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Sociology 1977; 11; 87

DOI: 10.1177/003803857701100105

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SOME SEQUENTIAL NEGOTIATIONS IN CONVERSATION: UNEXPANDED AND EXPANDED VERSIONS OF PROJECTED ACTION SEQUENCES*

GAIL JEFFERSON and JIM SCHENKEIN

Abstract This paper reports findings of research into the organizational structure of ordinary conversation. Substantively, the paper is preoccupied with building rigorous descriptions of transcribed conversational materials; a technical appreciation of the action sequences organizing chunks of talk into meaningful interactional units is developed as increasingly non-intuitive observations detail the systematic expansions of three turn action sequences into four, five, and six turn action sequences. Methodologically, the paper is built as a series of progressively more formal characterizations of the interaction captured in the transcript; an analytic appreciation of a research mentality committed to close scrutiny of actually occurring instances of conversation emerges as successive phenomenal layers receive attention.

THE FOLLOWING is a transcribed excerpt of a multiparty conversation:

	[Ted, John, Steven, and Richard are sitting around talking in a backyard patio; the excerpt begins just before the entrance of a newspaper salesboy who has walked down a driveway from the front of the house to deliver a sales appeal.] ¹	
Ted:	I c'd play drums,	1
John:	Y'ca:n, — Hu:h. What ki:nd uh-a trap set? or uh	2
	bongo drums.	3
Ted:	Trap set.	4
John:	Hm.	5
	((pause))	6
John:	How long didjeh play the drums.	7
Ted:	Not very long, just about uh::: three months	8
Steven:	()	9
	((pause))	10
Salesboy:	G'n aftuhnoon sir, W'dju be innerested in subscribing	11
	to the Progress Bulletin t'help m'win a trip tuh Cape	12
	Kennedy to see the astronauts on the moon shot. You	13
	won'haftuh pay til nex'month en you get it ev'ry single	14
	day en I guarantee you ril good service. Jus' fer a	15
	few short weeks sir, tuh help me win my trip,	16

*Accepted 30.3.76. Work on this paper began at the School of Social Sciences, University of California at Irvine, in 1971; a preliminary report was presented to the Congress on Ethnomethodology, University of Manchester, England, in 1972; a revised version was distributed as a background paper for the Conference on Sociolinguistics, Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung, Universität Bielefeld, Germany, in 1973. We should like to express our appreciation to E. C. Cuff, J. R. E. Lee, W. W. Sharrock, Fritz Schutze, and Roy Turner, and their colleagues and students for many comments at these earlier junctures.

Richard:	Well I <i>live</i> in Los Angeles. I don't live around here but	17
	<i>these fellas</i> live here, you might- ask the:m, I don'	18
	know,	19
Salesboy:	[W'd eej-er- any of you gen,tuhmen be innerested in	20
	subscribing to it,	21
Ted:	Whaddiyou think uh Beany,	22
Steven:	[Na::w,	23
Steven:	Naw. I don't go faw it.	24
Salesboy:	[Plea:se, <i>just</i> fer a short weeks sir, Y'won'	25
	haftuh pay t'l next <i>month</i> ,	26
Ted:	[Well, you er uh, talk t'the <i>lady</i> of the house.	27
Steven:	Ye:h,	28
Salesboy:	[No. We knocked there no one w'z here.	29
Steven:	Well she's <i>here</i> ,	30
Ted:	She's here alright.	31
Salesboy:	(Are you sure)?	32
Steven:	(Yeah.)	33
Salesboy:	(okay.)	34
	((pause))	35
.	.	.

One way to begin an investigation of such materials is to elaborate details of an intuitively observable interactional phenomenon. A beginning of this kind will focus our analytic attention at the start on phenomena about which the members of a conversational community are themselves analytic experts. We shall shortly have more to say about how this procedure can be only a beginning for the sort of research we are undertaking,² but for now, let us direct our attentions to observations governed more directly by these data.

We will begin by developing some observations on the ways in which various recipients of the salesboy's subscription appeal avoid accepting or rejecting the appeal.³

The first recipient of the appeal, Richard, avoids the issue by 'passing' it to some of the others:

Richard:	Well I <i>live</i> in Los Angeles. I don't live around here but	17
	<i>these fellas</i> live here, you might- ask the:m, I don'	18
	know,	19

In forwarding the salesboy to some others, Richard has formulated those others as qualified to accept or reject the appeal in just the way he has formulated himself as ineligible. Having selected his nonlocal residence to immediately disqualify himself from considering the appeal, Richard has found an exemption carefully fitted to prominent features of the appeal: the appeal is presented with a decidedly *local* service issue ('... you get it ev'ry single day en I guarantee you ril good service ...') combined with an appreciation of *distant* newsworthy places ('... t'help me win a trip tuh Cape Kennedy to see the astronauts on the moon shot ...'). That is, the sales pitch may be a coherent package, the 'prize' selected in the first place for

its locale-expansiveness. Obviously it is selected via its interest for potential subscribers as well as its interest for the competing salesboys. The implication is that the newspaper, although local (with the virtues of a local paper), is cognizant of and covers 'big news'. Richard's 'Well I *live* in Los Angeles. I don't live around here . . .' undercuts the value of a local service. Simultaneously, by naming a place like Los Angeles as outside the scope of interest of the local paper, a place whose own *local* news could constitute *big* news for such a paper as the Progress Bulletin, he undercuts the locale-expansion proposed by '... Cape Kennedy ...'.

