

Reprinted from *Rethinking context:*
Language as an interactive phenomenon
Edited by Alessandro Duranti and Charles Goodwin
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Printed in Great Britain

7 In another context

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Editors' introduction

Emanuel A. Schegloff is Professor of Sociology at the University of California in Los Angeles. He received his doctorate in Sociology from Berkeley. Most of Schegloff's research has been devoted to the analysis of conversation, a field of research that originated in the 1960s through intense collaboration between Harvey Sacks, Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson.

Conversation analysis differs from most other fields that take talk as their primary subject matter in that it uses as its point of departure not linguistics but rather a deep interest in elementary properties of social action. Influenced by Harold Garfinkel's **ethnomethodology**, early work in conversation analysis approached talk in interaction as a perspicuous site for investigating how human social organization was dynamically accomplished by participants within the indigenous settings where they lived their lives. In order to sustain and elaborate the events they are engaged in, participants must display to each other their ongoing understanding of those events while simultaneously interpreting in a relevant fashion the actions of others. When the analysis of talk was approached from such a perspective, it was found that in order to understand utterances (and other forms of action) in a relevant fashion, parties engaged in conversation do not approach a strip of talk as an isolated object but instead interpret whatever is being said by tying it to the **context** within which it occurs. For example, a bit of talk cannot be recognized as an **answer** by looking at it in isolation. Instead it must be seen as responsive to a particular type of prior action, e.g. a **question**. A key aspect of context is thus the **sequence** of talk within which a particular utterance is lodged (hence the strong interest of conversation analysts in **sequential organization**).

Many of these themes were elaborated in Schegloff's first major publication, "Sequencing in Conversational Openings" which appeared in *American Anthropologist* in 1968. One of the issues addressed by Schegloff in this article is specification of what in fact constitutes a sequence. Clearly the mere fact that two events occur in close proximity to each other does not establish that participants treat these events as a sequence of actions tied to each other. Schegloff proposed that a defining characteristic of true sequences is the property of **conditional relevance**: a first action creates a slot for an appropriate next action such that even the **absence** of that action can be perceived as a relevant and noticeable event (consider for example a student's silence after a teacher's question, or someone who says nothing in response to a greeting). The power of sequential organization as a contextual

resource for interpretation is thus so strong that even things which fail to happen become relevant events for participants. Notions such as conditional relevance integrate interpretive issues with analysis of the ongoing production of social action. Producing a sequence of responsive action, such as an exchange of greetings, not only requires that participants engage in appropriate interpretation, but is itself an elementary example of coordinated social action.

In subsequent research Schegloff has described and analyzed a range of different types of conversational phenomena. His work includes elaborate and detailed analysis of how participants coordinate entry into interaction (Schegloff 1968, 1979, 1986) and, in collaboration with Harvey Sacks, how they exit from interaction (Schegloff and Sacks 1973). A key constitutive feature of conversation is the exchange of turns at talk. Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) have provided a classic analysis of this process, one that ties the accomplishment of elementary social organization to the detailed shaping of units of talk. While most students of language dismiss phenomena such as hesitations and restarts as "performance errors" that obscure ideal linguistic form, Schegloff notes that conversation is a "self-righting mechanism" with its own indigenous mechanisms for repairing the troubles it systematically encounters as a real-world phenomenon; he has provided extensive analysis of how repair is organized as a social and interactive phenomenon (for example Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks 1977). Conversation permits detailed analysis of how participants employ general, abstract procedures to build the local particulars of the events they are engaged in. One key aspect of this process is **recipient design**, the multiplicity of ways in which participants take into account the particulars of who they are talking to, and the events they are engaged in, in the organization of their action. Schegloff's (1972) analysis of "formulating place" provides a classic illustration of this process.

In his chapter in the present volume, Schegloff begins by addressing a number of theoretical and methodological issues posed in the investigation of context. He argues strongly that an analyst is not free to invoke whatever variables he or she feels appropriate as dimensions of context, no matter how strongly grounded in traditional social theory – e.g. class, gender, etc. – but instead must demonstrate in the events being examined that the participants themselves are organizing their behavior in terms of the features being described by the analyst. He then uses a specific storytelling episode to demonstrate how sequential organization provides multiple levels of context for the organization of participants' action. In a previous analysis of part of this same sequence, C. Goodwin (1987) investigated how an utterance specifically designed to be a single-party, context-free event was in fact contextually shaped through a process of collaborative interaction. Schegloff now reanalyzes this same event by placing it within a much larger sequence than Goodwin looked at, an entire storytelling episode. Schegloff finds that this larger sequence is in fact consequential in detail for the organization of the event that Goodwin examined. However, Schegloff notes that his current analysis in no way undercuts Goodwin's earlier analysis. Instead multiple levels of sequential context mutually reinforce each other as they provide alternative types of organization for the local production of action. In the course of his analysis, Schegloff also provides an extended demonstration of how one of the speech events recurrently examined in this volume – storytelling – is studied within conversation analysis.

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In another context

1 Introduction

Invocations of the relevance of context, in both everyday vernacular and in scholarly or scientific discourse, have commonly been characterized by certain features.

First, omission of what is claimed to be appropriate context is treated as having distorted the sense of what has been (as we say in ordinary discourse) “taken out of context.” Putting something “in context,” accordingly, is treated as transforming, and correcting, our understanding.

Secondly, the project of putting something in proper context ordinarily has commonly treated that context as reasonably well understood by the one undertaking the project, though possibly in need of explication for others. The focus of analysis is on what is being put in context. The context itself is not so much subjected to analysis or review as it is “invoked”; in being relied on, our understanding of it is treated as reliable. What is being advanced is our understanding of the contexted object, rather than our understanding of the context itself.¹

Such a stance has been not only understandable, but warranted and salutary when confronting certain contemporary modes of inquiry on language, discourse, and other forms of conduct in interaction. It has been especially pertinent in confronting styles of research which do not even

address themselves to actual occurrences, but to invented or idealized versions of supposedly actually occurring types of events – as in certain formal approaches to language, speech act theory, and other undertakings in pragmatics. Such modes of research commonly address their targets of inquiry – whether sentences or actions or stories – as if they were intrinsically autonomous objects, that is, objects designed to have integrity and coherence which are entirely “internal” to the object itself. In doing so, they systematically obscure the possibility that their objects of inquiry are designed not for splendid and isolated independence, but for coherence and integrity as part and parcel of the environment or context in which, and for which, they were produced by its participants. In response to such modes of analysis, it has seemed quite important to make clear how different a picture of the object of analysis emerges if one reengages it – sentence, story, gesture, and the like – to its context, and then reconfigures our understanding of its structure and character.²

In such polemical contexts (i.e. ones in which another stance is being challenged), it is important to underscore the “transformative” potential of context, and the robustness of our invocation of the context as already understood can be strategic. But the general thrust of the present chapter is to suggest that this stance should itself be context-sensitive.

Because any demarcation of a segment of an actually occurring interaction or occasion of language use as an object of analysis will necessarily leave some portion or aspect(s) of it unincluded, there will always and inescapably be something which can be claimed to be context for what has been focused on. Especially when what has been selected out for attention is a relatively small bit of the stream of events in which it occurred, it can appear vulnerable to the same concerns for context described above, and the argument can be (and has been) made that proper understanding of the object of inquiry is forfeit if its context is not taken into account.

It is on this point that the present chapter aims to sound a note of caution. That caution is that when confronting prior analyses which have themselves been empirically based and have been sensitive to the details of a particular occasion, the transformative thrust of invocations of context may be substantially mitigated, and insistence on it can be misplaced and misleading.

In what follows, I want to make explicit two quite simple points: (1) that “putting something in context” **can** take (and perhaps increasingly **should** take) the proposed **context** as the “news” and as the object of analysis (rather than as the “given” relative to the object of analysis); and (2) that putting something in context may **not** necessarily transform the proper understanding of what has been so “contextualized.” The support of these points requires first some clarity about what will be intended by the term “context.”

The concern with "context" in the social and human sciences, especially with respect to interaction and discourse, is commonly understood to be addressed to two **types** of context – what can be called "external" or "distal" on the one hand, and "intra-interactional" or "discourse" or "proximate" on the other. Under the former rubric may be grouped aspects of social life long central to the social sciences – the class, ethnic, and gender composition of an interaction, each of these understood either as a distinctive source of ordering of and constraint on social life, or as an embodiment of more general properties such as "power" (in various of the senses in which that term is used). Here as well are found the various institutional matrices within which interaction occurs (the legal order, economic or market order, etc.) as well as its ecological, regional, national, and cultural settings, all of which may be taken as "shaping" what goes on under their auspices or in arenas of social life on which they have a bearing.

By the second type of context we can understand the sort of occasion or genre of interaction which participants, by their conduct, make some episode be an instance of, the sorts of sequences of talk or courses of conduct in which particular events may occur (stories, request sequences, etc.), the capacity in which participants act relative to the episode in progress (e.g. as the initiator of a conversation or a topic, or its recipient), etc.

Now clearly, these two types need not constitute disjunct, or non-overlapping, sets. "Buyer" and "seller" can refer both to the "objective statuses" of participants in an interaction in a marketplace, and to the relevant "capacities" in which they engage one another in a particular spate of talk. But as that very example may suggest, although "external" and "intra-interactional" contexts **need not** be disjunct, their relationship can be problematic, and must be **taken as problematic** for the purposes of disciplined analysis.

A number of difficulties can be (and have been) raised concerning the invocation by academic analysts of contexts of the first type in addressing data of social interaction.

