "Who is this?" where the caller figures that he can take any "Hello" and see who it is, for the place he's calling. So one of the reasons you don't say "Hello" if you're not a possible called is so as not to give the caller something that they have got to work with to try to figure out who this is. If you say "Hello" they'll figure that you're someone whose voice they can use to figure out who it is, or who it's not. And the reason they do that is that there are some not-called persons whom they are obliged to go through talk with, and one of the things they want to find out is, is this one of them even if it's not their called? And the "Hello" is an announcement that I'm a possible called; ignore me at your peril, and recognize me from my voice.

Now, in our materials he listens to the voice and finds it's not the one he wants, whom he then asks for. That he asks for her can reveal that he knows the other one isn't the one he called. But there are ways of putting in this question which retain that this person may well be the called. So, for example, if you use a title plus last name rather than a first name, that locates that you may not know the person and thereby may not know whether the person who answered is that person. It can even be done with first names, e.g., "Is there a Jerry there?" or your can stumble over the first name in such a way as to indicate that you don't know them. Now, the issue of whether the caller knows the one they're calling doesn't merely make for the possibility that the person who answered is going to turn out to be the called, but can have another import. That is to say, part of the use of showing that you know the one you're calling is to establish your rights to call. And the use of a first name is at least a generic way of doing that.

So, having listened to the "Hello" and found that this person who answered isn't the called, he then makes the request for the called, using called's first name. Now notice that we get a nice *insertion sequence* done:

Gene :   I:s, Maggie there.
Lana :   ˙hh Uh who is calling,

Gene :   Uh <u>th</u>is's Gene:. Novaki.
                   (0.3)
Lana :   Uh just a mom'nt,

That is to say, while answerers can get ignored, they themselves have positions from which they can operate to get caller to do various things for them. They control, for now, access to the called. And that gives them some rights relative to caller.

I want to look at the "Uh"'s that precede the utterances. "Uh" occurs in millions of places in conversation. We know some things about it. We know, for example, why it occurs at the beginning of an utterance. A characteristic form of an utterance turns out to be "Uh," pause, sentence. Why is the "Uh" there? It's there in order to permit the pause to be after you started talking, rather than before. There being now a difference between a silence in the conversation and the pause in somebody's talk. So if you're going to pause you do "Uh" first, capturing that pause inside your talk. And in doing that, you show that you are indeed taking the floor. If that's what "Uh" does, then it can be informative about such a thing as that a person who hasn't yet spoken knows that they're going to speak. So, for example, if you've been asked a question, until you start to talk there could be an issue of whether you see you've been asked a question. One can't suppose the silence indicates that you're definitely working out the answer. When you've been selected to do an answer you first off show you know you've been selected, and a way in which you declare your recognition that the floor is yours is by doing "Uh."

One place, then, where one would expect "Uh" to occur a lot is at the beginning of second pair parts; those being the places where one has been selected to do things, and has the floor by virtue of having been selected to talk next, the problem being, are you taking the floor, do you know you have the floor. We would want, then, to do an investigation as to whether "Uh" occurs before answers and things like that with some interesting frequency. Now, there is real support for such an argument when one specifies the thing a little bit more sharply, i.e., where one can show that there are alternative – not answers, but alternative *types* of answers, that can go in a slot. So, for example, we have this slightly puzzling answer to the question "Who is calling?," i.e., "Uh this is Gene Novaki." That can hardly mean that the reason he's hesitating is he doesn't know what his name is. If, however, we're proposing that persons are put in a position to do a selection for some sorts of things, there being alternatives, they can then produce the hesitation when they're looking to determine *which* of the alternatives they are going to pick.

So there are alternatives. In this situation, which name he should use, where which name is used has relevance to a variety of things. For one, it's the name that the answerer will give to the called, and on the basis of which the called is then to make a decision whether to come to the phone or not. It can also be via the name that answerer will see that they do or don't know the

caller. Not uncommonly we get, "Hello." "Is Maggie there?" "Who is calling?" "This is Gene." "*Hi* Gene." The name now permitting answerer to say "I recognize you," apart from now getting Maggie and saying "It's Gene." And for names of callers not known to answerer, I think the name gets called into the room with a question intonation on it: "It's Gene?" which says, "Do you know a Gene? There's a Gene calling you. I don't know who it is." So, from the name, it's possible that answerer will recognize the person. And if answerer recognizes the person, then answerer may convey to called that they recognize the person.

So at least, among other things, in the environment of adjacency pairs things like "Uh" – the 'hesitation marks' – may have an interesting lawfulness. And in telephone calls in particular, "Uh" before a pause may be much more important, to indicate that one is still on the line. If you don't do an "Uh" in a long pause, the other party is liable to say "Hello?"

In a way, we're studying something like this: Here's an object introduced into the world 75 years ago. And it's a technical thing which has a variety of aspects to it. It works only with voices, and because of economic considerations people share it, so that there are not yet things where you can call up a particular person and get them, or get nothing. Now what happens is, like any other natural object, a culture secretes itself onto it in its well-shaped ways. It turns this technical apparatus which allows for conversation, into something in which the ways that conversation works are more or less brought to bear. So, there evolves from the introduction of the telephone, a collection of rules about its use which operate in terms of phone-specific identities; caller, called, answerer, and then varieties of such things as that answerer can over time get developed into something with its own social structure involved in it. And here's this initial segment of a conversation, in which all that's happening, so to speak, is that a party is using this line which somebody has now answered, to get to somebody else. That's imaginably a merely media operation. But it has been turned into something eventful in all the lives, with more or less elaborate long range, short range, social considerations involved.

What we're studying, then, is making the phone a reasonable part of the house. Of the set of complaints I had, the phone gives me a new one, i.e., "If your mother doesn't stop forcing me to go through those conversations with her I'll never call you up again" or "If that guy ignores me again I'm going to hang up on him," with attendant attitudes about the person and their group, and all the rest of those things. We can read the world out of the phone conversation as well as we can read it out of anything else we're doing. That's a funny kind of thing, in which each new object becomes the occasion for seeing again what we can see anywhere; seeing people's nastinesses or goodnesses and all the rest, when they do this initially technical job of talking over the phone. This technical apparatus is, then, being made at home with the rest of our world. And that's a thing that's routinely being done, and it's the source for the failures of technocratic dreams that if only we introduced some fantastic new communication machine the world will be transformed.

Where what happens is that the object is made at home in the world that has whatever organization it already has.

[*A woman in the class has been raising her hand for a while.*]
HS: Are you asking a question, or are you bidding, or what?
Q: Well, I was just wondering if we're ever going to get around to topics of conversation.
HS: That's an amazing question. I wouldn't know what you're– What do you have in mind?
Q: I just think that we should get some content. I feel very frustrated about it.
HS: Oh. What do you mean by some content?
Q: Pardon me?
HS: What would be some content?
Q: I don't know. I expected at least that you're going to analyze conversations, or have something a little more interesting.
HS: I guess I figure I've been analyzing conversations.
Q: Well we haven't got past that adjacency pair parts yet.
HS: Oh yeah. We're not going to get past it.
Q: Ever?
HS: Not in this course, no. It's a rather fundamental part of conversation.
Q: Well then let's get to the conversation.
HS: Often you can do that kind of thing and figure that it will work. But as weird as it may be, there's an area called the Analysis of Conversation. It's done in various places around the world, and I invented it. So if I tell you that what we're doing is studying conversation, then there's no place to turn, as compared to experimental psychology where you can say "I want to know what the mind is like" and then you can choose to study humanistic psychology or something like that. There is no other way that conversation is being studied systematically except my way. And this is what defines, in social science now, what 'talking about conversation' would mean. Now surely there are other ways to talk about conversation. But in social science there isn't. And people take it that they have to learn from listening to the sorts of things I say, what it could possibly mean to talk about a particular conversation, how a conversation works, or how the details of conversation work. Nobody has ever heard a characterization in that detail, with that abstractness, of a fragment like that. It's just never been done. It's been done here for the first time.

Now, you can treat that as of no consequence. But over the next couple of years there will be dozens or hundreds of people around the world who will have examined this as the most elaborate current instance of a study of a greeting. That's just an unfortunate fact. I mean because academics in many times and places are put

into the position of, "Well, when are we going to get around to the topic the syllabus says we're going to talk about? After all, there's more to quantum physics than you propose." But where I end is where knowledge ends on these things. So that makes the choices clear.