With this display of his own disqualification⁴ Richard is heard as neither assailing nor avoiding the subscription appeal, for he is simply not the candidate subscriber he was mistaken for. Richard has circumvented accepting or rejecting the appeal by forwarding the matter without prejudice to those bona fide local residents whose business it properly should be to respond to the subscription appeal with an acceptance or rejection. This kind of 'passing' of the occasioned business at hand may be a local instance of a generally available interactional device to avoid performing some relevant next activity without harassing the propriety of its performance for someone else.

After the subscription appeal is redirected to the indicated local residents (20–22) and is rejected by Steven (23–24), Ted responds to continued pleadings from the salesboy (25–26) with an utterance similar in important ways to Richard's 'pass':

Ted: Well, you er uh, talk t'the *lady* of the house

27

Like Richard's utterance, Ted's remark forwards the salesboy to a potential subscriber as it forwards the acceptance or rejection of the appeal to the identified candidate. Both utterances appear to be instances of a particular sort of 'pass', where the initiator of some sequence (in this case, the salesboy) is 'processed' to alternative, legitimate, or in other ways preferred performers of the occasioned next action (here, accepting or rejecting the subscription appeal).

To emphasize both the processing of the initiator of a sequence and the passing of the occasioned next activity to someone else, we can refer to this kind of utterance as a 'Processing Pass'.

As these data illustrate, Processing Passes can be used in different sequential environments and can have different sequential consequences. Richard's utterance is the first response to the subscription appeal; the utterance is not heard as proposing a termination of the salesboy's encounter, but only a disqualification of one among co-present others. By contrast, Ted's 'Well, you er uh, talk t'the *lady* of the house.' (27) is offered after Richard's disqualification (17–19) and after the appeal has been rejected by Steven (23–24); the utterance specifically raises closure of the salesboy's encounter by directing him to continue his appeal somewhere else.⁵

Our data furnish us with an instance of an alternative kind of pass:

Salesboy: W'd ejer-any of you gen,tuhmen be innerested in
subscribing to it,

20

21

- | | | |
|---------|----------------------------|----|
| Ted: | Whaddiyou, think us Beany, | 22 |
| Steven: | [Na::w, | 23 |
| Steven: | Naw. [I don't go faw it. | 24 |

Notice here that Ted's 'Whaddiyou think uh Beany,' (22) responds to the just redirected appeal with (again) something other than the relevant acceptance or rejection. In this respect, the utterance is a circumvention of the occasioned next activity, yet the circumvention is achieved under auspices substantially different from the Processing Passes we have considered.

To emphasize both that there is a passing of the occasioned next activity to someone else, and that it is via having a conference with colleagues that a postponement of that activity is undertaken, we can refer to this kind of utterance as a 'Conference Pass'.

While the Processing Passes provide direction to the salesboy who must redirect his appeal to realize an acceptance or rejection, the Conference Pass forwards the pending issue at once to its recipient without intermediary participation by the salesboy. In answering Ted's query, in 'saying what he thinks', Steven unavoidably confronts the acceptance or rejection of the appeal.⁶ Steven's subsequent 'Na::w, —Naw. I don't go faw it.' (23–24) is heard as an explicit rejection of the subscription appeal which therefore inherits the pleadings to reconsider immediately following it.⁷

One resource Ted may be relying on for his Conference Pass instead of accepting or rejecting the appeal is that the redirected appeal to which he is responding was addressed to the ensemble 'cejer- any of you gen,tuhmen' (20) who are presumably the 'fellas' (18) Richard has indicated as the local residents. The salesboy having been processed to, and subsequently addressing, an ensemble,⁸ appears to provide for a conference among the members of that ensemble in advance of performing the acceptance or rejection of the pending appeal. The appropriate use of this kind of postponement of the occasioned business at hand may be a local instance of a collection of interactional devices which avoid performing some relevant next activity while being legitimately on-the-way-to the performance of that activity.⁹

We have sketched out a characterization of the circumventing which '... these fellas live here, you might- ask the:m, I don'know' (17–19), 'Whaddiyou think uh Beany' (22), and '... talk t'the lady of the house' (27) display to us in these materials. We have treated each instance of 'passing' as a methodic interactional device, and we have suggested that there are different kinds of Passes whose actual occurrences can be interrogated in detail with interesting reward. To propose that there are three instances of 'passing' in the data we have been examining is not at all contrary to our intuitions about circumstances in which avoiding some relevant next action may be a likely component, and the details sketched out on these Passes intimately collaborate with our intuitions about the phenomenal world of conversational interaction.¹⁰

Our research interests, however, seek to move beyond these characterizations of intuitively available interactional phenomena. Our commitment is not to giving academic voice to the expertise of member conversationalists, or at least it is not only that.

