

On integrity in inquiry . . . of the investigated, not the investigator



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ABSTRACT The article begins with a sketch of the relation of interaction to language and to culture, and of the students of interaction to the students of language and of culture. A 10-second segment of recorded interaction at a family dinner is then examined in a fashion meant to preserve the integrity¹ of what is being done interactionally while incorporating attention to the deployment of various facets of the language that is used, and its relationship to simultaneously ongoing bodily doings. An interactional practice – whining – from that episode is then juxtaposed with the same practice in several other segments of interaction in the interests of developing a more formal, trans-situational account. The viability of research focused on phenomena in an analytically distinct domain of events while preserving the integrity of the occasions in which instances of the phenomenon occurred is then reviewed, using a case study of the conjoint use of phonetic analysis and conversation analysis. The article concludes with a reply to Levinson’s article in this special issue of the journal, and uses the occasion to sketch the relationship between interaction and so-called ‘macro’ social and cultural formations such as kinship.

KEY WORDS: *action, conversation, integrity, interaction, sequence, turn*

This special issue’s theme²

What model should we adopt of the relationship among language, culture and interaction? Put that way, the question is for me virtually unanswerable. I can offer some reflections on each of these nouns and, for some of them, the relationship in which it stands to some other. For example, with respect to interaction and language, if interaction is, as seems apparent, the primordial site of language both for the species over time and for the individual in the life course, then one would think that it would bear the marks of its ecological niche, as it were;

and this theme could be considerably expanded (Schegloff, 1989, 1996). It implies one sort of relationship between interaction and language.

The case of interaction and culture is harder, in larger measure because of the differing senses of the word 'culture'; if I remember correctly, Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) registered somewhere in the hundreds of usages over 50 years ago; who knows what they would find today! For my part, I think of the things that conversation analysts study, and the *results* of our work on talk and other conduct in interaction, as being studies of culture – culture in the sense of inventories of possible actions, of common-sense knowledge about members of the society and of other societies organized by reference to categories of person, etc., both of which have historically been in the province of anthropology. I suppose that would mean that my view of the relation of interaction and culture is something like identity or some part-to-whole relation between the two, but this will surely be disputed by true members of the anthropological discipline, of which I am *not* one, and many of whom find the work that I and my colleagues do uncongenial, to say the least.

Be that as it may, here also (as with language) students of interaction take it that language and culture are inescapable parts of the domain with which it is their commitment to come to terms. It is by no means clear that either anthropology (even parts of *linguistic* anthropology) or linguistics take interaction as part of the domain with which they have to come to terms. Conversation analysts cannot disassociate themselves from language or culture or gesture or posture or facial displays without violating the integrity of their undertaking. Their undertaking is defined by a domain of naturally occurring events – talk and other conduct in interaction; that undertaking is committed to the study of any observable doings that are treated as relevant by the parties to those interactions. It seems to me that both 'language' and 'culture' must surely have interaction as their preeminent sites of realization, if not as their primordial ecological niche. And I suppose that that is a position on the relationship between the three after all.

In its roughly 40 years of existence, conversation-analysis has come to have many of the tell-tale signs of a discipline. It very quickly addressed itself to a form of data that had not previously been addressed in a sustained fashion – recorded data of naturally occurring episodes of interaction in a variety of settings. It developed new analytic tools for dealing with these data – from ways of transcribing to ways of dealing with single cases to ways of dealing with multiple cases, and so forth, and methods for implementing these resources. The results of such analyses cumulated to substantial accounts of singular practices, *families* of practices, *organizations of practice* addressed to generic organizational problems in interaction – such as turn-taking, sequence organization, repair organization, word selection, overall structural organization of single conversations, and the like. I think it not unfair to characterize these results as composing a body of theorizing about the organization of interaction. Taken together, then, this work provides a range of accounts of interaction that have a bearing on its prosecution

and on contingencies affecting things that happen in interaction, and provides tools for examining events in interaction in context. Distinctive data, methods, findings, and data-grounded theorizing – does this not add up to a discipline?

A circle of surrounding disciplines has found this work relevant to their own – anthropology, linguistics and applied linguistics, communication, psychology, and sociology, among others – but all have some major reservation and misgivings. ‘It’s very interesting,’ they say, ‘but the trouble with CA is . . .’, and there follow concerns about rigor or relevance, about generality or insensitivity to variation, about objectivity and/or subjectivity, and so on – that is, it falls short of the ideals of the practitioners of virtually all those other fields. To paraphrase Professor Higgins in *My Fair Lady*, the problem seems to be: ‘why can’t *they* be more like *us*?’ This is a *good* sign; it suggests that there is something quite distinctive involved, and not a simple extension of past work in one or other long-standing discipline.

For me as a conversation analyst, the challenge is to understand and be able to describe – with detail and with some rigor – how interaction works. By that I mean, how the parties to an episode or stretch of interaction do what they do, and how they understand what others do. And by that I mean, what the practices are by which participants produce some recognizable action or actions at some moment, at some sequentially specifiable juncture in the interaction, while engaged with some here-and-now characterizable co-participants; and, complementarily, what the practices are by which they come to recognize the action or actions being accomplished, the course of action being launched, advanced, redirected, abandoned, etc.

In doing my work, which is to understand the work being done by the parties to the interaction I am examining, I cannot but engage with the talk through which much of what is going on gets done, and, in the contemporary way of dividing up the world, that means that I cannot but engage with language. This also means that I cannot but engage with linguists and what they do, psycholinguists and what they do, and linguistic anthropologists and what they do. Because I am a sociologist by training and academic membership, I cannot but engage with sociology and sociologists, and what they *might* do, and occasionally appear ready to do. And so, for me the issue of the relationship between language, culture, and interaction plays itself out as my relationship with linguists, cognitive psychologists, linguistic anthropologists and sociologists. For the most part these relationships are disappointing because the work commitments, accumulated knowledge and professional competence of these colleagues are (not surprisingly) given by the history and current aspirations of their home disciplines. This directs their interest in, and stance toward, the world of interaction not to that which makes for its integrity, but toward that which contributes to the furtherance of their own discipline’s trajectory of development – whether that is cognitive psychology, or social psychology, or linguistics (all too often even ‘interactional linguistics’), or anthropology (all too often linguistic anthropology), or sociology and its version of social psychology. There is no

stable place in our universities and research institutions where the integrity of interaction, and the integrity of inquiry into it, are institutionally respected (that is, by a commitment of resources and stability). This is the ‘labor market’ underside of models of language, interaction and culture as a general, theoretical question.

What might work look like if there were such a place? What might collaboration with colleagues in other disciplines look like if there were such a place? There is of course a literature to read with respect to the first question, but I offer in what follows some indications of ways of pursuing a specimen or exhibit of the sort of data which conversation analytic work addresses, and then (though not on the same data) an exploration of fully realized collaboration across disciplinary boundaries. I end with a response to Steve Levinson’s contribution to this special issue which addresses my work – a response which allows me to add a sketch of the relationship between conversation analysis, on the one hand, and social/cultural institutions, on the other, to the discussion in the preceding paragraphs of its relationship to culture and language.