- (1) As various writers have shown, the range of "objective" identities of participants in interaction is virtually infinite, and so also are the aspects of the situations in which some interaction might be described to be occurring. The sheer correctness of some description of a possible invocation of context, e.g. that an interaction took place in a hospital or in a courtroom, is equivocal in its import; for we know that not everything that goes on in a courtroom has anything to do with the law, and we know as well that endless numbers of other descriptions would also be "correct" (e.g. that it was in a north-facing room). The issue then becomes, **which** of the possible characterizations of context (whether of setting or of participants) can be shown to be **relevant**. Relevant to whom?

If one is concerned with understanding what something in interaction was for its participants, then we must establish what sense of context was relevant **to those participants**, and at the moment at which what we are trying to understand occurred. And we must seek to ground that claim in the conduct of the participants; they show (to one another in the first place, but to us students as a by-product) what they take their relevant context and identities to be. This is so precisely because their grasp of the setting supplies the basis for each next increment of their conduct, either further confirming and constituting a setting along certain lines or moving to reshape it. They may well embody for one another the relevance of “courtroom” or “hospital” or “marketplace” as the setting, and of personal identities related to these settings – judge and defendant, doctor and colleague doctor, merchant and customer; that is why “external” and “intra-interactional” are not mutually exclusive sets of contexts. But it is only by a display of relevance that the former becomes the latter.

Showing that some orientation to context is demonstrably relevant to the participants is important, as well, in order to ensure that what informs the analysis is what is relevant **to the participants in its target event**, and not what is relevant in the first instance to its academic analysts by virtue of the set of analytic and theoretical commitments which they bring to their work.

- (2) Not all aspects of setting or of capacity in which persons are acting are consequential for all aspects of what they say or do. That two interactants are relevantly doctors talking in a medical setting, and about medical matters, is not necessarily consequential for the way in which they deploy hand gestures which occur in the course of their talk or the way in which they refer to a prospective fourth for their golfing outing on Wednesday. So, even if one can show that, of the descriptions of the settings and persons which **could** be invoked, some particular ones **are** relevant to the participants in the interaction, it remains to be shown that they are **procedurally consequential** for the particular aspect of the talk or other conduct which is the focus of analysis – that is, that there is a consequential tie (again, for the **participants**) between the setting and interactional identities so understood and a particular facet of their conduct.

There are other problems to be faced in bringing “external” formulations of context to bear on interactional conduct which cannot be detailed here. For now, two points which follow from the preceding discussion will have to suffice.

The first might be termed the “paradox of proximateness” (Schegloff, 1991), and it concerns the need for showing some “external” aspect of setting or role to be relevant to the participants and displayed in particular details of their conduct. If the analyst **can** show with explicit analysis that the participants take themselves to be relevantly “doctors” and relevantly “in the hospital” or “in intensive care,” then it is their so taking themselves and “marking the setting” by so conducting themselves

which is germane to the analysis of their conduct, and not their "objective status" of being in such a setting. If, on the other hand, the analyst **cannot** show from the details of their conduct that they take themselves to be relevantly in such a setting and acting in such capacities, then the analyst's invocation of the objective correctness of so describing them is rendered equivocal in the ways mentioned earlier – there are indefinitely many such objective characterizations which could also be shown to be "true."

The paradox, then, is this: if some "external" context can be shown to be proximately (or intra-interactionally) relevant to the participants, then its external status is rendered beside the point; and if it cannot be so shown, then its external status is rendered equivocal.

The second point which is suggested by the preceding discussion is this. If there are indefinitely many potentially relevant aspects of context and of personal or categorical identity which could have a bearing on some facet of, or occurrence in, interaction, and if the analyst must be concerned with what is relevant to the parties at the moment at which what is being analyzed occurred, and is procedurally consequential for what is being analyzed, then **the search for context properly begins with the talk or other conduct being analyzed**. That talk or conduct, or what immediately surrounds it, may be understood as displaying which out of that potential infinity of contexts and identities should be treated as relevant and consequential (both by co-participants and by professional analysts).

Thus, for example, the use of technical medical terminology by interactional participants (e.g. terminology such as "cellulitis," "group A strep," "bacteremia," etc., as in Cicourel 1987, this volume) anchors **within the interaction** the relevance for the participants of the medical cast of the setting and of the participants (even for ones for whom it is not in fact correct), and invokes it **within the interaction**; it need not be independently invoked by the analyst on extrinsic ethnographic grounds.³

Curiously, then, it seems at least as appropriate, and perhaps more so, to speak of talk or other conduct invoking its contexts than it is to speak of context impacting on talk or other conduct.

These analytic constraints on the invocation of "external" formulations of context are not impossible to meet (cf., for example, Heritage and Greatbatch 1989 for one line of solution). But, in view of these considerations and the paradox of proximateness, it seems increasingly useful to focus, at least in the near term, on the so-called intra-interactional or proximate contexts for talk and conduct. The problems which have been discussed are either mitigated, or simply do not arise in the same fashion, in the case of this sense of context. This is because these contexts tend to be formulated in the first instance by virtue of the observable conduct of the participants, and problems of showing relevance to the participants thus do not arise. Perhaps one product of sustained study of the organization of interaction will be analytic resources for new ways of warranting the

analytic incorporation of aspects of setting or identity which we may feel to be relevant to interaction, but at present have no way of showing in an analytically warrantable way.

One consequence of the considerations which have been reviewed so far concerns the sense or type of context which will be central to the analysis to follow, given its main themes. These themes are to show that preoccupations with context may/should focus on its **analysis** and not only its invocation,⁴ and that such analysis may add to our understanding of **the context** without necessarily transforming our understanding of what occurred **in** that context. For these themes, intra-interactional or discourse senses of context are central, and provide a strategic focus for disciplined inquiry at the present time.

2 Thematic

There are various aspects of conduct which appear to us (both as ordinary members of cultures and as professional students of them) to be immensely consequential and meaningful, but which can, on occasion, challenge our capacity to specify their consequentiality. One aspect of conduct for which this may sometimes be the case is context.

Given that context can be taken to refer to anything outside the boundaries of a unit of analysis, it is hard to contest the principle of the "decisive relevance of context." Quite often, putting an utterance or a fragment of an interaction in some version of "its context" (e.g. the preceding talk, or a description or picture of the physical setting, or a formulation of the dramatic moment in a developing line of action at which it occurs) will engender the sense, "Ohhh, so **that's** what it was about/doing!" But, if pressed, we may be unable to specify exactly how that packaging of context has interacted with the original object of attention, and with our perceptual and analytic apparatus, to transform our "grasp" of its import. We may be unable to access and explicate the "how," – both in the sense of the **substance** of the change in our understanding and in the sense of the **mechanism** of that change.

Is it that there are respects in which, commonsense experience to the contrary notwithstanding, context is **not** actually consequential (except if imparted bizarre realizations)? Or is it that we do not yet know enough to get at the mechanisms involved and their consequences?

This experience of an unexplicatable, and therefore analytically infertile, "aha" when some bit of talk is supplied its context coexists with another, in some ways contrary, tendency.

One corollary which has seemed to go with the principle of the decisive relevance of context has been the expectation of a revelatory or transformational significance of context for analysis. If one begins with the premise that the prototypical occurrences of talk in interaction cannot be properly

understood, described or analyzed without reference to context, then showing something to be relevant context which had not previously been included in the description or analysis might be expected to yield a transformation in our understanding – an analytic revelation of sorts. Indeed, one pay-off regularly claimed by new analyses which claim to demonstrate previously unappreciated “contexts” is the revision, if not transformation, in our understanding which has been made possible.

As suggested earlier, one of the points of the present chapter is to show that this need not be the case. Previous accounts of a phenomenon or an event need not be shown to be wrong in order to warrant the value of the contribution of showing previously undescribed context(s) in which they occur. If well crafted and grounded in careful and detailed empirical analysis, they may survive robust even as layers of context in which they are embedded are subsequently explicated. I want not merely to claim this point, but to exemplify it.

I take as a point of departure an utterance in a course of action of leavetaking from a cluster of persons engaged in conversation. This utterance (“Need some more ice”) has been taken up by C. Goodwin (1987) as one which appears to apotheosize something detached from context (like Goffman’s “self-talk,” 1978). But Goodwin shows that this very appearance is a context-sensitive interactional achievement, one which the several participants collaborate to achieve as a “unilateral departure.” One point of Goodwin’s paper, thus, appears to dot the “i” on the “contextualist” stance: even an utterance **specifically designed to be context-free** must be understood as context-oriented, even context-dependent.

I will try to show that the utterance concerned occurs in a demonstrable sequential context in addition to the elements of context incorporated into Goodwin’s account, and at a strategic point in that sequential context. The **type** of context involved here, then, is the intra-interactional context constituted by a course of action, here especially as embodied in turns and sequences of talk. I will conclude that reexamining the target occurrence in its sequence-organizational context – though it may produce an “aha” sensation – leaves Goodwin’s analysis of it essentially intact.

I hope thereby to establish as a useful kind of find or result a factual addition of relevant contextedness which does not, however, transform our understanding of the import of what has been shown to be so contexted.

3 Background⁵

The “departure” which is the focus of Goodwin’s account and of the present chapter is that of Phyllis, a guest at a backyard picnic, from a grouping which has included her husband, Mike; the host, Curt; and Gary, the husband of Curt’s cousin Carney (who is an intermittent participant in

this grouping).⁶ The episode of talk involved can be said to have begun with an inquiry by Curt to Mike about the automobile races which the latter had attended the previous evening (this portion appears in the Appendix 1: 001–34, and is treated in Schegloff 1987b). A bit into the ensuing talk, Mike's wife Phyllis launches him into a storytelling episode which is not entirely uneventful (this portion appears in Appendix 1: 035–126 and is treated in C. Goodwin 1986), and then, a few minutes after the story has ended, Phyllis leaves the table, at the arrow in the transcript fragment which follows.