Okay. I began the lecture this time by trying to come up with an account for the non-occurrence of a second greeting. In dealing with that, it was eventually proposed that the initial greeting occurs as one thing that can occur in that answerer's first position utterance; alternative now to things like "J. Magnin's," "Dr Smith's office," etc. And in non-professional settings by and large, it's from among the possible calleds that answerers are selected; answerer being now a merely potential resting state, where you've made preparations for turning out to have been the called right off when you say "Hello." Answerers can become calleds, or they can become non-calleds-but-talked-to, or they can remain answerers, in the sense of not being talked to themselves, and also having what turn out to be obligations incumbent on being an answerer-not-called; obligations like getting the called or taking a message for the called. So it's this possible-called answerer who does the "Hello," and who is treated as just an answerer by this caller.

Now, in attempting to handle a non-occurrence of the second greeting, we will of course have provided for the ordinary situation of "Hello" "Hello," where the possible-called answerer does a "Hello" and gets a "Hello," it turning out that they are the called. And the second "Hello" is done in a *recognitional* way by the caller, to indicate that from your "Hello" I recognized you. That's not just what it does. It does "From your hello I recognize you, and you are the called." Because after all, here, from her "Hello" he may well have recognized her and recognized her as not the called, but he doesn't then do the exhibit of recognition that we hear in a second "Hello," though there may well be just such a recognition present in the doing of "Is Maggie there?"

Let me say something about the recognitional "Hello." It would seem like a telephone-specific thing. As we know, people play recognition games over the phone. They say "Do you know who this is?" and they do things in conversation beginnings other than give their names, intending that the other find who they are. Now there's this phenomenon of the voice-recognitional "Hello" that says "I recognize who it is." And it's not the thing we often think of in that way, e.g., the seeing someone across the street recognitional "Hel*lo*!" My current suspicion is that the way you do voice recognition over the phone with your "Hello" is to do that "Hello" that your respondant recognizes as the "Hello" you give them. So you show them you know who they are by giving them the "Hello" you give them. And the recognitional "Hello"'s that people give others are not the same as the recognitional "Hello" they give you. For some of them, if it turned out it was, you would feel fairly leery, e.g., if your girlfriend turned out to give all the guys who called her that "Hello."

Now, typically if a recognitional "Hello" of the sort I've been character-
izing has been done by caller, then called comes back with one too. So there's
a place where you get more than a pair of "Hello"s, you get three of them:
(1) answerer's "Hello," (2) caller's recognitional "Hello," (3) called's
recognitional re-"Hello." So now we've moved from one "Hello" to two
"Hello"s to three "Hello"s; the three-"Hello" situation being characterizable
in this fairly abstract way; an initial answerer recognized as the called who
now recognizes the caller. And again, answerer as not merely whoever picks
up the phone, but the person who has decided to answer by virtue of being
a possible called; having, as answerer, obligations, and being treatable by
caller in various ways.

In this case, however, we're back to a one-"Hello" sequence, and answerer
has been put in the least happy position. Having done the picking up of the
phone, they have been turned into someone at the mercy of the treatment that
the caller will give them: What kind of jobs are they going to impose? Are
they even going to talk to them? A lot of family world is implicated in the way
those little things come out, an enormous amount of conflict turning on being
always the answerer and never the called, and battles over who is to pick up
the phone. It has become a possible environment of conflict given the sheer
fact that more than one person may be available when a phone rings, more than
one of whom may be a possible called and insofar as they're possible calleds
they're eligible answerers, where, insofar as they figure they may turn out to be
just an answerer, they don't want to be the one who answers.

One set of things I'm not going to get into is some simple ecological rules
for who answers the phone. For example, it may be that the person nearest the
phone answers it, except if the person nearest is lying down and the person
farther away is standing up. There would be a whole bunch of rules
organizing those things, which were also conflictable. My interest now is not
what the rules are, but to bring out kind of clearly the way in which this new
toy we've found has been made at home with us, so that one could have
conceivably sat down and considered what would happen to people, given the
phone, and instead of focussing in science fiction kinds of ways on the way it
will change our life with instant communication across great distances and
rapid dispersal of news, it would be seen as intruding into a household which
has no lack of sources of conflict, another systematic source of conflict that,
e.g., you can engender any time you want just by calling up your friends. If
you want to make trouble in their house, call them up at dinner time. Now,
that's an utterly derivable consequence of the introduction of the telephone
into a culture like this one which will exploit such formal possibilities. And
presumably you could say if it didn't exploit it, then that would be a really
important sign of something, since, given the organization of our world, if
something is a formally derivable place of conflict, it will be a place of conflict.
This is an option that persons can take up, and in each family it's taken up
as though they discovered it.

Now, the answerer, having been turned into that, does have a series of
small options. One is, they can treat themselves as the agent of a called, e.g.,

asking "Who is calling?" where the called may be perfectly well wishing that they didn't behave as their agent. For one, it gives answerer the name, to do with what they might; to use it in later talk, to ask what that one wanted, to keep a roll of who's calling, etc. So, while answerer is apparently getting the name in the service of called, answerer is also getting the name for themselves. And a consequence of that is, you don't call some people in some places, being concerned to avoid those who might answer that phone knowing that you call that person.

There are issues about answerer asking for the name. For one, if caller can bring off how well he knows called, answerer may not be in a position to ask for the name. Or, e.g., caller might refuse to give the name but give something else, "This is a friend of his." And often callers refuse to give a name if called isn't there, which then raises nice strategic things that go at this place, elaborating it. They have to do with, e.g., that answerer does or does not say whether called is there before getting caller's name. Answerer can take your name, it appearing that they will then get called for you but then tell you that called is not there. And callers, when asked their name, will refuse to give it and do things like "Is he there?" Where, then, we're getting a rather nice series of insertion sequences: A: "Hello." B: "Is Fred there?" A: "Who is calling?" B: "Is he there?" A: "Yes." B: "This is Joe Henderson." A: "Just a moment."

I haven't at all talked to what is, in its fashion, one of the main topics of a consideration of these three evolved identities, caller, answerer, called, having to do with caller and called. Where, for caller and called there is a world of things involved which implicate themselves very nicely in the structure of conversation, having to do with who should have been the caller and who should have been the called. In an exchange system which some people figure operates, if we are in a caller-called relationship as a relationship in the world and not just for this conversation, then we should alternate calls. So, if you are a called of a given caller, you might well attempt to indicate that while it turns out that they're the caller, you should have been the caller and they shouldn't count this as one of their calls to you. There are ranges of ways that people attempt to deal with such a matter, e.g., A answers the phone with "Hello," B does a "Hello," and then A says "My God I was just trying to get you!" or "I've been trying to call you all day. Where have you been!" thereby attempting to transform the overt fact that the caller was the caller in this call into that the called was really the caller. I've seen people jockey rather extendedly on that, attempting to arrive at that it doesn't matter for the rest of this conversation who was caller or called – though it does matter irretrievably in the sense that there are caller's ways to get off the phone and called's ways to get off the phone. Calleds are 'forced' off the phone: "I've got to go do something," callers 'offer' to get off the phone: "I'm holding up your line," though called is holding up caller's line too. That callers 'offer' to get off and calleds 'have to' get off suggests that it is caller's business to get off the phone first, calleds only doing it *in extremis*. But there is a place at the beginning of the call for attempts to modify in some way the sheer technical

fact that one was a caller and the other was a called, in the light of the structures that have been built up surrrounding those identities.

Let me just mention an altogether different sort of thing. We can talk of it as the aiming of emotions. So, for example, caller can in effect begin his talk to called as he is talking to answerer; i.e., by being brusque and angry, or friendly, etc., in the way he proceeds to ask for called, caller can reveal his attitudes relative to called, not relative to answerer. So answerer 'overhears' the mood of caller rather than feeling themselves to be the recipient of that mood. Unless, of course, caller directs remarks specifically to answerer. A way to think about it is that by selecting a party and addressing remarks to them, one can aim an emotion at them so that to whom the utterance goes, locates to whom the emotion goes. And you can pick people out as the recipients of your feelings in such ways that various overhearers to it hear an emotion, but not an emotion to them. And it's a very generic sort of question: How do people go about aiming emotions which are, after all, exhibited on them as an appearance or hearable in their voice? So, for example, having said something affectionate, not everybody around would have felt affectioned. And they don't go through the physiological, etc., responses that the recipient does, though they can feel in the presence of an emotion. And it's reasonable to think of things like first pair parts as ways to aim an emotion at somebody. Where, obviously, among the most typical is the use of "Hello" to do an emotion at the person you're talking to. That is, in the caller's "Hello." The called's "Hello," if it exhibits an emotion, exhibits an emotion to the world. It's a mood they're in, and it can be a request to anybody who is calling to, e.g., talk to me and right now; I'm feeling awful. So that it's a flair sent up as compared to an aimed emotion.