Ten seconds of dinner, with an analytic gloss

Let me start with a sample of what I think we all want to be able to come to terms with: a strip of conduct from an ordinary scene of interaction. It features two ur-topics of anthropology – kinship and commensality; many of the key areas of linguistics – grammar, prosody and phonetics, semantics, pragmatics, and the like; familiar topics in some versions of psycholinguistics and cognitive science – establishing common ground, the import of gesture and gaze, for example; and familiar concerns of what is, for now at least, a remote province of sociology called conversation analysis – sequence structure, turns, turn constructional units or TCUs, repair, its own concerns with gesture and other forms of bodily deployment, and so on. It is, I believe, fitting to start a consideration of theories and models of the relation between language, culture and interaction with an example of what these theories and models are meant in some fashion to represent.

The occasion is dinner at the home of a family at or near an air force base in South Carolina in the early to mid-1970s [VC 00].³ Mom is at the head of the table – whether because the paterfamilias is on duty, or dead, or separated we do not know. On her left is her 14-year-old daughter Virginia, on her right (and across from Virginia) is older brother Wesley. Next to Wesley, and only occasionally visible on camera is Wesley’s intended, Prudence – whether fiancée or long-time girlfriend we do not know. And invisible to the camera but to Virginia’s left is middle child Beth, who is taping this for a course at a local college, and has apparently been told not to speak, but just to record. The blessing has been called for and recited, and the food is being doled out by Prudence, who loads up the plates for passing around the table. We will be focusing on the sequence at lines 29–37. [VC 01]

(01) Virginia, 2:30 – 3:31

- 1 MOM: [No, I didn' jog th]is mornin' 'cause I didn'
 2 have tah:me.
 3 (1.9)
 4 WES: Wel[l uh
 5 MOM: [eh-huh! · hh [I h a d d a | s a l e t h a t |startid tida-]
 6 WES: [I thought you | wuh gettin' ready | fuh next week.]
 7 (.)
 8 MOM: Huh?
 9 WES: I thought you were gettin' ready fuh next week.
 10 (1.1)
 11 PRU: You had a sale tiday?
 12 (.)
 13 MOM: Yeauh.
 14 (0.3)
 15 PRU: Big one?
 16 (0.3)
 17 MOM: Yea:h,
 18 (1.0)
 19 PRU: How much off.
 20 (1.1)
 21 MOM: E-'ust about a third off'uv everything.
 22 (0.8)
 23 WES: Whu summa mercha[ndise?
 24 MOM: [Aw:::right Virginia?
 25 VIR: °(Thanks.)
 26 MOM: How 'bout some-
 27 (1.0)
 28 MOM: Yeah summa merchandise.
 29 VIR: Can I please get that dre:ss, p[lease mom? Lemme g[et that-
 30 MOM: [Dreh(ss)-?
 31 VIR: >You know that [one-<
 32 MOM: [OH VUHginia, we('ve) been through this
 33 befah[wh, you've got enough summa d[resses now I think you=
 34 P?: [hhhh! ((laughter?)) |
 35 VR?: [uhhh! ((“pained” sound))
 36 MOM: =just wait an' get- some'uh'the'new fa:ll stuff when it comes in.
 37 VIR: tch!

For economy's sake, I will try to boil this rough analytic gloss down to a series of points.

1. The talk is about the sale at Mom's store and involves Pru, Wes and Mom – in a manner of speaking 'the adults', relative to whom Virginia is 'a child' (a matter overtly taken up in just those terms in a later sequence). It is worth noting that the talk about the store and the sale has its origin in Mom's giving an account for her not jogging that morning, an account which overlaps with a turn of Wesley's [VC 01a]. Mom moves to retrieve what *Wesley* had said (01:8–9) [VC 01b]. And Prudence then moves to retrieve *Mom's*

overlapped turn (01:11–13) and a question series ensues [VC 01c]. As Wesley asks whether the sale is of summer merchandise, Virginia's food reaches Mom, who interrupts Wesley's sequence to hand the plate to Virginia and to offer her some biscuits [VC 01d]. As she offers the biscuits to Virginia, her utterance stalls on 'How 'bout some-'; the 'some' resonates with Wes's question about 'summer' goods, and Mom is prompted to shift from Virginia back to answering Wesley's question [VC 01e].

So the environment has combined to include: (1) talk about a big sale on women's summer clothes, with (2) a turning to Virginia. Although the turning was occasioned by the passing of the food, Virginia draws on it, as well as on the current state of the talk, to launch a sequence about an item of clothing which is hearably related to – or at least exploitable by reference to – the summer merchandise on sale which has just been mentioned [VC 02].

2. The first turn of the targeted sequence could be initially and roughly characterized as 'a request' [VC 2a]. But this would fail to register a number of features embedded in the construction of the turn and not irrelevant to the way in which the sequence is developed, features which might have the action being done in the turn better termed a 'pleading' or an 'entreaty'. These features are:

- (a) The turn is marked pretty much from the outset as *not* the first time this course of action has been undertaken, but as its resumption. One way in which this is shown is in its reference to 'that dress': the reference treats the dress as already known to Mom, and uses the prior sequential context of talk about the women's clothing store as the resource that should allow Mom to recognize which dress that Virginia is known to want she is referring to.
- (b) The 'please' doubly deployed in the first TCU and in its second, together with the pleading – virtually whining – prosody also lend a sense of 'not the first time' this has been requested by Virginia and had the request rejected. And the 'lemme get' which follows this pleading resonates a status as 'follow-up or second request' after an unsuccessful first.
- (c) The final (and not-completed) TCU underscores the central place of Mom's agency here – it is contingent on Mom's 'letting' Virginia get the dress (which appears to involve paying for it).
- (d) Taken together, these three components – 'Can I please get . . .', 'please mom', and 'lemme get that-' – deployed without allowing place for a reply lend the character of 'pleading' or 'entreaty' to the turn and to the sequence which it initiates as its base first pair part, and the reference to 'that dress' marks this as the resumption of a past request sequence which had been disappointed [VC 2a again].

3. Mom's reply to the turn initiates repair on the reference ('that dress') which invoked her already knowing what it referred to; it does so by repeating

'dress' in a rising intonation which displays 'puzzlement'. Mom thereby declines to align herself with Virginia's treatment of her as oriented to her (that is, to Virginia's) continuing frustrated desire, and as able to recognize the reference form which presupposes it ('that dress'). In displaying trouble in recognizing the reference, Mom not only defers a sequentially relevant response by initiating a repair sequence; she also prefigures an imminent dispreferred response by adopting a stance toward the dress at sharp variance with Virginia's.