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--|-------------------|----------|-----|------------------|
| 250 | Curt: | Keegan usetuh race uhr uh- er ih was um, (0.4) | | | | |
| 251 | | usetuh run um, | | | | |
| 252 | | (2.7) | | | | |
| 253 | Curt: | Oh:: shit. | | | | |
| 254 | | (0.4) | | | | |
| 255 | Curt: | Uhm, | | | | |
| 256 | | (0.4) | | | | |
| 257 | Curt: | Eisher's car. | | | | |
| 258 | Mike: | Three en <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 2px;">na</td> <td style="padding-left: 2px;">quarter?</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 2px;">Thr</td> <td style="padding-left: 2px;">ee enna quarter.</td> </tr> </table> | na | quarter? | Thr | ee enna quarter. |
| na | quarter? | | | | | |
| Thr | ee enna quarter. | | | | | |
| 259 | Curt: | | | | | |
| 260 → | Phyl: | <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 2px;">°Need some more i</td> <td style="padding-left: 2px;">ce.</td> </tr> </table> | °Need some more i | ce. | | |
| °Need some more i | ce. | | | | | |
| 261 | Mike: | <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="border-left: 1px solid black; padding-left: 2px;">Yeh,</td> </tr> </table> | Yeh, | | | |
| Yeh, | | | | | | |
| 262 | | (1.0) | | | | |
| 263 | Curt: | (When I) wz foolin around. | | | | |

This last occurrence is treated by Goodwin (1987) under the title "Unilateral Departure," a term employed because, as noted earlier, Phyllis' departure is brought off without apparent notice by, or involvement with, any of the others in the interactional huddle. Goodwin provides a subtly observed account of the components of Phyllis' leavetaking, one which provides for its design by Phyllis not-to-be-noticed, and of the conduct of the others, whose noticing is designed not to be noticed. The "unilateral departure" is thus shown to be an entirely interactional accomplishment.

Part of its "unilaterality" is that the components out of which Phyllis' departure is assembled, including her departure utterance, do not display any apparent sequential relationship to the talk into which they are interpolated, nor is any talk by others directed to it. It seems entirely a self-contained sequential bubble in its interactive environment, and its components are built to display only an internal ordering as the parts of a sustained, "private" course of action – going to get some more ice for her drink. Goodwin accordingly examines the departure within a relatively small stretch of tape and transcript (Appendix 1: 250–64), for the action involved thus appears to be disengaged from even that immediate context.

In the present chapter, Phyllis' departure from the table is situated within a larger stretch of talk, which provides a different order of sequential context in which it is embedded.⁷ One goal, again, is to show

that “putting something in context” may sometimes **not** transform a previously developed account and understanding of it. If it has been carefully and empirically described, we may add to the account, enrich it, but not subvert what had been understood about the phenomenon addressed in the more proximate context.

Another goal of this analysis is to provide an account of another form or shape of extended or expanded sequence, to add to a number of such accounts already in the literature (e.g. Jefferson and Lee 1981; Jefferson and Schenkein 1977; Schegloff 1980: 117–20, 128–31; 1988a: 118–31; 1990). In the present case we will be dealing with what currently appears to be to be the main type of structured sequence other than ones based on adjacency pairs – namely, **storytelling sequences**.

The very term used to characterize these sequences should serve to underscore the contrast with “stories” *per se*; more is involved here than “stories” or “narratives” themselves. Whatever sort of “discourse unit” stories may turn out to be (as treated by, among others, cognitive scientists, folklorists, linguists, and literary theorists), as naturally occurring events in conversation (and perhaps in **most** forms of talk-in-interaction) stories appear as parts of larger sequentially organized spates of talk – **storytelling sequences**. Examining stories within their sequential context permits the explication of how stories are articulated with what has preceded them, how that relationship to what has preceded enters into the constitution of the story itself, how the passage from the story to what follows it is managed, and how the exigencies of **that** transition enter into the shaping of the story, and (as it happens) into the initiation of the story as well (for such a treatment of an extended sequence in which storytelling is implicated, see M. Goodwin 1982). The contingencies of initiating and closing the telling of stories have supplied one major focus of past work on storytelling in conversation.

I propose to examine the materials being addressed in the present exercise by drawing primarily on two major prior accounts of storytelling in conversation by two different authors (Sacks 1974, Jefferson 1978), to see how they can be brought to bear on this fragment, which is on the surface quite different from the materials examined in either of these prior accounts.⁸ I will begin by reviewing briefly some of the main points developed in the papers by Sacks and Jefferson. Because these points will subsequently be brought to bear on the episode which is the concern of the present chapter – which is an episode of storytelling – I will not separately exemplify these points with data displays.⁹

3.1 Background analyses

Sacks (1974) parsed storytelling sequences into three main components (each subject to elaboration, expansion, etc.): the **preface sequence**, the

telling sequence, and the **response sequence**. The focus here will be on the first and third, and predominantly the latter.

Story **prefaces** address a number of issues posed by the project of telling a story in conversation. This is not the place for a full discussion, but several of these issues may be mentioned. One is establishing that what the teller means to tell is not already known to the intended audience. The common incorporation in the preface of mentions of the source of the story, of when it occurred, and of some characterization of the "type" of story ("funny," "awful," etc.) can allow recipients to assess whether they have heard it, and to stop the telling by virtue of this, if they choose. Some of these components of preface turns, most notably the characterization of the story, can also provide recipients with an interpretive key or context by reference to which the story may be monitored and understood step by step in the course of its telling, and by reference to which recipients may recognize the story's possible completion.

The last of these uses of an interpretive key is relevant because of the special management of turn-taking contingencies during storytelling. Telling a story requires a substantial withholding by others of the initiation of full turns of their own at points at which such full turns would otherwise be options – that is, at the possible ends of "turn-constructural units" such as clauses or sentences. Prefaces, when taken up approximately, occasion a shift by the participants to a somewhat different mode of organizing turns: story recipients largely suspend using possible completion of clauses and sentences as licenses to talk, thus allowing the teller to build an extended turn; and if they do talk, interpolations generally are fitted to the telling of the story in restricted and describable ways. This modification of the operation of turn-taking shifts has as its proper end point the completion of the story, at which the otherwise prevailing, turn-by-turn mode of turn-taking organization (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974) is resumed. Hence the strategic importance of a proper grasp by recipients that the story has come to possible completion, and hence the importance of resources which arm the recipients for such a recognition, resources provided both in the preface and in the design of the story itself. Jefferson's account of story initiation (1978) focuses on the ways in which non-preface starts of storytelling episodes (a) reveal the "triggers" which occasion their telling – that occurrence in the ongoing interaction by virtue of which the story has "come up," and (b) manage the introduction of the story into turn-by-turn talk while displaying the basis in the prior talk for the story's telling.

Preface sequences can themselves be implemented by an organized sequence type, the adjacency pair, with all the sequential contingencies such units embody. Thus, Sacks proposed that story prefaces can be done through offers-to-tell, offers which then may make acceptance/rejection relevant as responses. In the episode which furnishes the materials for the

present exercise, the preface is implemented not by an offer (or a request), but by an informing/announcement of sorts, "Mike says there was a big fight . . .," which makes a different set of response types, e.g. news receipts or uptakes, relevant next.¹⁰

The **telling sequence** is in many ways the most distinctive component of storytelling sequences, but the concerns of this chapter will involve little preoccupation with it. Let me note, however, that one consideration which entered centrally into Sacks' material and analysis shows up in the telling sequence of the present episode as well. Sacks noted (1974: 344):

In contrast with the organization of the preface sequence, place for the talk of recipients within the course of the telling sequence need not be provided by the teller . . . If recipients choose to talk within the telling sequence, they may have to do their talking interruptively.

In the data which Sacks addressed, such an interruption occurs shortly after the start of the telling, and takes the form of a questioning or challenging or heckling of the telling which is in progress. In the present data, the telling is interrupted before its first sentence is brought to completion,¹¹ and also for a heckle or challenge.

Response sequences provide for displays of understanding by a storyteller's recipients that the story is over, making relevant a resumption of turn-by-turn talk, as well as appropriate appreciations of the upshot or point of the story (Sacks 1973: 137-8). Story response should provide evidence that the story can generate "topically coherent subsequent talk" (Jefferson 1978: 228), thereby proposing "the appropriateness of its having been told" (*ibid.*).

Jefferson displays various exemplars of story increments added by tellers to their stories when appropriate story responses are not initially forthcoming. Most of these involve relatively brief increments, which either succeed in generating further talk, or are followed by further rounds of such increments. The present analysis will be concerned largely with problems of story completion, response, and generating further talk, and the ways in which such contingencies can provide for substantial expansion of what should properly be considered the full storytelling sequence.

3.2 Background talk

As noted, the parties to this conversational cluster have begun talking about the automobile races the previous evening and, more generally, which drivers are competing and in which cars. Into this discussion, Phyllis recruits her husband Mike to tell a story with the story preface, "Mike sz there was a big fight down there last night." A moment later Mike begins the telling of the story only to be almost immediately confronted by the interruption mentioned above, an interruption which raises an alternative

interpretation of the sorts of events he is apparently beginning to recount – an interpretation of them not as events in a serious big fight but as a kind of routinized mock violence. This alternative interpretive set toward the story's events comes to be developed by all the members of the audience, but is instigated and developed primarily by Gary and Phyllis (Appendix 1: 047–64). Mike contests this incursion into the story and eventually resumes the telling (Appendix 1: 065), but now under auspices which are equivocal as between a story of impending serious violence and one of pretense.