Lecture 4

The relating power of adjacency;
Next position

I'm going to return to some fairly abstract considerations about adjacency pairs. I proposed this immense scope to the use of adjacency pairs, and left dangling the issue of why they are so massively used. This time I'll talk to one part of what would be an elaborate argument as to why they are so massively used. The argument in a figurative nutshell is something like this: *The adjacency relationship between utterances is the most powerful device for relating utterances.* This is particularly so, given the sort of turn-taking system – i.e., ways of getting a chance to talk – that obtains for the conversational system we're talking about, i.e., one that operates one utterance at a time. Where, for example, there are turn-taking systems that don't use that device, like debates, which have a pre-specified ordering of talkers. In any event, given a turn-taking system that operates one utterance at a time and thereby in part makes who speaks next after a given utterance generically problematic, and given that the adjacency relationship is, as we'll eventually develop, the most powerful one for relating any two utterances, I'll argue that *adjacency pairs constitute the institutionalized, i.e., formal, means for exploiting the relating power of adjacency.*

That is to say, there is a natural relationship between any two utterances that happen to be adjacent, and that relationship provides for the possibility, but does not require, that those two utterances are related to each other, and is a particularly powerful means for establishing that relationship. The provision for systematic *use* of that relating power is done with adjacency pairs. So, in brief, the adjacency pairs are a formal means of exploiting the relating power of adjacency as a relationship between utterances; a relationship that is at least problematic by virtue of the turn-taking system, leaving it open who will happen to speak next and, as well, what they will do; whether they will deal with a directly prior utterance, whether they will deal with some prior utterance, whether they will not deal with any prior utterance.

It will take a lot of work to develop that argument, and this time I'll focus on one particular aspect of it; that being something I'll talk of as the unique features of '*next position*' in conversation. I'll be talking about 'next position' with no further specification. It's not 'next position' after anything except after some utterance. In a fashion, it can be argued eventually that three terms for characterizing utterances seem core to much of the ways, and problems, of the workings of local order in conversation. A lot of this will sound awfully

banal but it's far from that, so you'll have to jolt yourself – if I don't jolt you – into thinking that it's not, after all, something anyone could have said; it's not that it's nothing; it's not that it has no consequences. The three terms are: Last, current, and next utterance. The terms obviously refer to ways of looking at an utterance and not to utterances, since when 'next' happens it's 'current,' and 'last' is prior to 'current;' and for 'current,' what's 'next' will have 'current' as 'last'. So, 'current' is an utterance, and 'last' and 'next' are, on the one hand sometimes possibilities, and at other times potentials for classifying an utterance.

We first need to establish a sense for next position as a way of characterizing some possible utterance. Obviously if we chose, we could use a class of which 'next' is one member, to simply, empirically characterize utterances. Where 'next' would be one of a set including 'second next,' 'third next,' 'fourth next,' etc. At any point in conversation we could mark a line for 'current' and then begin a list of 'next,' 'second next,' 'third next,' etc. But I propose that we're not thinking of such a list when we talk about 'next.' 'Next' is something else. It is what we would call an analytic object. And it's quite different than any of the proposed others, 'second next,' 'third next,' 'fourth next.' How it comes to be a different object will in part turn on a list of features that we can say obtain for 'next' which doesn't obtain for the others.

Now, in part I'm saying that next position is one way of characterizing some possible utterance. And if we're saying that, then we need means for establishing that it's in fact used, and its use is relevant. Where, if it's the "one way," then it might be one way among others; one that is sometimes used or not used. What makes it in fact used? What's our source for saying that next position is *oriented to* by participants? The turn-taking system makes next position an object. It operates one utterance at a time and provides means for selecting a next speaker, i.e., someone who speaks in next position. If you had a turn-taking system which pre-selected all speakers, then, while to be sure there would be a next position for any utterance, there would just as well be a 'third next,' 'fourth next,' etc. This system locates a relevant place, that being 'next.'

In an altogether intuitive way, let me show some things that follow from there being a next position, and a next position which admits only one utterance. Let's just suppose, on the one hand, that there are some sorts of constraints on what can go in a next position to any given utterance, and on the other hand, that more than one sort of thing can go in that next position – supposing those properties without specifying the next positions. To take an obvious case, if somebody asks a question, then varieties of answers can go there: "Yes," "No," etc. We can more or less see that in many, if not all places, some things that one could say in a conversation can go 'now' and other things can't, but more than one sort of thing can go 'now.' In that case, the various persons in the conversation, each of whom might have a thing to put into the conversation someplace, might have a thing to put into the conversation 'now.' But if only one utterance can go there, then what follows

is that there can be sorts of competition for next position. And indeed there's a fact, which we all know, that people sometimes compete to talk at a given place. And sometimes even if they don't compete, more than one would like to talk at a given place. The question is, why should competition ever emerge in conversation for a particular position?

If next positions were undifferentiated, i.e., if anything could go in any position, then if you had something to say it wouldn't matter where you said it, and therefore you needn't worry about trying to get it in 'now' as compared to waiting until later on. It's an imaginable thing that there would be no next position for any utterance; that any set of utterances that followed it anywhere might well be equally talking to it. But that doesn't obtain. If you want to talk to something that's just been said, then you know you have to talk to it 'now' or you may not get a chance to talk to it. So, from this very simple kind of beginning about constructing a notion 'next position,' we can go on to get sources for the existence of something we know about, i.e., competition in talk, which turns out to be competition to talk at particular places, and which turns on the non-admitability of more than one thing at a given place, where, given a next position, only one utterance can go there.

Of course next position, with the exception of first move in a conversation, is *generically present*, i.e., there's always a next position until the conversation ends. And while there's always a next position, it's always a next position for a different utterance. So that, if for each current utterance next position admits something but not everything, then as the utterances change, what's admittable changes. Such that, having, e.g., lost a competition to put in something 'last,' one is not automatically in a position to put it in 'now,' because that one will have changed what's admittable as 'next' after it. So, as an obvious example, if someone asks a question without selecting a speaker, then next position is the position to answer it. If you wanted to answer it but somebody else answered it, next position after their talk is not for an answer to that question, or not for the answer you intended to give. You might be able to do transforms on what you initially intended. For example, the question is "What time is it?" and "It's two twenty five" comes up as an answer. You knew it was 2:25, and you would have said "It's two twenty five." You might still go with that, but you won't do it as you would have at first; you'll do it with "Yeah, it's two twenty five" or "It *is* two twenty five," some way of indicating that you're now positioning it after a first answer. So even when you try to do the same thing you could have done in that last next position, you do it in a new way.

At this point I'm grossly proposing that the notion 'next position' is made relevant throughout conversation by reference to turn-taking's making next speaker a problematic event. That's preserved throughout a conversation so that there's always a next position that has at least that problematic aspect to it. Layered onto that is something I've only presented in an altogether allusive way, i.e., that given any utterance classified in any way, it admits more than one thing which can be done next, but provides that not anything can be done next. And as we fix in on types of utterances we'll get some of the sorts of

things they admit and some of the sorts of things they don't admit. But I wanted to just take a seemingly simple idea, 'next position,' and begin to derive some consequences from it, and to turn what otherwise looks like a no-problem phenomenon, i.e., people competing for a turn, into one that needs to be explained, and to suggest one sort of way we would go about explaining it – where we couldn't explain in if all positions were equivalent.

Now let's get to the issue of relating utterances to each other. First I want to propose something simple enough, and simple enough to see, and that is, *any utterance can be related to any prior utterance*. There are techniques for relating any utterance to any prior utterance. And that does not mean 'prior' in terms of this conversation, but 'prior' whenever. Consider that in a given utterance one may quote another utterance. So you can say, "Several years ago you said if I ever felt the need for a dollar I should come to you. Well, here I am." Or you can say, "A minute ago you said..." or you can say, "In a conversation with my friend a couple of weeks ago, he told me such and such, and now I think this and that about it." So that, by means of introducing an utterance into your utterance, you can relate a current utterance to any prior utterance. Now, if that were the only way that utterances could be related, we can see that the course of a conversation in which utterances were being related to each other in multiples, would expand in some elaborate way very quickly. A person says "Hello" to you, and your concern is to indicate that when you say "Hello" you're saying it in response to their first "Hello," so you say "Since you said hello, I say hello." And you can begin to see how that would build up so that an nth utterance in a conversation which intended to relate to the set of prior ones would consist of the size of the prior ones plus itself. But utterances don't expand that way, so obviously there must be means whereby utterances are related to each other through other techniques than quoting. What are the sorts of techniques for doing that?