Rather, we are entertaining the possibility of inquiries into a level of structural organization of conversational interaction for which the intuitions of member conversationalists are foreign. We are exploring certain organizational features of conversational interaction that may escape the scrutiny of ordinary intuitions. We are experimenting with analytic and methodological technologies for gaining access to those structural details of conversational interaction that may be arranged in domains remote from intuitive sensibilities typically defining for us the very phenomena of conversational interaction. We are, in the end, examining the prospects of a 'non-intuitive' analytic mentality for investigating and describing organizational details of conversation not only thus far undescribed, but thus far unnoticed as resources for conversationalists.

One way to transact the kind of analytic shift being proposed is to bring under review some prominent structural feature of the Passes initially characterized. The features we have glossed by the labels Processing and Conference Passes will not be treated as final results, nor will they be treated as especially deserving of continued elaboration, comparative documentation, or any other career of devoted attention. Instead, we will treat these initially sketched features as problematically achieved phenomena that are responsive not only to conspicuous interactional contingencies, but responsive as well to intuitively *unavailable* structural details of conversational interaction.

The defining characteristic of the Passes noted in the first collection of observations was a postponement of an occasioned next activity accomplished by the 'passer' forwarding performance of it to someone else. If we bring that feature under review, one thing that stands out is that postponement necessarily *expands* the interactional events between, on the one hand, whatever occasioned the activity which becomes postponed (in our data, the subscription appeal), and on the other hand, whatever would constitute recognizable performance of the relevant activity being postponed (in our data, accepting or rejecting the subscription appeal).

Having arrived at an analytic position that views the originally noted circumventions of accepting or rejecting the subscription appeal as 'expansions' of an occasioned sequence, we can now take up the organization of conversational interaction around 'unexpanded' and 'expanded' sequences as a technical accomplishment of member conversationalists.

An appreciation of the organization of conversational interaction around 'unexpanded' and 'expanded' sequences can be initially drawn by comparing the conversational fragment we have thus far been considering (11–27) with another excerpt from the same encounter, somewhat later. Having returned to the backyard patio after an interchange with 'the lady of the house', the salesboy

eventually brings Steven to subscribe to the newspaper. After the order form has been completed, the following occurs:

Salesboy: Okay thank y'very much,	283
Steven: (Yah, yer welcome.	284
Salesboy: Would any of you other gen-tlemen be innerested,	285
((pause))	286
Salesboy: Dju be innerested sir, ((addressed to Michael	287
who joined the ensemble in his absence))	288
((pause))	289
Salesboy: -Taking the Progress Bulletin,	290
Steven: No, en <i>he</i> don'know nothin about it.	291
Salesboy: Okay.	292
Salesboy: Thank y'very much, ((brightly))	293
Steven: Yeh <i>alrighty</i> ,	294
((salesboy turns and walks away))	295

Here we have an instance of a sequence initiated by an appeal (285–290) representing the 'unexpanded' version of the appeal sequence 'expanded' by the Passes we observed in the earlier excerpt from this encounter. In the data just cited, the salesboy's subscription appeal (285–290) occasions the relevance of an acceptance or rejection as the appropriate next action; when Steven follows the appeal with a rejection on behalf of Michael (291), the salesboy offers an acknowledgement (292) which paves the way for a subsequent closing to the encounter. We can schematize the progress of this Unexpanded Appeal Sequence as follows:

- (I) A: Appeal
- (II) B: Acceptance/Rejection
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

Technically, this Unexpanded Appeal Sequence can be described as containing two actions beyond the occurrence of an appeal (I), with the next-to-last action (II) returning the floor to the initiator of the sequence for performance of the acknowledgement (III).

It is this Unexpanded Sequence that exerts a constraint upon, and provides resources for, the building of an appeal sequence successively 'expanded' by the Passes we observed initially. A stepwise schematization of that earlier excerpt can illustrate the technical dependence an Expanded Appeal Sequence has on the materials of the Unexpanded Appeal Sequence on which it is based.¹¹

When the salesboy delivers his opening subscription appeal (111–116), the sequence his utterance sets up is the Unexpanded Appeal Sequence projected upon the occurrence of an appeal:

- (I) A: Appeal
- (II) B: Acceptance/Rejection
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

Richard's subsequent Processing Pass, instead of performing the occasioned next action, forwards performance of the (II) Acceptance/Rejection to 'these fellas'

(I7–I9) and thereby projects an Expanded Appeal Sequence based on the initial projection:

- (I) A: Appeal
- B: Processing Pass
- (I-r) A: Redirected Appeal
- (II) C: Acceptance/Rejection
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

The resulting Expanded Appeal Sequence maintains not only the component parts of the Unexpanded Appeal Sequence on which it is based, but also the order of the parts, and the distribution of the same parts to the initiator of the original projected sequence.