C. Goodwin (1986) follows the telling of the story to the point at which the competing – non-serious – interpretation of it is used by Gary to treat the story as effectively over, a treatment embodied (a) in his summary assessment (“All show”) after the canonic elements of “pretend violence” have been reported (e.g. throwing helmets down; Appendix 1: 055, 090–1); (b) in his request for a beer; and (c) in the joining in by Carney's remark that she is reminded of TV wrestlers (Appendix 1: 098–111).

Mike however does not treat this as the end of the story. Initially (Appendix 1: 101, 103), he persists in trying to continue the telling in which he was engaged at the point of interruption. Then, after he addresses himself to denying the assessment with which Gary treats the story as over (Appendix 1: 106, 108, 113, 115), his continuation (“he made his first mistake . . .,” Appendix 1: 117–24) itself suggests closure–relevance in its apparent move to summarize the upshot of the incident he has been telling about.

That Curt may be sensitive to the possible closure-relevance of this talk is suggested by his joining into a collaborative completion of the observation with Mike (Appendix 1: 121),

- 116 Curt: Well, h_e deserved it.
 117 Mike: [But y_ihknow eh-] uh-he made iz first
 118 mistake number one by messin with Keegan
 119 because a'pits'r fulla Keegans en when there
 120 is n't a Keegan there ere's a'Fra :nks,
 121 Curt: [°Mmhm, There's a'Fra:nks,

a move noted by C. Goodwin (1986: 288) as evidence of his (i.e. Curt's) knowledgeableability in the domain in which the story is set. In the present context it is relevant to note as well that it moves to provide a collaborative (co-)completion of Mike's utterance, a kind of action well suited to showing understanding (Sacks, in press [Fall, 1965:1; Fall, 1968:5]; Lerner 1987) – at a place (i.e. just after possible story completion) at which displays of understanding are of heightened sequential relevance (Sacks 1973: 137–8; 1974; Schegloff 1984 [1976]: 44).

There are, then, different stands taken up by different parties on the possible completion of the story at this point.¹² It may be remarked,

however, that it is in any case not the end of the **storytelling sequence** within which the story proper is recounted.

4 Further developments

If we track the trajectory of the interaction further, we can try to describe the actual subsequent course of this storytelling episode to its resolution. To anticipate: what we find first is an insistent completion by Mike of "his story" with another collaboration by Curt in its achievement. There follows a succession of efforts to resume turn-by-turn talk which has the story as its source, efforts which fail, and end up by leaving the talk just where it had been at the story's start. The following pages explicate this interactional trajectory.

4.1 Completing the telling

After the jointly ended utterance by Curt and Mike already examined above, there is at first a kind of collective withholding of participation: a throat-clearing by Curt (125), 0.8 seconds of silence (126), a cough by Mike (127).

- 119 because a'pits'r fulla Keegans en when there
 120 is n't a Keegan there ere's a'Fra :nks,
 121 Curt: Mmhm, [There's a'Fra:nks,
 122 Mike: (=
 123 Curt: [(I know.)
 124 Mike: = [Because they're relatedjih know?
 125 Curt: [((clears throat))
 126 Mike: (0.8)
 127 Mike: ((cough))
 128 Curt: [Oh that's (screwy at-)
 129 (0.2)
 130 Mike: So it ended up thet-
 131 (0.2)
 132 Mike: d_e t u h : .]
 133 Curt: [Dat see dat re]minds me of, [we wz o:.,]
 134 Mike: [He wz up on] the.:
 135 (0.1)
 136 Mike: trailer hh, er up on the back of iz pickup truck=
 137 Carney: [Gary:
 138 Mike: =with a, (0.4) with a ja:ck.
 139 Gary: [(cups.)
 140 Curt: Who DeWa:ld?
 141 Mike: DeWa:ld. Ye(h)ah
 142 (0.2)

What follows are two competing stances on where the telling episode is, and how it should develop.

Curt appears to treat the telling as over, and continues to produce forms of talk appropriate for a story recipient upon story completion. First, he provides a sort of assessment (128): "Oh that's screwy at-." ¹³ Then (133) he offers a possible "second story" (Sacks, in press [Fall, 1968: 1]; Ryave 1978): second (or "follow-up") stories serve as appropriate responses by hearers by revealing what the hearer took the story to be about, for this is displayed in the follow-up story they come to tell. Here, a story told by Curt as prompted by what he has just heard can display what Mike's story reminds Curt of, a telling which will display aspects of his understanding of the story which has just been told: "Dat see dat reminds me of, we wz o:.,." Of course, to launch a second story is to take the stance (and thereby claim the understanding) that the prior story is over.

In between these continuation tacks of Curt's (130, 132, 134, 136), Mike takes up a different line: a move to return to the story to give its completion ("So it ended up . . ."):

So it ended up thet- (0.2) det uh: . . . he wz up on the.:
(0.1) trailer hh, er up on the back of iz pickup truck with a, (0.4) with a ja:ck.

Curt's effort to launch a second story and Mike's effort to return to a completion of the first story collide in an overlap – from which Curt withdraws (133–4), yielding to Mike's resumption of a story claimably still in progress. This collision and resolution are by no means straightforward, however. Mike starts up after Curt has already shown himself ready to move on to a new unit of talk (128–30). Curt starts his launching of a second story after Mike has already shown himself committed to returning to his story for its final chapter (130–3). Mike presses the completion of the story after having already heard that Curt is beginning a second story (133–4). The outcome of this last convergence is a full-fledged competitive overlap, from which Mike's story completion emerges "victorious" – that is, with first access to the floor. But there are consequences.

It may be remarked about this competition and its resolution that the "loser" (Curt) makes subsequent efforts at what he tries here (at lines 146, 168), and eventually succeeds. And that the "winner" (Mike), in winning the resumption of his story, appears to substantially foreshorten it. ¹⁴

Now this increment of talk by Mike is not only announced in advance (130) to be the end of the story; its status as ending is displayed in another way as well. ¹⁵ At the very beginning of this whole storytelling episode, Mike takes up a "telling" posture or position (chin resting on hand, with elbow planted on table) at just the point at which the telling proper initially gets underway (Appendix 1: 045): "Evidently Keegan musta bumped

im. . .” When Gary and Phyllis join forces to subvert the initial auspices under which the story is being told, Mike breaks out of this position (at his second response to Gary’s intervention [Appendix 1: 052], “I don’t kno:w”) and spins around toward Gary (as Gary is saying “they-spun aroun th’ tra:ck”). When he resumes the telling (Appendix 1: 065–6) – with “This: De Wa::ld spun out:” – he assumes a modified form of the same telling position, which he thereafter sustains (except for excursions of hand gestures, which however return to the same “home” position) until the end of this “So it ended up . . .” utterance. At its end (138), in “with a ja:ck,” he breaks the posture and picks up his beer can.¹⁶

This increment of telling is thus marked in various ways as Mike’s ending for the story, one which seems designed to embody his version of its key incident – that is, as a dramatic and truly violent one.

Several responses from others collaborate in marking uptake of this increment as a possible end of the story proper.

- 133 Curt: [Dat see dat re]minds me of, [we wz o:;,]
 134 Mike: [He wz up on] the.:
 135 (0.1)
 136 Mike: trailer hh, er up on the back of iz pickup truck=
 137 Carney: {Gary:
 138 Mike: =with a, (0.4) with a ja:ck.
 139 Gary: { (cups.)
 140 Curt: Who DeWa:ld?
 141 Mike: DeWa:ld. Ye(h)ah
 142 (0.2)
 143 Curt: Try(h) ina keep (h)evry [body keep f’m] g(hh)et=
 144 Mike: [body ba:ck .]
 145 Mike: =k(hh)eep imse(h)lf fm gettin iz ass beat.

First, Curt. At possible story completion, it is relevant for recipient(s) to display an understanding that the story is over and what its upshot or point was (Sacks 1973, 1974). If understanding problems remain, this is a place where they may be raised (Schegloff 1984[1976]: 45–6). Then note, first, that Curt (140) checks his understanding that this last story increment refers to DeWald (“Who, DeWald?”).¹⁷ Then he offers his understanding of the import of the last increment (143), which he formats again as a collaboration with Mike’s telling (as he had done at the prior point which he had understood as possible story completion, 121). This is produced as an understanding which is collaborative not only in its grammatical format, but in its casting of the scene (as Mike had) as one of potentially serious violence as well. Mike intervenes into the course of this proffered understanding to establish forcefully again the threat of real bodily harm which DeWald faced, both confirming and correcting Curt’s collaboration (144–5).

A second evidence that Mike has been recognized as doing story completion is that Carney departs from the conversational cluster at just this point.

But showing understanding that the story is over and showing understanding of the story's import are not the only sequential contingencies prompted by story completion. Jefferson (1978) has shown that participants (a) can be oriented to the resumption of turn-by-turn talk from the state of partial suspension which storytelling will have involved, and (b) can be oriented to showing that the story is implicative for further talk, can generate further talk, and hence was appropriately told in the present context.

Some forms of talk after a story's possible completion can satisfy several of these constraints at once. Telling a second story can show understanding that the prior story is possibly complete; can by the choice and manner of telling the follow-up story display an understanding of the prior story as an assessment of it (as sad, funny, tragic, etc.); can demonstrate the generative force of the prior story in its capacity to motivate a next story, etc. Other forms of talk may do these jobs as well – on-topic talk derived from the point of the story or the characters (or other elements) in the story, for example. Given the methodically accountable features of Mike's talk as a designed ending of the story, and the recognition/ratification of that completion by Mike and Carney, we can focus on how the story's sequelae satisfy these relevant contingencies.