There is a large range of what we call *sequential techniques*, involving on the one hand, use of positions, and the use of various sorts of eligible objects and *markers of position*. Now, beginnings of utterances are a characteristic place for putting in sequential positioning information about that utterance. I typically use the following instance. An utterance begins with "I still say though that..." In this case it happened to be, "I still say though that if you take a big fancy car out on the road and you're hotrodding around, you're bound to get caught and you're bound to get shafted." This is a statement which is perfectly well sayable without "I still say though that." I propose that "I still say though" incorporates a variety of ways of *positioning* the utterance. And by 'positioning' it I mean locating the utterances it deals with. In this case, working it out kind of simply, "I still say though" proposes that on what I'm talking to, I talked to it before. Recall what I said before. And not only did I talk before, but after I talked someone else talked, and they disagreed with what I said. And now, in the light of their disagreement with what I previously said, I am reaffirming my initial position. So it's marking a structure in which there are at least two prior utterances; my earlier remark and somebody's disagreement with it. And it's not just locating two prior

utterances, i.e., it's not merely that I said something and somebody else said something, but it locates facets of those utterances, i.e., that I took a position and somebody disagreed.

From that brief sort of consideration one can begin to see that there is a rather elaborate collection of devices for positioning an utterance as subsequent to others, and thereby locating, furthermore, what you're doing in a given utterance. That is to say, *the positioning is relevant to the activity of a given utterance.* In this case, a way you can do 'being stubborn' is not simply to reaffirm your position but to reaffirm it while taking cognizance of the fact that others have talked since you've talked, and have differed with you. So the character of this utterance as 'stubborn' turns on its positioning techniques, not merely its occurring as third in a sequence. In other words, the utterance positions itself. Now that's important, because it differentiates between the utterance simply having a position in this conversation, e.g., 23rd utterance, and that any given utterance can *make* its position, i.e., locate those sorts of things relevant to its understanding, and relevant to what its doing.

We've said two sorts of things. One is that any utterance can be related to *any* other. And secondly, there are ways that an utterance can use sequential techniques to position itself relative to *some* others. This positioning work can be done by some collection of words used at the beginning of an utterance, but other things can be used as well. Possibly surprizingly, *intonation* can be used to position an utterance, in perhaps somewhat more interesting ways than we might suppose. It's kind of obvious that intonation can be used to position an utterance as specifically next to a last; as, e.g., to begin an utterance with a drawn-out, doubting "Well" involves that doubt being a doubt about what was last proposed. But you can use intonation to position an utterance relative to other than last utterance. So you can do a thing like "*I* went to the movies," where the contrast stress on "I" provides for locating *some* prior utterance, not necessarily the last, which this one by reference to its contrast stress intends to be in contrast to. So you could have such a sequence as:

A :   What did you do last night?
B :   I stayed home.
A :   Been working too hard?
B :   Yeah.
C :   I went to the movies.

Plainly, "*I* went to the movies" will be heard by reference to its specific contrast to the two-utterances-earlier "I stayed home."

We sense about intonation that while it can serve as a sequential technique to position an utterance relative to another that is not directly last, nonetheless it cannot serve to position itself relative to anything, wherever prior. It's probably fair to say that the scope of operation of intonation for locating prior utterances is rather short. So, using the lingo I used last time about 'aiming an emotion' at someone, using a directed utterance as the vehicle that will

locate who you're aiming the emotion at, so intonation can be a way of aiming something like doubt or agreement or whatever, at some other utterance, with the specification that it may only be able to operate in fairly local ways.

There is, then, a range of techniques for relating one utterance to another, and we've seen some of them. Now, it may be that there is only one generic place where you need not include information as to which utterance you're intending to relate an utterance to, and that is if you are in *next position* to an utterance. Which is to say that for adjacently placed utterances, where a next intends to relate to a last, no other means than positioning is necessary in order to locate which utterance you're intending to deal with. No other means being used, then you're recognizably intending to deal with the last one. "Yes" after a question is "Yes" to that question. Were you to use that position to, e.g., answer some other question, you would have to make it your business to indicate both that you're not answering the last and that you're answering some prior – and which prior, e.g., "Before I answer this question I want to answer the question he asked me. Yeah, I took it."

It's now being proposed that next position is special, in that next position can be used to relate an utterance to a particular utterance, the last, without any other means of locating that utterance being employed. For no other class is that so. Second next, fourth next, etc., none of them can be used in that way. That's the claim. If it is so, then that would be an initial way of locating the special status of next position.

Now, one thing I want to propose with respect to the issue of possibly related utterances is that there are a large class of possibly related utterances for some unspecified utterance, such that if any of them are to be done they should be done in next position; where, if they're not done in next position, then presumably the option to do them has been waived. There is formal evidence for this situation obtaining when we consider that there is a class of utterances that go after *any* utterance, which specifically locate the last as the one they're talking to, i.e., the *one-word questions* – why, how, what, where, when – and various minor amplifications of them. For them to be used, they should go right after the utterance they deal with. Now, all of those are first pair parts, and they can go after things without regard to whether those things are first pair parts or not, i.e., they can be done as beginnings of insertion sequences. But for them to go, they have to be put in next position. You can of course inquire about some utterance that went much earlier, but the form, 'one word questions' goes in next position. To ask "Why?" about an earlier utterance, some other form will have to be used. There is another class that goes in next position, which we call '*appendor questions*.' Things like "And why not?" Questions which do not consist of whole sentences, which typically consist of some sort of phrase, not uncharacteristically a prepositional phrase, and that's the complete utterance: "To where?" "Until when?" "Or?" All of those position themselves as 'next' to a last, and are to be appreciated by reference to 'last' specifically. We're beginning, then, to have classes of objects which specifically go in next position without any specification of what it is

that went in last position. And those are isolatable without regard to any consideration of positions at all, i.e., they're available upon inspection. You can look at a transcript of a conversation and find them.

Now, I said if such things haven't gone they can be treated as foregone. By that I mean that conversation operates with a *local cleansing* of itself, and the non-occurrence of one of those remedial questions (what, why, etc.) serves as evidence for the non-need to cleanse our current state. That is to say, unless you indicate that what I said was, e.g., unclear, or that you didn't hear it – which is to be done with some set of terms and right after I said it – then it's to be treated as though what I said was heard, and was clear. It would be altogether strange for converstion – as compared to, say, a lecture – to have the talk procede until, say, ten minutes before closing, at which point the parties pause and now engage in telling each other what they didn't understand of what the others said. That's to be done right then. And in that it's to be done then, talk about the system as locally self-cleansing is formally based. Obviously there are alternative options. Obviously the system we're talking about doesn't use them. Obviously, given a one-utterance-at-a-time system in which each current utterance is setting out options for the next, the use of the local self-cleansing mechanism is terribly neat.

Lecture 5

A single instance of a Q–A pair; Topical versus pair organization; Disaster talk

This time, in alternation to some rather abstract consideration of a topic, I'll be talking about a very particular fragment. Though what I'll say about it will be in some ways abstract enough for anyone's taste. This is from a telephone call.

> *Maggie*: Bu::t uh how've you bee:n how's Vi:,
> *Gene*: We:ll fi:ne, fi//ne,
> *Maggie*: Howdjuh survive the qua:ke? en the: fi:res 'n th' <u>floods</u> 'n everything.
> *Gene*: Oh we had 'em a:ll,

I'm interested in the third utterance, "How did you survive the quake and the fires and the floods and everything" and its response, "Oh we had them all."

I'm going to give a preface, and the preface will kind of set up the discussion. And since there are several ways to go about doing what I'm going to do, this preface may be taken as one optional preface. Now, let me make a remark about that as a proposal. Discussions are commonly academically characterized by a preface, and as any professional knows, prefaces are typically produced when the work itself has been done. So there might well be a series of optional prefaces. While the general rule is that prefaces are suggestions of one way you might read something, since the thing isn't derived from the preface but the preface is added, you can choose to treat it somewhat independently of the preface that's offered.