4. It takes very little response (if any) by Virginia to Mom's initiation of repair to trigger in Mom a self-generated solution. Virginia's reply has added virtually nothing to her initial reference when Mom's 'Oh Virginia' registers her recognition of what is being referred to [VC 2b]. In fact, directly after her repair initiator she starts a head toss and eye roll as she turns away from Virginia, [VC 02bi] a gestural overture to her exasperated 'Oh Virginia', an exclamation which stands as the turn's first TCU, in which the 'oh' takes up the stance that the question, and the entreaty which it packages, were not apt (hence her 'problem' in recognizing the reference),⁴ and the 'Virginia' with eye-roll displays exasperation, most likely with the recurrence of this inaptness [VC 02b again].
5. Mom then has registered recognition of the 'dress' by recognizing in Virginia's construction of the request an allusion to a prior presentation of this sequence – as resuming a previously made (and rejected) request: 'we've been through this before' [VC 02c]. This goes beyond recognizing the particular dress Virginia is referring to, to a more general *complaint* that requests along this line have been taken up before and denied (with the implication that it is being denied again). It is this complaint which articulates an account/explication of the exasperation in Mom's preceding TCU. And, although the hearing is problematic, what appears to be light laughter by Prudence registers her recognition of the possible completion of Mom's turn at that point, and a sympathetic uptake of Mom's complaint.
6. It is indeed the case that the repair initiator, the exclamation and this TCU pre-figure the rejection to come by invoking past engagements over this request, whose past rejection is presupposed by Virginia's asking again, and *doing* it as 'asking *again*' – by her pleading design.
7. In a third TCU, Mom adds an account for the denial(s) – both past and present: 'you've got enough summer dresses' – an account which is tantamount to the rejection itself, but without articulating it as such [VC 02d]. The incorporation of 'summer' here registers Mom's noticing that this sequence was triggered by the mention of 'summer' merchandise; and her mention of 'dresses' ties the utterance back to Virginia's request. Just after 'enough' Virginia shows her recognition of the rejection-in-progress by turning away into a slouch and producing what the transcriber describes as a 'pained sound' and, it might be noted, a pained expression in face and torso as well [VC 02di.]

8. Mom continues in a fourth TCU by offering a consolation – waiting for the fall clothes to come in and getting some then [VC 02e].
9. Virginia reacts (01:37) to this proposal/offer with a somewhat mitigated version of her preceding response, a kind of backing away from the prior degree of ‘pain’ in light of Mom’s palliative fourth TCU [VC 02ei]. This postural gesture is equivocal. On the one hand, the noticeable reduction of the display of disappointment and resentment can be understood as nonetheless ‘giving up’, and thereby bringing the sequence to possible completion. On the other hand, the continued display of disappointment and resentment can be understood as a refusal to be put off by the forthcomingness of the offer, and hence possibly still in the fray. In fact, both of these understandings are realized, the former by Prudence who chimes in with sympathy for Virginia’s plight, the latter by Mom who offers as a remedy to the continuing show of disappointment an incendiary re-raising of an old theme of her own – saving one’s allowance [VC 02f].

(02) Virginia, 3:23 – 4:08

- 29 VIR: Can I please get that dress, please mom? Lemme get that-
 30 MOM: [Dreh(ss)-?
 31 VIR: >You know that [one-<
 32 MOM: [OH VUHginia, we(‘ve) been through this
 33 befa[wh, you’ve got enough summa d[resses now I think you=
 34 P??: [hhhh! ((laughter?)) |
 35 VR?: [uhhh! (“pained” sound))
 36 MOM: =just wait an’ get- some’uh’the’new fa:ll stuff when it comes in.
 37 VIR: tch!
 38 PRU: I[t’s s o | frustrat | ing havin’ a | mothuh]
 39 MOM: [If you s|aved yer- | if you saved | yer al]lowan[ce,
 40 PRU: [hhh · hhh
 41 MOM: [(if you) save yer allowance, an:’ um: you could get=
 42 PRU: [w(h)ith a °sho°°(p) ((° = mid-word trailoff))
 43 MOM: =these little extr[a things.
 44 VIR: [A(h)llo::wan(h)ce? I o(h)nly g(h)et fi(h)ve
 45 d(h)ollars a week. That’s rid(h)i(h)c(h)ul(h)ous.

The two understandings are produced in overlap, but Mom’s is pressed more aggressively – note the recycling of her turn’s start (at lines 39 and 41) to win the competition with Prudence. She ‘wins’ in the sense that Virginia replies to her and not to Prudence, but the victory is pyrrhic, for virtually the whole of the rest of the meal is beset by repeated renewals of this already much rehearsed argument about allowance, sometimes by Virginia and sometimes by Mom.

And now the reader may want to review the whole sequence again [VC 02g]. In this sequence, we see a seamless interplay of the linguistics of grammar, prosody, semantics, pragmatics, etc., with deployments of facial expression, gesture, body posture, etc., the coordination of multiple courses of action whose convergence lies at the root of the sequence’s launching and weaves in and out of the ensuing utterances, etc., not to mention the culture of adolescence and

family relations, as well as of the institutions of commensality, etc., and so on, through the interactional organizations through which all of this is integrated – the organization of turns by which multiple components of the size linguists mostly deal with are packaged, the sequence organization by reference to which the consecutive steps in the playing out of this episode are shaped, the repair which organizes the deployment of an apparent trouble in understanding and expression of disaffiliation from Virginia's request, and, in the further course of this occasion for which we have no time, the overall structural organization of this occasion – a meal, which provides for the continuing co-presence of these folks, and thereby for the recurrent irritation of Virginia's and Mom's resumption of 'an argument' (their term) that persists to the end of the meal.

What we have been examining has a certain integrity: a course of action is launched, contested, and comes to possible – and initially apparent – resolution. It is composed of selected words, organized into clauses by grammar and prosody, informed by gestures, postures, facial expressions, simultaneous but separate other courses of action implicated by the practices of commensality – or being together at table, as well as practices of child rearing, and so forth. Each of these belongs to a putative domain of inquiry, with an academic discipline or sub-discipline devoted to it, of which it is the star. If we do not reassemble them, however, we have lost the integrity of action in interaction which made them interesting in the first place – no, which made them what they *are* in the first place, whether interesting or not. And such re-assembly is by no means assured; in fact, it is quite rare.⁵

Steps toward a more telling analysis 1: a finer level of granularity

There are various ways of 'zero-ing in' on a sequence like the one with which we began, preeminently by shifting to a finer level of granularity (Schegloff, 2000). One way of doing this involves taking sub-segments, themselves having describable natural boundaries, and explicating the various practices and resources which lend them the character they have – the actions accomplished in them, the stance(s) taken up, the formulations of person, place, object, time, action, etc., that are made relevant, the gestures, postures, prosody, etc., deployed in them, and so on. Here is one exercise at such a zeroing in.

I have depicted the start of the 'imploring sequence' as related to the trajectory of the food being served around the table. There is at least a gross observational basis for this, but it is external. That is, we see the relationship of the observable contours of the talk and its occurrence in a course of 'passing' action as 'things happening at the same time'. Can we move beyond the sheer fact of such 'co-occurrence' grossly observed, to its 'placement', that is, to its achievement at a targeted point from within the unfolding course of action of the passing, internally grounded in the indigenous terms of the interaction's collaborative construction? Here is a more finely grained account of the sequence, with the talk and passing of the food described together. This account

is meant to build upon and specify the earlier one, whose points are presupposed and will not be repeated here.