Now, as it happens, there then occurs a second expansion of this sequence; for instead of performing the forwarded (II) Acceptance/Rejection after the redirected appeal, Ted proffers a Conference Pass and the resulting sequence can be described as follows:

- (I) A: Appeal
- B: Processing Pass
- (I-r) A: Redirected Appeal
- C: Conference Pass
- (II) D: Acceptance/Rejection
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

Even with a second ‘expansion’ on the originally projected Unexpanded Appeal Sequence the component parts are maintained in their same order, and the appropriate speakers of those parts are permitted by co-participants to speak, and do speak, in the appropriate order.

Moreover, the Passes which achieve the orderly ‘expansions’ of the sequence are oriented to as on-the-way to the Acceptance/Rejection (II), and not as *de facto* rejections; although treating a sequence ‘expansion’ as a version of the activity it proposes to postpone is always an option open to the next speaker, all participants in this encounter ‘respect’ the status of the Passes as *sequence expanders*. Recall, for example, that the salesboy’s pleading Acknowledgement (III) is finely timed to occur no sooner and no later than the performance of an explicit Rejection (II):

- | | | |
|-----------|--|----|
| Salesboy: | [W’d eejer- any of you gen,tuhmen be innerested in | 20 |
| | subscribing to it, | 21 |
| Ted: | Whaddiyou think uh Beany, | 22 |
| Steven: | [Na::w, | 23 |
| Steven: | Naw. I don’t go faw it. | 24 |
| Salesboy: | [Plea:se, just fer a few short weeks sir, Y’won’ | 25 |
| | haftuh[pay t’l next month, | 26 |

Only after Steven’s ‘Na::w, —Naw.’ (23–4) does the salesboy re-enter the conversation. We can see how Acknowledgements placed in this way are technically

accomplished utterances sensitive to the performance of that event occasioning its own performance.¹²

While characterizing the Passes in this excerpt as circumventions of the subscription appeal, we noted how performance of Acceptance/Rejection shifts from Richard to Ted, then from Ted to Steven. The Passes with which Richard (or any 'B') and Ted (or any 'C') build an Expanded Sequence may reflect an alertness to the likelihood of inheriting the thrust of the Acknowledgement which will properly follow Acceptance/Rejection. That is, building an Expanded Sequence may be one of the ways speakers have of manipulating or negotiating performance of locally critical components of an initially projected Unexpanded Sequence. In our data, for example, since the performer of the next-to-last position (viz. Acceptance/Rejection) will be subsequently implicated in the kind of continuance (cf. 25–26) or the kind of closure (cf. 292) profferable by the last position (viz. Acknowledgement), the next-to-last position in the projected Unexpanded Sequence may be especially critical. We are suggesting that conversationalists design their utterances with such technical considerations informing on their achieved fit between interactional enterprises and projected sequence structures.

We have sketched a technical, 'non-intuitive' characterization of the observed Passes. This has involved us in becoming alert not only to the availability of Unexpanded and Expanded Sequences, but also to the possibility of selective deployment of those sequence types in the service of distinctive interactional enterprises. As a next heuristic to sustain our analyses, let us turn these resources to an investigation of some other materials. Using this heuristic can generate an appreciation of the abstract status of these sequence types, and also a sense for the detailed co-operation involved in the collaborative production of such sequences.

The following excerpt is taken from a telephone call between Patty and Gene, during which Patty's son, Ronald, is in the room with her as the telephone conversation proceeds; at some point Gene asks Patty about Ronald, and in responding, Patty is talking about Ronald in his presence when the following occurs:¹³

- | | | |
|---------|--|-----|
| Patty: | Oh I'd say he's about what five three enna half= | C1 |
| Patty: | = Aren'tchu Ronald | C2 |
| Ronald: | Five <i>fou:r</i> . | C3 |
| Patty: | Five four, | C4 |
| Patty: | En 'e weighs about a hunnerd'n thirty five | C5 |
| | pounds.= | C6 |
| Ronald: | = AAUGGH! WHADDA- L-LIE! | C7 |
| Patty: | [Well how-= | C8 |
| Patty: | =Owright? How much d'you weigh. | C9 |
| Ronald: | One <i>twenty</i> five. | C10 |
| Patty: | Oh one <i>twenny</i> [five. | C11 |
| Gene: | What'r yuh tryina make a fatty out'v'm? | C12 |
| Patty: | Hu:h? | C13 |
| Gene: | Trina make a fatty out'v'm? | C14 |
| Ronald: | [Y'make me sound like a <i>blimp</i> . | C15 |

Relying on Ronald's overhearing of her exchange with Gene (C₁), Patty initiates an encounter with Ronald by soliciting a correction from him on her estimate of his weight (C₂); Ronald offers the correction (C₃), Patty acknowledges the correction (C₄), and returns at once to her exchange with Gene (C₅). The 'unexpanded' character of the sequence devoted to the height correction (C₂–C₄) bears a striking similarity to the Unexpanded Appeal Sequence we have already seen (285–292); in both, the occurrence of the first item projects two actions beyond it, with the next-to-last action returning the floor to the initiator of the sequence for an Acknowledgement of the next-to-last action:

Unexpanded Appeal Sequence

- (I) A: Appeal
- (II) B: Acceptance/Rejection
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

Unexpanded Correction Sequence

- (I) A: Correction Solicitor
- (II) B: Correction
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

In each instance, the initiator of the sequence (A) uses the return of the floor for Acknowledgement (III) to negotiate closure to an encounter. We have already seen how the salesboy's unprotesting 'Okay' (292) acknowledges the just prior rejection and brings the encounter into a closing sequence. In the correction sequence now being considered, Patty uses an unelaborated repeat, 'Five four' (C₄) of Ronald's just prior correction to permit an immediate return to her encounter with Gene; packaging the Unexpanded Correction Sequence within the syntactically tied utterance 'Oh I'd say he's what about five three enna half . . . En 'e weighs about a hunnerd'n thirty five pounds' (C₁ . . . C₅) displays to both Ronald and Gene the intervals of height that, in describing Ronald, she is willing to treat as inconsequential.

In performing the Acknowledgement (III) to Ronald's just prior correction, Patty has the option to comment on the Correction (II) in some way that would generate resources for continuing the side encounter with Ronald; for example, the Acknowledgement (III) position can be used to apologize to Ronald for the error, to rebuke such a minor correction, to take notice of how much Ronald is growing or shrinking, and so forth. Patty's unelaborated repeat of the Correction (II) treats the difference between her own 'five three enna half' (C₁) and Ronald's 'Five *fou:r*' (3) as deserving no special notice by the estimator, and the side encounter with Ronald is brought to a close. Patty's immediate return to the encounter with Gene marks her part in the collaborative achievement of this Unexpanded Correction Sequence.

As for Ronald's part, performance of the Correction (II) delivers the Acknow-

ledgement (III) to Patty as we have seen; but this co-operation in achieving an Unexpanded Correction Sequence stands as an alternative to an 'expansion' he could undertake if, for example, he determined that the difference between Patty's estimate and his own knowledge of his height deserved another treatment. One characteristic 'expansion' for such correction sequences involves following the first Correction Solicitor (I) with a return Correction Solicitor (r). The resulting sequence,

- (I) A: Correction Solicitor
- (r) B: Correction Solicitor
- (II) A: Correction
- (III) B: Acknowledgement

thus forwards performance of the Correction (II) to the initiator (A) of the sequence instead of it being performed by the second speaker (B) as originally projected in the Unexpanded version of the sequence; as a consequence, the Acknowledgement (III) is delivered to (B) instead of (A). By contrast, Ronald's performance of the Correction (II) in our data (C3) already reflects an anticipation that the difference his utterance will disclose can receive another's minimal Acknowledgement (III), and an 'expansion' to forward the Correction (II) to Patty and deliver the Acknowledgement (III) to him is not warranted.¹⁴

On the matter of Ronald's weight, however, there is a considerable flurry as these co-participants negotiate an Expanded Correction Sequence tossing the performance of the Correction (II) and its Acknowledgement (III) back and forth. The sequence is initiated this time by Ronald who asserts his outrage (C7) when Patty's resumption of her encounter with Gene commits a mistaken estimate of his weight:

- | | | |
|---------|--|----|
| Patty: | En 'e weighs about a hunnerd'n thirty five | C5 |
| | pounds.= | C6 |
| Ronald: | =AAUGGH! WHADDA-[L-LIE! | C7 |

Here, Ronald's utterance (C7) presents itself as a Correction Solicitor (I) initiating a correction sequence whose Unexpanded projection,

- B: Estimate
- (I) A: Correction Solicitor
- (II) B: Correction
- (III) A: Acknowledgement

would have Patty (B) performing a Correction (II) to her own estimate of Ronald's weight, thus delivering to Ronald (A) the Acknowledgement (III) in which he can exercise the option to proffer continuance or closure to his apparent injury.¹⁵

Notwithstanding his outraged enthusiasm, Ronald has by-passed protesting at the point when the error was observable to him. Since his own knowledge of his

weight is 'One *twenty* five' (C10), an error of from five to fourteen pounds is detectable by Ronald when Patty gets as far as 'En 'e weighs about a hunnerd'n thirty . . .' (C5). Instead of asserting a protest to the mistake at that point, Ronald allows Patty's utterance to go to completion. His outrage is delicately positioned at the point when he hears Patty's completed utterance has left uncorrected a mistake that is presumably self-correctable.¹⁶ Following Patty's utterance with a Correction Solicitor (I) instead of asserting the correction himself provides Patty a chance to 'look again' and offer her own Correction (II). Ronald's 'AAUGH! WHADDA—L—LIE!' (C7) structurally reflects the disputed issue being a matter of appearance, not simply a matter of so many pounds, and it vigorously protests her estimate as an error his appearance will refute.¹⁷

But as it happens, Patty does not follow Ronald's protest (C7) with a revised estimate:

Patty:	En 'e weighs about a hunnerd'n thirty five	C5
	pounds.=	C6
Ronald:	= AAUGGH! WHADDA-L-LIE!	C7
Patty:	[Well how-=	C8
Patty:	=Owright? How much d'you weigh.	C9

In following Ronald's Correction Solicitor (I) with a return Correction Solicitor (r) instead of the Correction (II), the initially projected action sequence becomes an Expanded Correction Sequence,

- B: Estimate
- (I) A: Correction Solicitor
- (r) B: Correction Solicitor
- (II) A: Correction
- (III) B: Acknowledgement

thereby forwarding performance of the controversial Correction (II) to Ronald (A), and delivering the Acknowledgement (III) to Patty (B) instead of the other way around.

Upon the occurrence of each, both Ronald's (I) and Patty's (r) Correction Solicitors project sequences returning the Acknowledgement (III) to their respective speakers. We are suggesting that in sequences such as these, incumbency of the Acknowledgement (III) position may be especially critical to co-participants attempting to disarm another's victory. The negotiation of this Expanded Correction Sequence reflects technical sensitivities to the uses of the Acknowledgement (III) position in such sequences. For an embattled issue,¹⁸ Acknowledgement (III) can be used to control the disposition of the controversy with displays of its inconsequence—'Oh one *twenny* five' (C11), or its injury—'Y'make me sound lik a *blimp*' (C15). That conversationalists design their utterances, in part, by monitoring the positions being allocated in a projected action sequence is the recurring recommendation.

In elaborating the intuitively transparent circumventions observable in the salesboy data, we generated a detailed characterization of the Passes used to avoid accepting or rejecting the subscription appeal. In turning those observations into reflections of underlying structural phenomena, we focussed our attention on the sequential 'expansions' achieved by those circumventions and explored the organization of the salesboy data around Unexpanded and Expanded versions of projected action sequences. That analysis was then turned to other materials.

In the salesboy data, it was the Acceptance/Rejection (II) that was successively forwarded by two Passes, and we proposed that the negotiation of that Expanded Appeal Sequence was technically informed since the occurrence of the Rejection (II) would deliver the Acknowledgement (III) to the salesboy and thereby inherit his efforts to continue the encounter until transformed into an Acceptance. In the subsequent materials, the Ronald and Patty exchange, it was the Correction (II) that was successively forwarded, and we proposed that the negotiation of that Expanded Correction Sequence was technically informed since the occurrence of the Correction (II) would deliver the Acknowledgement (III) to the other participant and thereby place in the other's control the disposition of an energetically controversial matter.

The Acknowledgement (III) position and the next-to-last position (II) have an intimate technical relationship: negotiations about their distribution involves their occurrence as a consecutive pair of events. The 'expansion' of a sequence containing such a pair consequently will involve negotiation of the projected action sequence before the occurrence of the first component of such a pair; a review of our data will demonstrate that the components of these pairs (e.g. Acceptance/Rejection with its Acknowledgement, or Correction with its Acknowledgement) are separated in none of the observed 'expansions' (e.g. 23-24 or C8-C10). Since the occurrence of the first component in such a pair strongly controls the subsequent occurrence of the second, conversationalists may monitor them together, and they may be negotiating not merely incumbency of one position, but necessarily the distribution of incumbencies for both positions.

This abstract structure emerges as a sequential resource bearing on the managed relationship of intuitively intricate orders of richly varied interactional facts.²⁰

Notes

1. This excerpt is from a larger corpus of conversations recorded in 1969 by Alan Ryave and Jim Schenkein at a halfway-house for formerly institutionalized adult male 'retardates' outside of Los Angeles. Except for the salesboy, who is a 'normal' boy of about twelve, and Richard and John, who are 'normal' adult male visitors to the house, all other participants are 'retardate' residents. A more extensive consideration of the competencies exhibited by the 'retardates' in the conduct of their conversational interaction can be found in Ryave (1973).
2. This will be taken up on pp. 91-92.