So, then, a preface to the discussion. I've mentioned varieties of types of organization and proposed that adjacency pairs were used in various types of organization. One of the sorts of interests raised by talk like that can be developed in the following way. Imagine a surface of some sort, and we are now proceeding to characterize that surface in terms of conversational sequential types of things. Since the things we're talking about are serial it's imagineable that for lots of them they are in some ways *serially linked* on the surface – this follows this, this goes after this position, etc., etc. – rather than focussing on another aspect of things, which is the way that different types of organizations may be *layered* onto each other. So the surface is thick and not

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just serial. Which is to say that a given object might turn out to be put together in terms of several types of organization; in part by means of adjacency pairs and in part in some other type of organizational terms, like overall structural terms or topical organizational terms. And one wants to establish the way in which a series of different types of organizations operate in a given fragment, i.e., in a given, quotes place, on the surface.

So one sort of thing that I engage in doing is to take a particular fragment apart in terms of a collection of different types of organization that may operate, in detail, in it. Where the question is, in part, how to bring that kind of a consideration off in a possibly integrated way, i.e., to also show the relationships between the types of organization *in* the particular object. I want, then, to inhibit a consideration of actual objects in terms of single types of organization, i.e., saying of something that it's a 'question,' and then saying that it's adjacency-pair orderly in a variety of ways, and that's that, as though one is finished with it. The question of what sorts of things, even for the sequential organization of conversation, can be pulled out of a piece of talk needs to be open, and having found it orderly in one way doesn't mean that you've done all there is to make it operate in the ways that we can, perhaps, make it operate.

So that's at least one kind of line on it. Another kind of line is located initially a little bit more empirically, but also connects with some academic matters. There's a transparent commonness to the list members, quake, fire, flood. They are a set of names of events for which a common class such as 'disasters' can be said to be, not only what they have in common, but perhaps what provides for the use of each of them in the company of the others. So that there's a sense in which we could use materials like this in terms of semantic considerations, i.e., to get at common meanings, relations between meanings, etc., where lists are perhaps sort of ideal natural objects for getting at some sorts of commonness of meanings. Now I want to take a different tack on that, and introduce into the semantic considerations, some sequential functions. Where we have, then, those two sorts of interests, both of which have didactic aspects to them, i.e., considerations in terms of semantics, and the analysis of a single utterance by characterizing it in terms of some particular type of organization.

Focussing on "How did you survive the quake? and the fires and the floods and everything," we already know that if it's an adjacency pair first pair it can go, in effect, anywhere. But that doesn't tell us why it is done more or less at the beginning of the conversation. We might possibly examine it in terms of overall structural considerations, since such considerations may govern what goes or does not go at the beginning or end of conversation. Where the early parts of conversations are very heavily composed of series of pairs, and putting it into a pair form may be a way of finding a spot for it there.

Now, using semantic considerations, there's a kind of transparent way that overall structural considerations can be seen to operate so as to make this question askable right at the beginning of a conversation. And that is something like this: It's a class of disasters, and it's noticeable that talk about

disasters goes at the beginning of conversations. Now, this would involve that one could just take types of topics and distribute them across a conversation, and see about some that they go in particular places, like at the beginning. But that doesn't really work, because you have to intrude a series of other things about disasters. We don't have talk about disasters at the beginning of conversations except under certain sorts of constraints; one of those constraints being that the talk about the disasters can be introduced via something like "How did you survive" plus the disaster. Which is to say that it may not be 'disasters' but disasters with the specification that they happened to or might have happened to the person you're asking about them, that can be asked of at the beginning. And that little specification may turn out to wag the disasters.

There may be a class of things which are now to be called 'things that could have happened to your co-participant' which, by virtue of that, should be asked of at the beginning of a conversation. And those are now perhaps to be assimilated to a structurally positioned object in conversation, "How have you been?," which goes directly after the greeting segment. Then, what connects the meaning-class 'disasters' as a way of assimilating the three items – quake, fire, flood – to its placing in the conversation, is via whatever can be put in as possible objects for filling out "How have you been?," where things like "How have you been?" have a real place in conversation. Collecting things that way, you might collect a variety of items that do not have obvious commonness to 'disasters' as an isolated class.

And now we get into one of the possibly funny ways that the conversational world operates. There's this thing in the world, 'disasters.' Except in rather restricted senses 'disasters' is not directly a topic in conversation. It can be made into a topic in conversation through various of the means that things can be made topical in conversation. How do you make something topical? One way is to turn it into a 'something for us.' You can treat it as the most general content rule for conversation that people will talk overwhelmingly, not so much about *things* that *happened* to them, but about things *insofar as* they happened to *them*. Talking about whatever, it comes home to us. Which is to say, there are a variety of things happening in the world, like disasters. Their happening doesn't make them introduceable into a conversation. What has to be done is to turn them into something for us.

At least an initial way of turning an event into something for us is to see if I have some way of turning it into something for you, and asking you about it. In this case, the disasters happened in an area where I know you are; where, however, I know of them, not by virtue of the fact that I know of them for you, but I just know of them in the first place. And now, coming to talk with you, the question is, is there some way to introduce them? The technique is to connect you and the disasters. All I have to do in that case is a rather weak thing, i.e., the earthquake, fire, and floods all being public, anybody in Los Angeles might have been asked about these things. On the other hand it is not altogether weak, in that not anybody anywhere else could be asked – though one can manage it so that the disasters, being 'news,' are not wasted from

conversation in varieties of other places. So, e.g., my mother's friend could ask her "How did Harvey survive the earthquake?," making it a topic in their conversation in New York via my mother's interest in me, and the friend's interest in my mother which involves an interest in the things that involve my mother. So the earthquake comes up in a form which is not incidentally linked to "How did you survive. . ." And insofar as it's going to use the "How did you survive. . ." then its position in the structure of a single conversation may be located. That is to say, it may be that in that form, you're not to position it just anywhere, but you should put it up front, i.e., as a substitute for, or as a subsequent to and specification of, "How have you been?"

Now I want to get into the functions of putting this question up front. We need to consider some quite separate sorts of matters which involve a phenomenon we call '*orientation to co-participant*,' which is pervasive in conversation. It is pervasive in that one of its major operating maxims is '*design your talk to another with an orientation to what you know they know*.' And that maxim has special functions at the beginnings of conversation. There, it's occupied with a particular job, which is *re-finding each other*. In order to have my mind oriented to what I know you know throughout the course of a conversation so as to tell you things about what's happened to me that you don't know, and not things you know, I have to find who you are, in the sense of what sorts of things I already told you. So I locate right off as soon as possible, and use, when the last time we talked was. That will then throw off a whole bunch of things I have to tell you, i.e., the things that have happened since. Notice that you're talking to lots of different people. For each of them, at the point you meet, you're able to tell them the things that have happened since you last met. They are obviously not the same set of things for the set of people you encounter over a day, or a week. How do you find which things to tell which person? At least one of the things you use is when you last talked. That opens up a group of things and closes off others which you will of course have told them, since the last time you met you operated in the same way.

Now, I'd like to suggest about the list 'quake, fire, floods' that it's not merely a list of things that are public disasters which have happened in Los Angeles recently, but it also serves a *clock function*. What controls the size of the list is not 'recent disasters' but 'the disasters that have happened since we last talked.' The time spread of the list – each of these things having happened at a different time over, say, six months – is one way that she attends immediately and marks her attention to 'the last time we talked.' Those three objects being one way to propose this as the period of time what's happened to you is being asked about – 'you' being an anybody who lived in Los Angeles and would have that available as a way of characterizing that six-month period. So there's a clock function to the list, relative to 'the last time we talked.' To be able to use public disasters as such an object and not have to affiliate quite other things involving rather more particular sources of information, like "How did the operation go?" when I know the last time we talked you were about to have an operation, or "How did the promotion go?" when the last time we talked you were about to come up for promotion, etc.,

which is another class of things that can go at such a spot, may turn on the way in which for some time period public disasters are available as calendrical, e.g., "It's been quite a winter" which can be characterized in terms of some consistent set of things rather than a variety of packages of things.