1. Prudence has entered into the conversation by asking about Mom's utterance in the overlap competition that had just occurred. As Mom is answering the third of her questions, Prudence hands over a plate to Wesley, a plate that is destined to be delivered to Virginia [VC 02hi]. As Wesley hands over the plate to Mom, he adds his own question to the question series, 'What, summer merchandise?' Mom, having received the plate from Wesley with her right hand, transfers it to her left hand, and, as she reaches that hand with the plate toward Virginia, says in overlap with Wesley, 'Alright Virginia?' [VC 02hii] While doing so, however, her gaze is directed not at Virginia but at the biscuit basket on the table in front of her. Virginia receives the plate with her right hand, brings her left hand to co-hold the plate with the right and places the plate in front of her [VC 02hiii].
2. As she does so, Mom picks up the biscuit basket with her right hand, saying 'how 'bout some' as she does so, brings her left hand up to co-hold the basket, and extends it toward Virginia to take one [VC 02hiii again]. (It appears that holding the basket with both hands instead of passing it from one hand to the other is a way of displaying 'take *from* this' in contrast with 'take this', that is, it marks a difference between 'proffering for taking' on the one hand, so to speak, and 'proffering for taking from' on the other.) This reaching out with both hands brings Mom into a posture of slight but noticeable body torque to her left, toward Virginia. After the reaching out has achieved full extension and is being held for Virginia, Mom turns her head back in the opposite direction from her torso's body torque to answer Wesley's question, 'Yeah, summer merchandise', and then brings her head's orientation back to Virginia on the word 'summer' [VC 02hiv]. In the meantime, in response to Mom's proffer of the basket, Virginia has moved into body torque to her right and has reached with both hands into the basket to take a biscuit. As Mom comes back from her turn to Wesley, her eyes are again directed at the basket as Virginia is examining its contents and selecting a biscuit; the two of them are then in a state of converging gaze direction at the basket [VC 02hiv again]. As Mom finishes the word 'merchandise', and while her head tilt and eyes are still directed at the biscuit basket, as are Mom's, Virginia launches her turn, 'Can I please get that dress?' [VC 02hv].
3. On the word 'dress', Mom raises her eyes to Virginia, and Virginia raises her head, so that the two enter a state of mutual gaze (Virginia still with her hands engaged with the basket) [VC 02hv again]. Thus, the 'please Mom?' is said by Virginia to Mom at the first face-to-face alignment in this episode [VC 02hvi]. As the word 'Mom' is said and is fading, Mom does an eyebrow knit [VC 02hvi again]. After the initial display of knit eyebrows, Virginia adds, 'lemme get that-'. After the 'lemme' (which occupies the beat of silence next speakers allow for a normal or unmarked transition place), Mom begins her

- articulated response (the knit brow is, of course, the leading edge of her response) with 'Dress?' [VC 02hvii].
4. Although the transcript shows Virginia beginning to respond to Mom's repair initiation with 'you know that one-', visually Mom can be seen to move directly from the final consonant 's' of 'dress' to the open mouth from which issues the 'oh' of 'Oh Virginia' [VC 02hviii]. As she opens her mouth but before voicing the 'Oh', Mom releases her right hand's hold on the basket; with the 'Oh Virginia' she tilts her head up ('skyward') and rolls her eyes [VC 02hx]. On 'we've been through this before', she brings her eyes and her right hand back to the basket as Virginia appears to take half a biscuit from it [VC 02hxi]. On the 'before' and 'you've got enough' Virginia un-torques her posture from Mom back to a forward orientation to her place setting and deposits her biscuit on her plate [VC 02hxii], and on 'summer dresses now' she does 'collapsing' into an anguished posture with a hearable sigh of despair ('ugh!!') [VC 02hxiii]. At the same time, Mom is retracting the basket which she is again holding with both hands, and holds it above the table at the place from which she had earlier taken it, her eyes on it during the course of its trajectory [VC 02hxiii again].
 5. Mom continues her talk directly into 'I think you jus' wait and get-' and as soon as the word 'get' is articulated, Virginia moves her head out of the 'crucified' position it had been in and toward Mom [VC 02hxiv]. As Mom continues with 'some of the new fall stuff', Mom continues placing the basket back on to the table with her eyes on it, but as soon as Virginia starts moving her head and gaze toward her after 'get-', Mom brings her gaze toward Virginia, and they arrive at mutual gaze at 'fall stuff', with Mom still holding the basket about an inch off the table at its ordained place [VC 02hxv]. On 'when it comes in', Mom and Virginia, having achieved mutual gaze, now simultaneously break it off [VC 02hxvi]. And, as she finishes her utterance with 'in', Mom lowers the basket to the table and withdraws her hands [VC 02hxvi again]. Virginia in the meantime has moved into a modulated version of her earlier 'anguished' posture after breaking out of mutual gaze with Mom [VC 02hxvi again]. After setting the biscuit basket down (which appears designed to co-occur with the end of her projection of a happier future and thereby to mark her orientation to the possible completion of the sequence), Mom looks back to Virginia and sees her in the temporarily held, modulated 'not satisfied' or 'disappointed' posture [VC 02hxvii], and launches her further pursuit of the sequence [VC 02hxviii]. (The entire sequence is available in VC 02hxx.)

Let me conclude this effort at specified analysis by making explicit what I hope would be otherwise apparent – that such analysis can be in principle possibly relevant whenever talk in interaction is going on in the presence of other ongoing activities relative to which its organization may be adapted. Because much of the data collected for use by conversation analysts until now has

involved eating (because it is a setting in which persons group together for a sustained period in a fashion that allows them all to be visible to the video recorder), contingencies of distributing food, partaking of it, and consuming it (e.g., the relationship between mastication and articulating talk) are the most familiar, even if hardly studied at all. But the same principled mandate will apply *mutatis mutandis* to other settings – work settings (e.g., Bolden, 2003; C. Goodwin, 1994, 1996; Goodwin and Goodwin, 1996; Heath, 1986; Heritage and Stivers, 1999; Heritage and Maynard, forthcoming; Robinson, 1998; Robinson and Stivers, 2001), recreational settings (for example, in which games are being played, M. Goodwin, 1988, 1998), etc.

Steps toward a more telling analysis 2: tracking a phenomenon across occasions

Another way of ‘zero-ing in’ on a sequence like this is to take some feature and juxtapose it with other instances of that feature as a way of starting to depict a recurrent practice for doing something. For example, we have characterized Virginia’s turn at line 29 as an entreaty and as imploring, achieved in part by the prosody of its delivery, which we characterized as ‘virtually whining’. So let us fasten on this feature – turns done in whining intonation⁶ which appear to be doing imploring. Here are two other specimens, each in its sequential context. Neither can be given a detailed account here, so I have selected two specimens that are given fuller accounts elsewhere (the first in Schegloff, 1998: 568–80; the second in Schegloff, 1988: 118–31, and 2001: 1948–9). The first takes place in a college sorority house as the young women are preparing to ‘go out’ [VC 03]:

(03) Sorority: Formal, 34:43–35:40

- | | | |
|----|-------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Jill: | Bye:::= |
| 2 | Barb: | Bye bye: Ji:ll |
| 3 | | (.) |
| 4 | Anne: | Bye:. |
| 5 | | (0.8) |
| 6 | (?): | (Bye:.) |
| 7 | | (2.0) |
| 8 | Jill: | D’ja get (ya) <u>dress</u> yet. |
| 9 | | (0.8) |
| 10 | Barb: | Did I get dress[ed? |
| 11 | Anne: | [I don’[(think she) did.] |
| 12 | Jill: | [Yer dress fer the <u>for</u>]mal.= |
| 13 | Barb: | =No::; |
| 14 | | (.) |
| 15 | Barb: | My [mom sent it-] yes]terday:] |
| 16 | Jill: | → [I wanna see]: :] i:t.] |
| 17 | | (2.0) |