Before doing so, however, it may be useful to recall the circumstances under which this story came to be told. Curt had proffered as a topic (Appendix 1: 001) the races which Mike had attended the previous evening. Initially Phyllis does not talk in this sequence, but after several exchanges she enters (Appendix 1: 015), with an utterance designed at least in part to "do 'boring'" (apparently targetted at the report of the same fellow winning all the time, which it directly follows; cf. Schegloff 1987b: 109–10).

When the talk comes to be preoccupied with which drivers are in competition and what cars they are driving (or, as they say, "running"), Phyllis intervenes with "Mike siz there wz a big fight down there las' night," as if to rescue the conversation from the boredom with which she has already displayed herself to regard the races and this talk of them to something possibly more exciting (a "big fight"), even if it is a story which she has heard before (and even if, as Goodwin [1986: 293] shows, the whole domain of talk, and manner of talking, is for men and not for women). And now the issue is, on completion of the story, whether it can generate further talk, including (eventually) a return to turn-by-turn talk.

4.2 After the telling

Directly on completion of Mike's version of the upshot of the proper understanding of his story's completion, Curt and Phyllis simultaneously start possible sequelae (146-7).

- 145 Mike: =k(hh)eep imse(h)lf fm gettin iz ass beat.
 146 Curt: [We:ll you w-
 147 Phyl: [Mike said [e usetuh:]::=
 148 (Carney): =° (Oh).
 149 Phyl: =race go [carts en 'e got barred f'm the go-=
 150 Mike: [He use-
 151 Phyl: =cart track be [cuz he ra:n little]kids (h)off=
 152 Mike: [over in Tiffen.]
 153 Phyl: =the tr(h) a ck,
 154 Curt: [hh hhhhhh
 155 Mike: [That's a-] that's a fact.=
 156 Phyl: = [hhh
 157 Mike: = [n-
 158 Mike: DeWald is a big burly ((silent)) basterd=
 159 Curt: [Jeezuz. [hhhh hhehhhhhehheh,
 160 Phyl: [hhhh hhehhhhhehheh,
 161 Mike: = jihknow.
 162 Curt: = [Mmhm,
 163 Phyl: hh,hheh
 164 Mike: [En that's a fact he got barred from runnin go
 165 carts o'ver in Tiffen because he usetuh run the=
 166 Phyl: [°ohhh
 167 Mike: =little kids off the track.=
 168 Curt: =Well you remember when McKuen did that,
 169 (0.2)
 170 Mike: [Yeh.
 171 Curt: [Lo:ng time ago it reminds me when you were tellin
 172 about, DeWald en uh s:sittin up there'n, pst!
 173 (3.7)

Curt begins (146) with "We:ll you w-," an utterance which on a subsequent repetition (line 168) will be revealed to be the start of "Well you remember when . . .," the "w" being the first formant of the "r" sound. Enough of this utterance start comes out to suggest that Curt is trying again the post-story-completion tack he has tried before (line 133), "dat reminds me of . . ." On that try, Curt found himself in overlap with Mike's effort to produce a story completion. On this try, he finds himself in overlap with Phyllis, who is launching a follow-up story of her own. Once again, Curt yields to his partner in overlap.

Phyllis' follow-up topicalizes one of the characters in the prior story, DeWald, the character on whom the story had ended, its villain, and,

drawing again on Mike as story source, she tells a further story of his villainy. For brevity, we will omit here an explication of the ways in which Mike enters recurrent claims to this story (which, after all, was attributed to him) in the course of its telling, and then (164–7) reprises that telling on its completion by Phyllis.¹⁸

Suffice it to note that directly on completion of Mike's reprise of the story, Curt returns (line 168) with yet another effort to tell his second story. The second story he has to tell is a follow-up **not** to Phyllis' sequel, but to Mike's initial story. Curt shows this first by using the identical words in launching this telling as he had used in launching the last try, including the turn-initial marker "well" ("Well you remember . . ."). Secondly, Curt shows this (171–2) by explicating the source of his second story: ". . . it reminds me when you were tellin about, DeWald en uh s:sittin up there'n," (and note that the "it reminds me" echoes the first try at this "being reminded" – "see dat reminds me of . . ." at line 133).

Note then, first, that this deprives Phyllis' sequel of its capacity to serve as a link in a progressive movement of the talk away from the initial story in the episode. In being another "next" to the **first** story, Curt sequentially deletes Phyllis' contribution to generating a further line of talk and, in effect, replaces it with his own. Note, secondly, that in this regard his own contribution is a dismal failure. To its first part, Mike replies minimally (and after a gap), "Yeh" (170). After its continuation and source-citation, there is nothing. In the 3.7 seconds of silence (an exceptionally long silence in conversation) there is alarming evidence of the failure of Mike's story to be returned to turn-by-turn talk, or indeed, to engender any further talk of any kind.

Into this conversational vacuum leaps Gary, the remaining recipient of Mike's story, with a resource of the same sort as was drawn on by Phyllis. Phyllis' sequel had drawn on one of the characters in the original story, DeWald; Gary draws on the other, Keegan.

- 173 (3.7)
 174 Gary: 'N Keegans aren't (always) very big are they?
 175 (0.4)
 176 Curt: No. They're a_{ll} thin.
 177 Mike: [They're not] they're not
 178 to_o bi:g but-
 179 Gary: [o ("T's right if) they're all Keegans like the
 180 ones around Greensprings they're all kind'v,
 181 'bout five five, five six,
 182 Mike: [They're all from around Greensprin]gs.
 183 Curt: Yeh,
 184 Mike: [Yeah.
 185 Mike: They're the ones, mm- [hnh-hnh-hnh-hnh]-hnh
 186 Gary: [O:h. [hhOh my
 187 Go::d that's a, topnotch society over the:re,

- 188 Curt: eh heh heh
 189 Mike: ((sniff // sniff))
 190 Gary: eh-heh-heh eh(h) livi_n around Bidwell en=
 191 Mike: [Yea:h,
 192 Gary: =Greensprings (with th(h) e [be(h)st) · hhh hh
 193 Mike: [We:ll,
 194 Gary: They got nice ca:rs th.
 195 (): ° (Yeh)
 196 (3.0)
 197 Gary: ((clears throat))
 198 (0.5)
 199 Gary: Fraid tih g- (0.2) ((swallow)) go down there after
 200 da:rk, specially walking. hh
 201 (0.6)
 202 Curt: ((ve)) Ahhhhhhh
 203 (1.7)
 204 Curt: Well Doug isn't too bad a gu:y,
 205 Mike: No.
 206 Mike: His brother's a [He usetuh,] n-=
 207 Curt: [He usetuh,]
 208 Mike: =(Yeh) brother's a pretty nice guy I
 209 [spoze probly the younger kids that'r raisin hell=
 210 Curt: [I:--
 211 Mike: =over there,
 212 (0.5)
 213 Curt: I kn-ow. I d- [I know Dou:g=
 214 Gary: [No: they-]
 215 Curt: =[en he isn't,

Although in many ways a disaster, Gary's efforts are precisely attuned to the sequential demands of the interaction. In his drawing on Keegan as a topical resource for follow-up, he retrieves the relevance of Phyllis' follow-up as well, for his question "Keegans aren't (always) very big are they?" seems to draw not only on the initial story but on a component of Mike's reprise of Phyllis' sequel (line 158), "DeWa:ld is a big burly basterd."

Although sequentially successful in temporarily restoring turn-by-turn talk, Gary's sequel is an interactional disaster. His ignorance is revealed at virtually every point (cf. C. Goodwin 1986: 289-93 on Gary's lack of knowledge in this area) – on the size of the Keegans, on where they come from, in the negative assessment of the Keegans (186-7, 199-200), which is rejected by Mike and Curt.¹⁹ From these rebuffs Gary escapes into a story about twins who live in the same area – but are not Keegans, a story told very haltingly, with many hesitations and little uptake from its audience, a story implicating possible adultery (the theme from which the earlier discussion of the races has tried to free itself), and in various other ways infelicitous. It gets token laughs from Mike and Curt.

- 213 Curt: I kn_{ow}. I d- } I know Dou:g-
 214 Gary: { No: they- }
 215 Curt: = [en he isn't,
 216 (): { C'mon over here en git ()
 217 Gary: { There's twins thet-
 218 (0.8)
 219 Gary: twins thet live over there, they're younger (yuh) -
 220 (proolly) twunny three twunny four years old,
 221 (1.2)
 222 Gary: Round Carney's age'n,
 223 (1.3)
 224 Gary: They work over et the pla:nt. ()
 225 (2.0)
 226 Gary: The khhh, th(h)e(h)e wuh- The o:ne:: t'win's wife
 227 come right'n the plant one night'n wanna know
 228 who in the hell the girl was thet'er husbin
 229 [wz spe_nin the night with evry night after work. =
 230 Curt: [hmh [hmh-hmh]
 231 Gary: =mh- heh
 232 Curt: [nhh hn hhuh hu h huh
 233 Gary: [heh heh
 234 Mike: [Hhmmm.
 235 Curt: (She)?
 236 Curt: hu:h [hu:h huh-huh
 237 Gary: (She [I don't know what=
 238 Curt: [huhh
 239 Gary: =she wannit with it),
 240 (1.0)
 241 Gary: Ahhhhh!
 242 (2.0)
 243 Pam: You all will have tuh carry on without us fer a=²⁰
 244 Gary: { Went home after work from
 245 then on I guess,
 246 Pam: =minute.
 247 Mike: Mhhhhmmhhmmmm
 248 Curt: he::h heh heh heh-eh heh
 249 Mike: ·hheh hh
 250 Curt: Keegan usetuh race uhr uh- er ih was um, (0.4)
 251 usetuh run um,
 252 (2.7)
 253 Curt: Oh:: shit.
 254 (0.4)
 255 Curt: Uhm,
 256 (0.4)
 257 Curt: Fisher's car.