It's being proposed that the list items come from an orientation to co-participant. For this particular co-participant, given the position of this conversation in the calendar relative to a last conversation between these people, one can use the disaster possibility under a specification of "How have you been?" and thereby get an early question. And if you're going to use a list, you can get the items from the review of when you last talked. While the use of the list has a virtue in exhibiting an orientation to what might have happened to you since we last talked, there is also separately a question of why they are put into a single list question. There are two types of organization that we have to be concerned with. One is the organization of *topics* and the other is the organization of *pairs*. Insofar as she uses her utterance to get this possible talkable on the table, what that does is to say "I want you to talk to this possible topic or set of topics in your next utterance." So that makes a very current place for it. But insofar as you do that with a question, i.e., the first part of a pair, you also allow for the possibility that the pair will be the size of it. This thing which may be rather extendedly talkable about, if introduced as a pair part, may turn out to have been merely a pair. And he could, e.g., close the thing off by answering it in such a way as to have his answer serve as all the talk we're going to have about this, as compared to that we talk about it for a long time having begun with a pair. So, in using a pair format there's the possibility that although there are things to be talked about, we're not going to talk about them now, or much. As, for example, to the question "How have you been?" people can say things like "Fine," and that's not just an answer, but an answer that says "I'm not going to talk about that now." The shortness of the answer is not only that in this utterance I'm not going to say anything more than that, but that I don't want to talk about it now. There are, then, differential signals for saying, as an answerer, "Let's talk some more about it" or not.

Now essentially we're proposing that a question that contains a list can be the questioner's way of saying "Let's talk some more about this." And one of the ways it does that is to give a series of *options* to the co-participant, saying in effect, I'm giving you a bunch of what you and I know to be story sources; surely there's something out of this set of things that you can talk about more or less elaborately; tell me anything that you care to, under that range of possibilities." And not uncommonly, people will take up a tale about what happened to them in the quake or the fire or the flood, and they feel free to go on rather at length instead of trying to package their response into a single sentence. They have, however, an option to use features of the list to produce a summary answer, e.g., "We came out alright."

So we can look to the answer-options given the question, and then to the character of the answer in response to the question, in terms of whether it is an answer long, or more than an answer long. We can then play that back into

the design of the question to see whether the question at all *prefers* something an answer long or more than an answer long. And if it can be said to prefer a response which is more than an answer long, then we might say it's something like a 'topic opener.'

We're now getting into attempts to make longer sequences than pairs. It may be that one way of opening topics is specifically through the use of questions that are built such as to invite responses which are more than an answer long, but which admit at least answer-long responses. So you're not violating the adjacency pair status when you refuse to take up the topical possibilities by doing merely an answer-long response. That is to say, at the order of topical organization people can offer topical openers and people can reject them, and that's different than people asking questions and people not answering them. You don't own the course of topical operation, but you can own next position and what's to be done in it.

And now we get into something fairly complicated, having to do with the possible serial and possible non-serial relationship between overall structural organization and the structure of topical talk, as they now can converge on the use of an adjacency pair. One way to think of it is that conversational beginnings end when topic talk begins. That is to say, a series of beginning components are gone through pairwise, then there may be a break, and then some topic talk. Just as at the end of a conversation some topic comes to an end and then people will exchange "So"s or "Okay"s and go into closing. But the thing by no means always partitions out that neatly. Instead of beginnings coming to an end and topic talk starting up, it can be via some development out of some beginning materials that one gets into a first topic. And that can involve, e.g., that something that gets asked about in the beginning cannot be treated with a merely summary answer. If, for example, I had something terrific happen to me, then when you say "How have you been?" I shouldn't just say "Fine," but I should move straight into topic talk, introducing the thing which we will right now go on about at length. And that's roughly the difference between a pair and topic talk. Once we get into some item it will have its own life and won't be closed by reference to pair organization.

It's a general feature for topical organization in conversation that the best way to move from topic to topic is not by a topic close followed by a topic beginning, but by what we call a *stepwise* move. Such a move involves connecting what we've just been talking about to what we're now talking about, though they are different. I link up whatever I'm now introducing as a new topic to what we've just been talking about. Now, this stepwise thing is a really serious feature of topical organization, and it's my rough suspicion that the difference between what's thought to be a good conversation and what's thought to be a lousy conversation can be characterized that way, i.e., a lousy conversation is marked by the occurrence of a large number of specific new topic starts as compared to such a conversation in which, so far as anybody knows we've never had to start a new topic, though we're far from wherever we began and haven't talked on just a single topic, it flowed. Under that possibility, one can see that there might be a *preference* for not bringing

the beginning to an end and now starting topic talk, but using aspects of the beginning to get directly into topic talk by blowing up one of the pairs that go at the beginning. So, e.g., to "How have you been?" instead of producing a short answer that says let's continue this pair alternation, "How have you been?" "Fine, how have *you* been?" "Fine," something like "How have you been?" "Really really rotten, you can't imagine what's happening" says we're going to talk about this right now, i.e., we're into topic talk right now.

Now, there are some problems with using the beginning in that fashion to explode into topic talk. And that has to do with that certain parts of the beginnings are distinctly to be *exchanged*. "How have you been"s are to be exchanged. If on the first response to "How have you been?" we get movement into topical talk, one consequence of that is that the return "How have you been?" is left dangling. It not going where it normally and properly does go, right after the last pair, it has got to find some new place to go. But given that topics can move stepwise, the development of the first response to "How have you been?" can lead to other things, and now maybe there's not ever a natural place for the return "How have you been?" And that can be evidenced in the way in which, when that sequence blows, the return "How have you been?" is not uncharacteristically stuck in somewhere later on into the conversation with "By the way, how have *you* been?" which remembers that this thing is still dangling. Now, there are virtues to having that thing hanging around, because then at some point where there's no natural topic shift but an apparent topic close, that's where it can be stuck in and now get things going again. So in some way a usable thing is held in reserve.

Essentially we're saying that the "How have you been?" sequence can blow up into more than a pair. It can blow up unanticipated by the asker, i.e., the asker can just say "How have you been?" which may well say that they're only doing the thing they should do at the beginning, say "Fine" and ask them how they've been, etc. Or the asker can invite that we right now go to some first topic. And if you know some things about somebody that you should show deference to, maybe you should begin the conversation, not with "How have you been?" but with the "How did it go?" version, e.g., "How is your foot healing?" "Is your grandmother better?" etc., such things being used when you know things that are independently topics and which also locate in part, right at the beginning, what was pressing the last time we talked; matters that fit under "How have you been?" but might not be elicited by it.

We have, then, a place where overall structure and topical talk cohere. And when they do, they blow up out of a pair. A possibly longer sequence that coheres in various ways can be offered by the speaker of the first pair part or can be begun by the second pair part speaker. And for this, pair organization is, so to speak, only incidentally involved. It does not describe how the topical stuff operates.

Now, there are indices of topical organization which are simply formal objects for it. So, for example, a thing like "Anyway" is a sheer topic marker

saying that the utterance it begins is on topic with what was being talked about – not immediately prior to this utterance but before that, and this utterance is going back to what was being talked about. You can think of it as a right-hand parenthesis which says 'on topic, but not on topic to last, but to last-but-one.' So there are topically structured things, and they are different than pairs. They have to do with larger sequences in just the way that "Anyway" is moving across more than two utterances, where pair organization is two utterance organization. Now, more than two utterance organization can be layered onto pairs, as pairs position themselves in terms of, say, overall structural organization. So, for example, there are pairs that go, say, second in overall structural terms: "How have you been?" following "Hello – Hello," that spot being the spot for such an object. And that can then have to do with where topic potential is in a conversation, and how topic potential is turned into particular types of topic sequences.

One of the things that everybody learns, and some people figure they don't know how to do, is to be able to take the eventfulnesses of their lives and the possible eventfulnesses of other lives, and make them into talk. People know how to see that the quake is something to remember because they'll be able to talk about it, where there are lots of things you wouldn't keep in mind for a next conversation. And they know that these things have to be *made* into talk. In our world you can't just say "Earthquake" and get the other person to start talking about it. You form it up for this conversation. Though plainly if forming it up for this conversation can be done in such a banal way as "How did you survive the quake?" then you can do it for lots of conversations. But one learns how to turn the world's events into talk-aboutables, and to know where to put them in a conversation.

Now, for her to pick "the earthquake, the fires and the floods" is topically strong without regard to whether he rejects the topic or not, by virtue of that it's a topic for her too. She was in it too, and she can have things to say about it whether he does nor not. But if he takes up the topic, we get something happening in which we can see how conversation works at its best, so to speak. And that is this thing I mentioned earlier, turning it into *something for us*, where what is done first is to turn it into *something for you*. "Tell me about how you suffered through the earthquake," and then he'll describe some set of things, e.g., "Well, it broke some windows and knocked the dishes off the shelves," etc. And those constitute one way of reporting what happened. Now when she will come to tell about it she will report it in a different way. She will report about it as 'for us.' And the way she does that is to introduce, not what happened to her, but what happened to her *comparatively* to what happened to him, e.g., "The exact same thing happened to me," or "Nothing like that happened to me," or "What happened to you is nothing compared to what happened to me," i.e., she will describe hers as a variant of his, or as different from his, etc. And now they're into making this experience something in their lives together, in some fashion.