- 18 Barb: (*She said.-) It's just like- (.) Jole::ne's
 19 mom made,=thee'exact same dress but bla:ck.
 20 (1.8)
 21 Barb: Thee'exact same dress.
 22 (.)
 23 Barb: My mom [made-
 24 Jill: [with (full)/(puffed) slee:ves?
 25 Barb: No; this'z- this'z the one that- (.) that-
 26 has little straps an' has a vee:, an has a
 27 drop[waist.
 28 Jill: [Ah::.
 29 (0.8)

The second specimen takes place in a college dormitory unit. Carol has just come in [AC 04]:

(04) SN-4, 5:1-40

- 1 Sher: Hi Carol.=
 2 Carol: =H[i : .]
 3 Ruth: [CA:RO]L, HI::
 4 Sher: You didn' get en icecream sanwich,
 5 Carol: I kno:w, hh I decided that my body didn't need it,
 6 Sher: Yes but ours di:d=
 7 Sher: =hh heh-heh-heh [heh-heh-heh [·hhih
 8 (??): [ehh heh heh [
 9 (??): [()]
 10 Carol: hh Awright gimme some money en you c'n treat me to one an
 11 I'll buy you a:ll some [too.]
 12 Sher: [I'm] kidding, I don't need it.
 13 (0.3)
 14 (??): (hih)
 15 Carol: → I WA:N' O:N[E,
 16 ?Ruth: [ehh heh-hu [h
 17 Carol: [hheh-uh · hhh=
 18 Carol: =No they [didn' even have any Ta:(h)b.
 19 ?Ruth: [°hheh
 20 Carol: This is all I c'd find.
 21 (·)
 22 Ruth: Well then there's ez many calories ez that prob'ly in en ice
 23 cream sa:nwich=so yih jis':, yih know.
 24 (·)
 25 Carol: I know(,) an icecream sanwich is better, but I di'n feel
 26 like going down tuh P* an seeing all those wierd people.an
 27 have them st[a:re at me.]
 28 Ruth: [In yer slipper]s; (**P' in line 26 refers
 29 (0.2) to the 'Parking Level'
 30 Carol: Yes. in a building.)
 31 (0.8)
 32 Carol: I don't want them tih see me when I l(h)ook t(h)his good.
 33 (0.2)

34	?R?C:	((cough))(H)(H)UH · hhhh=	
35	Carol:	=N(h)o [one des(h)erves]it. ((hoarse voice))	
36		(0.2)	
37	(??):	(Tch · hh=)	
38	Carol:	I'll see you all later,	
39	Ruth:	Awri:ght,	
40		(1.4)	((door opening))

Here are several features of these utterances in their respective contexts:

1. In both instances, they are produced after the prior talk has yielded what is in some respect a frustration. In (03), this is the 'still' unavailable dress (cf. the 'no' in response to line 8, 'Didja get your dress *yet*'; in (04) it is the disappointment of an expected occasion of getting an ice cream sandwich.
2. In both cases, this is met by an expression of insistence, i.e. a persisting orientation to the frustrated goal in the face of its apparent inaccessibility.
3. In both cases, this insistence takes on the color of a complaint, in part by the very insistence on the absent, yet still wanted, target.
4. In both cases, the utterance is embodied in a whine-delivery, and this is part of its realization as 'doing complaining'.
5. In both cases, the complaint serves in some fashion to align its speaker with her recipient. In (03), Jill's 'I wanna see it' mimics the prosody of Barb's just prior disappointed 'no'. In (04), Carol's 'I want one' aligns with Sherri's sequence-initiating complaint, 'You didn't get an ice cream sandwich', and her later insistent retort to Carol's account ('I decided that my body didn't need it'), 'Yes, but ours did.'
6. In both cases, the participants are young women at the transition from adolescence to adult status, roughly 18–19 years old; in both cases, cosmetic concerns are at issue.
7. In the two instances, the talk proceeds in different ways after the targeted turn. In (03), Barb undertakes to provide a substitute remedy for Jill's frustrated wish (a descriptive account of what the dress – and the 'outfit' – look like, at lines 18–39). In (04), Carol herself does an explicit register shift or change-in-voice at lines 18–20, marking it with 'no' as a shift from 'non-serious' to 'serious' (Schegloff, 2001), that is, marking the whining-voice as having been 'non-serious' (perhaps 'pretend'). So in one case the whine gets taken seriously and gets serious 'results'; in the other it is taken as 'non-serious', and gets appropriately designed 'results' – the laughter at line 16; and it is marked in retrospect as not having been after 'serious' results. In both cases, the 'wanna's are done in a 'different' voice, and an unsustainable one.
8. To the degree that 'whining' is 'childish', talking in a whine is a momentary reversion to a childish stance. In (04), it is rejected/suppressed/abandoned as soon as it has come out. It is a display of two-mindedness: something has 'welled up', has burst out, and is then distanced. In this moment we can glimpse fleetingly 'character growth' from the waning child to the waxing

'grown up' (as may also be encountered in some instances of suppression as well, cf. Schegloff, 2003: 248–53).

9. There is a sense in which these speakers are 'doing "doing whining"'. That is, children might well be said, if we are speaking analytically, not 'to whine', but to 'do whining'. Then here, these young women are one step further removed: they are not so much 'doing whining' as they are 'doing "doing whining"'.

If we now juxtapose Virginia's episode with the two other specimens, what do we get? Virginia's pursuit of 'that dress' shares the first four of the observations just registered about Jill's and Sherrie's/Ruthie's projects: it is produced in the aftermath of frustration (albeit on another occasion), it persists in pursuit of the frustrated goal, it takes on the color of a complaint, and is embodied in a 'whining' delivery. But in the other respects, it is quite different. Virginia's plaint does not serve to align her with her recipient; it does not succeed in any capacity, neither serious nor non-serious; this is no 'reversion to a childish stance' because, unlike the characters in the other two settings, Virginia is still a child (and is so referred to elsewhere in this occasion, in spite of her vigorous protestations that 'I'm not a child!');⁷ whereas Jill and Carol were playing at 'whining', – were, in that sense, 'doing "doing whining"' – Virginia is simply doing whining. What they momentarily revert to is what she is doing here as part of her interactional repertoire at this stage of life. And it is to dealing with this that most of this family dinner is given over.

This line of analysis has led us directly into what must surely be counted as a central component of culture. What figures centrally here are categories of members of the society – that collection of categories that Sacks (1972) termed 'stage of life' categories, here involving centrally being 'a child' and being 'a grown-up'. And what figures about these categories is the sort of conduct associated with them – working in a store, dealing with customers vs. wrapping packages (see note 7), responsibility in spending money; these are the forms of conduct that are talked about throughout the dinner. But conduct figures in another way – what Sacks (1972) termed 'category-bound activities'. Sacks developed his understanding of category-bound activities on the category 'baby' and the activity 'crying'; and he noted that one could bring a category into relevance by attributing to a person an activity bound to that category. But a person can bring such a category into relevant application to themselves by engaging in conduct that is bound to that category. I may well have implicated you – the reader – in the overwhelmingly invisible cultural operation of this 'membership categorization device' (Sacks, 1972) by writing several paragraphs ago, "To the degree that "whining" is "childish", talking in a whine is a momentary reversion to a childish stance' – I suspect with no demurrer from my readers. 'Whining' is an attenuated version of crying, and children who have stopped crying (because they are no longer 'babies') may still whine. When older brother Wesley says to Virginia 'you sure look like a child' (see note 7), he is not talking

of her physical appearance (which is not that of a child), but of her conduct. Sacks pointed out (1992: I: 479–81) that the same activity engaged in by someone who cannot be seen as a member of a category to which the activity is bound may be seen to be imitating it rather than doing it⁸ – an observation which underlies the suggestion in the preceding paragraph that ‘whereas Jill and Carol [in Extracts (03) and (04)] were playing at “whining” – were, in that sense, “doing ‘doing whining’” – Virginia is simply doing whining’. Surely the kinds of person there can be, the kinds of conduct that can be meaningfully attributed to various kinds of person, the implication of such structures of understanding in the age grade structure of a society – surely these are all part of the core of what we mean by ‘culture’ in the anthropological sense. And here they are animated, woven into the very warp and weft of ordinary conduct at the dinner table, in the sorority house, in the dormitory. How shall we understand the relationship of such a line of analysis to the culture which figures centrally for anthropology?