Although this story is problematic in various ways, it is followed by turn-by-turn talk, talk which it engenders by having keyed on Keegan.

However, the turn-by-turn talk which it sets off (250ff.) is a return precisely to the talk out of which Phyllis had drawn the conversation by "staging" Mike's story about the fight – who is driving what car (Appendix 1: 017–34).

That the talk has come full circle is most exquisitely represented in a small detail – Curt's shift (250–1) from the phrase "usetuh race" to the phrase "usetuh run." To show how this is consequential, a brief digression will be necessary to make clear how choice of terms can be seen to matter to this talk occasion.

In his treatment of the "big fight" storytelling episode and talk of the races more generally, C. Goodwin (1986: 290–3) showed that talking with expertise in this domain is embodied in part in the selection of the words which implement the talk. And he showed as well that Gary is, in general, incompetent in this area, and tries to imitate the others. Thus, in the talk just preceding Phyllis' launching of Mike's story, Curt and Mike use three terms for the activities of the drivers at the races: going/being out there (e.g. line 018–20, "Keegan's out there"), doin' real good (e.g. line 026–7, "M'Gilton's doin real good"), and runnin (e.g. line 030, "Oxfrey runnin"). When Curt and Mike have just spoken of some drivers as being "**out there**," Gary introduces his relative into the discussion (line 025) with "My brother in law's out there"; when they have switched to "**runnin**," Gary makes his next try to introduce his brother-in-law into the talk (line 032) as "Hawkins is **runnin**." And this utterance, and its interruption by Mike (line 033–4) with "Oxfrey's **runnin** the same car 'e run last year," are what immediately precede Phyllis' "Mike siz there wz a big fight. . ."

That is, just preceding the story, the talk was about activity at the race track; it was being formulated in terms of **runnin** cars; and the use of this term was understood by Gary as sufficiently relevant as to modify his talk to incorporate it.

Let us now return to the end of Gary's follow-up story about the twins and to Curt's reversion to talk about drivers and their cars. Having begun (250) "Keegan usetuh race . . .," Curt self-interrupts as he begins a search for the name of the car's owner, but in the course of the search he reverts to the choice of terminology which had been in effect earlier, "usetuh run uhm." However subtle, the choice of this implementing lexical item betokens quite clearly that the talk has returned to the state from which it departed with "Mike siz there wz a big fight . . . las' night."

It is at this juncture, with this evidence that her effort to launch a diversion from this topic (with the "big fight" story) some 4¼ minutes earlier has failed to sustain itself, that Phyllis undertakes the "unilateral departure" which Goodwin has so delicately described.

Although the departure itself is built to be detached from the surrounding sequential and interactional organization, if we ask "why that now" (Schegloff and Sacks 1973: 299) at a somewhat grosser level of sequential

organization,²¹ we can locate this departure at the point at which an interactional project or undertaking has shown itself to have failed. It is so located by reference to a determinately shaped sequential structure, built on the underlying armature not of adjacency pairs but of storytelling sequences, located at a place where a sequence-organizational contingency of storytelling sequences has shown itself to have not been met.

Virtually **nothing** in Goodwin's account of "unilateral departure," or of **this** unilateral departure, needs to be changed by virtue of this sequence-organizational contextual account. Perhaps only a small twist would be appropriate.

Goodwin writes near the end of his account (1987: 213) that Phyllis' departure runs the risk of casting aspersions on the conduct of the conversational cluster which she is leaving:

. . . such a noticeable action may have the effect of focusing attention on the fact that those she is with are not providing for her inclusion in their talk, i.e., her departure from the cluster could be seen as responsive to the way that she is being treated by the others in the cluster. The talk that she produces while leaving undercuts such a possibility by providing not simply an account for the departure but *the* official account for why she is leaving.

The twist one might add is that perhaps her departure is indeed to be understood as a response to developments in the talk of her cluster. The talk which she produces while leaving provides a cover – exquisitely constructed and built into a whole course of action, as Goodwin shows – but nonetheless a cover, whose viability requires just that studied disattention which Goodwin documents.

So, there is a determinate interactional project being sustained through this talk. It is embodied in describable practices of talking. The target occurrence is situated at a strategic juncture in that course of action. Specifically, there is an expanded storytelling sequence being sustained in this segment of interaction; its participants are engaged in trying to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion; the departure is situated at the moment when the sequential aftermaths of the storytelling come to an end. In disengaging her departure from the ongoing activities of the interactional episode which she is leaving, it is precisely the relevance of these activities and this juncture in them for her leaving which may be being masked by Phyllis. But the consequence of all this need not be, and here is not, a transformation of the previous analysis of the departure. Sometimes a context is just a context.

5 Closing

At its worst, "context" is deployed as a merely polemical, critical tool. In this usage, it is roughly equivalent to "what I noticed about your topic that

you didn't write about." With that club, I can relativize what you have to say by reference to what I have noticed or know about or care about, potentially diminish or obliterate what you have offered and put what I have offered center stage. This is partially facetious, but only partially.

On the one hand, the notion of "context" can be understood as a kind of formal orientation of practical actors – participants in the scenes of their everyday lives. Sacks once referred to members' (i.e. persons') orientation to the "in-principle setting character" of everyday life, including talk. That is, talk and other ordinary conduct are informed by a principled orientation to the setting-specificity of their undertakings.

On the other hand, in any particular scene, on any particular occasion, moment-by-moment, this formal orientation is "filled in" by particulars, is implemented or realized in particular contextual orientations. Our access to these particular contextual orientations as social science analysts is, in principle, the same as those of real-world co-participants: they (the orientations) infiltrate and permeate and enter constitutively into the talk and other conduct of each participant, and are thereby made accessible to others for uptake.

To be sure, the resources which an academic analyst brings to their recognition may be different in various respects from those available to co-participants. For this there is no remedy. (But we should bear in mind that the disparity involves for the analyst not only deficits but also potential virtues – such as freedom from participant blindspots, either those cultivated by the history of a relationship, or by cultural induction of studied disattention). Surely there is no appropriate remedy in freeing the analysis of context from the constraint that it be subject **in the first instance** to contingencies that the parties seem oriented to, not to ones which preoccupy academic or political commitments.

"Demonstrable relevance to the participants" continues to seem the most compelling warrant for claims on behalf of context. Any prospective context which can be so warranted – including the ones of both classical and contemporary social theory – earns its way into the arena of analysis. Otherwise, its status remains profoundly equivocal. Because the evidence of relevance of any order or type of context will be found "on the scene" so to speak – **in** the talk and conduct – there is reason to believe that interest **in all** sorts of context will be well served by enhancing our understanding of the immediate or proximate contexts in which all conduct is situated.

The upshot is that "rethinking context" is not a task for single convention sessions or special volumes alone. If "context" is **in** the conduct itself, if it **is** in a sense the conduct itself, then rethinking context is the omnipresent job of analysis.

Appendix 1

- 001 Curt: (W-) how wz the races las'night.
 002 (0.8)
 003 (): (Ha- uh) =
 004 Curt: [Who w'n] = [th'feature.]
 005 Mike: = [Al won,]
 006 (0.3)
 007 Curt: (Who) =
 008 Mike: [Al.] =
 009 Curt: = Al did?
 010 (0.4)
 011 Curt: Dz he go out there pretty regular?
 012 (1.5)
 013 Mike: Generally evry Saturdee.
 014 (1.2)
 015 Phyllis: He wins js about evry Saturday too.
 016 Curt: He- he's about the only regular <he's about the
 017 only good regular ot there'z, Keegan still go out?
 018 Mike: Keegan's,
 019 (0.2)
 020 Mike: out there he's,
 021 Mike: He run,
 022 (0.5)
 023 Mike: E: r he's uh::
 024 Gary: [Wuhyih mean my:]
 025 Gary: My brother in law's out there,
 026 Mike: [doin real good this year'n] M'Gilton's doing
 027 real good thi's year,
 028 Curt: [M'Gilton still there?=
 029 Gary: =hh Hawki^{ns},
 030 Curt: [Oxfrey runnin-I heard Oxfrey gotta new
 031 ca:r.
 032 Gary: Hawkins is ruⁿⁿⁱⁿ.
 033 Mike: [Oxfrey's runnin the same car 'e run
 034 last year,=
 035 Phyl: =Mike siz there wz a big fight down there las' night,
 036 Curt: Oh rilly?
 037 (0.5)
 038 Phyl: With Keegan en, what. Paul [DeWa::ld?
 039 Mike: [Paul deWal]d. Guy out of,=
 040 Curt: =DeWa:ld yeah I [('know 'm.)=
 041 Mike: [Tiffen.]
 042 Mike: =D'you know him?
 043 Curt: ·Uhhuh=I know who 'e i:s,