3. We might have developed instead observations on some other intuitively transparent activity as a way of breaking into these materials. For example, we could begin the investigation by building a characterization of the salesboy's opening utterance (11–16) as a recognizable sales pitch: we would observe the syntactical momentum employed for an uninterruptable delivery, the ordering of the component parts of the utterance, the construction of personal appeals and guarantees, the consequence of the utterance in now confronting its hearers with accepting or rejecting the sales appeal, and other features detailing the management of the sales pitch over the course of the utterance. It should be clear from this brief hint at one alternative beginning that these materials can support extensive analytic energies and can yield substantially different analyses. We should also point out that the procedure for beginning investigations of these materials suggested at the start of this paper—viz. 'elaborate details of an intuitively observable interactional phenomenon'—was the result of retrospective examination of a research enterprise conducted unwise to a formulation of that policy. This research got started 'somehow' and only a review of its history stimulated formulation of the policy reported. While at present we can offer no principled position for selecting one intuitively transparent observation over another as a point of investigative departure, some work has been done on a variety of other research predicaments requiring selection of one analytic direction over another; see Sacks (1967), Schenkein (1971 and 1977b), Sudnow (1972).
4. The explicit display of the grounds for his forwarding of the appeal to the others is a crucial part of an utterance designed to circumvent accepting or rejecting the appeal. Had Richard merely said something like 'Ask these fellas here' he might well have avoided the issue for now, but without a display of adequate grounds for his own disqualification he would not have secured resources for more permanent immunity to a redirection of the appeal to him by the salesboy somewhat later, or a 'pass back' of the issue by those to whom he attempted passing the matter himself.
5. In this regard, the Processing Pass of the housewife to her not-at-home-husband is a notorious device to bring closure to encounters with door-to-door solicitors; to be sure, the counter-moves available to such a Processing Pass occupy a critical place among the professional skills of salesmen.
6. Of course, the query 'Whaddiyou think' is not guaranteed circumvention of the pending issue: had Steven returned with 'I think it's perfect for you' instead of 'Naw. I don't go faw it,' the issue would have been passed resoundingly *back* to Ted. Indeed, successive passings back and forth sometimes become an occasion to specifically formulate the awkwardness, irony, or stalemate in such circumstances. But without regard to the *success* of the Conference Pass in committing its recipient to a position on the pending issue, a Conference Pass does confront its recipient with the issue being considered.
7. These data reveal that a circumvention may be a preferred interactional strategy to an explicit rejection of the appeal. Richard's initial Processing Pass (17–19) avoided the practical and interactional consequences of considering the appeal further, for the salesboy turns at once to the others; Ted's subsequent Conference Pass (22) avoided for him performance of either an acceptance or rejection, and his continued participation in the encounter never jeopardizes his escape from the appeal; but Steven's rejection (23–24) is treated by the salesboy as a chance to extend Steven's consideration of the appeal (25–26). It is not unlikely that Passes used to circumvent the occasioned relevance of accepting or rejecting the subscription appeal are structurally wise to the extendability of the encounter by the salesboy when a rejection of his appeal is proffered.
8. The salesboy specifically corrects his utterance to contain not merely a term which covers two of the remaining three, the two to whom Richard has presumably directed the salesboy in his Pass with '... these fellas' (i.e. 'ejeer-'), to a term which can include

John as a candidate subscriber, so that John can decide for himself whether the paper is of interest and is not automatically excluded from 'these fellas' in the salesboy's correction (i.e. 'any of you').

9. The mere fact of a Pass in some instances can invoke and rely upon elaborate ideologies informing the conduct of everyday social intercourse. Consider the tacitly rational distributions of authority and/or provinces of activity among certain categories of persons displayed in the Pass of a man to the lady of the house for whole collections of issues, of the wife to the not-at-home husband, of the child to an adult, of the client to the attorney, of the psychiatrist to the patient, of the cashier to the floor manager, and so on. Both formulated displays of the grounds for a Pass (as in Richard's disclaimer of local residence as a ground for Passing to the others) and unformulated grounds (as in Ted's Conference Pass or his Processing Pass to the lady of the house) can bear inspection for those features of the taken-for-granted world underlying the design of conversational actions.
10. The transparency of such heuristic beginning observations (for example, 'this is a sale pitch', 'this is an evasion', and so on) can be appealed to for relief from our persistent suspicions that the phenomena we research are figments of our technical imaginations. Beginning with intuitively plain observations draws upon the resources lay conversationalists have for formulating their conversational enterprises. Conversationalists can recognize instances of such phenomena, they can elaborate subtleties of construction and debate with authority propositions about the phenomena, and they can locate situational contingencies having an impact on the appropriateness or artfulness of a given instance. The proposed beginning heuristic offered here of course relies on our own membership within the conversational community we seek to study; more particularly, it asks that we formulate some aspects of our membership expertise about phenomena more or less known and observable to any competent member of the community.
11. We intend the terms Unexpanded and Expanded as technical descriptions of action sequence possibilities, and not to suggest that the former is more impoverished than the latter; it is an Unexpanded Appeal Sequence (285–292) that is used to negotiate the encounter into a closing sequence, and there are obviously large collections of interactional enterprises for which an Unexpanded version of a sequence is the appropriate or preferred form. We might add that the particular appeal sequence being examined here in Unexpanded and Expanded forms (viz. an appeal sequence fitted to a newspaper subscription) has observable generalizability to other sorts of appeals; we may well view this analysis as a prototype for appeal sequences of various kinds.
12. While no such happening is exhibited in these data, it may be useful to point out that a series of sequence expansions heard to be circumventions of a relevant component in the projected action sequence (e.g. Accepting/Rejecting) can permit, and sometimes oblige, the initiator of the sequence to perform the avoided action himself (e.g. 'Oh well, you probably wouldn't be interested'); notice that in this case, the initiator having performed the Accepting/Rejecting himself on the other's behalf has the consequence of yielding the Acknowledgement position to the others (e.g. 'That's right'). We will have more to say shortly about the consequences of such negotiations for incumbency of one or another position in a projected action sequence (cf. pp. 97 *et seq.*). A more elaborate consideration of precise timing constraints such as the 'no sooner and no later' placement of the salesboy's Acknowledgement in these data can be found in Jefferson (1973, 1974).
13. This excerpt comes from a larger corpus of materials collected in 1971 by Jo Anne Goldberg at the University of California, Irvine; we would like to record here our appreciation to her for making it available to us.
14. When the difference between the estimate and the correction is somewhat more significant, or when the mistake in the estimate is heard as a different kind of error, the recipient of the