I have sketched two directions in which a conversation analyst might press inquiry past the initial analytic gloss with which I presented the data segment with which I began. The second of these involved a feature of the talk that involved me in a vernacular characterization of a manner of talking – ‘whining’ – which was virtually criterial for the interactional practice under examination. There is a discipline which studies the sort of thing that was referred to in vernacular terms: phonetics. In the next section I examine the relationship between conversation analysis and one of its neighboring disciplines in the constellation of language, interaction and culture by exploring the relationship between researchers in these domains. I will do it in a narrative format.

On the interface with other disciplines

I received a manuscript from phoneticians John Local and Gareth Walker which sketched out some phonetic findings about what they took to be ‘rush-throughs’ (Schegloff, 1982). This term was coined to describe a practice employed by speakers approaching possible completion of their turn to interdict realization of the possibility that another would launch a next turn at that completion. The practice involved speeding up the talk as the speaker approached possible completion (for example, just after a pitch peak that might project completion at next grammatical completion point) and, without a break, starting a new turn-constructional unit and articulating it to a point of maximum grammatical control (for example, after a preposition but before its noun phrase, or after an infinitive marker but before its verb). It seemed likely to me that this would be a promising object for phonetic investigation because of the informal quasi-phonetic tenor of that common-sense description; it certainly looked to me like a promising place to explore the possible convergence of phonetic and conversation-analytic work.

But there was a problem. In some of the specimens Local and Walker were describing, there was a gap of silence between the end of the turn-constructional

unit that was coming to possible completion and the next turn-constructional unit launched by the same speaker. Such a silence was precisely what I thought rush-throughs were designed to interdict and thereby avoid, and seemed to me on those grounds to be inappropriately included as instances of the phenomenon Local and Walker figured they were studying. They replied that my comments had helped clarify their thinking, and that they now figured they were not studying rush-throughs but something else, which they called ‘abrupt joins’.

I was very disappointed. It had seemed to me that the anomalous cases allowed for two sorts of resolution. One was to preserve the previous account of rush-throughs, segregate out the anomalous cases for separate examination – either as accountable deviant cases or as a different practice altogether, and then spell out the phonetic practices by which rush-throughs are realized. The other was to privilege the phonetic ‘machine readings’ as defining what the phenomenon was over the inquiry’s starting point in rush-throughs, and treat the latter as, in effect, not at all what was involved. Between the two, it seemed to me, they had chosen the second path – not the first time that the intersection between CA and some long-standing discipline was resolved by privileging the concerns of the latter and drawing on CA resources with no sense of their proper boundaries and constraints.

This story has a happy ending, but let me pause to convey some of the history that gave rise to this reaction on my part, because the happy ending of this story is one of the exceptions. It may be useful to workers at the boundaries between CA and anthropology, communication, linguistics, psychology and sociology to register the sorts of recurrent problems that have arisen in the past that they might try to avoid – certainly if their aim is to contribute to the corpus of conversation analytic work, and very likely if their aim is to advance some other domain of work – the structure of language, cognitive/psycholinguistic processes, cultural components of interaction, information transfer, interaction in institutional contexts such as medicine, mass communication, organizations, law, etc. – by exploiting the data of talk in interaction.

1. An investigator whose academic specialty is grammar, or phonetics, or prosody, or gesture may find a grammatical or phonetic feature or cluster of features that appears regularly to accompany some conversational practice, type of action, or other feature of the talk, and may then figure that, if it is not present, then the conversational feature is not the case. This appears to be the result of taking the field of inquiry – the world of objects that comprise the discipline – to be autonomous and to comprise an exhaustive domain of possibilities within whose boundaries the inquiry must be conducted.

But for participants in interaction, there may be multiple ways of marking a bit of talk as doing some action or having some status, and those multiple ways transcend the boundaries that comprise discrete domains of academic inquiry. Having a turn at talk accomplish or realize some action may turn on its sequential position, its grammatical form, its prosodic features, its lexical

composition, some bodily configuration or action, or combinations of these or other features. Investigators need to take them all into account, or ask if there is some as-yet-unidentified feature that is implicated in getting this job done. That is to say, one cannot restrict one's analytic resources to the traditional boundaries of one's discipline. One cannot arbitrarily declare some aspect of the data being analyzed as beyond the scope of the study; if it could be implicated in the topic of the research, it cannot be rendered irrelevant by fiat, because it is inconvenient or beyond the reach of the researcher's current resources. To study materials from conversation or other talk-in-interaction in a fashion that seeks to draw on conversation-analytic resources one needs to proceed as a conversation analyst who knows and/or is working on grammar, prosody, gesture, etc., not the other way around – not as a grammarian, psychologist, sociologist, etc., who knows some CA.⁹

2. Often investigators appear to be tacitly oriented to the expectation that there will be a one-to-one relationship between some linguistic, prosodic, gestural, cultural practice, on the one hand, and a certain conversational outcome on the other. That is no more the case than figuring that some sequential practice or deployment of formulations or other conversational practice must always be shown to have some single interactional effect. What a speaker is doing by adding an increment to an otherwise possibly complete turn, by inserting a descriptor into a turn-in-production which did not initially have it, by trailing off an utterance before it is grammatically possibly complete, etc., can be quite various, although that variety can itself often be broadly characterized. This one-to-many relationship can work both ways: from single linguistic forms (to take one example) to diverse conversational outcomes, or from single conversational practices to diverse ways of realizing them. To get on top of these possibilities one needs to be a competent conversation analyst together with whatever else one does.
3. As must be apparent from the preceding points, one needs to know the conversation-analytic work not only for the particular province in which one is working, but for all aspects of conversational organization. One cannot work on the grammar and prosody of possible turn completion while limiting one's scope to the single turn or turn constructional unit in which the construction happens to occur. If one is trying to control the analysis by seeing if co-participants show that they recognize that the ongoing turn has come to possible completion by starting a next turn, this will not work if the turn in question occurs in a storytelling-in-progress, and the analyst must be open to registering what larger units of talk are in progress – stories, extended sequences, openings or closings of conversation, continuing states of incipient talk, and so forth.

In short, you can't do anything unless you know everything! Or at least unless you are open and alert to all the possibilities – possibilities established not by what we know about grammar, prosody, gesture, culture, institutions, etc., but by what we know about talk-in-interaction.