So, the second speakers for these exchanges typically design their talk in 'comparative' terms, though plainly the events didn't happen comparatively.

But this quake that happened is first of all being turned into an event in his life, though after all it was very incidentally an event in his life; only by virtue of the fact that she's talking about it is it of interest as an event in his life. But once having been turned into an event in his life, once he'll give that, then it's available for being turned into an event in *our* life, which is where interaction in talk happens. Once we get to there, we can do things other than exchange news, we can do new things together.

Now, if you can't in the first place get into topical organization, you're in one typical sort of bind that people can be in, i.e., there are lots of people who engage in possible conversations that never become conversations by virtue of they can never get out of the beginnings, they just exchange those pairs. And it's of some interest that that's the way some relationships obtain; that one does, in effect, conversation beginnings and nothing more. Whole classes of types of relationships in social structural terms, employers/employees, etc., are characterized by admitting beginnings and no more; specifically not admitting transforms of beginnings into first topics.

At least a gross lesson guide is that a possible fairly routine way to begin to examine a fragment involves that having found it to be, e.g., adjacency pair orderly, one might proceed to work further on it by considering what else it is. Not only in terms of things independent of adjacency pairs, but what else is it that has to do with adjacency pairs by virtue of their involvement with other types of organization. So one could begin to collect the possible types of organization and see whether they have anything to do with putting the parts of the thing together. And – although you'd want to be cautious about this you could pull it apart so as to see whether parts of it can be characterized in terms of separate types of organization, as "How did you survive . . ." can be partially isolated as a thing which can assimilate whatever it's going to preface, to the early on "How have you been?" type object. Where, then, overall structural considerations can be used to move the quake to the front of the conversation, though, not turning it into a "How did you survive . . ." it may not be allowed to go up front. Put in the up front position, it can be a way of closing the beginning, operating as a possible topic opener by making a first topic out of this if the other is prepared to do more than an answer-long response to it. So there's now a use of it to make a first topic which interfaces with overall structural aspects, for which, again, its pair status is relevant.

And with regard to the issue of semantics, the use of a list turns out to be a relevant way to proceed, such that to propose as an answer to where the list comes from that it comes from the fact that all these things are commonly 'disasters,' is hardly to catch the way in which the list members come to be said. Whereas one mapping of what semantics looks like involves classes of classes of terms – 'quake, fire and flood' being assimilated to 'disasters,' and 'disasters' being hierarchically ranked with other things and contrasting with, e.g., 'good news', our business is to now collect some of these classes in sequential position terms, having to do with when they happen in conversation, to see if that might order them in some interesting way.

Lecture (6)

Laughing together; Expressions of sorrow and joy

Properly conducted, the course should be done like a math course in the sense of having work all the time. So there will be continual assignments from now on. There are two or three ways I would recommend proceeding. The first is to attempt to see, for something you notice, where such things go in terms of, for example, the overall structure of the organization of conversation. So, you ought to say that a something goes in the beginning or at the close, or it doesn't go in any of those places – where it's much weaker to say where something doesn't go. You can also consider whatever it is that you've noticed in other types of terms, such as where does it go within a topic. In other words, you might not be able to say where the *topic* goes, but you might be able to say that this thing goes at the beginnings of topics or at the close of topics. Or you might now have, for the same thing, a way of layering the characterization of it, e.g., it goes at the close of such topics as go at the beginning or close or whatever of a conversation. So, having found that a conversational object goes in one place, you might not stop there.

I'm really heavily interested in trying to distributionalize things. That doesn't mean that you have to do a statistical study of where something goes. Proceed by locating it in some way as a sort of thing, e.g., a 'question,' a 'story beginning,' etc. Having located it in some way, you might be able to examine the circumstances to come up with a version of those circumstances that tells you this is the sort of *place* this thing goes. Don't stop there, however. Go on to attempt to see if you can't establish it in some provable way. So, instead of just counting the range of places something goes, you might locate a version of the place and then see if you can come up with an account of why it goes there; some explanation or proof.

Let me give some instances of different types of things than those we've considered in the course so far, some of which are in the first instance non-intuitive, but once I give the presentation you can easily see that I might be right. Let me take a very simple instance. Suppose you notice that there's a symbol on the transcript that there's *laughter*. Supposing it gets slightly more refined and you notice that there's something that happens to be very important, that you would not ordinarily bring yourself to notice, and that is something you wouldn't call 'laughter' but that you should call *'laughing*

Transcriber unknown. This lecture was not among those transcribed as they were delivered. A transcript turned up among Sacks' materials after his death. It is designated lecture (6) in parentheses because its actual position in the course is unknown.

together.' That is to say, both people are laughing at the same time. That's special and interesting for conversation because there aren't many things that people do in talk together. Laughter is one of the few things lawfully done together. But not only is it lawfully done together; the thing about laughing is that to do laughing right, it *should* be done together. That is to say, it's not just that you're not committing a violation if you laugh when someone else is laughing, but that in certain circumstances, if they laugh and you don't laugh, then maybe you're committing a violation.

So we can notice a place where there's laughing, and then notice, e.g., that it's 'laughing together.' Then we might ask, "Well, where does laughing go in conversation?" Now, there's a very simple-minded, no-news answer to that. Obviously, laughter goes after jokes. But I don't see any particular point in saying that, though you might be able to say where jokes go, and if you could say where jokes go then you might be able to drop that out and be able to say where laughing goes, directly. But one thing that you can begin to catch if you study a transcript – and particularly if you read it out loud – is that laughing together is often characterizable as going after something; and what it goes after is the various parties laughing separately. That is to say, we get a long laugh together, and one of the things you can find is that there's been an exchange of short laughs earlier: A says something and chuckles in the middle or at the end of it. B doesn't join him. Then B makes an utterance in which he chuckles a little. And that having been done, one may find that they then produce talk and we then get a joint laugh. And that is a nice, new characterization for where laughter goes: *Laughing together goes after laughing separately.* Its interest is that one begins to see that there's a development of a laugh; that it is pre-sequenced, and that there's a phenomenon in which a sequence might be organized around getting a joint laugh. It may turn out that when somebody does one of these things, they find the other doesn't take it up. It may then get re-offered and eventually taken up, or not. And if it isn't taken up, then it may drop. So that whether something is going somewhere or not can turn on whether the *laugh offerings* are being accepted or not. This is almost inspectable out of the transcript; you can almost see the sequence right there, as compared to having to analyze out whole ranges of things in a much more elaborate way. But it's a characterization of 'where a something goes' in a novel way, but yet a sequential way.

Now, once you have that, you can begin to try to understand why it should be so that we get these exchanges and then a joint laugh. Why should there be such a sequence? Well, one thing we already noted was that the product of such a sequence is the laughing together. And, laughing together being one of the few things people can do together, it might well be that one of the ways that they arrive at doing *something* together in their interaction, is by coming to be able to do a laughing together. And if you're talking about face-to-face interaction, a thing you want to consider is, there might be a series of other things involved which commend laughing together as something people might have as their project. For example, in the course of a laughing together people have a color change; they can do a little bit of movement; they may

be able to look at each other more extendedly, i.e., they can do a range of other things in the course of a laughing together.

This is one instance of examining a thing for where it goes; in this particular case, what it goes after. Take another sort of thing that's somewhat related. A thing you find in conversation and that can be viewed plainly if you're reading a transcript, is *expressions of the emotions 'sorrow' and 'joy'*. Can I say now of 'sorrow and joy' that it happens somewhere in conversations? That we won't find that strong sorrow and strong joy are just distributed over the course of the conversation but instead, there are real places for them to occur? Where obviously, connections between, quotes, the expression of emotion, and the organization of conversation would be of some interest. Well, where do they go? If you look at conversations, a place pops out. It becomes an interesting place because it's the same place for both sorrow and joy. If you're going to have sorrow or joy in the conversation then it's very likely that it goes very, very early on into the conversation. And it's altogether transparent why that should be so. That is, if someone has some very large news that would involve having sorrow or joy about it, then it's their business to call others up while they still have the sorrow or joy. And it's not only their business to call others up while they still have the sorrow or joy, but they should also tell it to them right off. And furthermore, if you're called up and you have a sorrow or joy to tell, then you should tell it right off.