first Correction Solicitor (I) may decide to 'expand' the action sequence and respond with a returned Correction Solicitor (r) instead of the Correction (II) as in the following hypothetical instance:

(I) A: You must be about five four.

(r) B: Look again.

(II) A: I mean *six* four.

(III) B: That's better.

Notice that the 'expansion' with a returned Correction Solicitor (r) results in B's incumbency of the Acknowledgement (III), whereas without this 'expansion' A's incumbency of the Acknowledgement (III) would have to confront his prior error as in:

(I) A: You must be about five four.

(II) B: *Six* four.

(III) A: Yeah, I *meant* six four.

These 'expansions' can be used not only to make a fuss, but also to save an apology.

15. Of more general interest is the observation that a Correction Solicitor can attach itself to some prior utterance, and thereby seek to gain control of a projected action sequence as it simultaneously proposes a review of its own precedent. In our data, Patty's estimate of Ronald's weight (C5-C6) does not generate the ensuing correction sequence, although it is the precedent for Ronald's Correction Solicitor (C7) which does. Correction Solicitors appear to have an across-the-board *second position occurrence potential*; they can be asserted after estimates and assertions not necessarily wise to their own defect; they can occur after questions to inform the questioner that he already knows or ought to know the answer; and, what is emerging as organizationally critical, they can occur after a prior Correction Solicitor as a way to negotiate for control of the projected Acknowledgement (III) position.
16. A detailed discussion of this fragment can be found in Jefferson (1973).
17. In general, if one has made an estimate on something available to inspection for an estimate revision, and is told in no uncertain terms that the estimate is in error, one can 'look again' (actually, figuratively, or constructively) and see for himself the kind of error he has committed. In this case, moreover, there exists a bias for generating low estimates of a person's weight since it is generally high estimates that are offensive. Ronald's Correction Solicitor (C7) not only proposes that his actual weight, as a matter of appearance, can be correctly observed by Patty, but it instructs her, just in case she cannot, that the direction her revision should take is downward.
18. The same structural 'expansion' can be used in another kind of correction sequence to negotiate the proper display of affinity, apology, or amazement. For example, in the following sequence:

B: I bet that sweater cost you thirty five dollars.

(I) A: Oh nowhere near that!

(r) B: Well how much *did* it cost.

(II) A: Five bucks.

(III) B: Incredible!

B's complimentary estimate is followed by A's Correction Solicitor (I); had B subsequently proffered a Correction (II) to the mistaken first estimate, A would be delivered the Acknowledgement (III) in which B's second guess would command attention—and since A's Correction Solicitor (I) informs not only on the direction of the mistake but also on the magnitude, B is in a position to substantially repair the mistake, and that would leave A an Acknowledgement (III) for either applauding B's second guess or affirming that a closer look at the sweater will convince you of its lesser value. By contrast, in treating A's Correction Solicitor (I) as a *claim* of correct information instead of a solicitation of correct information, B offers a return Correction Solicitor (r) which forwards to A performance of

the Correction (II) and delivers to B the Acknowledgement (III) position in which to properly display the complimentary amazement. Negotiating performance of positions in projected action sequences is finely tuned to the interactional enterprises at hand.

19. For those familiar with the emerging findings of Conversation Analysis, it is worth noting that the 'consecutive pairs' being referred to in this discussion seem to behave differently from the 'adjacency 'pairs' considered elsewhere (cf. Harvey Sacks, unpublished lecture; University of California, Irvine, Lectures 1-4, Spring, 1972). In an adjacency pair, the occurrence of the 'first pair part' occasions the occurrence of the second, such that the second either occurrence is noticeably absent. The 'consecutive pairs' referred to here are not *pair* parts but *sequence* parts, such that the occurrence of the 'first' has itself been occasioned by the larger sequence in which the 'pair' is structurally embedded. While we have not explored the implication of this distinction we suspect that it has some interesting analytic consequence.
20. Initial reports on repeating action sequences organizing extended stretches of talk can be found in Schenkein (1975) and Jefferson (1977); close study of identity negotiations conducted through systematically enlaced action sequences will be found in Schenkein (1977a). Those already familiar with the work of Harvey Sacks will have recognized his deep influence on our analytic mentality—cf. Sacks (1963, 1967, 1972a, and 1974); a convenient collection of papers stimulated largely by Sacks' early work can be found in Sudnow (1972); a gathering of more recent work will be found in Schenkein (1977b).

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