044 (1.8)
 045 Mike Evidently Keegan musta bumped im in the,
 046 (0.6)
 047 Gary: W'wz it la:st week sumpn like th't
 048 ha pp'n too?
 049 Mike: [Ohno:, thi:s:
 050 Gary: [Somebody bumped somebody else'n
 051 [they- spun] around th'tra: [ck
 052 Mike: [I don't know.] [Oh that wz::uh
 053 a 'week be,fore last in the late models
 054 Phyl: [(Yeh they'd be doin'it) en den ney go
 055 down'n ney throw their hhelmets off'n nen n(h)ey
 056 [l:lo]ok-et each [othe,r.
 057 Mike: [But,] [this]=
 058 Curt: =Ye::h hh[heh heh
 059 Phyl: [ehhehhhhh
 060 Mike: [This:: uh:::
 061 Gary: (They kno:w) //),
 062 Phyl: eh'h heh!
 063 Curt: [Little high school ki ds,=
 064 Gary: [(No matter what [ju:re)
 065 Mike: = [This, [DeWa::ld
 066 spun out: 'n he waited.
 067 (0.5)
 068 Mike: Al come around'n passed im Al wz leadin the
 069 Feature,
 070 (0.5)
 071 Mike: en then the sekint- place guy,
 072 (0.8)
 073 Mike: en nen Keegan. En boy when Keeg'n come around he
 074 come right up into im tried tuh put im imtuh
 075 th'wa:ll.
 076 Curt: Yeh?
 077 Mike: 'n 'e tried it about four diffen times finally
 078 Keegan rapped im a good one in the a:ss'n then
 079 th-b- DeWald wen o:ff.
 080 (0.5)
 081 Curt: Mm
 082 Mike: [But in ne meantime it'd cost Keegan three
 083 spo:ts'nnuh feature.
 084 Curt: Yeah?
 085 Mike: So, boy when Keeg'n come in he-yihknow how he's
 086 gotta temper anyway, he js::: wa:::h
 087 sc.reamed iz damn e:ngine yihknow,
 088 Curt: [Mm
 089 (0.5)
 090 Mike: settin there en 'e takes iz helmet off'n clunk it
 091 goes on top a' the car he gets out'n goes up t'the

- 092 trailer 'n gets a °god damn iron ba:r? .hhh raps
 093 that trailer en away he starts t'go en evrybuddy
 094 seh hey you don't need dat y'know, seh ye:h yer
 095 righ'n 'e throws that son'vabitch down- .hhhhhhh
 096 Curt: [Mm hm hm
 097 Mike: So they all [go down
 098 Gary: [A:ll [All show.
 099 (0.2)
 100 Carney: Yeah, they all, =
 101 Mike: [They all-
 102 Gary: =hn--hn!
 103 Mike: [They all go down there,=
 104 Gary: [Gimme a
 105 beer Curt,
 106 Mike: [=No some- somebuddy so:mebuddy,
 107 Carney: [It reminds me of those wrestl(h)] ers..hhh
 108 Mike: So:me body rapped=
 109 Carney: [hhh(h) on t(h)elevi:sion. ° ().
 110 Gary: = [Bartender how about a
 111 beer. While yer settin there.
 112 Carney: [().
 113 Mike: So:mebuddy rapped uh:.
 114 Curt: ·((clears throat))
 115 Mike: DeWald'nna mouth.
 116 Curt: Well, h-e deserved it.
 117 Mike: [But yihknow eh-] uh-he made iz first
 118 mistake number one by messin with Keegan
 119 because a'pits'r fulla Keegans en when there
 120 is n't a Keegan there ere's a'Fra:nks,
 121 Curt: [°Mmhm, [There's a'Fra:nks,
 122 Mike: [()=
 123 Curt: [(I know.)
 124 Mike: = [Because they'relatedjih know?]
 125 Curt: [((clears throat))
 126 (0.8)
 127 Mike: ((cough))
 128 Curt: [Oh that's (screwy at-)
 129 (0.2)
 130 Mike: So it ended up thet-
 131 (0.2)
 132 Mike: det uh: .]
 133 Curt: [Dat see dat re]minds me of, [we wz o:.,]
 134 Mike: [He wz up on]the:..
 135 (0.1)
 136 Mike: trailer hh, er up on the back of iz pickup truck=
 137 Carney: [Gary:
 138 Mike: =with a, (0.4) with a ja:ck.
 139 Gary: [(cups.)

- 140 Curt: Who DeWald?
- 141 Mike: DeWald. Ye(h)ah
- 142 (0.2)
- 143 Curt: Try(h)ina keep (h)evry [body keep f'm] g(hh)et=
144 Mike: [body ba:ck.]
- 145 Mike: =k(hh)eeep imse(h)lf fm gettin iz ass beat.
- 146 Curt: We:ll you w-
- 147 Phyl: [Mike said ['e usetuh:]::=
- 148 (Carney): = ° (Oh).
- 149 Phyl: = [race go carts en 'e got barred f'm the go=
150 Mike: [He use-
- 151 Phyl: =cart track be cuz he ra:n little] kids (h)off=
152 Mike: [over in Tiffen.]
- 153 Phyl: =the tr(h) a ck,
154 Curt: [hh hhhhhh
- 155 Mike: [That's a=] that's a fact. =
- 156 Phyl: =.hhh
- 157 Mike: = [n-
- 158 Mike: DeWald is a [big burly ((silent)) basterd=
159 Curt: [Jeezuz.
- 160 Phyl: [.hhhh hhehhhhhehheh,
- 161 Mike: = jihknow,
- 162 Curt: = Mmhm,
- 163 Phyl: hh hheh
- 164 Mike: [En that's a fact he got barred from runnin go
165 carts o_{ver} in Tiffen because he usetuh run the=
166 Phyl: [.ohhh
- 167 Mike: =little kids off the track. =
- 168 Curt: =Well you remember when McKuen did that,
169 (0.2)
- 170 Mike: Yeh.
- 171 Curt: [Lo:ng time ago it reminds me when you were tellin
172 about, DeWald en uh s:sittin up there'n, pst!
173 (3.7)
- 174 Gary: 'N Keegans aren't (always) very big are they?
175 (0.4)
- 176 Curt: No. They're a_{ll} thin.
- 177 Mike: [They're not] they're not
178 to o bi:g but-
- 179 Gary: [('T's right if) they're all Keegans like the
180 ones around Greensprings they're all kind'v,
181 'bout five five, five si x,
182 Mike: [They're all from around Greensprin [gs.
183 Curt: Ye,h,
184 Mike: [Yeah.
- 185 Mike: They're the ones, mm- hmh-hmh-hmh-hmh-hmh
186 Gary: [O:h. [hhOh my
- 187 Go::d that's a, topnotch society over the:re,

- 188 Curt: eh heh heh
 189 Mike: ((sniff // sniff))
 190 Gary: eh-heh-heh eh(h) livi_n aroun Bidwell en=
 191 Mike: [Yea:h,
 192 Gary: =Greensprings (with th(h) e be(h)st) ·hhh hh
 193 Mike: [We:ll,
 194 Gary: They got nice ca:rs th.
 195 (): ° (Yeh)
 196 (3.0)
 197 Gary: ((clears throat))
 198 (0.5)
 199 Gary: Fraid tih g- (0.2) ((swallow)) go down there after
 200 da:rk, specially walking. hh
 201 (0.6)
 202 Curt: ((vi)) Ahhhhhhhh
 203 (1.7)
 204 Curt: Well Doug isn't too bad a gu:y,
 205 Mike: No.
 206 Mike: His bro_ther's a]_n=
 207 Curt: [He usetuh,
 208 Mike: =(Yeh) brother's a pretty nice guy I
 209 spoze probly the younger kids thet'r raisin hell=
 210 Curt: [I:-
 211 Mike: =over there,
 212 (0.5)
 213 Curt: I kn-ow. I d- I know Dou:g=
 214 Gary: [No: they-]
 215 Curt: =en he isn't,
 216 (): [C'mon over here en git ()
 217 Gary: [There's twins thet-
 218 (0.8)
 219 Gary: twins that live over there, they're younger (yuh)-
 220 (prolly) twunny three twunny four years old,
 221 (1.2)
 222 Gary: Round Carney's age'n,
 223 (1.3)
 224 Gary: They work over et the pla:nt. ·()
 225 (2.0)
 226 Gary: The khhh, th(h)e(h)e wuh- The o:ne:: t'win's wife
 227 come right'n the plant one night'n wanna know
 228 who in the hell the girl was thet'er husbin
 229 wz spe_nnin the night with evry night after work.=
 230 Curt: [hmh [h_mh-h_mn]
 231 Gary: =mh-[-heh
 232 Curt: [nhh hn h_huh hu h h_huh
 233 Gary: [heh heh
 234 Mike: [Hhmmm.

- 235 Curt: (She)?
 236 Curt: hu:h [hu:h huh-huh
 237 Gary: (She [I don't know what=
 238 Curt: [huhh
 239 Gary: =she wannit with it),
 240 (1.0)
 241 Gary: Ahhhhh!
 242 (2.0)
 243 Pam: You all will have tuh [carry on without us fer a=
 244 Gary: [Went home after work from
 245 then on I guess,
 246 Pam: =minute.
 247 Mike: Mhhhhmmhhmmmm
 248 Curt: he::h heh heh heh-eh heh
 249 Mike: °hheh hh
 250 Curt: Keegan usetuh race uhr uh- er er ih was um, (0.4)
 251 usetuh run um,
 252 (2.7)
 253 Curt: Oh:: shit.
 254 (0.4)
 255 Curt: Uhm,
 256 (0.4)
 257 Curt: Fisher's car.
 258 Mike: Three en na quarter?
 259 Curt: [Thr[ee enna quarter.
 260 Phyl: [°Need some more i_{ce}.
 261 Mike: [Yeh,
 262 (1.0)
 263 Curt: (When I) wz foolin around.
 264 Gary: I usetuh go over there with my cousin. . .

Appendix 2

A brief guide to a few of the conventions employed in the transcripts may help the reader in what appears a more forbidding undertaking than it actually is. Some effort is made to have the spelling of the words roughly indicate the manner of their production, and there is often, therefore, a departure from normal spelling. Otherwise:

- Arrows in the margin indicate the lines of the transcript relevant to the point being made in the text.