4. And finally, for now, the inquiry needs to be undertaken and conducted in a way designed to enhance our understanding of talk-and-other conduct-in-interaction, and not simply use data collected from that context to enhance our understanding of other things – whether the nature of grammar (as in much of ‘interactional linguistics’), speech production and understanding (as in much of ‘gesture studies’), or the microanalysis of social institutions (as in much of the study of ‘talk in institutional contexts’). On the one hand, the contribution made to the targeted domains of inquiry may be subverted by taking the interactional data out of the context as it would be understood by technical conversation analysis; on the other, the return or payoff of the research redounds virtually entirely to the other domain and not to the corpus of conversation-analytic knowledge. It need not be so, but, so far, it has been so.

So this is the history that led to my disappointment and qualms about what Local and Walker were doing. But I should have known better, given the past track record. So now back to my story and its happy ending.

Local and Walker were right. What they had found and called ‘abrupt joins’ were not rush-throughs, but were something sequentially closely related to rush-throughs, and they were true conversational practices in their own right and not phonetic phenomena alone. As I read the account in the published paper it struck me that what they were describing were occurrences registered in CA transcripts by the ‘less than’ symbol (<), which is referred to as a ‘left push’. When introducing students to CA transcription, I would describe this as a practice by which speakers bring off a start to the following talk that sounds earlier than it is, and seems to be produced by an over-loud first syllable. Well, Local and Walker got it rather more precisely than that! And when, in drafting this article, I went back to the transcripts I had for the data which they analyzed and looked at the places on which their analysis focuses, four of the six were marked in the transcript by the left-push symbol, one was marked by a combination of symbols that approximates that (an equal sign plus up arrow, = ↑),¹⁰ and one had no special marking at all.

Abrupt-joins or left-pushes are related to rush-throughs in the following way. Unless otherwise provided for (as, for example, when a story-telling or other projectedly extended account is underway), the possible completion of a turn-constructional unit is transition-relevant. The ‘transition place’ in which the possibility of transition is managed starts from a little before possible completion and extends a little bit into the next turn-constructional unit, whether taken by a new speaker or prior speaker.¹¹ The transition place can come off as ‘normal’, compressed or expanded. By ‘normal’ I mean neither a statistical claim (not average or modal) nor a normative one (departures from it are not ‘abnormal’), but rather that value of the transition place that accomplishes, and is understood by the parties as accomplishing, transition from one speaker to the next and nothing else. It is, to use a common term from linguistics, the unmarked value. It

is composed by what Jefferson (1984, 1986) characterized as one beat allowed to pass by an incipient next speaker before beginning their talk. Compressed, or shorter than normal, transition places can be achieved ‘from either side’; that is, the beat of silence can be diminished by an extension of the prior speaker’s talk past where it was projected to end (so to speak ‘from the left’), or by a starting by next speaker earlier than after a beat of silence (so to speak ‘from the right’), or both. In departing from the ‘normal’ value, such compressed transition places (or expanded ones, for that matter, but they do not figure in this discussion) bring off that something else besides simple transition from one speaker to a next is taking place. One such ‘something else’ is interdicting the possibility of a next speaker’s start in the clear. One way a just-possibly-finishing speaker can do this is by speeding up their talk so that they get to possible completion earlier than projected and utter the initial words of a new turn-constructural unit before a next speaker can start a next turn. This is the practice of ‘rush-through’ mentioned earlier. It closes up the transition place ‘from its left edge’, so to speak. But if a just-possibly-finishing speaker has not deployed this practice before possible completion of their turn, there is another tack available. They can start a next turn-constructural unit before the beat of silence being allowed by an incipient next speaker has elapsed; here they close up the transition place ‘from the other side’, so to speak; not from where the old talk was ending, but from where new talk can be beginning – except that that place is now claimed by the prior speaker. This is the practice of the left push or the abrupt join, and it should now be clear how this phenomenon, though clearly distinct from a rush-through, is closely related to it; it is another practice by which a just-possibly-finishing speaker can move to get to talk further.

Though I have been teaching about this for a long time, I am unaware of having published anything about it, and it is unlikely that Local or Walker would have known about it. I am often asked by skeptics about CA whether different analysts addressing the same data would come up with identical or convergent analyses. It is rewarding to have another case to add to the files.

But Local and Walker have added more to our understanding than the independent and technically specified analysis of this practice of talking. They begin their paper not with the phonetic account, but with conversation-analytic workups of each of their specimens. This not only qualifies the data as specimens of a conversational practice and not just a phonetic one; it specifies a distinctive sequential juncture at which this practice is deployed, and thereby suggests one basis for the deployment of a left push/abrupt join rather than a rush-through. So the payoff is not only an appreciation of what motivates a particular phonetic deployment, but the specification of a distinctive sequential juncture in conversation. To be sure, there may well be abrupt joins in places other than the one which Local and Walker have described; in my search for left-push symbols in CA transcripts, I found some in places that do not look like the junctures they describe. One next step would be to review those places and determine whether what happens there is properly an instance of an abrupt join or not. If it is, it will

be worthwhile describing those junctures and determining how they are related to the ones Local and Walker have described.

The moral of the story is that the possibility of work at the boundaries of these disciplines is robust. Making it happen requires, on the one hand, that investigators be masters not only of their traditional discipline of training, but of conversation analysis as well, and, on the other hand, that conversation analysts undertake to become literate in related disciplines which show themselves able to shed light on conversational phenomena as objects of inquiry in their own right. Most of all it requires that the collaborators share a respect for the integrity of interaction, and aspire to contribute to our understanding of how any particular sort of occurrence is woven into its texture.¹²

On the 'corrosiveness' of conversation analysis

In his contribution to this special issue, Steve Levinson expresses a concern about the possible 'dangerousness' of conversation analysis, or, at least, my understanding of it. He himself favors a tripartite division of social inquiry, one that recognizes three autonomous domains of organization: a socio-cultural domain, an interactional domain and a linguistic domain. But he deftly presents a competing alternative, one in which all social formations are functions of the interaction order. He expresses uncertainty about which of these stances my version of conversation analysis implies; it could be interactional constructivism which allows for the independent consequentiality of social institutions and linguistic structures, or it could be the 'dangerous' interactional reductionism, in which 'interaction determines every other level of phenomena, including social systems and linguistic systems'.

Actually, I would like to slip through a hole in the wall which he has constructed between these two alternatives. In arguing that 'it is essential to keep our levels separated . . . three distinct levels of analysis, or three different kinds of systems, socio-cultural systems, interaction systems and language systems, interlocked in various ways', Levinson allows that

one doesn't have to be a realist about these entities – one can treat them as analytical fictions, whereby one gets a better model of the whole shebang by finding relatively differentiated subsystems which seem to have organizing principles of their own.

'Analytical fictions' – that is the hole I wish to slip through.

But before I slip through it, let me say that Levinson places greater faith in macro-social science than I am prepared to. Having been trained as a sociologist in the classical mold, and having tried a considerable range of sociologies and found them wanting, I have reservations about relying on social structural or institutional accounts as counterparts or helpmates to interactional analysis. However substantial they may be for the problems they are used to address, they rest (in my view) on methodological grounds very different from those central to conversation analysis.