That's simple enough. There are moderately interesting things involved, however. Sorrow or joy both go in the same place. Is there any relative ordering of them? That is to say, since sorrow and joy go in the same place, can you then ask what is their relationship *preferentially* to each other? Suppose one party has one and one party has the other; should they just try to get them out, or should they try to see if, for example, the other has a contrast one, so that before announcing joy I will try to check out whether you have sorrow. If you have sorrow I won't announce joy; I'll let you announce sorrow and hold off the joy or not tell it to you. That's a possible thing.

Okay, we locate sorrow and joy very early in the conversation relative to the overall organization of conversation. If we then look at the sorrow/joy sequences, we find that the recipient of the news expresses an appropriate emotion. Now, we find as well that while they express an appropriate emotion, they do a series of other things first. The announcement is such that you could imagine that they could say right off, "Oh I'm sorry," or "Oh I'm delighted." It turns out they don't. When one gets into the local organization of the sequences that involve sorrow or joy, one sees that sorrow and joy don't come up front in those. Instead what happens is an announcement of some big *news* and an expression of *surprise* by the recipient (though the expression of surprise can be geared into the wonderfulness or the miserableness). Then there's some more talk about it by the announcer, and *then* the expression of the appropriate emotion.

Now, that turns out to be a cutting observation. And one of the things I want to make you see is that there's no point to saying something is a something unless it cuts through the material. Let me show you what I mean

for a thing like this. Here is a phone call. Bernice happens to have wonderful news and calls up Emma. It turns out, however, that Emma has terrible news. Bernice doesn't put out her news, possibly by virtue of the way Emma puts out hers right off. In any event, Emma puts out her bad news – she just had an operation – to which Bernice responds with the characteristic surprise statement; in this case, "Why?" And then there's a discussion of the operation.

Emma :	Hello
Bernice :	Hello
Emma :	<u>Hi</u> honey, how are // yuh.
Bernice :	Fine, how'r you.
Emma :	'hhhhhhhh Oh, I'm pretty goo::d, I hadda liddle operation on my <u>toe</u> this week, I hadtuh have– <u>toe</u>nail taken off.

              (0.5)

Bernice :	Why::hh
Emma :	Oh, I have a fungus'n I had'n infection,

              (0.3)

Emma :	'T's a // <u>hell</u> of a–
Bernice :	<u>Oh</u>:::::: Emma. Innat awful,

              (0.7)

Bernice :	Well what a <u>shame</u>. Didjeh haftuh go in the hospit'l?
Emma :	No::, I dist hadda local deal, en I– id wadn'any fun, but I'm <u>be</u>tter I wz, lying on the couch out'n front.
Bernice :	Oh::: I'm sorry Em<u>ma</u>?

Focussing on the end, in some ways there's something strange here. The last thing said is "I'm better," to which the reply is "I'm sorry." Now, nobody hears that "I'm sorry" as "I'm sorry that you're better." What it is heard as is an "I'm sorry" for the reported news. Now, in saying that this expression of sympathy is an expression for the news, we're separating out what looks like two pairs: 'News announcement – surprise' and then 'news development – sympathy,' where those things are disconnected; the surprise is for the announcement and the sympathy is for the later business. And, e.g., pairs of questions can be treated as separated in that way.

If, however, one is making a case for this being a sequence, then "I'm sorry" following "I'm better" is perhaps for something else, and one then examines the relationship between the surprise thing and the expression of sorrow or joy. Doing that, one begins to see that the surprise thing is very important. For one, it gives the other party a chance to fully develop what it is that happened. Also, if the person doesn't put in the surprise but just the emotion, then it may be heard as not really caring, i.e., cutting off the story. Though there are, we speculate, places where one doesn't put in surprise. There might be news strong enough so that you don't put in at least some sorts of surprise, e.g., things like "Did he really?" For example, if a doctor comes out of the operating room and says "I'm sorry but your X died," then

the person doesn't ever say, as far as we can tell, "Did he really?" But, and this may sound ridiculous, people do "Did he really?" for all kinds of announcements. In any event, sorrow and joy are prefigured by the surprise thing. In a way, then, the surprise thing can be treated as reserving rights to future expression of emotion, saying, "I see that this is the thing that I will express emotion about. Let me give you some more room to tell me about it. Then you'll hear me give a wail."

What I'm suggesting is that there are all kinds of things you can distributionalize. And having distributionalized them, you can juice out some interesting news from them. I would also try to do multiple distributional-izings, i.e., something comes at the beginning, but, relative to the beginning, it comes subsequent to some other things. I would want then to see, well, 'subsequent to;' is that a sequence? If so, then I have something else. Then I have, e.g., that expressions of joy or sorrow go after expressions of surprise.

Now there are sometimes issues of things that appear to be the same, going at two different places. It may be that there are two or twelve or eighty different types of places it goes. It may also be that these different places are locatable and similar. And then another possibility is simply that they're, in a fashion, different objects. Let me take one and talk briefly about it. An event, '*invitation*,' has a plain, simple enough, obvious enough place. It goes, e.g., early on into a conversation, particularly when the caller is calling to make the invitation, that being the one legitimate business of that conversa-tion. Also, since it affects the character of the call, i.e., since invitations precede arrangements and renegotiations and all that sort of stuff, there are various reasons why invitations go early.

But invitations also turn up elsewhere. If you look at those invitations that don't go early, one of the things they involve is that they're what we call '*interactionally generated*' *invitations*. That is to say, there are invitations which generate an interaction, i.e., you call somebody up to invite them to something, and on the other hand there are invitations which are generated out of the interaction itself. At some point in it, somebody comes to say "Why don't we get together?," "Why don't you come on over?," things like that. Now, if you look at the conversation, one begins to find that there are ways in which the interactionally generated invitations can be positioned. So, e.g., if I call you up and offer you a job, whether you take it or not it might well be that you will then come up with "We ought to get together," "You ought to come over for dinner some time," or something like that, i.e., people calling up someone to do something nice for them will often have a response to that be some sort of invitation. One can then find a variety of kinds of talk that lead to invitations getting produced.

Now, when you look at those sorts of invitations you can then find that they are indeed different, in that they get dealt with quite differently. And there are very simple, clear instances; things like, if somebody calls you up and invites you to dinner for Friday night, then you say "Yes," "No," "I'd love to," whatever. If, however, in the course of the conversation the invitation seems to be produced out of the course of the conversation, then, not

uncharacteristically the recipient doesn't say "Yes" or "No," but *counters* it with another invitation: "No, you come over here," "No, we'll go out to dinner together." So an interactionally generated invitation seems to get a jockeying over whether that invitation will produce the particular event it seemed to invite one to. But that doesn't obtain for the other sort. One can then see, not only that an interactionally generated invitation is a kind of different thing, but one can also begin to see it as the *use* of an invitation to do something that is itself sequentially appropriate, i.e., at a place where somebody has received a something nice done by somebody else, then there are a variety of nice things for them to do in return, of which an invitation may be one among a set of alternatives including, e.g., doing the same sort of thing for them ('returning the favor'), being really appreciative, etc.

But of course if something goes in lots of places, you might well try to figure that it's not 22 different things, but that it's one or two or three things – though again, you would have to work out the ways in which what you propose is so. In any event, I'm suggesting that a strategy you should try to use is to examine things in terms of various senses of where something goes. And try to pile up the senses of where it goes, even if you have to modify the characterization of it in order to do that. For example, you might say that "Hello" delivered in one way is a 'first pair part' and then characterize its distribution, and then re-characterize it as a 'greeting' and re-characterize its distribution, i.e., as a first pair part it provides for a second pair part; as a greeting it goes at the beginning of the conversation. And you can do that for lots of types of questions or other things.

A second sort of thing you might do: Utterances variously take what I'll call 'positioning load.' By that I mean that they can take various extended-nesses of positioning themselves, e.g., "Anyway" at the beginning of an utterance positions the utterance as on topic with what was being talked about just before the talk now being done. It is a right-hand parenthesis which proposes we now skip back to something in an on-topic fashion. Now, one can look at the various ways that an utterance can be put together to position itself, i.e., one can look at what kinds of loads what sorts of utterances can take. So, for example, one might think that "Hello" can't take much of a positioning load; that at the beginning of a conversation you can't do much more with "Hello" than do a greeting. But that's not quite true because you can do things such as, "Why hel*lo*." Which does things like, "I haven't heard from you in a long time," thereby positioning this conversation relative to others that we've had, and locating a distance between them. I don't know how much one can build up around "Hello," but one might take various types of utterances and see how much positioning load they can take which will more or less finely locate where they are.

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