- () Empty parentheses indicate talk too obscure to transcribe. Letters inside such parentheses indicate the transcriber's best try at what is being said.
- [] Elongated square brackets indicate overlapping talk; the left-hand bracket marks the beginning of the overlap, the right-hand bracket marks the end.
- ((points)) Words in double parentheses indicate comments about the talk, not transcriptions of it.
- (0.8) Numbers in parentheses indicate periods of silence, in tenths of a second.
- ::: Colons indicate a lengthening of the sound just preceding them, proportional to the number of colons.
- A hyphen indicates an abrupt cut-off or self-interruptions of the sound in progress indicated by the preceding letter(s).
- He says Underlining indicates stress or emphasis.
- ° A degree sign indicates "very quiet."

A fuller glossary of notational conventions can be found in Sacks *et al.* 1974, and in Atkinson and Heritage 1984: ix–xvii.

Acknowledgements

The empirical portions of this chapter have developed in the context of my courses at UCLA over the last dozen years or so. My appreciation goes to cohorts of students for helping to prompt some of what is presented here, and to Charles and Marjorie Harness Goodwin for making available data which they collected, and on which they themselves work, for the benefit of poaching colleagues. For the less empirical portions of the chapter, I have drawn on two previous efforts to deal with the proper treatment of "context" in studies of talk-in-interaction (Schegloff 1987a, 1990). Throughout, I have drawn on the sympathetic and critical readings of Chuck Goodwin and Sandro Duranti, whose suggestions regarding both substance and style have been very helpful indeed.

Notes

- 1 One basis for this is suggested in Note 4 below.
- 2 The thrust of the intellectual stance I have in mind here is represented by undertakings such as those (to cite only a few of the major earlier works) of Gumperz and Hymes in anthropology (both together, e.g. 1964 and 1972, and separately, e.g., the interactional sociolinguistics of Gumperz 1971, 1982, and the ethnography of communication of Hymes 1974); Labov (1972) (and especially 1970) in linguistics; and Garfinkel (1967), Goffman (1964) (among

others), and Cicourel (1978) in sociology. See also the early collection edited by Giglioli (1972) and the recent one edited by Baugh and Sherzer (1984). Much of the subsequent work on language and conduct in context locates itself in one of these traditions.

- 3 Ethnographic research may, of course, have been necessary to enable the analyst to recognize the sense and import of such terms as display the relevance of some aspect of context, or to recognize that seemingly ordinary words have such an import. But the relevance of whatever has been learned through fieldwork (or in any other manner) must be warranted as relevant to the participants by reference to details of the conduct of the interaction.
- 4 Now that we have incorporated the distinction between the participants' view of context and the analyst's, we can entertain a conjecture about one basis for the tendency to invoke rather than explore context. "Context" can appear to be a "horizontal" phenomenon. That is, like the horizon or like peripheral vision, it by definition eludes direct examination; when examined directly, it is no longer peripheral.

However, this is the case only for what context is for **analysts**. What is demonstrably context for the participants in some interaction does not have its peripheral or horizontal status changed by being made the focus of direct examination by analysts. Here again we are brought up against the centrality of **establishing** with evidence that something serves as context **for the participants** in the event being studied.

- 5 Another of my goals in this chapter is to contribute another increment to what has become an entirely unplanned but progressive examination of a longish stretch of talk from an episode of interaction videotaped some fifteen years ago by Charles and Marjorie Goodwin. The past papers in which portions of this stretch of conversation are examined are C. Goodwin (1986, 1987) and Schegloff (1987; 1988: 8-9). Although not designed as a sustained treatment or otherwise coordinated, these papers may be read as partially converging accounts, in some (although variable) detail, of a substantial episode of talk. Closure is far from having been reached. A full transcript of this episode appears as Appendix 1 to this chapter. Some notational conventions are explained in Appendix 2.
- 6 This identification of the participants is itself subject to the considerations of relevance and consequentiality raised earlier in this chapter, and is warranted by various events which occur in the episode to be examined, which will be discussed in due course. To anticipate, at least briefly, here:

The relevance of the characterization of Phyllis as Mike's wife is provided by her action (Appendix 1: 035) in prompting and staging his telling of a story which she reports him to have earlier told to her. It is the course and aftermath of this story with which the segment of interaction examined here is preoccupied. The tie between Carney and Gary is displayed by their physical positioning throughout the episode (Carney has sat on, and fallen from, Gary's lap, and stands by him throughout the segment considered in the text), and is made possibly consequential by the introduction by Gary of a competing cover interpretation of the story in question, an interpretation with which Carney publicly affiliates (*vis-à-vis* the story's teller, Mike) in the course of the talk (Appendix 1: 107-9).

To the degree that these warrants cannot be more formally developed here because of considerations of space, an element of informality remains in the overall account. I have offered rudimentary indications of the lines along which these characterizations might be warranted in order to ground the claim that they have not been casually introduced and that such warrants are possible.

- 7 This involves filling in some analysis for portions of this extended episode which have not yet been treated in print in any of the papers previously cited.
- 8 This, then, is yet another of this chapter's goals – to employ some analytic resources from “the literature” on data somewhat different from those for which they were introduced in order to see how they work . . . and how they can be made to work.

Readers of analyses of conversational material sometimes marvel at how the author has found bits of data which “seem to fit the argument so perfectly” – apparently not entertaining very seriously that the analysis was built to accommodate the data, rather than data being sought out to fit an analysis constructed independently of it. But frequently students and colleagues seek to apply the terms of analysis to other data, data in their own experience, and are unclear about the proper analytic articulation of existing analytic resources and initially apparently divergent data. Perhaps the present analysis can help to see how the analytic thrust of past work can be extracted and found to inform data (and even practices) different from those analyzed by the authors of the prior work.

- 9 Although I am not proposing here any substantial revision in the accounts of storytelling sequences by Sacks and Jefferson, I am not simply invoking them in the manner attributed to others at the outset of this chapter. On the one hand, in undertaking to employ those resources for the empirical analysis and explication of a stretch of interaction to which they might not initially appear relevant, the present exercise is engaged in a detailed **analysis** of the empirical data as embodying the phenomenon at issue, and not a broad subsumption of the data under some analytic category or rubric. On the other hand, our understanding of the sort of data which these past analyses can illuminate can potentially be expanded, although the text of the chapter does not address itself to this theme explicitly for lack of space.
- 10 And, as it happens, occurrent; see Appendix 1: 036.
- 11 Appendix 1: 045, “Evidently Keegan musta bumped im in the (0.6).” Note that this is an interruption even though the teller is momentarily silent in a pause because, among other features of the talk, a unit of turn construction is in progress but is not possibly complete.
- 12 Goodwin's analysis stops at this point for it marks the end of the portion of the storytelling most relevant to his analytic theme – audience differentiation and its bearing on the telling.
- 13 Recall that Gary's earlier treatment of the story as over was done by offering an assessment (098).
- 14 This foreshortening can be seen in several of its features.
- (a) The return to the story does not resume at the point where the telling proper had previously been abandoned. The point of abandonment had been (Appendix 1: 097, 103), “So they all go down (there) . . .” The resumption is (134–7) “He wz up on the trailer . . .”

- (b) "Trailer" is immediately self-corrected to "pickup truck" (136). It may be noted that the character "Keegan" is "associated with" the trailer, and it was Keegan at the trailer that was the scenario (Appendix 1: 085-95) immediately preceding the interrupted continuation "They all go down . . ." The reference to "trailer" thus appears to be a perseverance from where the story had been abandoned. The shift to "pickup truck" from "trailer" (and to "jack" from "goddamn iron ba:r," lines 092, 138) marks a jump forward in the action. That Curt has "tracked" this foreshortening he shows by proffering his understanding (140-41) that the "he" being talked of now is "De Wald" and not Keegan.
- (c) The phrase "So it ended up thet- . . ." may itself serve as a marker of omission (a suggestion which I owe to Chuck Goodwin).
- 15 Perhaps it would be useful to make explicit what is otherwise implicit here and elsewhere in the analysis. Although it may be "obvious" to the reader that this is the "end of the story," the task of analysis remains to specify what is done in the talk, or how the talk is done, that **makes it** "the end," and makes it "obvious" (if it is obvious - to the participants, that is). So also is it relevant to make analytically explicit what it is about the ensuing talk of the co-participants that shows them to grasp that the story is over, for it is that which will display that grasp to one another as well, and thereby allow the teller to act accordingly.
- 16 Treatments of posture as marking aspects of the organization of talk and other conduct in interaction (for example, serving as a "frame") may be found, *inter alia*, in Scheflen 1964 and 1973, in various writings in Kendon 1977, and in his contribution to the present volume, and various writings of C. Goodwin, e.g. 1984.
- 17 Two further observations may usefully complement the text at this point.
First, that Curt produces any responsive utterance at all here can be understood in part as prompted by Mike's continuing to look at him after bringing his talk to completion (cf. C. Goodwin 1981: 108-9).
Second, in the data considered in Schegloff 1984[1976], where possible story completion is also followed by an apparent addressing of an issue of understanding, the final segment of the telling had also been explicitly marked or announced: "It come down to this."
- 18 Cf. Schegloff (1988b: 8-9) for a brief account.
- 19 And recall that earlier (line 017) Keegan was the first exception to the assertion that A1 was "the only good regular."
- 20 This utterance of Pam's does not appear germane to the interaction being described in the text, a possibility raised by Sandro Duranti.
- 21 Grosser, that is, than the observation (C. Goodwin 1987: 207) that she begins her utterance "Need some more ice" while two others are talking and with no claim on their attention, etc.

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