The data of conversation (even more than some other forms of talk-and-other-conduct-in-interaction) are distinctively and densely interactive. Virtually all turns at talk display – and are taken to display – their speaker's understanding of 'the current state of play', that is, either (as the default) the just preceding turn relative to what has preceded *it* in the sequence, or some *earlier* turn which it is designed to target. For this reason, researchers who have arrived at some analysis of what some turn is doing can seek to ground that analysis in the displayed understanding by a co-participant in a subsequent turn or other form of responsive conduct – an understanding on which the next move in the interaction has been based. That is to say, there is a proof procedure internal to the data. It is, as Harold Garfinkel used to say, as if this world were designed to allow a science of it to be done.

Examples abound in the data segments examined earlier in this article. The analysis of Virginia's 'request' turn (in Extract 01) as an entreaty, as a re-request after previous requests had been rejected, is echoed in Mom's reply which shows her to understand it in just that way – as not apt, as 'over the top', by virtue of 'having been through this before'. That 'you've got enough summer clothes' extends this familiar scenario with the same reason for rejecting the request as has been given before is attested by Virginia's collapse into a posture of pained disappointment at the word 'enough'. Or in Extract 04, our analysis of 'I wan one' as 'not serious', as 'joking', is underwritten by Ruthie's treatment of it as that by laughing. Note that Ruthie's analysis (unlike ours) is vulnerable to immediate sanction if wrong; to treat something as a joke when it was meant seriously (or vice versa) can be interactionally problematic – more or less so depending on what is at stake. At the very least, the parties may find themselves to be 'not on the same wave length', not having a meeting of minds, and this by itself can be troublesome.

There is no other analytic domain in the social sciences that I am aware of that has this kind of leverage in grounding its analysis, and it turns on the fact that analysis by the investigator is in a fashion part of the same playing field as the analyzed, only in the role of analytic spectators, not players. This is not the case with work on socio-cultural systems, and puts that work in a different league. It is not, I submit, that there are different levels or systems that are of equivalent standing; interaction analysis (I mean of the conversation-analytic sort) has quite a different standing methodologically and analytically; it is built on a distinctive resource for which I want to claim a realist stance; this is no analytic fiction.

Levinson recognizes one aspect of this when he writes about comparative kinship theory that it 'is not available to the participants in interaction – it is not a theory *for* interaction, although it is a theory much concerned with predicting properties *of* interaction, like joking behaviour, in-law avoidance and name taboos'. Aye, there's the rub! The relationship between normative accounts and behavioral realities – always an issue when grounding theories in informants'/consultants' accounts – is surely not a lesser issue in such circumstances.

Levinson sees such analytical fictions as virtues, as resources ‘whereby one gets a better model of the whole shebang’. I, on the other hand, see them as obstacles whose fictional status does not keep them from preempting discovery of real organizations of practice. This is a possibility to which Levinson is not blind; he writes ‘and, yes, we should not think in terms of interaction as playing out structures determined at another level. And we can understand the irritation of the interactional experts watching amateurs from other disciplines making a mess of interaction analysis.’ So he clearly knows the obstacles that just such thinking puts in the way of clarity about interactional process. Why then should one favor what may well be an analytical fiction?

If we are to be allowed ‘analytic fictions’, it seems to me that we should adopt the ‘dangerous’ view so as to dissolve with its ‘acid’ the place where other systems and their theorists have preempted the interactional constitution of social reality. When pushing the interactional view cannot reach some indisputably real occurrences, phenomena, facts, etc., and where another system’s account is defensible, we can allow it back in; my reservations and objections are not principled. But much of the other systems’ theories are *not* defensible without permissive stipulations and benevolent inattention, yet they command the disciplinary turf that controls academic and scientific culture. We can only preserve the integrity of interaction as an object of inquiry in the short term by availing ourselves of the dangerous idea – if only as an analytic fiction for those who must have it that way. For myself, I remain agnostic in the face of the problematic grounding of much received and contemporary work, on the one hand, and the as-yet-untested reach of naturalistic work on interaction on the other.

Closing

Whatever may be the case about ‘language’ and ‘culture’, occasions of interaction are instances of a natural kind. As such, they have integrity in the sense introduced in the beginning of this article, ‘the condition of having no part or element wanting’. Unless we respect and explicate their integrity, we will not have done our jobs with integrity in another sense – ‘uprightness, honesty, sincerity’ (*Oxford English Dictionary*: I, 1088). And so we should do what it takes.

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NOTES


1. A preliminary definitional note: I am using the term ‘integrity’ here not in the moral sense in which it is applied to humans (in the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s language, ‘soundness of moral principle; the character of uncorrupted virtue; uprightness,

- honesty, sincerity'), but in its non-moral sense: 'The condition of having no part or element wanting. . . ' (OED: I, 1088). In either case, I suppose that, where integrity has been lost, we should wish to restore it.
2. The reader may find it instructive to juxtapose the discussion in this section with Alessandro Duranti's article, 'On Theories and Models', in this special issue of the journal, and with the 'theses' presented in its Appendix.
 3. 'VC' stands for 'video clip'; when inserted into the text in brackets, it suggests that the reader may wish to examine the video clip with the discussion in the text. Later in the article, I use data for which only audio is available, and it will be signaled by 'AC' for 'audio clip'. To access the clips, go to my website <<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/>>, and then follow directions.
 4. See Heritage (1998).
 5. Although not exactly the same as the central point of Erving Goffman's 'The Neglected Situation' (1964), the theme here is closely related.
 6. The *Oxford English Dictionary* relates 'whining' to crying ('to cry in a subdued plaintive tone'), and to complaining, intonationally accomplished ('to utter complaints in a low querulous tone; to complain in a feeble, mean or undignified way') *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*: II, 2537.
 7. Here is the exchange in which this figures.
 - 1 MOM: Beh- oh:. Vuhginia, we've been through this. When you're
 - 2 → old enough you ca:n work in the store.
 - 3 (0.2)
 - 4 VIR: · hh Well Beth didn' Beth get tih work b'fore she was sixteen?=
5 MOM: =No::! I'd- (0.2) I would let her wrap presents an' packages et
6 Christmas an:'- °times we needed somebody.° · hh >But people
7 → just don't want< (0.4) chu:ldren (0.2) waiting on [(‘um).
 - 8 VIR: → ((shrilly)) [I'm not a chi:::ld!
 - 9 PR?: hhh!
 - 10 MOM: Wellç
 - 11 (1.0)
 - 12 MOM: I said'yuh could wrap packages at Christmas.
 - 13 (.)
 - 14 WES: → Yo[u sure look like a chi:ld.
 - 15 ???: [(eh-hhh! eh) ((laughter or cough?))
 - 16 ???: ·hh=
17 WES: =h[h!
 - 18 VIR: → [Wel [l I('m) | no(h)ot] o(h)ne,
 - 19 M/P: [W e s: | l e y !]
 8. For example, Sacks writes, 'to do such activities mockingly, kiddingly, and the like, in play, is more or less explicitly to recognize that in doing them one is making no claim to doing them seriously' (1992: I: 481).
 9. See, for example, Lerner (1991, 1996a, 1996b, 2004); Lerner and Takagi (1999).
 10. I should add that an examination of the entire transcript revealed no left-push marks, which suggests that the symbol had not yet been adopted for its current use.
 11. These rough terms – 'a little before' and 'a little after' – can be made more precise, but there is neither need nor space for such precision here.
 12. Another area of inquiry which is of interest to students of language, of interaction and of culture is so-called 'narrative', and the theme of integrity has a compelling relevance there as well (cf. Schegloff, 1997).

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